



**Corporation of the Town of Ingersoll
Council Agenda
Special Meeting of Council
Town Centre, Council Chambers
Tuesday, February 19, 2019, 6:00 p.m.**

Call to Order

Disclosures of Pecuniary Interest

Delegation to Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

- 1) Appointment of Members to Attend Delegation at UTRCA in Support of St. Mary's and Perth South Delegation
 - a) [St Marys Delegation letter to UTRCA Feb 21, 2017.pdf](#)
 - b) [Perth South Delegation letter to UTRCA Feb 21 2017.pdf](#)

Upcoming Council Meetings

Regular Meeting of Council
Monday, March 4, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Town Centre, Council Chambers

Regular Meeting of Council
Monday, April 8, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Town Centre, Council Chambers

Council Committee Meetings

Please check the events calendar at www.ingersoll.ca in the event of changes to Committee meeting dates and times

Harvest Festival
4th Wednesday of the Month
Cheese and Agricultural Museum
6:30 p.m.

Safe Cycling Committee
2nd Thursday of the Month
Town Centre, JC Herbert Room
6.30pm

Ingersoll BIA
2nd Tuesday of the Month
Town Centre, JC Herbert Room
6:30 p.m.

Recreational Trails Committee
3rd Wednesday of the Month
Town Centre, JC Herbert Room
6:30 p.m.

Transportation Committee

4th Wednesday of Every Other Month
Town Centre, Engineering Board Room
10:00 a.m.

Museum Committee

3rd Thursday of the Month
Cheese Museum
6:30 p.m.

Adjournment



SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

February 17, 2017

Board of Directors

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
1424 Clarke Road, London ON
N5V 5B9

RE: 2017 UTRCA Budget Concerns

Members of the Board,

At their February 17, 2017 regular meeting, Town of St. Marys Council received a presentation from Mr. Ian Wilcox, General Manager, Upper Thames River Conservation Authority, in regards the Authority's 2017 draft budget. Council also received and reviewed correspondence from the Township of Perth South which expresses the Township's concerns with the 2017 budget tabled by the Authority.

After consideration of both of these matters Council passed the following resolution:

Moved by: Councillor Craigmile
Seconded by: Councillor Van Galen

THAT the correspondence from the Township of Perth South be received; and

THAT Council for the Town of St. Marys supports the concerns with the UTRCA budget raised by Perth South; and

THAT the Town of St. Marys submits a letter in support of the Township of Perth South concerns to be used during their delegation to the UTRCA Board of Directors.

CARRIED

Much like the Township of Perth South, the Town of St. Marys is a small municipality located in rural Southwestern Ontario with financial resources commensurate to our size. The 2017 municipal budget has been a particular challenge for the Town because our levy has been influenced significantly by uncontrollable increases. These are represented by increases in external transfers to other agencies, increases to debt financing

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requirements, and lost tax revenue as a result of a local food plant closure in November 2016.

It is this plant closure, and the loss of over 200 local jobs, that is at the forefront of our minds. The lost tax revenue for the Town represents a budget challenge that we now must manage. More importantly, we have turned our minds to the financial challenges faced by the residents of St. Marys who have lost their jobs due to this closure. We tried to respect this challenge through our budget process by ensuring that our municipal levy remains responsible and affordable. To that end, we tasked staff with finding savings in our budget to the point where the Town's controllable costs have been reduced compared to 2016. To achieve this budget reduction, we have had to make difficult sacrifices like reducing staff hours, flat-lining services and denying budget increases to local social services providers. The result is that our municipal levy sits at 2.4% and is only influenced by the uncontrollable increases which were discussed above.

The Town of St. Marys is not unique when compared to the other municipalities within the Authority's watershed. The Village of Thamesford has recently experienced an announced plant closure. We sympathize with the Council of the Township of Zorra as they face a similar challenge to St. Marys of attempting maintain a reasonable tax levy in the face of lost taxation revenue, while also respecting the ability of their residents to afford any increase after losing jobs.

Even the City of London, who is the largest contributor to the Authority's budget, is not immune to the current economic climate. Statistics Canada recently reported that the unemployment rate for the London area hit 7% in December 2016 which is higher than that of its comparators. Given the economic climate within the Authority's watershed, Town of St. Marys Council does not find the 10.5% overall increase tabled in the Authority's 2017 Budget to be responsible at this time. Specifically, the 8.55% levy increase for the Town of St. Marys is a contributing factor to our uncontrollable increases.

We are encouraged to see that the Authority has recognized an issue with the turnaround time for reviews of permits and applications, and we are pleased to know that the Authority is taking steps to improve its internal processes. We believe that these process changes will help to improve the delivery of the Authority's core services. However, we would encourage the Authority to review its 2017 budget to determine if there are programs and services delivered by the Authority that are outside of its core services that could be reduced to fund the proposed improvements to internal process. As above, we have had to make sacrifices within our Town budget to maintain a reasonable levy increase for our residents, and we feel that similar sacrifices need to be made by the Authority. We do not believe it to be appropriate for the municipal levy to fund the Authority's proposed increases until all other cost reduction measures have been taken.

In closing, Town of St. Marys Council requests that the Board reconsider the current draft of the 2017 Upper Thames River Conservation Authority budget and work towards

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reducing the increases to the municipal levy that will be felt by 10 of the 11 member municipalities.

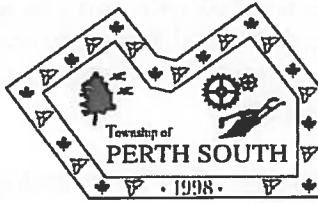
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Al Strathdee", is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Al Strathdee
Mayor

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Corporation of the Township of Perth South

3191 Road 122
St. Pauls, ON N0K 1V0
Telephone 519-271-0619
Fax 519-271-0647
lscott@perthsouth.ca

February 6, 2017

Board of Directors
Upper Thames River Conservation Area
1424 Clarke Road
London, ON N5V 5B9

Re: 2017 Budget Comments

At the January 10, 2017 Perth South Council meeting, Ian Wilcox, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer, appeared as a delegation to present the draft 2017 Budget for Upper Thames River Conservation Area (UTRCA). Our municipal representative Tony Jackson was also in attendance. At that meeting Council had a lengthy conversation with Ian Wilcox in regards to details contained in the budget. This letter is intended to share the comments and concerns raised by Perth South Council with the UTRCA Board of Directors.

Perth South is a rural municipality with a population of less than 4,000 located in the southern portion of Perth County. The Township is primarily agricultural farmland with no urban area. Like many municipalities, Perth South faces a number of financial challenges that includes declining population, little growth, and a limited ability to generate additional revenues. However, the biggest challenge has been the reduction in the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) grant allocations.

The OMPF is the Province's main grant program which provides municipalities with unconditional grant funding. In 2012 the grant program was redesigned and as a result Perth South has experienced significant reductions in grant funding. Since 2012 Perth South's OMPF grant has been reduced by \$1,178,600, an amount equal to \$738.47 per household. There has been no additional funding or revenue streams to offset the grant reduction. These grant reductions will continue in the future and will result in an additional \$1 million dollar reduction. While actual increase proposed by UTRCA is not large is not large, it is in the context of our budget as a 1% levy increase is approximately \$30,000.

Given the financial pressures we are faced with, we are left to determine what services we are going to cut in order to afford the additional services proposed by the UTRCA Board. Are the UTRCA increases so important that they warrant service reduction levels in other Perth South municipal services?

Some of the additional concerns discussed at the meeting were as follows:

- Significant increases beginning in 2017 and continuing in future years. Is the conservation authority trying to do too much in light of the financial pressures faced by municipalities? UTRCA staff may be too aggressive given the financial constraints of municipalities. How does UTRCA ensure that they are spending within their means? Perth South is constantly forced to look at service cuts as a result of reduced grant funding and lack of growth to support new services. Does UTRCA follow the same program and funding review process? In these times of financial constraint it is recommended that UTRCA do an in depth review of current programs to assess viability before adding further programs and staffing to future budgets.
- Recognition that the phosphorus problem in the Thames River is not just caused by agricultural activities. The use of fertilizers in towns and cities along with sewage by-passes are a significant contribution to the problem and efforts should be made to address this issue, and not just with the agricultural landowners.
- The Glengowan dam project has been an outstanding project for a number of years. Investments have been made in the purchase of lands for this project, and given that this project appears to be no longer viable Perth South Council would strongly recommend that the Board close off this file and dispose of any surplus lands.
- Information provided in the budget indicates that there has been an increase in the volume of applications related to environmental planning and regulation activities. As a result of these increases delays have been experienced, and some municipalities have lobbied the Board to address these delays. UTRCA staff has indicated that two additional staff members are required to address these delays. As a result, the budget currently includes the cost of two new staff members, one funded through government contract funding and the other funded through the general levy. Since not all member municipalities have experienced the same increases, those who have, should be the ones paying the additional cost of the new staff person. Is this an opportunity for UTRCA to review and potentially implement a more robust fee for service model for these additional service requirements?

In addition, there is concern that with one position through grant funding, future budgets will further increase when funding is eliminated. While it is commendable that grant funding is utilized for various initiations of various programs in initiatives, there is concern regarding the financial impact when the grant funding has ended. Just because there is a grant available doesn't mean it needs to be utilized.

- Municipal allocation – Our farmland values have increased significantly while our population continues to decrease.
- As a municipality we understand the difficulty in funding legislated responsibilities, but we do so within our spending limits. Please understand that the municipalities in the UTRCA watershed are quite different and the financial ability of larger municipalities may vary greatly from the smaller ones. Just because you have authority to do something doesn't mean that you should do it or that you have to do it.

We would like to thank Ian for his attendance at the Council meeting to present the 2017 budget and listen to the concerns raised by our council. We also wish to express our thanks and appreciation to our municipal representative, Tony Jackson, for his continued service and efforts on our behalf. We understand the difficulty of balancing needs over financial capability and appreciate the UTRCA's Board of Directors consideration and review of concerns reviewed above.

Regards,



Mayor Robert Wilhelm

Cc: UTRCA Municipal Members (City of London, Municipality of Middlesex Centre, Municipality of Thames Centre, Township of Lucan-Biddulph, Township of Perth East, Town of St. Marys, Municipality of South Huron, City of Stratford, Municipality of West Perth, Township of Blandford-Blenheim, Township of East Zorra-Tavistock, Town of Ingersoll, Township of Norwich, Township of South-West Oxford, City of Woodstock, Township of Zorra)

Tony Jackson, UTRCA Board Representative