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County approves using reserves for courthouse repairs

Written By JAMES MATTHEWS

Dufferin council will dip into a reserve fund to cover extra costs required to repair the county's courthouse on Zina Street in Orangeville.

Councillor Bob Currie, Amaranth's mayor, said during a recent council meeting the price tag associated with transporting chimney bricks from overseas is one of the reasons for the cost over-run. The project requires an additional $70,795. Initially, the tender awarded to Clifford Restoration was pegged at $1,040,700.

County council agreed to use money from its Courthouse Capital Reserve.

?The bricks aren't here from Europe,? said Coun. Currie. ?And we're 70K short of the tender.?

Work includes the design and construction to replace Courthouse chimneys, its slate roof repair, select architectural metal and wood restoration, and window repaint work. With design completed in 2019, construction is scheduled to start this year.

?It was an item in last year's budget,? said Coun. Currie. ?It wasn't done. Hopefully it will be done this year. But the bricks have to get from Europe over to Dufferin County.?

The COVID-19 worldwide pandemic has delayed the project, which was planned before the health crisis.

Custom masonry to match the style and appearance of the existing Courthouse envelope was pre-ordered last year, well before the social distancing and social lockdowns that came into effect in March 2020.

The county requires contractors conform to best practices related to COVID-19 such as physical distancing. That may result in changes in scheduling and project sequencing. Supply chains have been and will continue to feel impacts of the pandemic.

It's anticipated the bricks will be delivered in July.

?I feel it should be the chimneys that are completed first, before we do the roof,? Coun. Currie said. ?When the chimneys, what's there now, are dismantled ? if a few bricks fall on the roof and that's specialized material, you're going to have to do the roof over again.?