REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

To the Warden and Members of Council,
United Counties of Prescott and Russell

The Committee of the Whole met in L’Orignal at 9:00 a.m. on August 10, 2016.

Were present: Gary J. Barton, Jeanne Charlebois, Guy Desjardins, Fernand Dicaire, Robert Kirby, Conrad Lamadeleine, Pierre Leroux and François St-Amour, Council Members.

Stéphane P. Parisien, Michel Chrétien, Marc Clermont, Pierre Gauthier, Anne Comtois Lalonde, Louise Lalonde, Carole Lavigne, Julie Ménard Brault, Louis Prévost, Department Heads, and Andrée Latreille, Clerk.

The report is presented as follows:

1. **Delegation of the Domiciliary Hotels Association**
   Mr. Normand Tremblay, representative of the Domiciliary Hostels Association of Prescott-Russell, requested a substantial increase in the per diem for the domiciliary hostel subsidy program. According to Mr. Tremblay, a 2% increase in 2017 would be insufficient to offset the expected shortfall. According to a study from the Ontario Homes for Special Needs Association (OHSNA), the per diem should be between $58.90 and $59.32, or $1,795 per month. He requested an additional contribution from the UCPR.

   It was recalled that Council adopted a resolution in August 2015 to increase the subsidy for beneficiaries to $51 per day as of January 1, 2016, and to review this amount during the 2017 budget discussions.

   **THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED** to meet the Minister of Housing along with the representatives of the Domiciliary Hostels Association, to urge the Province to invest additional funding in order to increase the contribution for domiciliary hostel residents and therefore compensate for the hostel operators’ funding shortfall.

2. **Date change request**
   The Mayor of the Town of Hawkesbury inquired about the possibility of changing the date of the next Committee of the Whole on September 14, which coincides with the start of the Ontario East Municipal Conference in Kingston. **THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED** to move forward the date of the Committee of the Whole meeting and the Emergency Services Committee meeting to September 13.

3. **Fire Dispatch**
   The Mayor of the Village of Casselman noted that communication towers on the territory of Prescott and Russell are not only used by fire services and suggested that all the towers should be owned by the Counties. Several mayors noted that, to date, the negotiations have been very laborious.

4. **Bus for the AFMO Conference**
   The Nation Municipality has offered to rent a bus at an approximate cost of $400 per municipality, to travel the AFMO Conference being held in Hearst on September 21 and 22, 2016. Mayor St-Amour requested that each municipality send its response as quickly as possible.

5. **2017 Budget**
   The Treasurer presented, via PowerPoint, a summary of the 2017 budget. She noted that the major expenditures in recent years and the projects currently being studied will create a significant increase in taxes. She requested a clear directive from Council regarding the services and cuts that it wishes to consider, in order for the Administration to begin the budget process.

   Among other factors, the UCPR’s reserves have decreased by $9.6 million since 2013 and $3.3 million was used from the reserves to reduce the 2016 tax rate. A one per cent
increase in the tax rate represents an additional $395,000. The expenses and major projects undertaken by this Council are:

- annual subsidy of $2 million per municipality for roads;
- annual subsidy of $10,000 per municipality for cultural and community activities;
- funding for external organizations (Centre d’accueil Roger Séguin – $500,000; Eastern Ontario Water Resources Program – $50,000; P-R Community Services – $30,000; Recycle Action – $35,000; Fort McMurray – $20,000, etc.);
- purchase of two properties in L’Original and building renovations;
- project to find a property and the construction of a long-term care Residence;
- project to build in new office in the Larose Forest;
- project to build a new ambulance station;
- the asset management plan recommends investing $1 million to address the financial backlog for 2016 and another $2.5 million in 2017.

THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED to present a budget with a tax rate increase of 2% or less, to make budget cuts in every department and service, to propose cuts to future or ongoing projects, and to submit the draft budget for consideration purposes at an upcoming meeting.

6. Human Resources Statistical Reports
The Human Resources Director proposed to present human resources statistics twice a year, as opposed to four times per year. THE COMMITTEE agreed with this proposal and RECOMMENDED that statistics be presented in February and August of each year.

7. Presentation on the Alfred College revival
Karen Pitre, Special Advisor to the Premier, met with Council regarding the revival of Alfred College. This presentation was held in camera as per Section 239(2)c) proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the Counties. THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED to formally explain Council’s position to Ms. Pitre in writing.

8. Discussion concerning an individual
The Mayor of Russell Township discussed a problem regarding a person that be identified. This presentation was held in camera as per Section 239(2)b) personal matters about an identifiable individual, including County employees.

9. Adjournment
The Committee of the Whole adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

ALL OF WHICH IS RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED.

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Guy Desjardins, Chairman

Moved by François St-Amour
Seconded by Robert Kirby

THAT THIS REPORT BE ADOPTED

Adopted by Council
August 24, 2016

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Guy Desjardins, Warden

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Andrée Latreille, Clerk