



**Minutes**

**Owen Sound City Council**

**January 29, 2024**

**City Hall - 808 2nd Avenue East**

**5:30 p.m. - Open Session - Council Chambers**

**MEMBERS**

**PRESENT:**

Mayor Ian Boddy  
Deputy Mayor Scott Greig  
Councillor Travis Dodd (via video)  
Councillor Jon Farmer  
Councillor Brock Hamley  
Councillor Marion Koepke  
Councillor Suneet Kukreja  
Councillor Carol Merton  
Councillor Melanie Middlebro'

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Tim Simmonds, City Manager  
Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services  
Pam Coulter, Director of Community Services  
Lara Widdifield, Director of Public Works and Engineering  
Aidan Ware, Director and Chief Curator, TTAG  
Phil Eagleson, Fire Chief  
Michelle Palmer, Senior Manager, Strategic Initiatives and Operational Effectiveness  
Briana Bloomfield, City Clerk  
Staci Landry, Deputy Clerk

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Boddy called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Mayor Boddy provided a land acknowledgement.

**2. CALL FOR ADDITIONAL BUSINESS**

- 2.a Councillor Farmer Re: Bruce Grey Poverty Task Force, Safe 'N Sound, and ROMA

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- 3.a Mayor Boddy - Report CS-24-007 from the Manager of Planning and Heritage Re: Draft Minutes of Settlement respecting Appeals of City Approved Zoning By-law Amendments 44 (OLT-23-000419) and 48 (OLT-23-000699), and Consent B06-2023 (OLT-23-000804)

Mayor Boddy declared a conflict of interest with Item 11.a due to him being the solicitor for a party with an interest in part of the lands being considered.

- 3.b Mayor Boddy - Closed Session Agenda Item

Mayor Boddy declared a conflict of interest with an item on the Closed Session agenda.

- 3.c Mayor Boddy - By-law No. 2024-013, A By-law to authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute Minutes of Settlement with Heritage Grove (2125 16th Street East)

and Sydenham Square (2275 16th Street East) respecting appeals to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT-23-000416, OLT-23-000699, OLT-23-000804)

Mayor Boddy declared a conflict of interest with Item 21.d due to him being the solicitor for a party with an interest in part of the lands being considered.

#### **4. CONFIRMATION OF THE COUNCIL MINUTES**

4.a Minutes of the Regular Council meeting held on January 15, 2024

R-240129-001

Moved by Councillor Farmer

Seconded by Deputy Mayor Greig

**"THAT the minutes of the Regular Council meeting held on January 15, 2024 be adopted as printed."**

Carried.

#### **5. MOTION TO MOVE COUNCIL INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

R-240129-002

Moved by Councillor Farmer

Seconded by Deputy Mayor Greig

**"THAT City Council now move into Committee of the Whole to consider public meetings, deputations and presentations, public question period, matters arising from correspondence, reports of City staff, consent agenda, committee minutes, matters postponed, motions for which notice was previously given and additional business."**

Carried.

### **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

#### **6. PUBLIC MEETINGS**

6.a 2024 Budget

Mayor Boddy declared the Public Meeting open at 5:34 p.m.

The City Clerk explained that notice of the Public Meeting was published in The Sun Times newspaper and posted on the City's website on January 11, 2024. All comments received prior to the agenda being published were attached to the agenda. Two comments were received after the publication of the agenda and were circulated to Council in advance of the meeting. These comments will be added to the agenda when it is republished. No individuals registered to attend the meeting electronically. The City Clerk encouraged those present for the public meeting to sign the sign-in sheet located on the table outside of Council Chambers.

The City Clerk advised that personal information is collected under the authority of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, and that the information collected will be used to complete the budget process and will form part of the public record. Questions about this collection should be addressed to the City Clerk.

The Director of Corporate Services provided a presentation on the 2024 draft budget. Ms. Allan highlighted the draft levy increase which is estimated to be 2.81% or \$914,784, the changes that have been made since the budget meeting on December 1, 2023, a comparison to Grey and Bruce County municipalities as well as other municipalities in Ontario, and the budget process to date. Ms. Allan provided responses to some frequently asked questions, such as how budgets are prepared, why the cost of providing services outpaces the average household income, when Owen Sound's taxes will be equal to those of the Township of Georgian Bluffs, and where data can be found for the City's total

workforce. In closing, Ms. Allan provided an overview of next steps, including that a final budget report will be brought forward to a Council meeting in February, with the budget by-law to follow at the subsequent Council meeting. Ms. Allan also noted that operating budgets will be presented to the City's Committees for review and comment ahead of the Council review of the 2025 operating budget.

Mayor Boddy asked if there was anyone present to speak at the public meeting.

Pat Kelly, Owen Sound resident, inquired about the unanimous decision made by Council in December 2021 for the development of an Economic Development Plan as an offset to property taxes.

The City Manager advised that staff will provide an update at the next budget meeting.

Joachim Ostertag, Owen Sound resident, noted that the recently approved Climate Action Plan, which focuses on developing a climate lens for all operations and services within the City, is not reflected in the draft budget, nor is a Climate Coordinator position. Mr. Ostertag suggested that staff conduct more research on winter operations as he notices a lot of inefficiencies with the salting and sanding practices in the City.

Ms. Allan advised that the City approved a Climate Action Strategy and Climate Mitigation Plan in 2023. These documents were created internally by a staff team and were supported by the Climate Action Team Owen Sound (CATOS) and through public engagement. These documents will be maintained through an internal steering committee and supported by CATOS where possible. The Manager of Corporate Services will continue to participate on the Grey County Climate Change Community of Practice, alongside staff from other Grey County municipalities. Ms. Allan noted that staff reports now include a section that connects the content of the report to the Climate Mitigation Plan, if applicable. In 2024, projects and initiatives that are currently funded include building condition assessments, City facility upgrade retrofits, including new mechanical equipment at the McQuay Tannery, Bayshore Community Centre, and Owen Sound Animal Shelter, development of a Fleet Management Strategy, development of a source separated organics program for mid-2025 implementation, continuation of the inventory of the urban tree canopy, and the continued promotion of community gardens.

Doug Stewart, Owen Sound resident expressed concern with the proposed levy increase of over 3%. Up until 2022, the City was 21.5% over inflation in levy increases. Mr. Stewart suggested that perhaps some services need to be eliminated to reduce the levy. Mr. Stewart questioned why the City employs two Human Resources Managers for a complement of 151 full-time employees. Mr. Stewart indicated that by 2024, there could be budgeted expenses of \$62 million if the City continues to spend money.

Ms. Allan advised that the total expenses currently budgeted in 2024 are \$46.7 million, not \$62 million.

Lloyd Elliott, Owen Sound resident suggested that Council go back and investigate the costs that they can control, such as staff wages. Council should also push back on Grey County Council to reduce their levy increase to help manage the City's increase. Mr. Elliott noted that more community engagement at the beginning of the budget process is important as opposed to waiting until just before the budget by-law is brought forward to Council for final approval. As a citizen of Owen Sound, Mr. Elliott notices a lot of waste and idleness within the City that could be improved. Mr. Elliott indicated that if the budget does not at least meet the rate of inflation, then this will eventually cause problems in a few years' time.

In response to a question from Council, Ms. Allan advised that from 2021 to 2024, the City's budget increases have been less than inflation.

Doug Stewart, Owen Sound resident commented that from 2011 to 2022, the City's total expenses were 21.5% above inflation and have increased to \$59 million.

Ms. Allan clarified that the City's total expenses in 2024 are \$46.7 million.

Ken Jones, Owen Sound resident noted that there are common themes from the public comments submitted as part of the Council agenda package on the proposed budget, including that taxpayers do not want this budget approved as is, and Council is not receptive to input from taxpayers. Mr. Jones inquired if Council will consider any further input on the draft 2024 budget from taxpayers.

Councillor Merton thanked the public for their comments, questions, and suggestions on the draft budget. Councillor Merton advised that all comments have been read and considered and although Council did not discuss a report circulated by Mr. Hutton in an open Council meeting, it does not mean that Council disregarded his analysis or suggestions for action. Councillor Merton advised that she has been in correspondence with Mr. Hutton and the City Manager and the Director of Corporate Services respecting all comments she has received from taxpayers.

Joel Pennington, Owen Sound resident inquired as to how the City plans to involve the vulnerable communities in the budget process.

Ms. Allan advised that the operating budgets will be presented to the City's Committees for review and comment ahead of the Council review of the 2025 operating budget. This will allow the Committees an opportunity to provide Council with their own comments and suggestions. Staff will also utilize the OurCity Owen Sound website for the 2025 budget to allow residents to participate through that avenue.

There being no other comments from the public, Mayor Boddy declared the Public Meeting closed at 6:36 p.m.

## **7. DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

There were no deputations or presentations.

## **8. PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD**

There were no questions from members of the public.

## **9. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FOR WHICH DIRECTION OF COUNCIL IS REQUIRED**

There were no correspondence items presented for consideration.

## **10. REPORTS OF CITY STAFF**

### **10.a Verbal Report from the Deputy Mayor Re: Grey County Council**

Deputy Mayor Greig advised that County Council received an update on the annual housing write offs for uncollectable accounts in the amount of \$88,000. Grey County staff continue to work towards collecting these debts and noted that non-payment is a disqualifier for individuals seeking subsidized housing with Grey County or other housing providers in Ontario.

County Council agreed to utilize a grant from Natural Resources Canada to support the development of Green Development Standards in partnership with Wellington and Dufferin Counties. The project seeks to create a consistent framework across the region to facilitate advancement towards efficiency standards at the construction stage that help reduce energy costs and more expensive retrofits over time.

County Council received a report on the Rural Recharge Program, which is an initiative funded by a service provider and the Ministry of Transportation to enhance the network of public EV charging infrastructure in the region. City staff are engaged in this project to host a future site within Owen Sound.

County Council provided direction for the purchase of the Diamond Motor Inn in Owen Sound for its emergency housing program, utilizing funding through the federal Affordable Housing Fund. The average nightly cost of emergency housing will be reduced by approximately 50% with this purchase.

R-240129-003

Moved by Deputy Mayor Greig

**"THAT in consideration of the Verbal Report provided January 29, 2024 from Deputy Mayor Greig respecting Grey County Council, City Council receives the Verbal Report for information purposes."**

Carried.

Having declared a conflict of interest with Item 11.a, Mayor Boddy left the Council Chambers and Deputy Mayor Greig assumed the position of Chair.

## **11. CONSENT AGENDA**

- 11.a Report CS-24-007 from the Manager of Planning and Heritage Re: Draft Minutes of Settlement respecting Appeals of City Approved Zoning By-law Amendments 44 (OLT-23-000419) and 48 (OLT-23-000699), and Consent B06-2023 (OLT-23-000804)

R-240129-004

Moved by Councillor Farmer

**"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CS-24-007 respecting Draft Minutes of Settlement respecting Appeals of City Approved Zoning By-law Amendments 44 (OLT-23-000419) and 48 (OLT-23-000699), and Consent B06-2023 (OLT-23-000804), City Council receives the report for information purposes."**

Carried.

Mayor Boddy resumed the position of Chair.

- 11.b Report CM-24-003 from the Senior Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Operational Effectiveness Re: ROMA Delegation and AMO Pre-Budget Submission for the 2024 Provincial Budget
- 11.c Report OP-24-005 from the Director of Public Works and Engineering Re: Assignment of Bruce Telecom Municipal Access Agreement
- 11.d Report CR-24-004 from the Manager of Corporate Services Re: Award of Tender RFT-23-035 - 17th Street East Sanitary Sewer Replacement
- 11.e Memorandum from the Junior Planner Re: External Planning Policy Comment Summary - November and December 2023
- 11.f Minutes of Boards and Committees for Receipt Re: Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board meeting held on December 19, 2023
- 11.g Final approval issued for the following Business Licence:
- NakdBasics has relocated to a home occupation at 1207 2nd Avenue 'A' West
- 11.h Correspondence received which is presented for the information of Council

R-240129-005

Moved by Councillor Farmer

**"THAT in consideration of the items listed on the January 29, 2024 Consent Agenda, City Council:**

- 1. Receives Items 11.c to 11.h; and**
- 2. Approves the recommendations contained in Items 11.c and 11.d. "**

Carried.

R-240129-006

Moved by Councillor Farmer

**"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CM-24-003 respecting ROMA Delegation and AMO Pre-Budget Submission for the 2024 Provincial Budget, City Council:**

- 1. Calls on the Province of Ontario to commit to undertaking with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario a comprehensive social and economic prosperity review to promote the stability and sustainability of municipal finances across Ontario; and**
- 2. Directs staff to send a letter to the leaders of the provincial Liberal Party, New Democrat Party, and Green Party, in addition to the Premier of Ontario, Minister of Finance, and the Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound MPP."**

Carried.

The Director and Chief Curator of the Tom Thomson Art Gallery left the meeting.

## **12. COMMITTEE MINUTES WITH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPROVAL**

12.a Minutes of the Operations Committee meeting held on January 18, 2024

R-240129-007

Moved by Deputy Mayor Greig

**"THAT the minutes of the Operations Committee meeting held on January 18, 2024 be received and the recommendations contained therein be approved."**

Carried.

## **13. MATTERS POSTPONED**

There were no postponed matters.

## **14. MOTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE WAS PREVIOUSLY GIVEN**

14.a Motion for Which Notice was Previously Given by Councillor Farmer at the January 15, 2024 Regular Council meeting Re: Town Hall

Mayor Boddy inquired if Councillor Farmer would consider asking for a staff report to be presented at a future Council meeting respecting town hall style meetings and how they could be planned and structured to encourage more public engagement.

The City Manager advised that a staff report could be brought back to Council in late March or early April.

**"WHEREAS October 2024 is the mid-point in the current term of Council;**  
**AND WHEREAS there has not been a town hall style meeting so far this Council term;**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT City Council directs staff to:**

- 1. Bring forward a report to Council outlining a structure and plan for town hall style meetings, at least one of which to occur in 2024, to serve as a forum for public questions and suggestions relating to City operations and governance; and**
- 2. Reserve a location for this meeting with a larger seating capacity than the Council Chambers and with a foyer where information tables can be set up to raise awareness about City departments, Committees, and initiatives as well as community services and agencies should they choose to participate."**

Carried.

Prior to a vote on the motion, Councillor Farmer requested a recorded vote:

	In Favour	Opposed
Councillor Dodd	X	
Councillor Farmer	X	
Councillor Hamley	X	
Councillor Koepke	X	
Councillor Kukreja	X	
Councillor Merton	X	
Councillor Middlebro'	X	
Deputy Mayor Greig	X	
Mayor Boddy	X	

The resolution was carried with nine (9) votes in favour and zero (0) votes opposed.

**15. DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL BUSINESS**

**15.a Bruce Grey Poverty Task Force, Safe 'N Sound, and ROMA**

Councillor Farmer advised that the Bruce Grey Poverty Task Force is currently recruiting for volunteers to assist with their Income Tax Program. This program assists low-income individuals and families in preparing their income tax returns where they could qualify for different rebates.

Councillor Farmer noted that Safe 'N Sound is in need of winter coats and pants.

Councillor Farmer attended the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Conference last week where he sat in on a variety of panels and sessions about housing and homelessness, gender-based violence, collaboration with Indigenous communities, food insecurity, and providing healthcare in rural and Northern communities. The closing keynote speaker was Althia Raj, a political journalist and commentator, who spoke about the impact of polarization on public decision-making.

**16. MOTION THAT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE RISE AND REPORT**

R-240129-009

Moved by Councillor Farmer

**"THAT the Committee of the Whole rise and report."**

Carried.

**FORMAL SESSION**

**17. MOTION TO ADOPT PROCEEDINGS IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

R-240129-010

Moved by Councillor Farmer

Seconded by Deputy Mayor Greig

**"THAT the action taken in Committee of the Whole in considering public meetings, deputations and presentations, public question period, matters arising from correspondence, reports of City staff, consent agenda, committee minutes, matters postponed, motions for which notice was previously given and additional business be confirmed by this Council."**

Carried.

**18. NOTICES OF MOTION**

There were no notices of motion.

**19. MOTION TO MOVE INTO CLOSED SESSION**

Prior to moving into Closed Session, Mayor Boddy advised that for those who are watching the meeting live on Rogers Cable TV or the Rogers TV website, the Rogers feed will not reconnect to the meeting upon Council returning to the open session to report out of the Closed Session and review the by-laws. If anyone would like to view the remainder of the open session, they can watch the livestream on the City's Council and Committees webpage at [www.owensound.ca/meetings](http://www.owensound.ca/meetings). The video recording of the meeting will also be posted on this webpage following the meeting.

R-240129-011

Moved by Councillor Farmer

Seconded by Deputy Mayor Greig

**"THAT City Council now move into 'Closed Session' to consider:**

- a. Minutes of the Closed Session of the Special Council meeting held on December 1, 2023;**
- b. Minutes of the Closed Session of the Regular Council meeting held on December 4, 2023;**
- c. One matter regarding a proposed disposition of land by the municipality and advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege respecting a road allowance;**
- d. One matter regarding a proposed acquisition of land by the municipality and advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege respecting property on 18th Avenue East; and**
- e. One matter regarding litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals, affecting the municipality, advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, and a position, plan, procedure, criteria, or instruction to be applied to negotiations respecting minutes of settlement."**

Carried.



Councillor Dodd, the Fire Chief, and the Senior Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Operational Effectiveness left the meeting.

Council moved into the Closed Session at 7:16 p.m.

## **20. REPORTING OUT OF CLOSED SESSION**

Mayor Boddy advised that Council returned to the open session at 7:46 p.m.

Having declared a conflict of interest with an item on the Closed Session agenda, Mayor Boddy relinquished the position of Chair. Deputy Mayor Greig assumed the position of Chair.

Deputy Mayor Greig advised that in Closed Session, City Council:

- Reviewed minutes of the Closed Session of the Special Council meeting held on December 1, 2023;
- Reviewed minutes of the Closed Session of the Regular Council meeting held on December 4, 2023;
- Discussed one matter regarding a proposed disposition of land by the municipality and advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege respecting a road allowance, and direction was provided to staff;
- Discussed one matter regarding a proposed acquisition of land by the municipality and advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege respecting property on 18th Avenue East, and direction was provided to staff; and
- Discussed one matter litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals, affecting the municipality, advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, and a position, plan, procedure, criteria, or instruction to be applied to negotiations respecting minutes of settlement, and direction was provided to staff.

Mayor Boddy resumed the position of Chair.

## **21. BY-LAWS**

### **21.a By-law No. 2024-010**

"A By-law to confirm the proceedings of the Regular Meeting of the Council of The Corporation of the City of Owen Sound held on the 29th day of January, 2024"

### **21.b By-law No. 2024-011**

"A By-law to authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute a Consent to transfer a Municipal Access Agreement from Bruce Telecom to WPC Infrastructure Fund LP"

### **21.c By-law No. 2024-012**

"A By-law to authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute an agreement with Moorefield Excavating Ltd., respecting 17th Street East Sanitary Sewer replacement, in accordance with RFT-23-035"

R-240129-012

Moved by Councillor Farmer

Seconded by Deputy Mayor Greig

**"THAT By-law Numbers 2024-010, 2024-011, and 2024-012 be passed and enacted."**

Carried.

Having declared a conflict of interest with Item 21.d, Mayor Boddy left the Council Chambers and Deputy Mayor Greig assumed the position of Chair.

21.d By-law No. 2024-013

"A By-law to authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute Minutes of Settlement with Heritage Grove (2125 16th Street East) and Sydenham Square (2275 16th Street East) respecting appeals to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT-23-000416, OLT-23-000699, OLT-23-000804)"

R-240129-013  
Moved by Councillor Farmer  
Seconded by Councillor Hamley

**"THAT By-law Number 2024-013 be passed and enacted."**

Carried.

22. **ADJOURNMENT**

The business contained on the agenda having been completed, Deputy Mayor Greig adjourned the meeting at 7:49 p.m.

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Deputy Mayor Scott Greig

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Briana M. Bloomfield, City Clerk