



Minutes

Operations Committee

November 20, 2025, 5:30 p.m.

City Hall - 808 2nd Avenue East - Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Scott Greig
Vice Chair Carol Merton
Member Donald Anderson
Member Arlene Blue Indoe
Member Mike Crone
Member Robert Droine
Councillor Brock Hamley
Member Michele Hawkins

MEMBERS

ABSENT/REGRETS: Councillor Suneet Kukreja

STAFF PRESENT: Tim Simmonds, City Manager
Lara Widdifield, Director of Public Works and Engineering
Heidi Jennen, Supervisor of Environmental Services
Christina McLean, Committee and Executive Support
Coordinator

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Greig called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. CALL FOR ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

- 2.a City Manager Re: Town of Blue Mountains Correspondence - Changes to Blue Box Recycling for Non-Eligible Sources
- 2.b Vice Chair Merton Re: Grey County Joint Municipal Services Committee and Blue Box Recycling for Non-Profit Sources
- 2.c Chair Greig Re: Winter Sidewalk Maintenance

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

4.a Minutes of the Operations Committee meeting held on October 16, 2025

OP-251120-001

Moved by Member Anderson

"THAT the Operations Committee approves the minutes of the meeting held on October 16, 2025."

Carried.

5. DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

5.a Deputation from Barb Wakeford Re: Harbour House Condominiums Driveway Access

Ms. Wakeford cancelled the deputation between agenda publication and the meeting taking place, so no discussion was had on the matter.

6. PUBLIC FORUM

6.a Francesca Dobbyn of United Way Bruce Grey

Ms. Dobbyn provided comments respecting charities located in the River District and the impact of the changes to blue box recycling for non eligible sources on the non-profit sector, noting that cardboard recycling will be a significant challenge for these organizations.

6.b Leigh Greaves of the Harmony Centre

Ms. Greaves provided comments respecting the impact of changes to blue box recycling for non-eligible sources on non-profit organizations and downtown businesses.

6.c David Parsons of the River District Board

Mr. Parsons provided comments on the impacts of the changes to blue box recycling for non-eligible sources on businesses in the River District.

7. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FOR WHICH DIRECTION IS REQUIRED

There were no correspondence items presented for consideration.

8. REPORTS OF CITY STAFF

8.a Environment

8.a.1 Report OP-25-040 from the Supervisor of Environmental Services Re: Collection of Non-Eligible Sources Post Blue Box Transition December 31, 2025 Follow-Up

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

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Jennen noted that there was previously a MRF (Materials Recovery Facility) on site where the waste contractor would collect, sort and market recyclable material, and added that this has since been closed so there is no longer the same revenue stream from recyclables. She added that for paper, cardboard, and boxboard there is no tonnage charge.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Jennen noted that these changes impact all municipalities. The City Manager added that many counties and regions are no longer providing collection of these materials after December 31, putting the costs back on the sources to advocate that the province review these changes.

In response to a question from Committee, Chair Greig noted that the Municipal Joint Services Committee at Grey County has designated \$250,000 towards a county-wide waste management study. He added that the County will also receive the correspondence from the Town of Blue Mountains respecting the changes in all Grey County municipalities.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Jennen noted that the \$145,000 cost outlined for Option 1 is based on estimates, and that the actual tonnage fees are not known at this time.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Jennen noted that the contractor disposes of recyclable materials at a recycling facility, and if the contractor were to receive any revenue from the sale of recycling materials, such as cardboard, it would be factored into the tonnage cost and would not be received by the City directly.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Jennen noted that for Option 3, there would be a separate container for Owen Sound businesses to drop off their tin, glass, and plastics. She added that in order for them to qualify, they would have to register through the City, and that businesses would not be able to bring garbage, just recyclables, and that the cost would be to cover tin, glass, and plastics recycling.

OP-251120-002

Moved by Councillor Hamley

"THAT in consideration of Staff Report OP-25-040 respecting Collection of Non-Eligible Sources Post Blue Box Transition December 31, 2025, the Operations Committee recommends that City Council:

1. Select Option 2.b as outlined in the report, to continue collecting non-eligible materials from all non-eligible properties for up to 3 months; and

2. Direct staff to include Option 2 in the 2026 Mayor's Budget."

Carried.

OP-251120-003

Moved by Vice Chair Merton

"THAT the Operations Committee waive the notice of motion requirement in the City's Procedural By-law in order to discuss the motion from the Town of Blue Mountains respecting blue box recycling."

Carried.

OP-251120-004

Moved by Vice Chair Merton

"THAT in consideration of correspondence received on November 20, 2025 from the Town of Blue Mountains respecting changes to Blue Box recycling for non-eligible sources, the Operations Committee recommends that City Council:

1. Support the resolution passed by the Town of Blue Mountains to encourage Grey County municipalities with vested interests in Blue Box recycling to consider working together for their Blue Box materials for the Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (ICI) locations; and

2. Direct staff to forward this motion of support to Grey County."

Carried.

Councillor Hamley declared a conflict of interest at this time due to his personal employment with the Government of Ontario and left the Council Chambers.

OP-251120-005

Moved by Vice Chair Merton

"WHEREAS the Province of Ontario designated producers to be responsible to collect recycling in the Province;

AND WHEREAS nonprofit organizations, including our local food banks and social service support agencies have been deemed ineligible for producer blue box collection effective January 1 2026;

AND WHEREAS food and income insecurity is a local, provincial and federal issue;

AND WHEREAS local food banks and local food support programs, and additional support agencies like the United Way backpack program, need to receive items that are delivered in cardboard boxes and cartons which generate copious amounts of recyclable material;

AND WHEREAS these programs and services support the most vulnerable in our communities, and are volunteer and donation based with no revenue collected to pay for services such as removal of recyclable materials;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Operations Committee recommends that Owen Sound City Council direct staff to send a letter that strongly urges the Province to re-instate the eligibility for curbside blue box collection beginning January 1, 2026, for charitable organizations, such as food banks, local food support services and United Way programs;

AND FURTHER THAT this motion be forwarded to the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, the Honorable Todd J. McCarthy, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, Paul Vickers, MPP Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario."

Carried.

Councillor Hamley returned to his chair.

8.b Engineering

None.

8.c Public Works

None.

8.d Transit

None.

8.e Water and Wastewater

None.

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 Town of Blue Mountains Correspondence - Changes to Blue Box Recycling for Non-Eligible Sources

This matter was discussed during Item 8.a.1.

12.b Grey County Joint Municipal Services Committee and Blue Box Recycling for Non-Profit Sources

This matter was discussed during Item 8.a.1.

12.c Winter Sidewalk Maintenance

Chair Greig inquired about winter sidewalk maintenance in the City.

Ms. Widdifield noted that currently most sidewalks are cleared of snow, though some are unable to be completed due to the smaller width of older sidewalks or uneven surfaces.

13. NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no notices of motion.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The business contained on the agenda having been completed, Chair Greig adjourned the meeting at 6:39 p.m.