



**The Corporation of the Township of Norwich
Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday March 10, 2026
Regular Council Meeting**

In Attendance:

Council:

Mayor Jim Palmer
Councillor Toews
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
A.J. Wells, Manager of Medical Services
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 9:00 a.m. with Mayor Palmer presiding.

2. Approval of Agenda

Resolution #1

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That the Agenda be accepted as presented.

Carried

3. Public Recognition / Presentations

None.

4. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

Mayor Palmer disclosed an indirect interest in item 7.1, Delegation of Matthew Lloyd and Marie Avey from the Norwich & District Historical Society Re: Proposed Monument for the Norwich Pioneer Cemetery, Quaker Street.

5. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)

5.1 February 24, 2026

5.2 February 26, 2026 – Operating Budget

5.3 February 26, 2026 – Special Session

Councillor Couwenberg requested that the Operating Budget Minutes be amended to include reference to the Council discussion regarding Oxford County reserve funds.

Resolution #2

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Karl Toews:

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

February 24, 2026

February 26, 2026 – Operating Budget

February 26, 2026 – Special Session

And further that the Operating Budget minutes be amended to included reference to the discussion about Oxford County reserves.

Carried

6. Public Meetings / Hearings

6.1 The Municipal Act

None.

6.2 The Drainage Act

Resolution #3

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That the following members be appointed to sit as the Court of Revision for the Frain Drain 2025: Jim Palmer, Adrian Couwenberg, Karl Toews and Shawn Gear, with the first member being the Chair of the Court of Revision, and further that the Court is now convened.

Carried

The Mayor advised that as per Section 42 of the Drainage Act, R.S.O. 1990, as amended, this Public Meeting is being constituted to consider the Engineers Report for the Frain Drain 2025 Improvement.

All owners and agencies were sent notification of the meeting to consider the reports on February 18, 2026.

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

6.2.1 Court of Revision

Re: Frain Drain 2025

Report DR 2026-08

Resolution #4

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That Report DR 2026-08, Court of Revision of the Frain Drain 2025, be received as information.

Carried

Ms. Armstrong advised that no written appeals were received by the Clerks Department.

Resolution #5

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That the Court of Revision for the Frain Drain 2025 now allow appeal(s) to be heard in accordance with Section 52(4) of The Drainage Act.

Carried

There was no one in attendance that wished to submit an appeal against the Drainage works.

Resolution #6

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

Whereas the Council of the Township of Norwich provisionally adopted the report by Spriet Associates Engineers & Architects at their meeting on February 10, 2026 for the drainage works known as the Frain Drain 2025;

And whereas no appeals have been received by the Court;

Therefore the Court of Revision for the Frain Drain 2025 accepts Provisional By-law 09-2026 as presented.

Carried

Resolution #7

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Karl Toews:

That the Court of Revision for the Frain Drain 2025 does now adjourn.

Carried

6.3 The Planning Act

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.

Resolution #8

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Shawn Gear:

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 the Township of Norwich, File Number ZN 03-25-18.

Carried

6.3.1 Applicant: Township of Norwich

File No.: ZN 3-25-18

Report No.: CP 2026-82

Location: Township of Norwich

Details of Proposed Amendment: To undertake administrative updates and update provisions of the Township Zoning by-law, including: Clarification on administration and enforcement of the Zoning By-law, updating conflicts with the Ontario Building Code, revised definitions related to 'dwelling', 'first storey' and 'swimming pool', clarification on lot coverage calculations for swimming pools, clarify walk-out deck requirements and provision of a mechanism for replacement dwellings where a demolition agreement has been authorized.

Ms. Amy Hartley, Development Planner, provided an overview of the application as contained within Report CP 2026-82. She advised that this application has been submitted by the Township to make several housekeeping amendments, administration updates and legislative changes to the zoning by-law. She explained that the application is an administrative proposal and does not change any site-specific zoning or permitted uses on existing properties. Ms. Hartley provided a summary of the proposed updates contained within the application.

In response to questions from Council, Ms. Hartley explained that lot coverage provisions for properties with multiple zones would now apply to the defined area of legal lot boundaries rather than the boundary of the zone and will not impact taxes. Ms. Hartley also clarified that the definition of a swimming pool was to ensure that outdoor pools were distinct from indoor pools.

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

Resolution #9

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Karl Toews:

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

Carried

Resolution #10

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That with respect to the application to amend Zoning By-law 07-2003-Z, by the Township of Norwich, to introduce general housekeeping amendments to the Township Zoning By-law 07-2003-Z as described in Report CP 2026-82, the Council of the Township of Norwich hereby approve the zone change.

Carried

Resolution # 11

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

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

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.

6.3.2 Applicant: Jeffrey and Gayle Kindurys

File No.: A 02-26

Report No.: CP 2026-83

Location: Part Lot 14, Concession 4 (East Oxford) 505273 Old Stage Road, Township of Norwich, ON

Details of Proposed Amendment: Relief of Table 5.1.1.3, Lot Coverage, to increase the permitted lot coverage of a residential accessory structure from 100 m² (1,076 ft²) of gross floor area to 283.3 m² (3,050 ft²); and Table 5.1.1.3, Maximum Height, to increase the permitted height from 4.5 m (14.8 ft) to 6.1 m (20 ft) to facilitate the construction of an accessory structure in addition to an existing detached garage on the subject lands.

There was no one in attendance representing the application.

Ms. Amy Hartley, Development Planner, provided an overview of the application as contained within Report CP 2026-83. She advised that the application is requesting relief from the zoning by-law to permit a larger lot coverage for all accessory buildings on the subject lands to allow for the construction of a new accessory building. She explained that while the property is approximately 3.4 acres and the structures and addition would only account for 2% lot coverage, it is the intent of the zoning provisions to ensure accessory buildings remain secondary and subordinate to the main dwelling. She advised that the total structures together would be 1,420 ft² larger than the dwelling on the subject lands. Ms. Hartley explained that staff are of the opinion that the proposal is not considered minor and are therefore not recommending approval.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Hartley explained that MDS is not applicable to accessory structures. She also advised that applications like this are not considered to maintain the intent of the Official Plan as there is a potential for businesses to set up in the buildings and the related activities can hinder surrounding agricultural properties. She also advised that any business set up in the buildings would be an issue for By-Law enforcement.

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

There was committee discussion about potentially deferring the application to allow the applicant another opportunity to present additional information to the committee for consideration.

Resolution #12

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That minor variance A 02-26 be deferred until the March 24th meeting to give the owners or agent the opportunity to attend and speak to the application.

Lost

Resolution #13

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Jim Palmer:

That with respect to the application by Jeffrey and Gayle Kindurys, File No. A 02-26, for a Minor Variance for lands described as Part Lot 14, Concession 4 (East Oxford), municipally known as 505273 Old Stage Road, in the Township of Norwich, for relief from:

1. Table 5.1.1.3, Lot Coverage for Accessory Structures, to increase the permitted lot coverage of a residential accessory structure from 100 m² (1,076 ft²) of gross floor area to 283 m² (3,050 ft²); and,
2. Section 5.1.1.3 – Accessory Use Provisions, Maximum Height – to increase the maximum permitted height from 4.5 m (14.7 ft) to 6.1 m (20 ft);

To facilitate the construction of a new, detached accessory structure, approximately 204 m² (2,200 ft²) in size, with a maximum height of 6.1 m (20 ft), while also recognizing the detached garage on the subject lands, for a total lot coverage of 283 m² (3,050 ft²), the Committee of Adjustment hereby approve the requested minor variance for the following reasons:

- Did not receive public comments of concern
- Minimal lot coverage percentage

Carried

Resolution #14

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Shawn Gear:

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

Mayor Palmer, having declared a pecuniary interest, did not participate in item 7.1.

Councillor Couwenberg, being Deputy Mayor, assumed the Chair.

**7.1 Matthew Lloyd, Curator, Norwich & District Historical Society and Marie Avey
Re: Proposed Monument for the Norwich Pioneer Cemetery, Quaker Street**

Mr. Matthew Lloyd, Curator, Norwich & District Museum, provide an overview of the groups proposal to replace the current sign installed at the Norwich Pioneer Cemetery, Quaker Street, with a monument depicting the names of individuals buried there and a plan illustrating the locations of each grave. He advised the current sign was never intended as a way-finding tool for the cemetery. As such it is confusing for families looking for their ancestors in the cemetery because it depicts the historical family names from the area, but not necessarily those who are buried at the cemetery.

Mr. Lloyd further explained that the proposed monument will be designed by Ingersoll Memorials, who created a similar monument in Tillsonburg. He also requested permission to relocate the old sign to the museum to be integrated into the exhibits.

In response to questions from Council, Mr. Lloyd explained that there would be no cost to the Township for the monument. Mr. Lloyd also shared some pictures of the current sign and the design of the proposed memorial with Council Members.

Mr. Smith advised that staff had met with Mr. Lloyd and Ms. Avey a few weeks ago and have no concerns about the proposal from a staff perspective.

Resolution #15

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Karl Toews:

That the Delegation of Matthew Lloyd, Curator, Norwich & District Historical Society and Marie Avey, Re: Proposed Monument for the Norwich Pioneer Cemetery, Quaker Street, be received as information;

And that Council approve the installation of a monument at the Norwich Pioneer Cemetery on Quaker Street to facilitate the identification of the graves located at the cemetery;

And that the current "Norwich Families in the Settlement" sign be relocated to the Norwich Museum to be incorporated into the displays.

Carried

Mayor Palmer resumed the Chair.

- 8. Correspondence**
- 8.1 Township of Zorra**
Re: Request to Consider Inclusion of Small-Scale Value-Added Business Subclass in 2026 Tax Ratios Policy
- 8.2 Township of Blandford-Blenheim**
Re: Support for Zorra Township Request Regarding Inclusion of Small-Scale Value-Added Business Subclass in 2026 Tax Ratios Policy
- 8.3 Oxford County Federation of Agriculture**
Re: Request for Implementation of the Optional Small-Scale On-Farm Business Subclass
- 8.4 Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC)**
Re: Small-Scale On-Farm Business Subclasses – Frequently Asked Questions
- 8.5 Rural Oxford Economic Development Corporation (ROEDC)**
Re: Adoption of MPAC’s Optional Small-Scale On-Farm Business Subclass
- 8.6 Township of Perry**
Re: Inter-Library Loan Services and Reduced Postal Rates
- 8.7 Township of Papineau-Cameron**
Re: Ontario Veterinary College Expansion of Enrollment Capacity
- 8.8 Township of Nipigon**
Re: Proposed Changes to Conservation Authority Act
- 8.9 James Bay East OPP Detachment Board**
Re: Support for Development of a Coordinated Provincial Bail Notification Program

In response to questions from Council, Mr. Smith explained that the small-scale on-farm business tax sub class was created a few years ago to support smaller scale commercial operations on agricultural properties. Each Upper Tier municipality may choose to implement it or not. He advised that there are only about 3 properties in the Township that this sub-class would apply to, and only about 10 across the entire County, with an overall impact of about \$7,000 that would need to be redistributed across the other tax classes should it be implemented.

Mr. Smith also explained that if implemented, it would be up to MPAC to determine eligibility.

There was Council discussion regarding the potential impacts and benefits of supporting the implementation of the new tax sub class.

Resolution #16

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That the Correspondence as listed in Agenda Item 8.1 to 8.9 be received as information;

And further that further that the Council of the Township of Norwich supports Zorra Township Council's resolution requesting that Oxford County consider the inclusion of the Small-Scale Value-Added Business subclass in the 2026 tax ratios policy, in order to support on-farm processing, agricultural diversification, and rural economic development across Oxford County;

And further that Council supports item 8.7.

Carried

9. Committee Minutes
9.1 Otterville Park Advisory Committee
Re: Meeting Minutes – January 28, 2026

9.2 Norwich BIA
Re: Meeting Minutes – February 3, 2026
Resolution #17

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That the following Committee Minutes, be received as information:

Otterville Park Advisory Committee
Re: Meeting Minutes – January 28, 2026

Norwich BIA
Re: Meeting Minutes – February 3, 2026

Carried

10. Reports
10.1 Fire and Protective Services
10.1.1 Monthly Activities – February 2026
Report FP 2026-05

Resolution #18

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That Report FP 2026-05, Monthly Activity Report – February 2026, be received as information.

Carried

10.2 Building Services

10.2.1 Monthly Activities - February 2026

Report BB 2026-04

Resolution #19

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That Report BB 2026-04, February 2026 Building Services Activity, be received as information.

Carried

10.2.2 Monthly Activities – February 2026

Report DR 2026-07

Resolution #20

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Karl Toews:

That Report DR 2026-04, January 2026 Activity Report, be received as information.

Carried

10.3 Operations

10.3.1 Capital Projects – Arena Boilers Project Options

Report OP 2026-06

There was Council discussion and questions about each option, including the benefits of engaging a professional with expertise to advise on best options for arena, costs to treat water versus the lifetime benefits for the equipment, costs for just replacing the current set up with new boiler units and tanks, and supporting the longevity of the arena.

In response to questions from Council, Mr. Smith advised that it is not best practice for municipalities to do bid-calling to get quotes for informational purposes with no intention of considering those quotes as part of a bid process. He also explained that the costs for a consultant are somewhat offset by efficiencies from improvements to the bidding process by having a more precise spec for the bid and likely better pricing because of it.

Resolution #21

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That report OP 2026-06, Capital Projects – Arena Boilers Project Information, be received for information; and

That Council direct staff to proceed with Option 3 – Hire a heating and cooling specialist to assess the System, funded from the existing capital budget, and bring an additional report forward for Council's consideration based on the specialists' recommendations.

Carried

10.3.2 Capital Projects – Arena Doors Replacement

Report OP 2026-07

Resolution #22

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Karl Toews:

That report OP 2026-07, Capital Projects – Arena Doors Replacement, be received for information; and

That Council direct staff to proceed with procurement and replacement of the identified Arena doors as approved in the 2026 Capital Budget.

Carried

10.3.3 Parks & Facilities Monthly Report – February 2026

Report OP 2026-08

Resolution #23

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That Report OP 2026-08, Parks and Facilities Monthly Report – February 2026, be received as information.

Carried

Council recessed at 10:42 a.m.

Council resumed at 10:50 a.m.

10.3.4 Public Works Monthly Report – February 2026

Report OP 2026-09

In response to questions from Council, Mr. Farkas advised that half load season had started on March 2, and explained that all of the area municipalities use the same system to ensure that the half load requirements are declared at the same time.

Resolution #24

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That Report OP 2026-09, Public Works Monthly Report – February 2026, be received as information.

Carried

10.4 Financial Services

10.4.1 2026 Final Operating Budget By-law

Report FS 2026-03

There was Council discussion and questions regarding how levy increases are blended across the Township, County and Education levies to determine the overall levy impact; use of reserve funds for capital projects as opposed to off-setting levy increases; how

using reserve funds to off-set levy increases results in a greater increase the following year; and increase costs borne by municipalities as a result of downloaded services from the federal and provincial governments.

Resolution #25

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That Report FS 2026-03, 2026 Final Operating Budget By-law, be received as information; and

That Council approve and adopt the 2026 Final Operating Budget By-law.

Carried

**10.4.2 Medical Centre Activity Report – December 2025 through February 2026
Report MED 2026-03**

Resolution #26

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That Report MED 2026-03, Acitivity Report – December 2025 through February 2026, be received as information.

Carried

10.5 Corporate Services

10.5.1 East Oxford Home and School Association

Re: Request for Waiver of Rental Fees for ‘Spring Soiree and Silent Auction’

Resolution #26

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Karl Toews:

That the request from the East Oxford Home and School Association for a waiver of rental fees for their upcoming “Spring Soiree and Silent Auction” be received as information;

And further that Council grant \$288.15 from Council’s Discretionary Fund towards the March 28, 2026 rental fee for the Spring Soiree and Silent Auction.

Carried

10.6 Chief Administrative Officer

10.7.1 Strategic Plan and Council’s Directions Update

Report CAO 2026-12

Resolution #28

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Karl Toews:

That Report CAO 2026-12, Strategic Plan and Council Directions Update, be received as information.

Carried

11. Notice(s) of Motion

None.

12. Closed Session

11:29 a.m.

Resolution #29

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

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 a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipality.

Carried

12.1 A proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipality or local board

Re: Property Proposal

Confidential Report CAO 2026-13

12.2 Closed Meeting Minutes

Re: Confidential Minutes – January 13, 2026

12:18 p.m.

Resolution #30

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That the Council do now reconvene in open session.

Carried

13. By-Laws

**No. 04-2026-Z To Amend Zoning By-law 07-2003-Z (Township of Norwich
File No ZN 3-25-18 – Housekeeping)**

No. 16-2026 To Approve the Operating Budget

No. 17-2026 To Confirm All Actions and Proceedings of Council

13.1 First and Second Reading of the Following By-laws

Resolution #31

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Shawn Gear:

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

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| No. 05-2026-Z | To Amend Zoning By-law 07-2003-Z (Township of Norwich File No ZN 3-25-18 – Housekeeping) |
| No. 16-2026 | To Approve the Operating Budget |
| No. 17-2026 | To Confirm All Actions and Proceedings of Council |

Carried

13.2 Third Reading of the Following By-laws

Resolution #32

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Karl Toews:

That By-laws 05-2026-Z, 16-2026, and 17-2026 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 – 12:20 p.m.

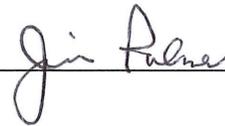
Resolution #33

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Shawn Gear:

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 24th day of March, 2026.



Jim Palmer
Mayor



Kimberley Armstrong
Director of Corporate Services / Clerk