

Tudor and Cashel proposed Class 6B roads winter maintenance update]

By Mike Riley

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At their meetings on April 4, Tudor and Cashel council received an update on their proposed Class 6B roads winter maintenance and thoroughly discussed the issue. After discussing it, they decided to put a placeholder amount for this winter service, should they decide to proceed with it of \$60,000, which would be taken from General Reserves in the first year, and would be covered by property assessment increases and the subsequent higher tax revenues during subsequent years.

At their council meeting at 1 p.m., council got an update on the inaugural Class 6B roads Ad Hoc committee meeting on March 9. Mayor Dave Hederson, Councillor Jerry Chadwick, Garland Burkitt, David MacDonald, Jeff Knox and Patrice Schad were present, while staff was represented by clerk and treasurer Nancy Carrol and roads superintendent Glenn Hagerman.

The committee discussed their mandate and expectations as well as the potential benefits and potential costs of changing the level of service to these now seasonally maintained roads. They also talked about the inequality of services provided throughout Tudor and Cashel due to the classification. Safety concerns and the expectation of upgrades to these roads were pointed out with the change in classification. For next steps, they decided to clarify, the actual kilometres of the Class 6B roads, recommend to council that this be considered in budget discussions, and that a public consultation be had on this matter, with a letter being sent out to residents in early May and an in-person session being held on June 15.

Overall, the committee made two recommendations; to make a contingency in the 2023 budget to include the cost of winter maintenance on Class 6B roads in the event changes are made to the minimum maintenance standards for the township, and that there be a public consultation with a letter sent to all stakeholders of the township letting them know of the potential changes and asking for community feedback.

Within Tudor and Cashel Township, there are 5.8 kilometres of seasonal roads that do not get winter maintenance, and were built to reflect this intended use. They are classified as class 6B roads, as per bylaw 2013-31. Additionally, with the COVID-19 pandemic and its resulting restrictions, including working from home, many previously seasonal residents of Tudor and Cashel decided to move here and make the area their permanent residence, and consequently require this type of winter maintenance that they did not need before. These roads are South Steenburg Lake Road, Moores Lane, North Jordan Lake Road and East Road.

Pursuant to the recommendations made by the Class 6B roads Ad Hoc committee, council discussed this issue during their draft budget discussions at a special committee meeting of the whole for their budget talks at 9 a.m. on April 4.

At this meeting, Hederson asked Carrol to put a placeholder, a contingency fund into the 2023 budget in case council puts a policy in place to provide that winter maintenance to the township's Class 6B roads.

Hederson suggested that for the first year, ?a transition year? he called it, that the expenses be taken from General Reserves, and that that one year of expenses will be covered by the increase in assessed values the following year.

?And then it's been absorbed, the assessed increase comes through, the mill rate applies and we take out the allocation from Reserves in the second year,? he says.

Council agreed with the rationale behind Hederson's suggestions on funding the work on the Class 6B roads during the first year, with those costs being at least partially if not fully covered in subsequent years by the coming assessment increases and the higher tax revenues.

Carrol told council that they would have to pass a resolution when they pass the budget that the costs incurred tendering for the

winter maintenance on the Class 6B roads will be covered through reserves.

Ultimately, council decided to go with a \$60,000 contingency for the winter maintenance versus the \$30,000 that had been initially in the draft budget for the coming 2023/2024 winter season.