

Contingent on Timing ? Town works to keep construction on track

In the world of municipal politics timing can be everything when it comes to completing projects with government grants that are contingent on restrictive schedules. Consequently, Shelburne Town Staff and Council are working hard to keep construction projects on schedule to fulfill grant requirements from the Provincial government. But who is holding them up? Well?the Provincial government ? specifically the MOE (Ministry of Environment) who seem to be back logged with approvals for construction projects that need to get underway during the always limited ?good weather? months.

Council received a report from Jerry Haan of the engineering firm WSP regarding the west side fire flow and infiltration reconstruction project. According to Haan, in April of 2015, the company started to design for approval and tendered in late June, closing July 7th with only two bids. ?It was not a good show,? said Haan, despite extra promotional efforts by WSP to entice bidders. He told Council, ?Both companies bidding on the job were well known to WSP and came with good references.? Although Haan said the ?unit prices were higher than we hoped,? the bids came in under the original estimates of around \$3.8 million. Haan continued to express concern about some outstanding approvals at the MOE, saying that WSP had made a request for an ?expedited review? of the application. He acknowledged that many communities were experiencing the same issues and that there would be a ?large pile? of expedited review requests at the MOE. Haan and Council worked out a plan to switch the order of jobs under the construction contract in order to ensure that the most be made of the good weather and that the project comes to completion by the December 2016 grant deadline stipulations.

Councillor Randy Chambers asked Haan what requirements or additional costs might come back from the MOE when the application was finally reviewed. Haan responded that it was possible that the MOE could disagree with some design elements, or they could ask for storm water management. Councillor Chambers commented that it was ?hard to take advantage of time sensitive grants without MOE approvals? coming in on time.

Haan recommended delaying work on Susan Street until 2016 and beginning work on Cedar Street in 2015 to alleviate some of the issues with approval delays, which could even help the contractors with scheduling. Haan and Town CAO John Telfer will be negotiating with the contractors on July 14th.

Council made the motion to receive the July 8th report from WSP on the west side fire flow and infiltration reconstruction project and to award the construction contract to Moorefield Excavating at a cost of \$3,526,756.35 ?provided that the work schedule be amended to provide that Cedar Street and intersection works at Susan Street and Owen Sound Street be completed in 2015 and the balance of the contract work not be completed until MOE compliance approval has been obtained.?

Further, Council moved that ?Avertex be authorized to proceed with the water main on Owen Sound Street between Susan and O'Flynn using a directional drilling method in the amount of \$289,073.

By Marni Walsh