



Municipality of West Elgin

Minutes

Council Meeting

January 23, 2025, 4:00 p.m.

Council Chambers

160 Main Street

West Lorne

Present: Mayor Leatham
Deputy Mayor Tellier
Councillor Denning
Councillor Dougherty

Regrets: Councillor Statham

Staff Present: Robert Brown, Planner
Terri Towstiuć, Clerk
Magda Badura, Manager of Corporate Services (Treasurer)
Robin Greenall, Chief Administrative Officer
Lee Gosnell, Manager of Operations and Community Services
Tom Mohan, Drainage Superintendent

Also Present: J.M. Spriet, P. Eng, Spriet Associates (Virtual Attendance)

Council Meetings are held in-person at 160 Main Street, West Lorne, and the post-meeting recording available at www.westelgin.net, when available (pending no technical difficulties).

1. Call to Order

Mayor Leatham called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

2. Adoption of Agenda

Resolution No. 2025- 14

Moved: Deputy Mayor Tellier

Seconded: Councillor Denning

That West Elgin Council hereby adopts the Regular Council Agenda for January 23, 2025 as presented.

Carried

6. Adoption of Minutes

Resolution No. 2025- 19

Moved: Councillor Denning

Seconded: Councillor Dougherty

That West Elgin Council hereby adopt the Minutes of January 9, 2025, as presented.

Carried

6.1 Committee and Board Minutes

Resolution No. 2025- 20

Moved: Deputy Mayor Tellier

Seconded: Councillor Denning

That West Elgin Council hereby acknowledge receipt of the minutes of the Bo Horvat Community Center Board of Management, November 6 and December 11, 2024; And the Economic Development Committee, November 6, November 25 and December 9, 2024; And the Recreation Committee, November 27, 2024, as presented.

Carried

4. Public Meeting for Consideration of the Fleuren Drain Engineers Report

J.M. Spriet, P. Eng, Spriets Associates provided Council with the revised Fleuren Drain report, first presented in July 2024. Mr. Spriet advised that it is recommended that a new drain be constructed, out letting at the McMillian Drain, as outlined in the drain report. No members of the public or Council spoke on the subject drain or provided and questions or concerns.

Resolution No. 2025- 15

Moved: Councillor Dougherty

Seconded: Councillor Denning

That West Elgin Council hereby proceed into a Public Meeting pursuant to the *Drainage Act*.

Carried

4.1 Public Comment

No Public comment.

4.2 Council Comment

No comment from members of Council.

4.3 Recommendation

Resolution No. 2025- 16

Moved: Deputy Mayor Tellier

Seconded: Councillor Denning

That the Council of the Municipality of West Elgin hereby receives the revised Engineers report for the Fleuren Drain, as prepared and presented by Mr. J.M. Spriet, P. Eng.; and

That Council authorizes staff to initiate the tender process in accordance with the *Drainage Act*, if required, for the reconstruction to the Municipal Drain known as Fleuren Drain, to be considered by Council following the Court of Revision; and

That the Court of Revision be scheduled for Thursday, February 27, 2024, at 3:45pm; and

That Council consider the provisional By-Law 2025-06, as presented in the By-Law portion of the agenda for a first and second reading.

Carried

5. Delegations

5.1 Dawn Maziak, Board Chair, West Elgin Community Health Centre, Board Update

Resolution read prior to delegation, to allow thirty (30) minutes.

Dawn Maziak (Board, Chair) and David James (Board, Vice-Chair) attended Council to provide a slideshow presentation, detailing the West Elgin Community Health Centers (WECHC) community involvement in West Elgin and Surrounding municipalities. Ms. Maziak and Mr. James also provided funding struggles, fundraising efforts, board and staff composition. Ms. Maziak and Mr. James also advised Council of the struggles to keep doctors and nurse practitioners in small local

communities, as wages are not competitive with urban centers, resulting in high staff turnover, increased wait lists and lack of staff presence. The board continues to seek government funding, asking that West Elgin Council continue to advocate for WECHC, with the goal to keep health care in the municipality.

Ms. Maziak concluded the presentation with advising Council that the board is looking for more members, if any members of Council would like to join the board.

Resolution No. 2025- 17

Moved: Councillor Denning

Seconded: Councillor Dougherty

That In accordance with Section 3.5 of By-Law 2024-05 Being a By-Law to establish rules of procedure for the meetings of Council, West Elgin Council hereby allow the West Elgin Community Health Centre one-half hour (thirty minutes) for item 5.1, Delegation, suspending the rules of Section 6.8 of By-law 2024-05.

Carried

5.2 Dug Aldred, West Elgin Resident - Review of Council Ward System

Dug Aldred, West Elgin Resident, approached Council with a proposal to eliminate the Municipal Ward System, and move forward with an "at large" election system, providing for one Mayor and four Councillors, and the Councillor receiving the most votes to assume the role of Deputy Mayor. Mr. Aldred provided a petition, pursuant to the requirements within the Municipal Act, to dissolve the Ward System, with the idea of stronger Council representation, for the greater interest of the municipality and intentions to increase the voter turnout.

In recent elections, many members were acclaimed, eliminating the ability for many residents to vote in the election. Mr. Aldred advised this limitation is discouraging younger generations to get involved in local government.

Council was receptive to the idea of dissolving the Ward System, and requested staff provide a report at a near Council meeting, detailing the procedure and costs to move forward.

Resolution No. 2025- 18

Moved: Deputy Mayor Tellier

Seconded: Councillor Denning

That West Elgin Council hereby receive the delegation from Dug Aldred, West Elgin Resident Re: Review of Council Ward System; And

That West Elgin Council request staff to prepare a report for Council, detailing procedures to eliminate the three-ward system within the municipality.

Carried

8. Staff Reports

8.1 Operations & Community Services

8.1.1 Monthly Operations Update, December 2024

Resolution No. 2025- 21

Moved: Deputy Mayor Tellier

Seconded: Councillor Dougherty

That West Elgin Council hereby receives the report from Lee Gosnell, Manager of Operations & Community Services for information purposes.

Carried

8.2 Corporate Services & Finance

8.2.1 Intact Municipal Climate Resiliency Grants

Resolution No. 2025- 22

Moved: Councillor Denning

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Tellier

That West Elgin Council hereby receives the report from M. Badura, Manager of Corporate Services – Treasurer re: Intact Municipal Climate Resiliency Grant; And

That West Elgin Council endorse an application for a Flood Resiliency Project to the Intact Municipal Climate Resiliency Grant Program.

Carried

9. Committee and Board Reports or Updates

No updates provided.

10. Notice of Motion

None received prior to meeting.

11. Council Inquires/Announcements

11.1 Update from ROMA

Mayor Leatham, Deputy Mayor Tellier, Councillor Denning and CAO Robin Greenall attended the 2025 Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Conference, January 19-21, 2025 at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center in Toronto.

Ms. Greenall indicated that the atmosphere of the conference was very positive, while Council advised that they attended a delegation with Ministry of Infrastructure, to be a voice for West Elgin addressing upgrading and maintenance requirements for infrastructure, and lack of funding to do so. Council advised the ministry that West Elgin is ready, with many lots available for housing, however the current state of infrastructure will not support it.

Deputy Mayor Tellier advised that Council also participated in plenary sessions and workshops, with networking opportunities with many other government officials and staff from across Ontario. Plenary sessions included discussions about infrastructure, health care, safety of staff and Council, and building relationships with Indigenous partners.

12. Correspondence

Resolution No. 2025- 23

Moved: Councillor Dougherty

Seconded: Councillor Denning

That West Elgin Council hereby received and file all correspondence, not otherwise dealt with.

Carried

13. Items Requiring Council Consideration

13.1 Meeting Start Time Amendment - March 13, 2025

Resolution No. 2025- 24

Moved: Deputy Mayor Tellier

Seconded: Councillor Dougherty

That the start time for Thursday, March 13, 2025, be amended to 5:00pm, to accommodate staff Leadership Training.

Carried

13.2 Provincial Land Tax

Resolution No. 2025- 25

Moved: Councillor Dougherty

Seconded: Councillor Denning

Whereas municipalities face growing infrastructure needs, including roads, bridges, public transit, water systems, and other critical services, which are essential to community well-being and economic development; and

Whereas the current sources of municipal revenue, including property taxes and user fees, are insufficient to meet these increasing demands for infrastructure investment; and

Whereas the Province of Ontario currently collects the Land Transfer Tax (LTT) on property transactions in municipalities across the province, generating significant revenue that is not directly shared with municipalities; and

Whereas the Federal Government collects the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on property transactions, a portion of which could be directed to municipalities to address local infrastructure needs; and

Whereas redistributing a portion of the Provincial Land Transfer Tax and GST to municipalities would provide a predictable and sustainable source of funding for local infrastructure projects without creating a new tax burden on residents or homebuyers; and

Whereas a redistribution of a portion of the existing Land Transfer Tax and GST would allow municipalities to better plan and invest in long-term infrastructure initiatives, supporting local economic growth and improving the quality of life for residents;

Now Therefore Be It Hereby Resolved That the Council of the Municipality of West Elgin formally requests the Provincial Government to consider redistributing a portion of the Land Transfer Tax collected on property transactions to municipalities; and

Be It Further Resolved That West Elgin Council calls on the Federal Government to allocate a percentage of the GST collected on property sales to municipalities; and

Be It Further Resolved That this redistribution of the Land Transfer Tax and GST should be structured to provide predictable and sustainable funding to municipalities, allowing for better long-term planning and investment in infrastructure projects that benefit local communities, thus ensuring that local governments receive a fair share of the revenue to address critical infrastructure needs; and

Be It Further Resolved That copies of this resolution be forwarded to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Premier Doug Ford, the Ontario Minister of Finance, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), local Members of Parliament (MPs) and Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs); and

Carried

14. By-Laws

14.1 2025-06, Provisional By-law, Fleuren Drain

Resolution No. 2025- 26

Moved: Deputy Mayor Tellier

Seconded: Councillor Dougherty

That By-law 2025-06, Being a By-Law to provide for drainage works on the Fleuren Drain in the Municipality of West Elgin, be read a first and second time.

Carried

15. Closed Session

Resolution No. 2025- 27

Moved: Deputy Mayor Tellier

Seconded: Councillor Denning

That the Council of the Municipality of West Elgin hereby proceeds into Closed Session at 5:22 pm, to discuss matters pursuant to the *Municipal Act*, Section 239 (2)(a), being security of the property of the municipality or local board; Section 239 (2)(c) , being a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipality or local board; Section 239 (2)(d) labour relations or

employee negotiations; And Section 239 (2)(f) advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose.

Carried

16. Report from Closed Session

Clerk reported from closed session at 5:54 pm.

Council received four (4) items pursuant to Section 239 of the *Municipal Act*. Council provided administrative direction to staff, including the following two (2) recommendations, to be read in open session:

Resolution No. 2025- 28

Moved: Deputy Mayor Tellier

Seconded: Councillor Dougherty

That West Elgin Council hereby receives the report from Robert Brown, Planner regarding the permanent closure of a portion of an unopened road allowance (north of Fleming Line) and sale to abutting landowners;

That West Elgin Council declare the municipally owned lands, described as Road Allowance between Concession 1 WD and Concession BF WD, in Part of Lots 9 and 10, and shown on Figure one, as surplus to the needs of the municipality and undertake the required protocol to sell the subject lands to the abutting landowners.

Carried

Resolution No. 2025- 29

Moved: Councillor Denning

Seconded: Councillor Dougherty

That West Elgin Council hereby receives the report from M. Badura, Manager of Corporate Services – Treasurer re: 2025 Cyber Insurance Renewal as presented; And That West Elgin Council authorizes staff to proceed with the renewal of the 2025 Cyber Insurance premium with CFC Underwriting Ltd. in the amount of \$20,000 plus applicable taxes.

Carried

17. Confirming By-Law

Resolution No. 2025- 30

Moved: Deputy Mayor Tellier

Seconded: Councillor Dougherty

That By-law 2025-07 being a By-law to confirm the proceeding of the Regular Meeting of Council held on January 23, 2025, be read a first, second and third and final time.

Carried

18. Adjournment

Resolution No. 2025- 31

Moved: Councillor Dougherty

Seconded: Councillor Denning

That the Council of the Municipality of West Elgin hereby adjourn at 5:56 pm to meet again at 5:00pm, on Thursday, February 13, 2025, or at the call of the Chair.

Carried

Richard Leatham, Mayor

Terri Towstiuć, Clerk