



**The Corporation of the Township of Norwich  
Council Meeting Minutes  
Friday December 12, 2025  
Council Meeting – Capital Budget**

**In Attendance:**

**Council:**

Mayor Jim Palmer  
Councillor Toews  
Councillor DePlancke  
Councillor Gear  
Councillor Couwenberg

**Staff:**

Matt Smith, Chief Administrative Officer  
James Johnson, Treasurer/Deputy CAO  
Kimberley Armstrong, Director of Corporate Services/Clerk  
Derek Van Pagee, Director of Fire and Protective Services  
Ken Farkas, Director of Operations  
Jason Simpson, Director of Building Services/Chief Building Official  
Dirk Kramer, Deputy Chief Building Official/Drainage Superintendent  
A.J. Wells, Manager of Medical Services  
James Schaafsma, Manager of Parks and Facilities  
Al Foster, Manager of Public Works  
Sean McCoy, Deputy Clerk/Planning Coordinator

**1. Call to Order**

The Capital Budget Meeting of the 2022-2026 Council of the Township of Norwich was held in the Council Chambers, Norwich, commencing at 11:00 a.m. with Mayor Palmer presiding.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

Resolution #1

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Lynne DePlancke:

That the Agenda be accepted as presented.

Carried

**3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest**

No disclosures were reported.

**4. 2026 Capital Budget Presentation**

Mr. Johnson provided an overview of the 2026 Capital Budget and projects forecasted in the 10-Year Plan. He explained that project sheets are included this year to provide additional detailed information about each project. He advised that funding for Capital projects includes: the Canada Community Building Fund (formerly gas tax), Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund, donations, debentures, development charges, parkland levy fees, tax levy, and reserve funds. Mr. Johnson explained that many of the reserves are not fully funded representing an infrastructure gap. The tax levy applied to the Capital Budget goes towards debt servicing and capital reserve contributions, with projects being funded from those capital reserves. Mr. Johnson then provided examples illustrating perfectly funded and underfunded reserves.

Mr. Johnson commented that the Capital Budget is the first of three budgets, the other two being Community Grants and the Operating Budget. These total approximately \$11 Million and does not include amounts levied for education or the County of Oxford. Mr. Johnson also advised that scheduling the Capital Budget first allows staff to receive early approval of projects for tender circulation which may reduce costs.

In response to questions from Council, Mr. Johnson explained that some reserve funds are required through legislation, like the Parkland Dedication Reserve. He also explained that many of the reserves fund multiple projects and equipment under a single reserve. He further advised that cancelling a project or capital purchase would not reduce a contribution on an underfunded reserve.

Mr. Johnson advised that the 2026 Capital Budget represented a 3.4% increase to the overall levy.

There was Council discussion and questions regarding the inflation rates for Consumer Price Index versus the Building Construction Price Index, opportunities to shift funding between reserves, asset lifecycle management, and debenture payment timelines for certain projects.

Mr. Johnson provided a summary of the projects scheduled for 2026.

Under General Government, there was Council discussion and questions regarding the proposal for each Councillor to be issued a cell phone and consideration to extending the lifecycle of Councillor laptops.

**Resolution #2**

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That the Councillor Laptop project be removed from the budget; and

That the Council Laptop replacement schedule be changed from a four year cycle to a six year cycle; and

That the reserve contribution for Councillor Technology be reduced from \$2,500 to \$1,700; and

That the \$800 contribution be transferred to the Roads Reserve.

Carried

There was Council discussion and questions regarding furniture and lighting replacement projects. Staff advised that the existing staff work stations are comprised of used furniture purchased over ten years ago and pieced together, additionally staff chairs are quite old and not meeting ergonomical needs.

**Resolution #3**

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Lynne DePlancke:

That the administration office chairs be reduced by \$11,300 in the 2026 Capital Budget.

Carried

**Resolution #4**

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That the ceiling light replacement be limited to the front foyer lights in the 2026 Capital Budget and the amount reduced by \$6,500.

Carried

In response to questions from Council, Mr. Johnson advised that the purpose of the Contingency Fund is for emergencies since government grants only apply once emergency related costs have exceeded 3% of the levy. Also, he explained that the contingency fund may also be used as a levy stabilization fund for major projects.

Under Protection Services, there was Council discussion and questions regarding IT equipment for managing calls and training, truck lifecycle and costs, and HVAC system requirements for Ministry of Labour cancer prevention standards.

**Resolution #5**

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That the Building Department vehicle replacement be deferred to the 2027 Capital Budget.

Carried

Under Transportation Services, there was Council discussion and questions regarding the Brock Street and Smiths Lane projects, guiderail costs, the Maple Dell bridge resealing project and the location of the culvert projects. Mr. Johnson advised that OCIF and CCBF grants in the approximate amount of \$826,000 are covering a portion of the Brock Street project.

Council recessed at 1:01 p.m.

Council resumed at 1:30 p.m.

There was Council discussion and questions regarding; the urbanization project in Burgessville and associated sidewalk and streetlight works, the condition of Pick-Up Truck 3, light fixtures to be replaced and the Operations Centre parking lot paving project, including County contributions to that project.

**Resolution #6**

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Karl Toews:

That the Operations Centre parking lot paving in the amount of \$130,000 be removed from 2026 Capital Budget.

Carried

Under Health Services, there was Council discussion regarding computer replacements, flooring lifecycles and the purpose of the vaccine refrigerator. In response to questions, Mr. Wells explained that as part of the physician agreements, the municipality provides a turn-key facility.

Under Recreation and Culture, there was Council discussion and questions regarding the proposed Otterville Pool feasibility study. Mr. Smith explained the benefits of a study to help with planning for the future pool replacement, including: design, accessibility, location, cost, etc.

**Resolution #7**

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That the Otterville Pool Feasibility Study in the amount of \$50,000 be removed from the 2026 Capital Budget.

Carried

There was Council discussion about the cost to repair the dance hall and the offer from the Friends of the Otterville Park to donate \$3500 towards painting costs. Staff explained that there are exterior boards that need to be replaced and it needs to be painted inside and outside. There are also considerations when doing work to a historically designated building.

**Resolution #8**

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That the Otterville Park Dance Hall be reduced to \$10,000 in the 2026 Capital Budget.

Carried

There was discussion about budgets for playground repairs, staff equipment replacement, soliciting funding for maintenance from donors, insurance costs to repair damaged equipment and other Township property, the tree planting program and the tables and chairs replacement program. Mr. Farkas commented that Harold Bishop Park has aging equipment, some of which you cannot source parts for and they must be made. Mr. Schaafsma spoke to the amount of damage/vandalism taking place in the parks.

**Resolution #9**

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That the Table and Chair Replacement Program be reduced to \$8,000 in the 2026 Capital Budget.

Carried

There was Council discussion and questions regarding Kubota Tractor, including maintenance requirements, resale values, and service hours.

**Resolution #10**

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Karl Toews:

That the 2014 Kubota Tractor in the amount of \$95,000 be removed from the 2026 Capital Budget.

Carried

There was Council discussion regarding arena painting and wall repairs, and the Norwich Community Centre doors project.

**Resolution #11**

Moved by Lynne DePlancke, seconded by Karl Toews:

That Council approve the 2026 Capital Budget as amended;

And further that Council direct staff to bring forward By-Law to adopt the 2026 Capital Budget at the January 13, 2026 Regular Meeting.

Carried

**6. By-Laws**  
**No. 61-2025 To Confirm All Actions and Proceedings of Council**

**6.1 First and Second Reading of the Following By-law(s)**

Resolution #12

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Lynne DePlancke:

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

No. 61-2025 To Confirm All Actions and Proceedings of Council

Carried

**13.2 Third Reading of the Following By-law(s)**

Resolution #13

Moved by Lynne DePlancke, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That By-law 61-2025 as listed, be taken as read a third and final time and passed and signed by the Deputy Mayor and Clerk and the Corporate Seal be affixed thereto.

Carried

**14. Adjournment – 3:02 p.m.**

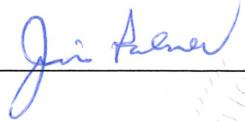
Resolution #14

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Lynne DePlancke:

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 13<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2026.



Jim Palmer  
Mayor



Kimberley Armstrong  
Director of Corporate Services/Clerk