



COUNCIL INFORMATION PACKAGE

SUMMARY

DECEMBER 15, 2023

1. **C-2023-426**
Correspondence dated December 6, 2023 from the municipality of Grey Highlands to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario petitioning the Ontario Government to expedite the implementation of recommendations with respecting to Enbridge Gas.
2. **C-2023-427**
Correspondence dated December 12, 2023 from the City of Port Colborne respecting a resolution of support of the Town of Plympton-Wyoming's resolution regarding an Amendment to the Legislation Act, 2006 to include Digital Publications as Acceptable means of Publication.
3. **C-2023-428**
Correspondence dated December 12, 2023 from the City of Greater Sudbury respecting a motion regarding an Amendment to the Occupational Health and Safety Act to Clarify the Definition of "Employer".
4. **C-2023-429**
Niagara SPCA Monthly Stats – November, 2023
5. **C-2023-430**
Correspondence dated December 11, 2023 from the Township of Clearview respecting a motion regarding Report LS032-2023 (Cemetery Transfer/Abandonment Administration & Management Support).



December 06, 2023

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario
200 University Ave., Suite 801
Toronto, Ontario M5H 3C6

Sent via email: resolutions@amo.on.ca

Attention: Colin Best, President

Dear Mr. Best

Re: Grey Highlands Resolution #2023-964

Please be advised that the following resolution was passed at the December 06, 2023 meeting of the Council of the Municipality of Grey Highlands.

2023-964

Whereas the Enbridge Gas has shared with Grey Highlands key messages regarding the Ontario Energy Board's Leave to Construct (LTC) process, entitled "reducing red tape for more cost-effective, timely energy connections in Ontario"; and

Whereas Grey Highlands supports and wishes to endorse the recommendations put forward by Enbridge Gas in order to expedite the installation of natural gas to rural, remote or underserved communities such as Grey Highlands; now Therefore be it resolved that the Municipality of Grey Highlands petition the Ontario Government to expedite the implementation of the following recommendations:

- i) THAT the Government of Ontario move to modernize the Ontario Energy Board's (OEB) Leave to Construct (LTC) process for smaller pipeline projects in order to bring reliable, affordable energy options to communities, homes and businesses in a more cost-effective and timely manner.**
- ii) THAT the LTC cost threshold be updated from \$2M to \$10M for hydrocarbon lines (by amending Ontario Regulation O.Reg.328/03) while maintaining current requirements and expectations for Indigenous consultation and environmental review for projects greater than \$2M and less than \$10M.**
- iii) THAT these outdated regulations are causing the LTC to apply far more broadly than intended when it was established over 20 years ago due to**

The Municipality of Grey Highlands

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increased regulatory and cost pressures, as well as inflation, virtually all gas pipeline projects are now greater than \$2M rendering the threshold meaningless.

iv) THAT roughly 0.5 KM pipe in urban settings now often exceeds the \$2M threshold.

v) THAT modernizing these outdated regulations would reduce delays and costs for economic development initiatives including transit projects, community expansion projects, housing developments, connections for low carbon fuel blending (e.g., renewable natural gas, hydrogen) as well as residential and business customer connections.

vi) THAT based on OEB's performance standards, this proposal would save approx. 5-7 months of regulatory process which is in addition to the time needed to undertake Indigenous consultation and environmental review and prepare an application to the OEB.

vii) THAT the cost of preparing and having a LTC application heard ranges from approx. ~\$50,000 to ~\$200,000, which is passed on to customers.

viii) THAT while no cost-based threshold exists for electricity lines, there are a range of exemptions ensuring that LTC is only required for significant electricity projects and the proposed changes would help ensure that, consistent with electricity projects, LTC for hydrocarbon lines would only be required for significant projects.

ix) THAT increasing the cost threshold to \$10M would closer align Ontario with other Canadian jurisdictions (e.g., in B.C., these thresholds are \$15M for electricity and \$20M for natural gas); and

That this resolution be circulated to the President of AMO, Colin Best, Premier Doug Ford, the Minister of Energy, Todd Smith, The Minister of Finance, Peter Bethlenfalvy and all regional municipalities requesting support of the proposed changes regarding reducing red tape for more cost-effective, timely energy connections in Ontario.

CARRIED.

If you require anything further, please contact this office.

Sincerely,

Amanda Fines-Vanalstine

Amanda Fines-VanAlstine
Manager of Corporate Services/Deputy-Clerk
Municipality of Grey Highlands

cc. Premier Doug Ford
Minister of Energy Todd Smith,
Minister of Finance, Peter Bethlenfalvy
All municipalities in Ontario

The Municipality of Grey Highlands

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PORT COLBORNE

Legislative Services

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December 12, 2023

Hon. Doug Downey
Attorney General
McMurtry-Scott Bldg 11th Flr, 720 Bay St.
Toronto, ON M7A 2S9

Sent via e-mail: doug.downey@ontario.ca

Dear Honourable Doug Downey:

Re: Town of Plympton-Wyoming – Support for an Amendment to the Legislation Act, 2006 to Include Digital Publications as Acceptable means of Publication

Please be advised that, at its meeting of November 14, 2023 the Council of The Corporation of the City of Port Colborne resolved as follows:

That the correspondence from Town of Plympton-Wyoming in Support of the Township of McKellar regarding Call for an Amendment to the *Legislation Act, 2006* to Include Digital Publications as Acceptable means of Publication, be supported.

A copy of the above noted resolution is enclosed for your reference.

Sincerely,



S. Tufail

Saima Tufail
Acting City Clerk

cc. Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs & Housing
Graydon Smith, Parry Sound-Muskoka MPP
Association of Ontario Municipalities (AMO)
Neil Oliver, CEO and President of Metroland Media Group
All Ontario Municipalities



Hon. Doug Downey
Attorney General
McMurtry-Scott Bldg 11th Flr, 720 Bay St.
Toronto, ON M7A 2S9

October 26th 2023

Sent via e-mail: doug.downey@ontario.ca

Re: Call for an Amendment to the Legislation Act, 2006

Dear Mr. Downey,

Please be advised that at the Regular Council Meeting on October 25th 2023, the Town of Plympton-Wyoming Council passed the following motion, supporting the attached resolution from the Township of McKellar regarding a Call for an Amendment to the Legislation Act, 2006.

Motion 10

Moved by Councillor Kristen Rodrigues

Seconded by Councillor John van Klaveren

That Council support item 'L' of correspondence from the Township of McKellar regarding a Call for an Amendment to the Legislation Act, 2006.

Carried.

If you have any questions regarding the above motion, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone or email at ekwarciak@plympton-wyoming.ca.

Sincerely,

Erin Kwarciak
Clerk
Town of Plympton-Wyoming

cc: Sent via e-mail
Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Bob Bailey, MPP Sarnia-Lambton
The Association of Ontario Municipalities (AMO)
Neil Oliver, CEO & President, Metroland Media Group
All Ontario Municipalities



Township of McKellar

701 Hwy #124, P.O. Box 69, McKellar, Ontario POG 1C0

Phone: (705) 389-2842

Fax: (705) 389-1244

October 19, 2023

Hon. Doug Downey
Attorney General
McMurtry-Scott Bldg 11th Flr, 720 Bay St.
Toronto, ON M7A 2S9

Sent via email: Doug.Downey@ontario.ca

RE: Call for an Amendment to the *Legislation Act, 2006*

Dear Mr. Downey,

At the Regular Meeting of Council held on October 17, 2023, the Council of the Corporation of the Township of McKellar carried the following resolution:

Resolution No. 23-671

Moved by: Councillor Kekkonen

Seconded by: Councillor Zulak

WHEREAS Metroland Media Group has sought bankruptcy protection and will cease the print publication of its weekly community newspapers across Ontario, moving to an online-only model; and

WHEREAS Neil Oliver, Chief Executive Officer and President of Metroland Media Group, said the 71 Metroland community publications will be digital only going forward; and

WHEREAS the *Legislation Act, 2006* provides a definition of “newspaper” which applies to every Ontario Act and Regulation, as in a provision requiring publication, means a document that, (a) **is printed in sheet form**, published at regular intervals of a week or less and circulated to the general public, and (b) consists primarily of news of current events of general interest; (“journal”); and

WHEREAS Ontario Municipalities are required to follow publication and notice requirements for Provincial Acts and Regulations; and

WHEREAS communities such as the West Parry Sound Area cannot comply with publication requirements in Provincial Acts and Regulations as the Parry Sound North Star news publication is no longer being printed in sheet form and there are no other local news publications fitting the definition of “newspaper”; and

WHEREAS some small, rural, Ontario Municipalities may not have the means to bring an application to the Court to ask for directions and approval of an alternate manner of providing notice;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Corporation of the Township of McKellar does hereby request the Provincial government to make an amendment to the *Legislation Act, 2006* to include digital publications as an acceptable means of publication and notice requirements for Provincial Acts and Regulations; and

FURTHER request the support of all Ontario Municipalities; and

FURTHER THAT this resolution be forwarded to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Paul Calandra; Parry Sound-Muskoka MPP, Graydon Smith; The Association of Ontario Municipalities (AMO); CEO and President of Metroland Media Group, Neil Oliver and all Ontario Municipalities.

Carried

Regards,



Karlee Britton
Deputy Clerk
Township of McKellar
deputyclerk@mckellar.ca
(705) 389-2842 x5

cc:

Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Graydon Smith, MPP Parry Sound-Muskoka
The Association of Ontario Municipalities (AMO)
Neil Oliver, CEO & President, Metroland Media Group
All Ontario Municipalities

December 12, 2023

Sent Via Email

Municipalities of Ontario

Re: Amendment to the Occupational Health and Safety Act to Clarify the Definition of "Employer"

The following resolution was passed by Council of the City of Greater Sudbury on December 5, 2023:

CC2023-303: WHEREAS in 2015 the City of Greater Sudbury (the "City") entered into a contract with a contractor experienced in road construction projects to complete a project on Elgin Street in the City's downtown core;

AND WHEREAS the contract provided that the contractor would be the constructor for the project as that term is defined in the Occupational Health and Safety Act (the "Act");

AND WHEREAS an employee of the constructor operating a grader on the project struck and killed a pedestrian;

AND WHEREAS the City was charged with offences under the Act as the constructor and the employer;

AND WHEREAS after being acquitted at trial and on appeal, the Ontario Court of Appeal, in a decision issued on April 23, 2021, found the City to be liable for contraventions of the Construction Regulations as an employer as it employed quality control inspectors to monitor the quality of work on the project from time-to-time;

AND WHEREAS the Supreme Court of Canada, in a decision issued on November 10, 2023, was evenly divided 4-4 on the issue resulting in dismissal of the City's appeal;

AND WHEREAS the consequence of this decision is that municipalities in Ontario, as well as all other owners of property in the province, who wish to undertake construction, are subject to being charged and convicted as an employer for offences in relation to project sites for which they have no control and have, in accordance with the Act, contracted with an entity to assume plenary oversight and authority over the work on such site as the constructor; AND WHEREAS the potential of an owner being charged as an employer as that term is defined in the Act in circumstances where it has engaged a constructor disregards and renders meaningless the owner-constructor provisions contained in the Act and presents an unacceptable level of increased risk and confusion for owners and contractors throughout the province;

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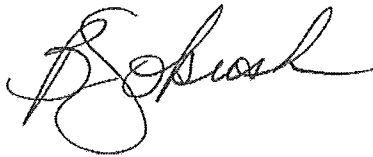
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www.grandsudbury.ca

AND WHEREAS the City believes that the safety of workers is paramount however the safety of workers on construction projects in Ontario is not increased by placing liability on parties that do not have control of and are not responsible for the conduct of the work on such sites;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council for the City of Greater Sudbury requests that the province amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act to clarify the definition of "employer" to exclude owners that have contracted with a constructor for a project;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this motion be provided to the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, the Honourable David Piccini, Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, the Honourable Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, France Gelin, MPP for Nickel Belt, Jamie West, MPP for Sudbury, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities, Ontario's Big City Mayors, Mayors and Regional Chairs of Ontario, Northern Ontario Large Urban Mayors, the Council of Ontario Construction Associations, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and all Ontario municipalities.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brigitte Sobush', written in a cursive style.

Brigitte Sobush
Manager of Clerk's Services/Deputy City Clerk

- c. Members of City Council
Eric Labelle, City Solicitor and Clerk



Staff Report

To: Mayor and Council

From: Sasha Helmkey, Clerk/Director of Legislative Services

Date: December 11, 2023

Subject: Report # LS-032-2023 – Cemetery Transfer/Abandonment Administration & Management Support

Recommendation

Be It Resolved that Council of the Township of Clearview hereby receives Report LS-032-2023 (Cemetery Transfer/Abandonment Administration & Management Support) dated December 11, 2023; and,

Whereas under the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002 (FBCSA), when a cemetery is declared abandoned by a judge of the Superior Court Justice, the local municipality within whose geographic boundaries the land of the cemetery is located, becomes the owner of the cemetery with all the rights and obligations in respect of the cemetery and the assets, trust funds and trust accounts related to it that the previous owner or operator possessed;

And Whereas over the last decade, there has been an increase in the number of churches and local cemetery boards initiating processes to transfer ownership or abandon their owned and operated cemeteries to the local municipality due to such issues as high maintenance costs, inaccuracy of records, lack of financial and human resources to effectively operate and maintain the cemetery, increased regulatory processes regarding training, selling of interment rights, financial operation of the care and maintenance fund, etc.;

And Whereas municipalities experience the same issues and pressures that churches and local boards experience with the operation and maintenance of cemeteries within its jurisdiction, and additional transfers of cemetery lands only compound the burden on municipal taxpayers;

And Whereas cemeteries are important infrastructure where the reasonable costs for interment rights, burials, monument foundations, corner stones and administration charges do not sufficiently support the general operation of cemeteries;

And Whereas the interest earned from the care and maintenance fund(s) of a cemetery do not provide adequate funding to maintain the cemetery with the rising costs of lawn and turf maintenance contracts and monument restoration;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that Council of the Township of Clearview requests that the Province through the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) consider the following to assist municipalities in this growing concern of cemetery transfers:

- Amend the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002 (FBCSA), to have the Province, through the BAO, identified as the default owner and operator of a cemetery when it is abandoned;
- Provide annual funding (based on the number of cemeteries a municipality owns and operates) to municipalities to assist with the maintenance of inactive and active cemeteries;
- Provide free training opportunities for municipalities regarding cemetery administration; and,
- Investigate and support the design of universal cemetery software for use by municipal cemetery operators that can be offered at an affordable cost.

And that this resolution be circulated to the Hon. Todd McCarthy, Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery, Jim Cassimatis, BAO Interim CEO/Registrar, MPP Brian Saunderson and all Ontario municipalities.

Background

Under the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002 (FBCSA), when a cemetery is declared abandoned by a judge of the Superior Court Justice, the local municipality within whose geographic boundaries the land of the cemetery is located, becomes the owner of the cemetery with all the rights and obligations in respect of the cemetery and the assets, trust funds and trust accounts related to it that the previous owner or operator possessed.

Over the last decade there appears to be a trend where cemeteries in Ontario are being transferred, whether through abandonment or a mutually agreed upon transfer, to the care and control of municipalities. This is often seen when there is a breakdown in existing cemetery boards and/or when churches cease operations. For many existing private cemetery boards their board members and volunteers are aging and are unable to assist with the operations and maintenance of the cemetery any longer. Finding new members proves to be difficult for these boards to continue. In addition to aging board members, there are other issues that are contributing to the increase in cemetery transfers:

- high maintenance costs
- inaccuracy of records
- lack of financial and human resources to effectively operate and maintain the cemetery

- increased regulatory processes that require ongoing training for selling of interment rights, and the financial operation of the care and maintenance fund, etc.

Township Owned Cemeteries

The Township of Clearview currently owns and operates nine (9) cemeteries within its geographic boundaries. Out of these nine cemeteries, four (4) are considered active meaning that there are still interment rights to be sold, or burials to take place. Below is a chart outlining these cemeteries and their status:

Cemetery Name	Address	Status
Batteau Hill Cemetery	2670 County Road 124, Duntroon	Inactive
Bethel Union Cemetery	2249 Creemore Avenue, New Lowell	Inactive
Dunedin Union Cemetery	9 Turkeyroost Lane, Dunedin	Active
Duntroon Pioneer Cemetery	2870 County Road 124, Duntroon	Inactive
Lavender Cemetery	827103 Mulmur/Nottawasaga Townline, Creemore	Active
Old Zion Presbyterian Church Cemetery	6130 Highway 26, Sunnidale Corners	Inactive
Second Line Nottawasaga Cemetery	2279 County Road 42, Stayner	Active
Stayner Union Cemetery	7661 Highway 26, Stayner	Active
Zion Presbyterian Church Cemetery	12358 County Road 10, Sunnidale Corners	Inactive

For the Dunedin and Stayner Union Cemetery, the Township looks after the maintenance and burials through a third-party contractor. The maintenance and burials for the Lavender Cemetery are conducted through the Board. For the Second Line Nottawasaga Cemetery all the interment rights have been sold, but there remains one burial to be completed. The cost to maintain an active cemetery is expensive. Although burial costs and the installation of markers, etc. are cost recovery through the purchaser, grounds maintenance is not.

Inactive cemeteries still require consistent grounds maintenance, which includes any monument restoration for health and safety, and record searches for the public register.

Comments and Analysis

When analyzing the number of cemeteries that Clearview Township currently owns and operates, maintenance and administration is a large undertaking. To add any additional cemeteries by way of transfer or abandonment will only compound the issues the Township is already facing. In the past year, the Township has been approached by two separate entities regarding possible cemetery transfers. When a board or cemetery transfers ownership to the municipality, the issues are transferred with it. Municipalities are not immune to the same concerns. It becomes a strain on municipal resources, financially, administratively, and operationally.

Administrative Impact

From an administrative perspective the management of four active cemeteries is both time consuming and complex. No interment is the same, and providing good customer service takes time especially for those making arrangements while also dealing with grief. Administrative tasks include but are not limited to: interment right sales and mapping, burial contracts and scheduling, monument placement, historical record searches, plot and monument staking, fees and charges review, family transfers of interment rights and annual reporting to the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO).

- **Incomplete records**

Often the records accepted by the Township from a dissolved cemetery board or church are incomplete and disorganized. This is no fault of the previous board members, as they are also often operating with limited resources. However, it does make it difficult to manage the cemetery post-transfer when records are sparse. Understanding which plots are occupied and by who is critical to the sound management of a cemetery. Unfortunately, this is not made possible in all cases because of incomplete records. In addition, records received during a transfer usually are maintained under different records management standards and are often organized and named inconsistently. Adaptation to Township records keeping practices takes time.

- **Lack of human resources**

Cemetery management is a highly regulated professional field, with the responsibility of which is often placed on public sector employees who may have limited knowledge of cemeteries in general. With reduced resources within municipalities especially rural ones, the management of cemeteries often becomes a secondary responsibility to another position. There is also a lack of affordable training available for municipal employees who are required to abide by regulations set out by the FBCSA and the BAO.

- **Increased regulatory processes**

Annual reporting requirements of the BAO can be extensive and complex. This includes monitoring the number of interments, the transfers to the Care and Maintenance Fund (C&M), and how the C&M fund can be used. There are also regulations pertaining to maintaining a public register, how sales are to be conducted and strict guidelines on Cemetery By-law approvals, and expansions including the erection of columbaria structures.

- **Inconsistent cemetery regulations**

Cemeteries can have many different regulations related to plot size, number of burials allowed in a given plot, monument size, what types of flowers/shrubs are allowed to be installed near a headstone etc. The transfer of different cemeteries having inconsistent regulations can make it difficult to adapt management practices in order to maintain original cemetery operational standards.

Operational Impact

Similarly, from an operational perspective the grounds maintenance of cemeteries, whether active or inactive, is both time consuming and complex. A key issue when analyzing the maintenance component of cemetery management is the lack of financial resources to support the operation. Cemetery maintenance includes, but is not limited to: grass cutting (whipper snipping around monuments), tree and shrub maintenance, monument and corner stone maintenance, water pipe and washroom monitoring, and general upkeep of cemetery grounds (removal of debris, etc.).

- **High maintenance costs**

As with many services, there are rising costs to contend with. Municipalities have adopted different models to address the maintenance of such, with third party contractors being commonly used or it becomes the responsibility of an internal department such as Parks & Recreation. Regardless the model, the costs have increased significantly over the last decade with equipment purchases/upgrades, insurance requirements for third-party contractors, and the time it takes to cut the grass and whipper snip around monuments. To put it into perspective, the Stayner Union Cemetery with the expansion is 25 acres with monuments to manoeuvre around during ground care. Other considerations for maintenance includes monument restoration and ensuring that they are not deteriorated to the point where they are unsafe. This is important for older cemeteries where restoration hasn't been provided in the past and there are many deteriorating monuments.

- **Cost of cemetery management software**

Cemetery Management Software can help municipalities manage cemetery records, including plot sale contracts, interment rights certificates, and regulatory reporting.

However, these software solutions are often expensive and require a large amount of staff time to implement especially with incomplete data and records. These software solutions range in price from \$5,000 to \$100,000 with annual maintenance costs. This investment in software can be a large budget request and one that would need to be supported from taxation with the limited funds in cemetery general accounts.

- **Inadequate Care and Maintenance funds**

When the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002 (FBCSA) was enacted, it stipulated that a care and maintenance fund for a cemetery shall be established. A cemetery operator is required to make contributions to the fund from the sale of in-ground graves, crypts, tombs, niches, scattering rights and monument installation. The contribution is prescribed under the FBCSA and differs dependant on the interment type. The idea is that the fund (income earned from the fund - interest) pays for maintenance costs after a cemetery has stopped making sales. In reality, this concept does not produce enough funds to maintain a cemetery. Looking at the Stayner Union Cemetery as an example, for the very basics (grass cutting and whipper snipping) the interest from the care and maintenance fund does not provide enough monies to maintain the cemetery for the 7 months it's required. In addition, the care and maintenance fund is also to be utilized for the stabilization, maintenance and security of markers. Cemeteries are not self funding, and maintenance of such is becoming a larger budget concern.

Support Request

Cemetery transfers and abandonments have been an ongoing concern for Clearview Township for many years. When you look at the large geography of the Township there are many cemeteries within the boundaries that have the potential to be transferred. To gauge the concern of other municipalities on this issue, staff addressed it at a Simcoe County Clerks group discussion. Many neighbouring municipalities expressed that they were dealing with the same issues and have also been approached by different external entities on possible transfers.

As result of the discussion, it was agreed that to assist with the real concerns with transfers and abandonments of cemeteries, it's vital that the Province provide assistance to adequately support this infrastructure. Support can be provided in many different forms, with staff making the following recommendations for the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and the BAO:

- Amend the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002 (FBCSA), to have the Province, through the BAO, identified as the default owner and operator of a cemetery when it is abandoned;

- Provide annual funding (based on the number of cemeteries a municipality owns and operates) to municipalities to assist with the maintenance of inactive and active cemeteries;
- Provide free training opportunities for municipalities regarding cemetery administration; and,
- Investigate and support the design of universal cemetery software for use by municipal cemetery operators that can be offered at an affordable cost.

There is not one solution to solve all the issues, but at the very least it's important to identify the concerns and have open and real discussions at the provincial level on what support can be provided.

Clearview's Strategic Plan

The above initiative supports the following strategic pillars:

- Governance

Financial Implications

It is difficult to identify an exact dollar amount that can be attributed to a cemetery transfer/abandonment to the municipality. Every transfer is different and depends on a multitude of factors beginning with the cemetery status (active/inactive), acreage, care and maintenance fund (if any), maintenance of records, etc. What is being recommended by staff by way of support from the province is not meant to erase the costs entirely, but rather, to alleviate the financial burden in some capacity.

Report Appendices

Not applicable.

Approvals

Submitted by:	Sasha HelmKay, B.A., Dipl. M.A., AOMC, Clerk/Director of Legislative Services
Reviewed by:	Krista Pascoe, Deputy Clerk
Financial Implications Reviewed by:	Kelly McDonald, Treasurer
Approved by:	John Ferguson, CAO



CLEARVIEW
TOWNSHIP

Clerk's Department
Township of Clearview
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Phone: 705-428-6230

December 12, 2023

File: C00.2023

Hon. Todd McCarthy
Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery
777 Bay Street, 5th Floor
Toronto ON M5B 2H7

Sent by Email

RE: Cemetery Transfer/Abandonment Administration & Management Support

Please be advised that Council of the Township of Clearview, at its meeting held on December 11, 2023, passed a resolution regarding Cemetery Transfer/Abandonment Administration & Management Support as follows:

Moved by Councillor Walker, Seconded by Councillor Broderick, Whereas under the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002 (FBCSA), when a cemetery is declared abandoned by a judge of the Superior Court Justice, the local municipality within whose geographic boundaries the land of the cemetery is located, becomes the owner of the cemetery with all the rights and obligations in respect of the cemetery and the assets, trust funds and trust accounts related to it that the previous owner or operator possessed;

And Whereas over the last decade, there has been an increase in the number of churches and local cemetery boards initiating processes to transfer ownership or abandon their owned and operated cemeteries to the local municipality due to such issues as high maintenance costs, inaccuracy of records, lack of financial and human resources to effectively operate and maintain the cemetery, increased regulatory processes regarding training, selling of interment rights, financial operation of the care and maintenance fund, etc.;

And Whereas municipalities experience the same issues and pressures that churches and local boards experience with the operation and maintenance of cemeteries within its jurisdiction, and additional transfers of cemetery lands only compound the burden on municipal taxpayers;

And Whereas cemeteries are important infrastructure where the reasonable costs for interment rights, burials, monument foundations, corner stones and administration charges do not sufficiently support the general operation of cemeteries;

And Whereas the interest earned from the care and maintenance fund(s) of a cemetery do not provide adequate funding to maintain the cemetery with the rising costs of lawn and turf maintenance contracts and monument restoration;

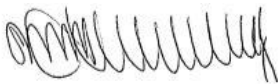
Now Therefore Be It Resolved that Council of the Township of Clearview requests that the Province through the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) consider the following to assist municipalities in this growing concern of cemetery transfers:

- Amend the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002 (FBCSA), to have the Province, through the BAO, identified as the default owner and operator of a cemetery when it is abandoned;
- Provide annual funding (based on the number of cemeteries a municipality owns and operates) to municipalities to assist with the maintenance of inactive and active cemeteries; Page 6 of 7
- Provide free training opportunities for municipalities regarding cemetery administration; and,
- Investigate and support the design of universal cemetery software for use by municipal cemetery operators that can be offered at an affordable cost.

And that this resolution be circulated to the Hon. Todd McCarthy, Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery, Jim Cassimatis, BAO Interim CEO/Registrar, MPP Brian Saunderson and all Ontario municipalities. Motion Carried.

For reference, please find attached the Staff Report LS-032-2023 that provides background for the above resolution. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Regards,



Sasha HelmKay-Playter, B.A., Dipl. M.A., AOMC
Clerk/Director of Legislative Services

cc: Jim Cassimatis, BAO Interim CEO/Registrar
MPP Simcoe Grey, Brian Saunderson
Ontario Municipalities