



MINUTES

ROMA BOARD MEETING

Friday, June 14, 2024

8:30 AM – 11:00 AM

Valhalla Inn

**1 Valhalla Inn Rd, Thunder Bay,
HYBRID Meeting**

PRESENT:

Chair Robin Jones, Mayor, Village of Westport (AMO Rural Caucus)

Zone and AMO Rural Caucus Representatives:

Jamie McGrail, Councillor, Municipality of Chatham-Kent (Zone 1)

Steve McCabe, Councillor, Township of Wellington North (Zone 2)

Dave Beres, Deputy Mayor, Township of Tillsonburg (Zone 3)

Christina Early, Councillor, Town of Caledon (Zone 4)

Pam Sayne, Councillor, Township of Minden Hills (Zone 5)

Jennifer Murphy, Councillor, County of Renfrew (Zone 6)

Carma Williams, Deputy Mayor, Township of North Glengarry (Zone 7)

Christa Lowry, 1st Vice Chair, Mayor, Municipality of Mississippi Mills (Zone 8)

Mark Wilson, Councillor, City of Temiskaming Shores (Zone 9)

Janet Hager, Councillor, Municipality of Red Lake (Zone 10)

Peter Emon, Reeve, Town of Renfrew (AMO Rural Caucus)

Rainey Weisler, Deputy Mayor, Municipality of Bayham (AMO Rural Caucus)

Paul Latam, Councillor, Town of Grand Valley (AMO Rural Caucus)

Staff:

Afshin Majidi, Executive Treasurer, AMO

Petra Wolfbeiss, Director, Membership Centre, AMO

Lindsay Jones, Director of Policy and Government Relations, AMO

Karen Nesbitt, Senior Manager, Policy, AMO

Bridget Cherry, Senior Policy Analyst, AMO

Daniela Spagnuolo, Policy Advisor, AMO

Farah Tayabali, Vice-President, Redbrick

Megan Abraham, Consultant, Redbrick

Lucas Stein, Digital Communications Intern, AMO

Lora Tigno, Administrative Assistant, Membership Centre, AMO

Guests:

Melanie Borho-Persechini, BDO Canada

Chloe Langlois, Economic and Business Advisor, OMAFRA

Early Departures:

Jamie McGrail, Councillor, Municipality of Chatham-Kent (Zone 1)

Regrets:

Sandra Datars Bere, 2nd Vice Chair, City Manager, City of London (AMO Rural Caucus)

1. Chair's Welcome and Introductions – ROMA Chair, Robin Jones

Chair Jones welcomed Board members and staff to the meeting.

2. Declaration

- Pecuniary interest – None declared
- Early departure – Jamie McGrail, Councillor, Municipality of Chatham-Kent (Zone 1)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

3. Approval of Friday, June 14, 2024, Meeting Agenda (*Pages 1-3*)

Motion:

"That the Board approve the agenda for Friday, June 14, 2024."

Moved: Paul Latam

Seconded: Jennifer Murphy

CARRIED

4. Approval of Friday, May 17, 2024, ROMA Meeting Minutes (*Pages 4-12*)

Motion

"That the Board approve the minutes from the May 17, 2024 meeting".

Moved: Peter Emon

Seconded: Mark Wilson

CARRIED

5. Executive-Treasurer – Afshin Majidi, Executive Treasurer

- i. Audit Communication to ROMA Board – Melanie Borho-Persechini, BDO Canada
(Pages 13-56) **8:45 AM**
- ii. 2023 Draft Audited Financial Statements – Afshin Majidi, Executive Treasurer (Pages 57-68)

Melanie Borho-Persechini, Partner, BDO Canada LLP, tabled and reviewed the final auditor's report.

Afshin Majidi presented the 2023 Draft Audited Financial Statements, indicating the favourable revenue position and continued positive growth of the annual conference. Afshin provided an update on the Boards reserves. and clarifying internal reserves.

Motion

"That the Audit final report be accepted as presented."

Moved: Steve McCabe

Seconded: Jamie McGrail

"That the 2023 draft audited financial statements be approved as presented."

Moved: Jennifer Murphy

Seconded: Christina Early

CARRIED

TIMED ITEMS

6. 8:00 AM – 8:45 AM - Economic Development Success in Thunder Bay - Chloe Langlois, Economic and Business Advisor, OMAFRA (*To Be Delivered*)

Chloe Langlois presented Thunder Bay's economic development success highlighting the importance of collaborating with local partners, farmers, and indigenous communities in creating an Emergency Food Plan (EFP) for Northwestern Ontario. Chloe also highlighted the growth of agriculture in the region due to climate change and the challenges faced by small producers in distributing local food, including limited access to trucking and customs pay exchange, resistance from females in taking over agri-businesses, and lack of distribution channels. Community champions were discussed as a key factor in promoting local food distribution, and the need for larger scale support and infrastructure to help rural communities thrive was emphasized.

Motion

"That the Board receive the OMAFRA presentation as information".

Moved: Paul Latam

Seconded: Jennifer Murphy

CARRIED

7. 9:20 AM – 9:40 AM - LAS Water and Wastewater Expert Panel – Judy Dezell, Director Enterprise Centre, Business Partnerships & LAS (*Pages 69-75*)

LAS is currently assessing the feasibility of creating a water and wastewater utility. LAS has engaged an expert panel to assist in the feasibility analysis including engaging with critical subject matter experts.

Judy provided a number of matters for consideration by the ROMA Board as input into the information seeking work. These matters will be explored further at the upcoming meeting of the Board.

LAS is holding a pre-conference session at the AMO Conference in Ottawa to engage delegates in the early stages of this work.

Motion

“That the Board receive the LAS Water and Wastewater presentation as information”.

Moved: Rainey Weisler

Seconded: Carma Williams

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

8. ROMA Communications Update – Farah Tayabali, Vice President, and Megan Abraham, Consultant, Redbrick (*To be delivered*)

ROMA platforms continue to experience strong engagement. with over 11,000 impressions since the last meeting. This included well-received posts from the Teeny Tiny Summit and a popular Local Food Week post that garnered substantial views and shares. Engagement on LinkedIn is growing, with 21,000 impressions and 1,600 followers, while Twitter (now X) remains effective despite recent changes.

Motion:

“That the Board receive the Redbrick communication update as information”.

Moved: Christa Lowry

Seconded: Dave Beres

CARRIED

POLICY

9. Policy Update

- **Provincial Offences Act (POA) - Bridget Cherry, Senior Advisor, AMO (Pages 76-83)**

Bridget provided an update on the revised advocacy approach for the Provincial Offences Act (POA) system, approved by the AMO Board.

A technical working group has been formed to inform AMO's advocacy positions with deliverables anticipated this summer.

- **Access to Health Services – Daniela Spagnuolo, Policy Advisor, AMO (Pages 84-89)**

Daniela presented an update on AMO's current advocacy efforts regarding access to health services. AMO has engaged with health sector partners and the AMO Health Transformation Task Force to develop a renewed Health Human Resources strategy.

Key areas of review for the strategy, include compensation, mental health and well-being, diversity, equity, and inclusion, worker attraction and retention, quality of care, and health human resources planning tools.

AMO is also working with the Ontario Medical Association on a resolution campaign advocating for investment in primary care.

- **Letter from Minister Smith and Minister Thompson re: proposed agricultural land siting considerations for upcoming procurements – Karen Nesbitt, Senior Manager, Policy, AMO (Pages 90-92)**

Karen presented further policy updates discussing two key letters included in the provided materials. The first letter, a joint communication from the former Ministers of Energy and Agriculture, addressed energy procurement and the challenge of siting energy projects on prime agricultural land. It outlined directives for future procurements, emphasizing the importance of avoiding prime agricultural land for energy projects, banning ground-mounted solar projects on such land, and requiring municipal council approval supported by an Agricultural Impact Assessment.

Karen also highlighted upcoming activities related to broadband access implementation, including a meeting with the Premier and ISP executives to ensure accountability and smooth implementation, followed by a Minister's roundtable to emphasize the municipalities' role in achieving the 2025 goal.

Additionally, Karen mentioned a letter from AMO providing principal-level advice to the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) on funding models for new Local Distribution Company (LDC) infrastructure expansion and maintenance, noting the significant future expenditure required to meet energy capacity demands.

Motion

"That the policy updates be received".

Moved: Janet Hager

Seconded: Rainey Weisler

CARRIED

INFORMATION ITEMS

Check in whether members would like any of the items pulled for discussion.

10. Bill 185

- a. 24-05-07 - Report #PD-2024-07 - Provincial Policy Statement and Bill 185 Comments-Tay Valley Township (*Pages 93-114*)
- b. Resolution Letter - Bill 185 Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act 2024-the Town of Tecumseh (*Pages 115-144*)

11. ROMA OGRA Conference

- a. Lanark Highlands_ROMA and OGRA conference (*Pages 145-146*)
- b. Letter - Support combining OGRA-ROMA Conference-Seguín Township (*Pages 147*)
- c. Letter_Return to Combined ROMA and OGRA Conference-Town of Cochrane (*Pages 148-149*)

12. Sustainable Infrastructure

- a. 05.29.2024 Letter of Support Re Sustainable Infrastructure Funding for Small Rural Municipalities-Township of Pelee (*Pages 150-151*)
- b. 24-102 Requesting the Province to Implement Sustainable Infrastructure Funding for Small Rural Municipalities-Township of The Archipelago (*Pages 152-154*)
- c. 2024-05-07 - Resolution Letter Re Sustainable Infrastructure Funding for Small Rural Municipalities-Municipality of West Grey (*Pages 155-158*)
- d. 2024-104 Support Hastings County Sustainable Infrastructure Funding-Municipality of East Ferris (*Pages 159*)
- e. C-2024-165 Infrastructure Small Rural Municipalities-Township of Georgian Bay (*Pages 160-161*)
- f. Letter of Support - Sustainable Infrastructure Funding for Small Rural Municipalities-Municipality of Central Huron (*Pages 162-165*)
- g. Resolution 2024-068 Resolution of Support Infrastructure-Municipality of Mattawan (*Pages 166-167*)
- h. Sustainable Infrastructure Funding for Small Rural Municipalities-Hastings (*Pages 168-169*)
- i. Sustainable Infrastructure Funding for Small Rural Municipalities-Town of Hearst (*Pages 170-171*)

- j. Township of Lanark Highlands LTR of Support Hastings County Sustainable Infrastructure (*Pages 172-173*)

13. **Tile Drain Loan Limit**

- a. Letter of Support - Town of Plympton-Wyoming-Township of Douro-Dummer (*Pages 174*)
- b. May 9 - Minister Thompson re Tile Drain Loan Limit_Township of South Perth (*Pages 175-178*)
- c. Tile Drain Load Limit-Haldimand County (*Pages 179-180*)

14. **Water and Wastewater**

- a. 05.29.2024 Letter of Support Re Rural Affordability of Water and Wastewater Systems-Township of Pelee (*Pages 181-183*)
- b. Affordable waste and water rates support letter May 2024-Village of Oil Springs (*Pages 184-185*)
- c. County of Renfrew - Affordability of Water and Wastewater Systems (*Pages 186-187*)
- d. Motion regarding Affordability of Water and Wastewater Rates Letter-Loyalist Township (*Pages 188-189*)
- e. Town of Deep River Resolution of Support - Affordability of Water & Wastewater Systems (*Pages 190-191*)
- f. Township of Georgian Bluffs Resolution in Support – Affordability of Water and Wastewater Rates (*Pages 192-194*)
- g. UNAFFORDABILITY OF WATER SYSTEM-Township of East Hawkesbury (*Pages 195*)

15. **Other**

- a. 2024-05-08 - Federal Capital Gains Tax-FOCA (*Pages 196-197*)
- b. 2024-05-15 Township of Clearview Letter in Support of Basic Income Guarantee (*Pages 198-201*)
- c. access to natural gas-Township of East Hawkesbury (*Pages 202-203*)
- d. Township of Southgate - Letter of Support Rideshare Services (*Pages 204*)

OTHER BUSINESS

16. Other business brought forward by members

During the board meeting, it was discussed that the strategic plan discussion, previously deferred due to time constraints, should be postponed until after the new board is established.

17. Agenda items for future ROMA Board meetings

ADJOURNMENT

18. Next meeting: July 19, 2024, **VIRTUAL**

19. Adjournment

Motion:

"That there being no further business, the Board move to adjourn."

Moved: Rainey Weisler

Seconded: Paul Latam

CARRIED