

**TOWNSHIP OF WOOLWICH
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES**

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2024

7:00 PM

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS – HYBRID WITH YOUTUBE LIVESTREAM
24 CHURCH STREET WEST, ELMIRA**

Present from Council: Mayor Shantz
Councillor Bryant
Councillor Burgess
Councillor Cadeau (Chairperson)
Councillor Grant
Councillor Schwindt

Present from Staff: David Brenneman, Chief Administrative Officer
Jeff Smith, Director of Corporate Services/Clerk
Deanne Friess, Director of Development Services*
Jared Puppe, Director of Infrastructure Services
Ann McArthur, Director of Recreation and Community Services
Colm Lynn, Director of Finance/Treasurer
Teresa Armstrong, Manager of Revenue/Tax Collector
Alex Smyth, Deputy Clerk
Derek Hughes, Economic Development and Tourism Officer
Lori Fox, Manager of Development Engineering
Tanya Bettridge, Council and Committee Support Specialist
Meet Patel, IT HelpDesk/Support Representative
** indicates remote participation*

Public Resolution to Move into Closed Session (5:30 P.M.)

Moved by Councillor Schwindt
Seconded by Councillor Grant

That the Council of the Township of Woolwich convenes in closed session on Tuesday, December 3, 2024 at 5:15 p.m. in accordance with section 239 (2) and (3.1) of the Municipal Act, 2001, for the purposes of considering the following:

- a. personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees (Library Committee Nomination);
- b. litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals, affecting the municipality or local board, and a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the municipality or local board (Legal Matter);
- c. a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipality or local board (Property Matter);
- d. educating or training the members. (Quarterly Report and Budget Training Matter); and
- e. litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals, affecting the municipality or local board, and advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose (Legal Matter).

...Carried

Public Resolution to Reconvene in Open Session (7:00 P.M.)

Moved by Councillor Grant

Seconded by Councillor Bryant

That Council reconvenes in open session.

...Carried

Land Acknowledgement

Chair Cadeau read a land acknowledgement.

Disclosures of Pecuniary Interest

None.

Items to Come Forward from Closed Session

Moved by Councillor Grant

Seconded by Mayor Shantz

That the Council of the Township of Woolwich, considering Report C33-2024 respecting Regional Municipality of Waterloo Library Committee Nomination, nominate Len Griffiths as the Township of Woolwich's Community Representative to the Library Committee until the expiration of the term of the Council that appointed them, or until successors are appointed, as long as they continue to be a qualified member of the Committee.

...Carried

Public Meetings

None.

Presentations**Downtown Elmira BIA 2025 Budget - Request for Funding**

Downtown Elmira BIA Board Member Dana Costello made a presentation to Council which highlighted:

- BIA Board Membership and Staff
- 2024 Funding Streams Opened
- Façade Improvement Recipients
- CIP Budget versus Disbursement of Funds
- 2025 Budget Committed and Requested

Council discussed the façade improvement program participation by local businesses.

Moved by Councillor Burgess

Seconded by Councillor Grant

That the Council of the Township of Woolwich, considering a Downtown Elmira BIA 2025 Budget - Request for Funding presentation direct staff to incorporate the following amounts in the 2025 budget for the Elmira BIA, subject to final approval during budget deliberations:

1. \$4,000 for the Community Improvement Plan; and

Document Number: 128523

2. \$13,000 for Downtown Greening.

...Carried

Delegations

Request for Tax Relief

Delegates Sasmitaa Nadarajah and Kowsala Nadarajah of Elmira ESSO made a request to Council seeking relief from outstanding taxes due to the negative impact that the COVID-19 pandemic and road construction had on their business, noting the construction at one point blocked all access points. Ms. Nadarajah provided a timeline of how hard they have worked to build and rebuild their business. The delegates provided examples of how they serve the community and noted they believed a similar tax relief request being granted to the previous owner of the business due to construction in 1991. The delegates requested waiver of the taxes assessed during the time of construction, and related penalties and fees.

Council discussed other avenues for reimbursement, such as through the Region of Waterloo since the road construction was a regional project, and how long the road construction affected the business. In response to Council's inquiry, the delegate noted that they received some funds through the Region but that it was not enough, that the construction continued for approximately 8 months, and the outstanding taxes are approximately \$11,000, plus penalties/fees. In response to Council's inquiry, staff clarified that the payments received for taxes are applied to the penalties and interest first, then the principal amount, noting that since 2022 approximately \$15,000 in payments have been received, but \$11,000 of that has gone to penalty/interest.

In response to Council's inquiry, the delegates reported the reduction in daily customers during the time of construction.

Council directed staff to meet with the delegates and examine the time period of construction and bring tax and penalty information back to Council.

Consent Items

Moved by Councillor Grant
Seconded by Councillor Bryant

That the following consent items be received approved and received for information:

Items for Approval

DS35-2024: Communication Tower, 5511 Crowsfoot Rd, West Montrose

That the Council of the Township of Woolwich, receive Report DS 35-2024 respecting Communication Tower, 5511 Crowsfoot Rd, West Montrose for information purposes.

Items for Information and Public Notice

- Notice of Hearing - December 9, 2024

...Carried

Items Pulled From the Information Package

None.

Document Number: 128523

Staff Reports and MemosQuarterly Report - 2024 - 3rd Quarter

Council discussed the Enova Dividend and indicated that in the future, they would like to see it allocated to reserves instead of the operating budget.

Moved by Councillor Grant

Seconded by Councillor Burgess

That the Council of the Township of Woolwich, considering the Quarterly Report - 2024 - 3rd Quarter, direct staff to transfer the \$337,994 Enova Dividend surplus for 2024 to the operating contingency reserve.

...Carried

A08-2024: Economic Development and Tourism Initiatives Update

Council discussed the process for being recognized by the awards program and the planned signage for St. Jacobs.

Moved by Councillor Grant

Seconded by Councillor Schwindt

That the Council of the Township of Woolwich, considering Report A08-2024 respecting Economic Development and Tourism Initiatives Update:

1. Append the St. Jacobs Brand Audit and Directional Wayfinding Strategy to the Municipal Sign Policy to approve the Timber concept as approved signs for the St. Jacobs area;
2. Authorize the Mayor and Clerk to sign the grant funding agreement with RTO4; and
3. Approve a \$5,000 contribution from the Municipal Accommodation Tax Reserve Fund.

...Carried

C21-2024: Appointment By-law

Moved by Councillor Grant

Seconded by Councillor Bryant

That the Council of the Township of Woolwich, considering Report C21-2024 respecting an Appointment By-law:

1. Approve the Appointment By-law as attached to this report; and
2. Approve the Amending and Repealing By-law to delegate authority of issuing lottery licences and repeal previous staff appointments as attached to this report.

...Carried

DS39-2024: Drainage By-law

Council discussed sump pumps and confirmed that the proposed by-law addresses those devices and the situations the by-law is designed to address/prevent.

In response to Council's inquiry, staff confirmed that new development drainage issues are generally dealt with via lot and block agreements, whereas this proposed Drainage By-law

addresses common, smaller drainage issues, and helps to bring all properties under the same standards for drainage. Staff also confirmed types of situations that the proposed by-law addresses that the Drainage Act does not.

Council discussed the availability of staff time in writing and enforcing the by-law, frequency of complaints, and what departments are responding to those complaints.

Moved by Councillor Bryant
Seconded by Mayor Shantz

That the Council of the Township of Woolwich, considering Report DS39-2024 respecting Drainage By-law, direct staff to develop a Drainage By-law to be presented to Council for review and acceptance.

...Defeated

Moved by Councillor Grant
Seconded by Mayor Shantz

That the Council of the Township of Woolwich, considering Report DS39-2024 respecting Drainage By-law, direct staff to create a drainage information package for residents in lieu of a formal by-law.

...Carried

F16-2024: LTFF – 2024 Finance Policy Update

Council discussed the inclusion of qualitative guidelines for investments, such as ensuring ethical or Canadian investments. In response to Council's inquiry, staff explained that it can be difficult to navigate those kinds of considerations, as it could result in accepting a lower rate of return. In response to Council's inquiry, staff confirmed internal and external financing are included in the debt calculations, interest rates on internal debt, and the standard practices for municipalities in terms of debt.

Moved by Councillor Bryant
Seconded by Councillor Burgess

That the Council of the Township of Woolwich, considering Report F16-2024 respecting LTFF - 2024 Finance Policy Update approve:

1. the Reimbursement of Personal Vehicles (Mileage) Policy outlined in Attachment 1;
2. the Debt Management Policy outlined in Attachment 2; and
3. the updated Township Investment Policy outlined in Attachment 3.

...Carried

F17-2024: Property Tax Exemption for Affordable Housing

Council confirmed if the property was no longer designated as affordable housing, that it would no longer be tax exempt. In response to Council's inquiry, staff confirmed that the target for this exemption would be not-for-profit and cooperative affordable housing properties. Council discussed offering a tax reduction rather than a full exemption.

Moved by Councillor Grant

Seconded by Mayor Shantz

That the Council of the Township of Woolwich, considering Report F17-2024 respecting Property Tax Exemption for Affordable Housing:

1. Support participation in the Region of Waterloo’s property tax exemption program for Roll number 30-29-010-001-25000-0000 by providing a property tax exemption for the Township’s portion of the levy for a period of 20 years starting in 2025; and
2. Adopt the attached By-law to provide Property Tax Exemption for Roll Number 30-29-010-001-25000-0000.

Council voted on the motion but the Chair ruled that the result was unclear and requested members vote again. Before voting again, the chair recognized a motion to defer.

Moved by Councillor Schwindt
Seconded by Councillor Bryant

That the Council of the Township of Woolwich, defer considering Report F17-2024 respecting Property Tax Exemption for Affordable Housing until the December 17, 2024 Council meeting.

...Carried

Other Business

Council Reports/Updates

None.

Outstanding Activity List as of Thursday, November 28, 2024

None.

Notice of Motion

None.

Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Bryant
Seconded by Councillor Burgess

That the meeting adjourns.

...Carried

Signature on File
Sandy Shantz, Mayor

Signature on File
Jeff Smith, Clerk