



**The Corporation of the Township of Norwich
Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday November 11, 2025
Regular Council Meeting**

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 Patee, 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
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 1:00 p.m. with Mayor Palmer presiding.

The Mayor advised that the Council meeting time was changed from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. out of respect for the Remembrance Day ceremony, which was well attended including many students from local schools.

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 October 28, 2025

Resolution #2

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That the following Minutes of the Township of Norwich Council be adopted as printed and circulated:

October 28, 2025

Carried

6. Public Meetings / Hearings

6.1 The Municipal Act

None.

6.2 The Drainage Act

The Mayor advised that as per Section 78 of the Drainage Act, R.S.O. 1990, as amended, this Public Meeting is being constituted to consider the Engineers Report for the Chant Drain Improvement 2025.

All owners and agencies were sent notification of the meeting to consider the reports on October 22, 2025.

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

6.2.1 Consideration of Engineers Report

Re: Chant Drain Improvement 2025

Report DR 2025-38

Mr. Michael Siemon, Project Lead, and Mr. Trevor Kuepfer, Project Engineer, Streamline Engineering Inc., provided an overview of the project which includes: construction of approximately 15 meters of channel, improvement of approximately 815 meters of municipal tile drain to current design standards which includes a new Oxford Road 59 crossing. The total estimated cost for this project is \$213,000, with \$61,700 assessed to County owned lands and \$151,300 assessed to privately owned lands.

In response to questions from Council, Mr. Siemon and Mr. Kuepfer explained that the drain originally continues south of the highway, but the proposed improvement ends at

the southern right of way of Highway 59. Crosses the right of way up to the Koppert property, and historically carried on through that property, but the recommendation is that flooding experienced on that property can be addressed with private tiling.

There was no one in attendance that wished to speak to the drainage works.

Resolution #3

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That Report DR 2025-38, Consideration of the Chant Drain Improvement 2025 be received as information;

And that in accordance with Sections 44 to 46 of the Drainage Act, Council of the Township of Norwich hereby adopts Chant Drain Improvement 2025 Engineer's report dated September 29, 2025, referred to as the "Chant Drain Improvement 2025",

And that Provisional By-law 54-2025 be given first and second reading;

And that the Clerk be directed to distribute copies of the Provisional By-law and Notice of the time and place of the first sitting of the Court of Revision to the affected parties pursuant to Section 46(2) of the Drainage Act;

And that a date of December 9th, 2025, be set for the first sitting of the Court of Revision.

Carried

6.3 The Planning Act

Resolution # 4

Moved by Lynne DePlancke, seconded by Karl Toews:

That the following members sit as the Committee of Adjustment for the Township of Norwich: Chair Shawn Gear and Members: Jim Palmer, Karl Toews, Lynne DePlancke and Adrian Couwenberg;

And further that the Committee of Adjustment is now convened.

Carried

Committee of Adjustment

The Chair advised that this public meeting of the Committee of Adjustment is being held for the purpose of hearing Minor Variance proposals and affording any person in attendance the opportunity to make a presentation to the Committee.

If an eligible applicant appealing a decision of the Committee of Adjustment in respect of the proposed minor variance does not provide written submissions or

make oral submissions at a public meeting, the Ontario Land Tribunal may dismiss all or part of the appeal.

The Chair directed that if anyone was in attendance with respect to this application, that they please sign the attendance sheet at the door and if they wished to receive a copy of the decision, to please provide their name and email address to the Deputy Clerk.

6.3.1 Applicant: David and Patricia Martin

File No.: A-23-25

Report No.: CP 2025-315

Location: Part Lot 4, Concession 2 (East Oxford) Parts 1 & 2 41R-3465, 565900 Towerline Road, Township of Norwich

Details of Proposed Variance: Relief of Table 5.6.2.4 – Provisions for Detached Additional Residential Units (ARU), to permit a detached ARU on a parcel zoned 'General Agricultural Zone (A2)' within a proposed agricultural storage building.

Mr. David Martin and Ms. Patricia Martin, applicants, and Mr. Jeff Martin, agent, were in attendance representing the application.

Ms. Amy Hartley, Development Planner, provided an overview of the application as contained within Report CP 2025-315. She advised that the application is to permit a detached Additional Residential Unit (ARU) on the subject property. It was identified by staff that an additional variance was required to increase the gross floor area from 1,507 sq. ft to 1,560 sq. ft, due to a proposed covered porch which contributes to the total area. Ms. Hartley explained that the ARU is proposed within a portion of an agricultural storage building and the remainder of the building will be used for storage. The subject lands contain a single detached dwelling with attached garage and are used for cash-cropping purposes.

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

Resolution #5

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Lynne DePlancke:

That with respect to the application by David and Patricia Martin File No. A 23-25, for a Minor Variance for lands described as Part of Lot 4, Concession 2 (East Oxford) being Parts 1 and 2, Plan 41R-4197, municipally known as 565900 Towerline Road, in the Township of Norwich, for relief from Table 5.6.2.4 – Provisions for detached Additional Residential Units (ARUs), to permit a detached ARU on a parcel zoned 'General Agricultural Zone (A2)'; and Table 5.6.2.3 – Provisions for all Additional Residential Units (ARUs), to increase the maximum permitted cumulative gross floor area from 140 m² (1,507 ft²) to 144.9 m² (1,560 ft²), to construct a new agricultural storage building containing an Additional Residential Unit, the Committee of Adjustment hereby approve the requested minor variance.

Carried

Resolution #6

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Lynne DePlancke:

Be it hereby resolved that the Committee of Adjustment do now adjourn and that the Regular Council meeting resumes.

Carried

6.4 Other
None.

7. Delegations
None.

8. Correspondence

8.1 Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

Re: Government of Ontario's Conservation Authority Consolidation Announcement

8.2 Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Re: Drinking Water Protection

8.3 Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Re: Bill 17 – Changes to Development Charges Act and the Ontario Building Code

8.4 Western Ontario Wardens Caucus

Re: Western Ontario Funders Forum

8.5 Township of Bluewater

Re: To Urge the Federal Government to Keep Climate Change as a Foremost National Priority

8.6 Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury

Re: Removing HST/GST from New Homes to Support Housing Affordability

8.7 Municipality of Wawa

Re: Request for Accessible and Accountable Alcohol Container Return System

8.8 Niagara Region

Re: State of Emergency on Mental Health, Homelessness and Addictions

8.9 Halton Region

Re: Public Safety Requirements to Protect Our Communities

8.10 Township of Southgate
Re: Increased Income Support Thresholds for Canadian Veterans

8.11 Municipality of Bluewater
Re: Closure of Before and After School Programs

8.12 Township of Tay Valley
Re: Collaborative Action on Sustainable Waste Management in Ontario
There was Council discussion regarding alcohol container return systems and the possibility of local groups raising money by collecting containers.

Resolution #7

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That the Correspondence as listed in Agenda Item 8.1 to 8.12 be received as information;

And further that 8.7 and 8.12 be supported.

Carried

9. Committee Minutes

9.1 Norwich BIA
Re: Meeting Minutes – October 7, 2025

Resolution #8

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That the following Committee Minutes, be received as information:

Norwich BIA

Re: Meeting Minutes – October 7, 2025

Carried

10. Reports

10.1 Fire and Protective Services

10.2.1 Monthly Activities – October 2025

Report FP 2025-18

Resolution #9

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That Report FP 2025-18, Monthly Activity Report – October 2025, be received as information.

Carried

10.2 Building Services

10.2.1 Monthly Activities - October 2025

Report BB 2025-13

In response to questions from Council, Mr. Simpson explained information has been added to the reports to identify increases in floor area resulting from permits issued. Mr. Simpson also explained that fees charged for permits are done so pursuant to the fees by-law and he plans to propose a review of fees in 2026 for Council's consideration.

Resolution #10

Moved by Lynne DePlancke, seconded by Karl Toews:

That Report BB 2025-13, October 2025 Building Services Activity, be received as information.

Carried

10.2.2 Monthly Activities – October 2025

Report DR 2025-37

Resolution #11

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Lynne DePlancke:

That Report DR 2025-37, October 2025 Drainage Services Activity, be received as information.

Carried

10.2.3 Vermeersch Branch Engineers Report

Report DR 2025-39

Resolution #12

Moved by Lynne DePlancke, seconded by Karl Toews:

That Report DR 2025-39, Vermeersch Branch Report, be received as information;

And that the Council of the Township of Norwich acknowledge receipt of the engineer's Vermeersch Branch report, dated October 7th, 2025;

And that Council direct staff to schedule a Public Meeting to be held on December 9th, 2025, 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

10.3 Operations

10.3.1 Public Works Monthly Report – October 2025

Report OP 2025-02

There was Council discussion and questions regarding positive public feedback from the 50th Anniversary facility tours, yard waste depot rules, and road patrol training.

Resolution #13

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That Report OP 2025-02, Public Works Monthly Report – October 2025, be received as information.

Carried

10.3.2 Parks and Facilities Monthly Report - October 2025

OP 2025-03

Resolution #14

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That Report OP 2025-03, Parks and Facilities Monthly Activity Report – October 2025, be received as information.

Carried

10.4 Financial Services

10.4.1 Monthend Statistical Report – October 2025

Report FS 2025-13

There was Council discussion and questions regarding potential impacts of early winter maintenance, responsible budgeting, and reporting for insurance claims.

Resolution #15

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That Report FS 2025-13, Council Financial Summary as at October 31, 2025, be received as information.

Carried

10.4.2 Recognition of Staff

Report FS 2025-14

There was Council discussion and questions regarding options for a Christmas meal that would include all staff, including potentially coordinating an event outside of office hours, staff engagement, including staff recognition for years of service, and revisiting the idea of a Christmas meal in 2026 to allow more time for planning.

Resolution #16

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Lynne DePlancke:

That Report FS 2025-14, Holiday Recognition of Staff, be received as information;

And that a holiday gift be granted to full-time, contract and part-time employees of the municipality for a total of \$6,500 as outlined in this report.

Carried

10.5 Chief Administrative Officer

10.5.1 Capital Project Deferrals and Cancellations

Report CAO 2025-17

There was Council discussion and questions regarding reserve funding and corresponding tax levy impacts, prioritizing underfunded reserve funds for allocating contributions, and the reasons capital projects get deferred or cancelled.

Mr. Smith advised that he had identified some errors in the report's recommendation which had been carried onto the motion.

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Karl Toews:

That the report be deferred to the following meeting to allow staff to review and correct the recommendation.

Carried

10.5.2 Pickleball Promotional Sign

Report CAO 2025-18

Resolution #17

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Lynne DePlancke:

That Report CAO 2025-18, Pickleball Promotional Sign, be received for information;

And that Council of the Township of Norwich hereby approve the display of the pickleball promotional sign, and associated advertising on the Norwich Community Centre property for a period of 60 days.

Carried

10.5.3 Councillor Gear – October 28 Verbal Notice of Motion

Re: Automated Speed Enforcement

There was Council discussion regarding new legislation banning the use of speed cameras, potential funding for proactive traffic calming measures, and speeding issues in the Township.

Resolution #18

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

Whereas, Council of the Township of Norwich has identified Pedestrian and Traffic Safety as one of the core pillars of its Strategic Plan for the 2022 to 2026 term of Council;

Whereas, Council has contracted with the Ontario Provincial Police to provide an enhancement officer focused on speeding enforcement in the Township at an annual cost of over \$190,000, and has implemented a Traffic Calming Policy as part of Council's commitment to improved pedestrian and traffic safety;

Whereas, the Province of Ontario enacted Ontario Regulation 398/19 Automated Speed Enforcement under the Highway Traffic Act in 2019 to allow Ontario municipalities to use Automated Speed Enforcement Cameras as an additional tool to address speeding and improve public safety;

Whereas, research from respected non-partisan organizations including Sick Kids Hospital, Toronto Metropolitan University, the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, the Canadian Automobile Association and the Ontario Traffic Council has clearly demonstrated that Automated Speed Enforcement results in significant reductions in speed and increased compliance in priority areas such as School Zones;

Whereas, Council of the Township of Norwich has previously supported the plan put forward by the County of Oxford to operate Automated Speed Enforcement cameras, and wishes to partner with the County to improve road safety in the Township; and

Whereas, the Province of Ontario has now enacted Bill 65, which repeals Part XIV.1 of the Highway Traffic Act and removes the ability for municipalities to use Automated Speed Enforcement.

Therefore, be it resolved that Council of the Township of Norwich urges the Province of Ontario to reconsider its decision to prohibit the use of Automated Speed Enforcement as a public safety tool; and

That Council further requests that the provincial government enact legislation to permit the use of Automated Speed Enforcement within municipalities, subject to clear regulations and standards for such enforcement programs, including guidance on how income from such programs must be reinvested in traffic and pedestrian safety; and

That this resolution be distributed to Premier Doug Ford, Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria, Minister of Transportation, Hon. Ernie Hardeman, MPP for Oxford, the County of Oxford and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

Carried

11. Notice(s) of Motion

11.1 Notice of Motion – Councillor Toews

Re: Customer Service Survey

Councillor Toews provided a brief summary of his motion, which will be before Council at the next meeting.

Prior to Closed Session, Mayor Palmer introduced Ms. Jamie O’Leary, who recently began her role as the Township’s Operations Coordinator.

12. Closed Session

2:52 p.m.

Resolution #19

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That pursuant to the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, Chapter 25, Section 239(2), Council convene in a meeting closed to the public to discuss personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees.

Carried

12.1 Personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees

2026 Canada Day Committee Appointment

Confidential Report CL 2025-17

12.2 Personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees

Re: Performance Review

12.3 Closed Meeting Minutes

Re: Confidential Minutes – October 14, 2025

3:22 p.m.

Resolution #20

Moved by Lynne DePlancke, seconded by Karl Toews:

That the Council do now reconvene in open session.

Carried

Resolution #21

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Lynne DePlancke:

That Report CL 2025-17, 2026 Canada Day Committee Appointments, be received for information;

And further that Mary Sue Hampson be appointed as a member of the 2026 Canada Day Committee.

Carried

- 13. By-Laws**
No. 54-2025 To Provide for Drainage Works – Chant Municipal Drain
No. 55-2025 To Confirm All Actions and Proceedings of Council

13.1 First and Second Reading of the Following By-laws

Resolution #22

Moved by Lynne DePlancke, seconded by Karl Toews:

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

No. 54-2025	To Provide for Drainage Works – Chant Municipal Drain
No. 55-2025	To Confirm All Actions and Proceedings of Council

Carried

13.2 Third Reading of the Following By-laws

Resolution #23

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That By-laws 54-2025 and 55-2025 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 – 3:25 p.m.

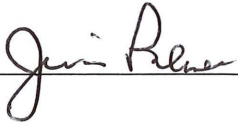
Resolution #24

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

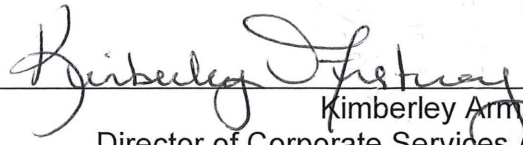
That this Council do now adjourn.

Carried

These minutes adopted by way of Resolution No. 2 as approved by Council at its meeting on the 25th day of November, 2025.



Jim Palmer
Mayor



Kimberley Armstrong
Director of Corporate Services / Clerk