

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

TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 2025

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
Councillor Grant
Councillor Schwindt (Chairperson)

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
Richard Petherick, Deputy Director of Finance/Treasurer*
Kurtis Wells, Economic Development and Tourism Officer
Anna Harrison, Climate Action & Sustainability Coordinator
Alex Smyth, Deputy Clerk
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 Bryant
Seconded by Councillor Cadeau

- a. personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees (Staffing Matter);
- b. labour relations or employee negotiations (Staffing Matter);
- c. advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose (Procedural By-law Legal Matter); and
- d. educating or training the members (2025 Council Training and Development Plan).

...Carried

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

Moved by Councillor Grant
Seconded by Councillor Cadeau

That Council reconvenes in open session.

...Carried

Land Acknowledgement

Chair Schwindt read a land acknowledgement.

Disclosures of Pecuniary Interest

Councillor Schwindt declared a pecuniary interest for Item 8.1 Reducing Site Alteration Fees: A Path to Sustainable Land Use.

Items to Come Forward from Closed Session

None.

Public Meetings

None.

Presentations

None.

Delegations

Councillor Schwindt passed the Chair to Mayor Shantz and left the meeting.

Reducing Site Alteration Fees: A Path to Sustainable Land Use

Delegate Connor Davis of XS Soil Solutions presented to Council a request for a reduction in the Environmental Impact Fee (EIF) for their proposed site alteration project at 1470 Cedar Spring Road.

In response to Council's inquiry, staff described the size and scope of a project that would elevate its category to commercial and therefore trigger Council approval for the site alteration. Council discussed soil costs incurred by the Township including haulage and disposal, how site alteration and EIFs are calculated, how the fees compare with other municipalities, and the importance of land rehabilitation.

Moved by Councillor Bryant
Seconded by Councillor Grant

That the Council of the Township of Woolwich, respecting the delegation from Connor Davis of XS Soil Solutions, titled Reducing Site Alteration Fees: A Path to Sustainable Land Use, direct staff to prepare a report for council regarding the proposed fee reduction and site alteration.

...Carried

Councillor Schwindt returned to the meeting and resumed the Chair.

Notice of Motion - Rural School Zone Speed Limits

Delegate Cheryl Nyusa expressed concerns about the speed limit reduction on Lobsinger Line, citing examples of road rage and aggressive driving/passing, lack of data to support the reduction, and that the school's students are driven every day and therefore do not pose any pedestrian safety concerns. Ms. Nyusa requested confirmation of where speed camera fines revenues are directed, that Councils revisit the speed limit reduction based on data and

consider time of day reductions with use of flashing lights, and to disable all speed cameras in the Region.

Delegate Randy Spruyt expressed his objection to the Region of Waterloo's 40 km/hr speed zone and speed camera installation on Lobsinger Line, citing a lack of supporting statistical data, safety concerns that the 40 km/h limit creates, alternative solutions not being explored, perceived conflict of interest for the Region in terms of blanket implementation and future revenues, and the lack of direct communication with residents.

Delegate Gary Bensler spoke to Council, expressing similar concerns as the delegates prior, requesting that while safety is important, it must be reasonable, effective, and not create other issues. Mr. Bensler also expressed concern regarding the lack of direct communication, and asked Council to support a more reasonable school zone with flashing lights during school hours.

Mayor Shantz explained the conversations that are happening at the regional level on the issue of speed limits especially as the needs differ between urban and rural communities.

Council invited unregistered delegates to speak.

Unregistered Delegate Frank Kamensky cited concerns about the inconsistency of speed limits across the Region especially in school zones and asked Council to advocate for more consistency.

In response to Council's inquiry, staff confirmed that there has not been a request from the Township to Waterloo Regional Police in terms of pattern observation or increase in patrol of the new speed limit areas. Council discussed how the Region distributes revenues from automated speed enforcement. Council discussed soliciting feedback from neighbouring municipalities, and the affected schools, and a blanket versus zone-specific approach to policy.

Moved by Councillor Burgess
Seconded by Councillor Cadeau

WHEREAS Woolwich Township understands and appreciates the importance of implementing road and public safety initiatives in rural areas near schools that protect the public; and

WHEREAS the Region of Waterloo has instituted various road safety measures to improve safety in school zones in the Cities, and has begun instituting the same measures in Rural areas by decreasing speed limits from 80km/h to 40 km/h and installing speed cameras on Lobsinger Line near King Alfred Academy and Northfield Drive near Balsam Grove Parochial School; and

WHEREAS solutions that improve safety on urban streets are not always appropriate for rural roads, and may in fact be counterproductive and cause community frustration; and

WHEREAS Woolwich Township has 27 school zones in rural, small settlement and urban areas which need to be considered with their own unique characteristics;

NOW THEREFORE be it resolved that the Council of the Township of Woolwich:

1. supports rural solutions in rural areas, which includes lowering speed limits in school zones from 80km/h to 60km/h, not the current 40km/h on Lobsinger Line near King Alfred Academy and Northfield Drive near Balsam Grove Parochial School;
2. supports investigating the installation of flashing lights in school zones that operate during school hours instead of active speed cameras;

3. supports the Mayor's efforts to advocate for a rural speed zone strategy in conjunction with the Townships at Regional Council; and
4. directs staff to forward this resolution to the Councils of the Region of Waterloo and the Townships of Wilmot, Wellesley and North Dumfries.

...Carried

A03-2025: Municipal Accommodation Tax Administration Policy and Allocation of Funding

Following the presentation of the staff report, Council discussed the annual revenue that the Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) brings to the Township, the inclusion of Heritage as an area of eligibility which staff clarified could be considered within the Arts & Culture category, and staff reporting requirements for requests granted under delegated authority.

Delegate Isabel Cisterna stressed the importance of arts and culture in the community and of diversity in a globalized world, advocating for the promotion of local events and culture, and the role of Neruda Arts festivals in local tourism and economic and heritage sustainability.

Council expressed their appreciation for Ms. Cisterna and the work she does for arts, culture, and community.

Delegate Dan Vandermolten of the St. Jacobs Business Improvement Area (BIA) expressed appreciation on behalf of the BIA for Council and staff's efforts in getting a strategy for MAT, but expressed concern that the work and research the BIA needs to undertake requires support for staffing, and asked Council to consider this a one-time request to help cover physical work associated with the proposed projects and not a precedent-setting element of the MAT program.

Council expressed their appreciation to the BIA, its members and staff for the work they do. Council discussed their desired reporting frequency.

Moved by Councillor Cadeau
Seconded by Councillor Grant

That the Council of the Township of Woolwich, considering Report A03-2025 respecting Municipal Accommodation Tax Administration Policy and Allocation of Funding:

1. Approve the Municipal Accommodation Tax Administration Policy;
2. Bring forward an amending by-law to delegate authority to the Senior Management Team to review and approve isolated Municipal Accommodation Tax fund requests under \$10,000 that are outside the scope of the annual allocation of funding;
3. Approve "The Woolwich Way – Destination Development Fund," and "The Woolwich Way – Marketing Material Fund";
4. Bring forward an amending by-law to delegate authority to the Senior Management Team to approve annual funding stream rewards on behalf of Mayor and Council; and
5. Approve allocation of funding for 2025.

...Carried

Consent Items

Moved by Councillor Grant
Seconded by Councillor Burgess

That the following consent items be received for information:

Items for Approval

None.

Items for Information and Public Notice

- Municipal Information Form - Liquor Sales Licences
- Notice of Public Meeting - April 1, 2025

...Carried

Items Pulled From the Information Package

None.

Staff Reports and Memos

A02-2025: 2025 Waterloo Region Economic Development Strategy

Economic Development and Tourism Officer Kurtis Wells, and from the Region of Waterloo, Director of Build Waterloo Region Matthew Chandy and Manager of Business and Industrial Development Laura Philippe, provided a presentation which highlighted:

- Municipal and agency partnerships
- Community engagement
- Research and engagement summary data
- Strategic pillars
- Strategic sector support, including tariffs support
- Implementation and reporting
- Next steps

In response to Council's inquiry, regional staff confirmed that endorsement of the plan does not mean endorsement of specific lands acquisition, the schedule of presentations of the proposed strategy to the other municipalities across the Region of Waterloo, and how the proposed strategy affects Woolwich specifically.

Moved by Councillor Grant
Seconded by Councillor Burgess

That the Council of the Township of Woolwich, considering Report A02-2025 respecting 2025 Waterloo Region Economic Development Strategy, endorse the 2025 Waterloo Region Economic Development Strategy.

...Carried

C05-2025: Woolwich Climate Justice Ad-hoc Working Group

Council discussed inclusion of the Mennonite community in the listed groups, expressed concern with the number of climate/environmental groups/committees that have already been formed, the importance of including specific groups as plans are being built rather than trying to work those groups' needs and feedback in later stages, expected time commitment for the proposed Ad-hoc Working Group, and staff described the contingency plan should there be a

lack of interest during the recruitment process. Council members expressed concern that the Township has too many committees but encouraged staff to connect with the specific groups that are the focus of the proposed ad-hoc group.

Moved by Councillor Cadeau
Seconded by Councillor Grant

That the Council of the Township of Woolwich, considering Report C05-2025 respecting a Woolwich Climate Justice Ad-hoc Working Group:

1. Direct staff to form the Woolwich Climate Justice Ad-hoc Working Group as set out in the report to provide advice on the Township's Climate Action Plan from the equity deserving community's perspective, and to provide advice during the first year of implementing the plan;
2. Approve the draft Woolwich Climate Justice Ad-hoc Working Group Terms of Reference attached to this report; and
3. Appoint Councillor Grant to sit as Council representative on the Woolwich Climate Justice Ad-hoc Working Group.

Councillor Burgess requested a recorded vote. Clerk Jeff Smith administered the recorded vote.

Recorded Vote

In Favour

Councillor Grant
Councillor Cadeau
Mayor Shantz

Opposed

Councillor Schwindt
Councillor Bryant
Councillor Burgess

...Defeated

C08-2025: Procedural By-law Mid-term Review

Council discussed concerns in no longer having a second meeting to consider contentious issues, eliminating the rotating chair schedule currently offered with Committee of the Whole meetings, the confusion experienced by residents regarding the differences between Committee of the Whole and Council meetings, the opportunity for efficiencies in replacing Committee of the Whole with Council meeting, and that a motion to defer or reconsider are options available to Council should they wish to delay a decision or bring a topic back to the table.

Moved by Councillor Burgess
Seconded by Councillor Cadeau

That the Council of the Township of Woolwich, considering Report C08-2025 respecting Procedural By-law Mid-term Review, defer the topic to the March 18th Council meeting.

...Carried

Other Business

Council Reports/Updates

None.

Outstanding Activity List as of Thursday, February 27, 2025

None.

Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Burgess
Seconded by Councillor Bryant

That the meeting adjourns.

...Carried

Signature on file

Sandy Shantz, Mayor

Signature on file

Jeff Smith, Clerk