



**The Corporation of the Township of Norwich
Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday May 26, 2026
Regular Council Meeting**

In Attendance:

Council:

Mayor Jim Palmer
Councillor Toews
Councillor DePlancke
Councillor Gear
Councillor Couwenberg

Staff:

Matt Smith, Chief Administrative Officer
Kimberley Armstrong, Director of Corporate Services/Clerk
Dirk Kramer, Deputy Chief Building Official/Drainage Superintendent
Ken Farkas, Director of Operations
Sean McCoy, Deputy Clerk/Planning Coordinator

1. Call to Order

The regular session of the 2022-2026 Council of the Township of Norwich was held in the Council Chambers, Norwich, commencing at 7:00 p.m. with Mayor Palmer presiding.

2. Approval of Agenda

Resolution #1

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That the Agenda be accepted as presented.

Carried

3. Public Recognition / Presentations

None.

4. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

None.

5. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)

5.1 May 12, 2026

The minutes were amended to include the number of speed signs in Section 3 and advise that the cost was for each sign.

Resolution #2

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That the following Minutes of the Township of Norwich Council be adopted as amended:

May 12, 2026

Carried

6. Public Meetings / Hearings

6.1 The Municipal Act

None.

6.2 The Drainage Act

None.

6.3 The Planning Act

Resolution #3

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That pursuant to Section 34(12) of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, as amended, Chapter P.13, this Council conduct a public meeting in respect to an application for amendment to Zoning By-law 07-2003-Z by Estate of Hedwig Stockmans, File Number ZN 3-26-03.

Carried

The Mayor advised that this meeting is being constituted as being a public meeting held under the Planning Act for the purpose of hearing Zoning Amendment proposals and affording any person in attendance the opportunity to make a presentation to Council.

The Ontario Land Tribunal has the power to dismiss an appeal under subsection (25) if an appellant has not provided the Council with oral submissions at a public meeting or a written submission before a by-law is passed under this section.

The Mayor instructed anyone in attendance with respect to this application to please sign the attendance sheet at the door.

6.3.1 Applicant: Estate of Hedwig Stockmans

File No.: ZN 3-26-03

Report No.: CP 2026-178

Location: Part Lot 8, Concession 11 (South Norwich) Southeast corner of New Road and Coal Line, Township of Norwich, ON

Details of Proposed Amendment: To rezone the subject lands from 'General Agricultural Zone (A2)' to 'Special General Agricultural Zone (A2-sp)' to permit a single detached dwelling to be constructed on an undersized agricultural parcel (approximately 0.84 ha (2.07 ac) in size) within a 0.4 ha (1 ac) building envelope. Ms. Suzanne Sandhu and Mr. Edward Stockmans, applicants, and Ms. Roxanne Lambrect, agent, were in attendance representing the application.

Ms. Amy Hartley, Development Planner, provided an overview of the application as contained within Report CP 2026-178. She advised that this application has been submitted to permit a dwelling on an undersized agricultural parcel. She advised that a letter of concern was received from an adjacent property owner citing concerns regarding MDS requirements and their ability to construct new livestock buildings in the future.

In response to questions from Council, Ms. Hartley explained that the landowner that expressed concerns was located to the north and explained that the existing cemetery and residential property to the east would cause more expansion restrictions than the proposed lot to be rezoned. She advised that the landowner was unable to attend the public meeting.

Ms. Roxanne Lampret, agent on behalf of the applicants, further explained that if the neighbouring landowner added 100 head of cattle the MDS distance would need to be 482 feet and the lot line is currently 800 feet from the existing barn. She also explained that future expansion would need to be more north and west, which would be even further from the lot.

There was Council discussion about general concerns with residential impacts on agricultural operations, that this lot could not reasonably be farmed and existing lots already impacting future expansion of the neighbouring livestock operations.

There was no one in attendance that wished to speak in support of or in opposition to the application.

Resolution #4

Moved by Lynne DePlancke, seconded by Karl Toews:

That the Public Meeting held pursuant to the Planning Act be closed.

Carried

Resolution #5

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Lynne DePlancke:

That with respect to the application to amend Zoning By-law 07-2003-Z, by the Estate of Hedwig Stockmans, for lands described Pt Lt 8, Concession 11 (South Norwich) in the Township of Norwich, whereby the lands are to be rezoned from 'General Agricultural Zone (A2)' to 'Special General Agricultural Zone (A2-sp)' to facilitate the construction of a single detached dwelling on an undersized agricultural parcel, the Council of the Township of Norwich hereby approve the zone change.

Carried

6.4 Other
None.

7. Delegations
None.

8. Correspondence

8.1 Long Point Region Conservation Authority
Re: Board of Directors Meeting Minutes – April 1, 2026

8.2 Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development
Re: Regional Economic Development through Immigration (REDI) – Frequently Asked Questions

8.3 Oxford Community Foundation
Re: OCFootprints Spring 2026 Newsletter

8.4 Hydro One Networks Inc.
Re: Upgrades to Electrical Meters

8.5 Township of Springwater
Re: Provincial Bill 100 – Better Regional Governance Act, 2026

8.6 Town of Richmond Hill
Re: Integrated Living and Participation Model for Adults with Developmental Disabilities

8.7 Town of Bruce Mines
Re: Bill 97, Plan to Protect Ontario Act 2026 -Schedule 7

8.8 County of Prince Edward
Re: Vacant Commercial Storefront Tax
There was Council discussion regarding support of item 8.5 and concerns with trends towards concentration of authority at the province.

Resolution #6

Moved by Lynne DePlancke, seconded by Karl Toews:

That the Correspondence as listed in Agenda Item 8.1 to 8.8 be received as information;

And further that Council support 8.5 and 8.6.

Carried

9. Committee Minutes

9.1 Canada Day Committee

Re: Meeting Minutes – May 12, 2026

Resolution #7

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That the following Committee Minutes, be received as information:

Canada Day Committee
Re: Meeting Minutes – May 12, 2026

Carried

10. Reports

10.1 Building Services

10.1.1 Richardson Drain Improvement 2026 Report

Report DR 2026-13

In response to Council concerns, Mr. Kramer advised that the contractor for the Simmons-Hopkins drain is unable to commit to a construction date. Mr. Smith advised that staff would review the procurement policy and have a recommendation regarding next steps for the Simmons-Hopkins drain contract included in the monthly drainage report at the next meeting.

Resolution #8

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That Report DR 2026-13, Richardson Drain Improvement 2026 Report, be received as information;

And that the Council of the Township of Norwich acknowledge receipt of the engineer's Richardson Drain Improvement 2026 report, dated May 6, 2026;

And that Council direct staff to schedule a Public Meeting to be held on June 16, 2026, to consider the report;

And that Staff be directed to mail a Notice of Public Meeting along with the report to all persons assessed to this drainage works in accordance with the Drainage Act.

Carried

10.2 Operations

10.2.1 Award of Tender – Brock Street Reconstruction

Report OP 2026-19

In response to questions from Council, Mr. Farkas advised that the engineer portions out the costs which are then discussed and agreed upon by the county and township. He further clarified that Oxford County has approved the works and contractor and are ready to proceed.

Resolution #9

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That report OP-2026-19 Award of Tender – Brock Street Reconstruction, be received for information;

And that Council award Tender PW-2026-02 to Navacon Construction Inc.;

And that Council authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute the agreement between the Township of Norwich and Navacon Construction Inc.;

And that Council authorize the use of Development Charges for a portion of the Brock Street Reconstruction Project, in place of other road reconstruction projects identified in the 2024 Development Charges Background Study.

Carried

10.3 Financial Services

10.3.1 Council Financial Summary as at April 30, 2026

Report FS 2026-10

Resolution #10

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Lynne DePlancke:

That Report FS 2026-10, Council Financial Summary as at April 30, 2026, be received as information.

Carried

10.4 Corporate Services

10.4.1 2026 Canada Day Committee - Appointment of Additional Members

Report CS 2026-05

Resolution #11

Moved by Lynne DePlancke, seconded by Karl Toews:

That Report CS 2026-05, 2026 Canada Day Committee - Appointment of Additional Members, be received for information;

And that the following be appointed as members of the 2026 Canada Day Committee: Johanna Veldhuizen and William Overbeek;

And that the resignation of Wilson Owuer from the 2026 Canada Day Committee be accepted.

Carried

10.5 Chief Administrative Officer

10.5.1 Development Charges

Report CAO 2026-19

There was Council discussion and questions regarding the benefits of amending the By-Law to reduce or exempt the development charges for non-residential classes and potentially cap that reduction at a certain amount; the difference in process for reducing development charges as opposed to increasing them; the recommendation to review and update development charges studies every 5 years; how the implementation of development charges may impact new non-residential development in the Township and the long-term costs associated with that; potentially implementing a progressive step-up reduction based on square footage of the development; and reviewing discounted rates and exemptions that have been applied in neighbouring municipalities.

Mr. Smith advised that reducing or exempting a rate would require a By-Law amendment, however to increase rates after a previous reduction would require some public engagement, a potential update to the study and would have an appeal period. He also explained that although the development charges study was coordinated by the County, it did include local developers in the discussions and no appeals were received. Mr. Smith further commented that none of the other rural municipalities had implemented any non-residential exemptions or reductions for development charges.

Resolution #12

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Lynne DePlancke:

That Council direct staff to bring forward a by-law to amend the Township Development Charges By-law to reduce the non-residential development by 35% for industrial and commercial development.

Councillor Couwenberg requested a recorded vote.

Councillor Couwenberg	Nay
Councillor DePlancke	Yea
Councillor Gear	Yea
Mayor Palmer	Yea

Councillor Toews Yea

Carried

10.5.2 Township Communications Plan

Report CAO 2026-20

There was Council discussion and questions regarding outsourcing communication functions, website upgrades to support online swimming registration, general Township staffing increases, the possibility of department heads maintaining the website, and using the modernization fund to cover the costs of the pilot communications program.

Resolution #13

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That report CAO-2026-20 Township Communications Plan be received for information;

And that Council approve the Township Communications Plan as presented;

And that Council authorize the creation of a new Communications Coordinator/Executive Assistant position on an initial 18 month contract, to be funded from the Modernization Reserve;

And that Council authorize the additional transfer of up to \$20,000 from the Modernization Reserve in 2026 to fund communications activities, including the creation of a print newsletter delivered to each property in the Township, to be issued prior to the 2026 municipal and school board elections.

Councillor Couwenberg requested a recorded vote.

Councillor Couwenberg	Nay
Councillor DePlancke	Yea
Councillor Gear	Nay
Mayor Palmer	Yea
Councillor Toews	Nay

Lost

11. Notice(s) of Motion

None.

12. Closed Session

None.

13. By-Laws

No. 08-2026-Z To Amend Zoning By-law 07-2003-Z (Estate of Hedwig Stockman, File No. ZN 3-26-03)

No. 27-2026 To Confirm All Actions and Proceedings of Council

13.1 First and Second Reading of the Following By-laws

Resolution #14

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That the following By-law as listed, be introduced and taken as read a first and second time:

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| No. 08-2026-Z | To Amend Zoning By-law 07-2003-Z (Estate of Hedwig Stockman, File No. ZN 3-26-03) |
| No. 27-2026 | To Confirm All Actions and Proceedings of Council |

Carried

13.2 Third Reading of the Following By-laws

Resolution #15

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That By-laws 08-2026-Z and 27-2026 as listed, be taken as read a third and final time and passed and signed by the Mayor and Clerk and the Corporate Seal be affixed thereto.

Carried

14. Adjournment – 8:46 p.m.

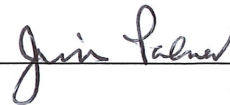
Resolution #16

Moved by Lynne DePlancke, seconded by Karl Toews:

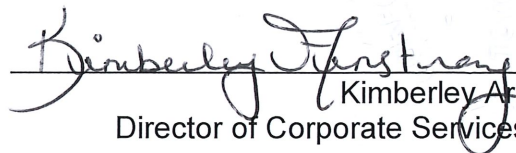
That this Council do now adjourn.

Carried

These minutes adopted by way of Resolution No. 2 as approved by Council at its meeting on the 16th day of June, 2026.



Jim Palmer
Mayor



Kimberley Armstrong
Director of Corporate Services / Clerk