



## **Minutes**

### **Operations Committee**

**April 17, 2025, 5:30 p.m.**

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

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Scott Greig  
Vice Chair Carol Merton  
Member Arlene Blue Indoe  
Member Mike Crone  
Member Robert Droine  
Councillor Brock Hamley (via video)  
Member Michele Hawkins  
Councillor Suneet Kukreja

#### **MEMBERS**

**ABSENT/REGRETS:** Member Donald Anderson

**STAFF PRESENT:** Lara Widdifield, Director of Public Works and Engineering  
Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services  
Chris Webb, Manager of Engineering Services  
Heidi Jennen, Supervisor of Environmental Services  
Allison Penner, Deputy Clerk

---

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Deputy Mayor Greig called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. All Committee members and staff noted above were present except for the Supervisor of Environmental Services.

#### **2. CALL FOR ADDITIONAL BUSINESS**

2.a Member Crone Re: Water Meter Replacement Program

2.b Chair Deputy Mayor Greig Re: Downtown River Precinct Phase II, Grey County Climate Adaptation Plan Consultation, and Ontario Good Roads Association Conference

#### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

- 4.a Minutes of the Operations Committee meeting held on March 20, 2025

OP-250417-001

Moved by Councillor Kukreja

**"THAT the Operations Committee approves the minutes of the meeting held on March 20, 2025."**

Carried.

The Committee recessed from 5:32 p.m. to 5:42 p.m. due to technical difficulties.

#### 5. DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- 5.a Deputation from GSS Engineering Consultants Ltd. Re: 32nd St East - East Bayshore Road to 9th Ave E - Watermain Replacement

The Manager of Engineering Services introduced Jacob Bartley and Tim Larose of GSS Engineering Consultants Ltd., the City's consultants on the 32nd Street East - East Bayshore Road to 9th Avenue East - Watermain Replacement project.

Mr. Bartley provided a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the project location, deficiencies in the existing watermain configuration, benefits of the replacement project, and preliminary project costs and schedule.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Bartley noted that the lot to the south of the project has been rezoned to allow for the development of eight apartment buildings.

In response to a question from the Committee, the Manager of Engineering Services advised that due to grant funding received, the City will be responsible for 27% of the total project cost. Mr. Webb noted that the developer that owns the property to the south of the project will contribute to the cost of the pressure reducing valve.

In response to a question from the Committee, Chair Deputy Mayor Greig advised that he would report total project costs to the Committee following Council's award of the tender for the project construction.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Bartley noted that the successful proponent of the construction tender will be responsible for purchasing project materials. The Manager of Engineering Services noted that the preferred supplier of pressure reducing valves is located in Canada and thus limited tariff impact is anticipated.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Bartley advised that the contractor would submit a traffic control plan. The Director of Public Works and

Engineering advised that staff can be prescriptive in writing the tender to ensure public access to the Kiwanis Soccer Complex is maintained during construction.

OP-250417-002

Moved by Member Hawkins

**“THAT is consideration of the deputation provided on April 17, 2025 from GSS Engineering Consultants Ltd. respecting 32<sup>nd</sup> Street East – East Bayshore Road to 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue East – Watermain Replacement, the Operations Committee recommends that City Council receive the deputation for information purposes.”**

Carried.

5.b Deputation from Hemson Re: City of Owen Sound Rate Study

The Director of Corporate Services introduced Andrew Mirabella, Associate Partner at Hemson Consultants Ltd., the City’s water and wastewater rate study consultant.

Mr. Mirabella provided a PowerPoint presentation highlighting a comparison of the City’s rate structure to that of other municipalities, current asset replacement value, and the approach taken to setting the recommended future rates. Mr. Mirabella highlighted that while capital investment will increase over time, a large deficit will remain at the end of the study period.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Mirabella noted that with the implementation of the water meter replacement program, billable water consumption is forecast to increase by 1% in the first year and an additional 1% in the second year. Mr. Mirabella advised that while the metering program may lead to a greater increase in billable flow, the study is conservative in its estimates because there is a direct impact on revenues.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Mirabella advised that billing needs to cover both system usage as well as maintenance and operating costs. Mr. Mirabella noted that the City has more than \$1 billion in water and wastewater infrastructure, and that the City must maintain capacity in its services to ensure availability when people choose to use them.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Mirabella advised that the capital cost of new water meters is built into the rate study, and that the new meters will make bills a truer reflection of usage.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Mirabella noted that long term considerations respecting the gap between capital need and capital investment will require future consideration of grant funding, use of longer-term debenture, and refining the asset management program.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Mirabella advised that City water delivered outside the City will continue to be billed at double the in-town rate.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Mirabella noted that the meter replacement program may reduce the City's loss factor, and that the monitoring exercised will quantify that change.

OP-250417-003

Moved by Member Crone

**“THAT is consideration of the deputation provided on April 17, 2025 from Hemson Consulting Ltd. respecting City of Owen Sound Rate Study, the Operations Committee recommends that City Council receive the deputation for information purposes.”**

Carried.

## **6. PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD**

There were no questions or comments from the public.

## **7. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FOR WHICH DIRECTION IS REQUIRED**

There were no correspondence items presented for consideration.

## **8. REPORTS OF CITY STAFF**

The Committee discussed Item 8.e.1 at this time.

### **8.e.1 Report CR-25-043 from Director of Corporate Services Re: 2025 Water Rate and Sewer Surcharge Update**

The Director of Corporate Services provided an overview of the report.

In response to a question from the Committee, Ms. Allan advised that staff would be open to considering setting rates for multiple years. Ms. Allan noted the benefits and drawbacks of this approach to rate setting.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Director of Public Works and Engineering noted installation of new water meters is underway and is expected to be completed by October 2025. Ms. Widdifield noted that despite additional revenue that may be achieved through implementation of the water meters, staff would not recommend a reduction in rates because of the outstanding gap between capital need and capital investment.

Ms. Allan advised that the report proposes an annual return to Committee to set the water and wastewater rates.

In response to a question from the Committee, Ms. Allan advised that staff aim to hold the average annual capital spent in reserve.

**"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-25-043 respecting 2025 Water Rate and Sewer Surcharge Update, the Operations Committee recommends that City Council:**

- 1. Approve the financial plan as presented;**
- 2. Direct staff to bring forward an amendment to the Fees and Charges By-law which includes:**
  - a. A five percent (5%) increase to water rates in the 2025 Fees and Charges By-law, effective July 1, 2025; and**
  - b. Maintaining the wastewater surcharge at 124% of the water rate; and**
- 3. Direct staff to provide notice of the water rate increase and continued wastewater surcharge in accordance with the City's notice provisions."**

Carried.

The Director of Corporate Services left the meeting.

8.a Engineering

None.

8.b Environment

The Supervisor of Environmental Services joined the meeting.

8.b.1 Report OP-25-018 from Supervisor of Environmental Services Re: Circular Materials Eligible Community Recycling Calendars Agreements

The Supervisory of Environmental Services provided an overview of the report.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Jennen advised that waste management information is available within an app, as an imbedded feature on the City's website, and within pamphlets that will be distributed to residents alongside their green bins.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Jennen noted that the City chose an app to promote green bins, and that Circular Materials selected the same app to promote recycling. Circular Materials is compensating the City for effort saved in implementing the app.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Jennen advised that paper copies of the waste management calendar are available at City Hall and can be mailed to residents upon request.

OP-250417-004

Moved by Councillor Kukreja

**"THAT in consideration of Staff Report OP-25-018 respecting Circular Materials Eligible Community Recycling Calendars Agreements, the Operations Committee recommends that City Council:**

- 1. Direct staff to bring forward a by-law to authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute an Agreement for Eligible Communities with Circular Materials for 2026, as outlined in the report; and**
- 2. Direct staff to bring forward a by-law to authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute an Amending Agreement for Eligible Communities with Circular Materials for the remainder of 2025 as outlined in the report. "**

Carried.

8.b.2 Report OP-25-012 from Supervisor of Environmental Services Re: Product Care Amending Agreement

The Supervisor of Environmental Services provided an overview of the report.

OP-250417-005

Moved by Member Hawkins

**"THAT in consideration of Staff Report OP-25-012 respecting Product Care Association of Canada – Municipality Services Agreement, the Operations Committee recommends that City Council direct staff to bring forward a by-law to authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute the Services Agreement with Product Care Association of Canada for the collection and processing of hazardous and special products as outlined in the report."**

Carried.

The Supervisor of Environmental Services left the meeting.

8.c Public Works

None.

8.d Transit

None.

8.e Water and Wastewater

- 8.e.1 Report CR-25-043 from Director of Corporate Services Re: 2025 Water Rate and Sewer Surcharge Update

This item was discussed after Item 7.

- 8.e.2 Report OP-25-017 from Manager of Water and Wastewater Re: Drinking Water - Standard of Care

The Director of Public Works and Engineering provided a PowerPoint presentation and overview of the report. Ms. Widdifield advised that it is necessary for the City to have mitigation protocol for every conceivable incident that it might need to respond to with respect to drinking water standard of care.

Ms. Widdifield provided examples of standard of care violations to illustrate the outcomes that can result from poor or uninformed choices and underfunded water systems. Ms. Widdifield noted that the City's large industrial watermain are aging, and that while staff believe these to be in good condition there is an increasingly important need to conduct non-destructive testing and valve exercising.

OP-250417-007

Moved by Member Droine

**"THAT in consideration of Staff Report OP-25-017 respecting Drinking Water Standard of Care, the Operations Committee recommends that City Council receive the report for information purposes."**

Carried.

**9. MATTERS POSTPONED**

There were no matters postponed.

**10. MOTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE WAS PREVIOUSLY GIVEN**

There were no motions for which notice was previously given.

**11. CORRESPONDENCE PROVIDED FOR INFORMATION**

There were no correspondence items presented for information.

**12. DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL BUSINESS**

**12.a Water Meter Replacement Program**

Member Crone advised that his home water meter had been replaced through the City's Water Meter Replacement Program. Mr. Crone noted that the installer was very professional and that the entire process took approximately 30 minutes.

In response to a question from the Committee, the Director of Public Works and Engineering advised that the expected lifespan of the new water meters is approximately 15 years.

12.b Downtown River Precinct Phase II, Grey County Climate Adaptation Plan Consultation, and Ontario Good Roads Association Conference

Chair Deputy Mayor Greig inquired about the remaining work required to complete the Downtown River Precinct Phase II project.

The Director of Public Works and Engineering advised that final details remain to be completed in 2025, including clean up, adding planters, crosswalks, street sign modifications, landscaping, and adding bollards. The Manager of Engineering Services noted that the contractor plans to return to site in May, with project completion anticipated prior to the grand opening celebration in early June.

Chair Deputy Mayor Greig advised that County of Grey staff are undertaking consultation on the County's Climate Adaptation Plan, including participating in community events and community consultations, as well as a ten-minute online survey available on the County's website.

Chair Deputy Mayor Greig advised that he attended the Ontario Good Roads Association Conference between March 30 and April 2 and noted his key takeaways from sessions relating to the increasing size and weight of vehicles, road safety and infrastructure design, and results of a provincial road quality survey.

In response to a question from the Committee, the Director of Public Works and Engineering advised that the City generally meets the Minimum Maintenance Standards (MMS) across all parameters, except during declared Significant Weather Events. Ms. Widdifield noted that staff are working to understand how the City's policies relate to meeting or exceeding the MMS, and that more data is required to make these determinations.

**13. NOTICES OF MOTION**

There were no notices of motion.

**14. ADJOURNMENT**

The business contained on the agenda having been completed, Chair Deputy Mayor Greig adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.