



Minutes

Owen Sound City Council

October 27, 2025

3:00 p.m.

City Hall - 808 2nd Avenue East - Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Ian Boddy
Deputy Mayor Scott Greig
Councillor Travis Dodd
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
Bradey Carbert, Manager of Corporate Services
Briana Bloomfield, City Clerk
Staci Landry, Deputy Clerk

GUESTS: John Thomson, Owen Sound Police Service Board Chair
Brian O'Leary, Owen Sound Police Service Board Vice Chair
Craig Ambrose, Police Chief
Dave Bishop, Deputy Chief
Kayla Wardell, Owen Sound Police Service Board Executive Assistant

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Boddy called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MOTION TO MOVE COUNCIL INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

S-251027-001

Moved by Councillor Middlebro'

Seconded by Councillor Dodd

"THAT City Council now move into Committee of the Whole to consider reports, Closed Session materials, and a roundtable discussion."

Carried.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

4. REPORTS

4.a Verbal Report from the Owen Sound Police Service Board Chair Re: Budget Update

The Owen Sound Police Service (OSPS) Board Chair provided an update on the OSPS budget. Chair Thomson explained that the Board's role is to ensure that the OSPS is compliant with the rules set out in the *Community Safety and Policing Act (CSPA)*. One of the primary focuses of the CSPA is for the provision of adequate and effective policing, which is defined as crime prevention, law enforcement, maintaining the public space, emergency response, assistance to victims of crime, and any other prescribed policing functions under the CSPA.

Chair Thomson explained that the Board assesses its compliance with the CSPA by tracking clearance rates, police visibility and presence in communities, early morning patrols to prevent crime, response times that meet or exceed provincial standards, policing support for large city events, and community-based policing efforts.

Chair Thomson explained several factors behind this year's proposed evidence-based budget:

- Three new apartment complexes are being built, contributing to unprecedented growth.
- Approximately 93% of the budget goes to salaries and benefits, while the remaining 7% covers gas, insurance, training, equipment, and office supplies.
- The population of people who work, shop, or visit Owen Sound has grown from roughly 40,000 to over 53,600, increasing demand on police services.
- Owen Sound, as the hub for Grey County, has additional social services which adds to the number of calls for service and officer workload.
- Officers and dispatch staff need specific training for mental health calls.
- Provincial statistics show that crime rates in Owen Sound are increasing, which further impacts staffing and resources.

Chair Thomson advised that, following a presentation from Chief Ambrose, the Board has approved a preliminary 8.35% increase in the OSPS budget and shared this information with the City's Director of Corporate Services. The Board plans to conduct a line-by-line review of the budget on November 12, 2025, to examine all details closely. Additionally, the Board has hired Gallagher Consulting to perform a pay equity review which is part of the ongoing collective bargaining process. The last review was completed in 2016, and the results of this study may affect the budget further.

Chair Thomson commented on the difficulties the OSPS faces in recruiting and retaining officers. Previously, a single job posting could receive 50 or more applications, but now, they typically only receive 10. This trend is affecting police services across Ontario. Chair Thomson noted that the Ontario Association of Police Service Boards is working with the Ministry of the Solicitor General to create recruitment strategies that can be tailored for local police services. In addition to recruitment challenges, Chair Thomson indicated that there is increased competition from public

and private sector jobs that offer higher pay and lighter workloads. Chair Thomson also noted that since the CSPA came into effect in April 2024, reporting requirements and oversight from the Inspectorate of Policing have added significant additional work for the OSPS.

Chair Thomson informed Council that the OSPS received Community Safety and Policing grants for the 2025-2026 fiscal year:

- \$229,519 under the Local Priorities Funding Stream to support the Part-Time Officer Enhancement Initiative; and
- \$417,679 under the Provincial Priorities Funding Stream to help fund the Community Oriented Response and Enforcement (CORE) team.

In response to questions from Council, Chair Thomson advised that there is an Advocacy Committee that is discussing the increased reporting requirements with the Inspectorate of Policing and the Ministry of the Solicitor General. The committee is reviewing whether all of the reporting requirements are necessary or could be adjusted.

In response to a question from Council, Chair Thomson noted that the Board will be conducting a line-by-line review of the budget on November 12, 2025. He cannot provide a full explanation of the preliminary 8.35% increase until that review is complete. The Deputy Chief added that the Community Safety and Policing grant received for 2025-2026 will not be used to offset the 2026 budget, as the funding is specific to the 2025-2026 fiscal year and ends in March 2026.

In response to a question from Council, Chair Thomson advised that Chief Ambrose will provide current staffing numbers during his presentation in Closed Session.

S-251027-002

Moved by Councillor Dodd

"THAT in consideration of the Verbal Report provided October 27, 2025 from the Owen Sound Police Service Board Chair respecting a Budget Update, City Council receives the Verbal Report for information purposes."

Carried.

5. MOTION TO MOVE INTO CLOSED SESSION

S-251027-003

Moved by Councillor Middlebro'

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

- a. One matter regarding the security of the property of the municipality respecting challenges and demands on Police Services; and**
- b. One matter regarding third party information supplied in confidence to the municipality, which, if disclosed, could significantly prejudice a competitive position or interfere with negotiations respecting dispatch services."**

Carried.

Council moved into the Closed Session at 3:26 p.m.

6. REPORTING OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Boddy advised that Council returned to the open session at 4:48 p.m. All Council members and staff listed above were present except for Councillor Hamley.

During the Closed Session, City Council discussed one matter regarding the security of the property of the municipality respecting challenges and demands on Police Services, and no direction was provided.

7. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Due to time constraints, Item 7 was not discussed.

8. MOTION THAT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE RISE AND REPORT

S-251027-004

Moved by Councillor Middlebro'

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

Carried.

FORMAL SESSION

9. MOTION TO ADOPT PROCEEDINGS IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

S-251027-005

Moved by Councillor Middlebro'

Seconded by Councillor Dodd

"THAT the action taken in Committee of the Whole in considering reports, Closed Session materials, and a roundtable discussion be confirmed by this Council."

Carried.

10. BY-LAWS

10.a By-law No. 2025-116

"A By-law to confirm the proceedings of the Special Meeting of the Council of The Corporation of the City of Owen Sound held on the 27th day of October, 2025"

S-251027-006

Moved by Councillor Middlebro'

Seconded by Councillor Dodd

"THAT By-law Number 2025-116 be passed and enacted."

Carried.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The business contained on the agenda having been completed, Mayor Boddy adjourned the meeting at 4:49 p.m.

Mayor Ian C. Boddy

Briana M. Bloomfield, City Clerk