



**The Corporation of the Township of Norwich
Special Council Meeting Minutes
Community Grants
Thursday January 27, 2026**

In Attendance:

Council:

Mayor Jim Palmer
Councillor Toews
Councillor DePlancke
Councillor Couwenberg

Staff:

Matt Smith, CAO
James Johnson, Treasurer/Deputy CAO
Kimberley Armstrong, Director of Corporate Services/Clerk
Jenna Garner, Deputy Treasurer
Sean McCoy, Deputy Clerk/Planning Coordinator

1. Call to Order

The special session of the 2022-2026 Council of the Township of Norwich was held in the Council Chambers commencing at 2:00 p.m. with Mayor Palmer in the Chair.

2. Approval of Agenda

Resolution #1
Moved by Lynne DePlancke, seconded by Karl Toews;

That the Agenda for this Special Session of Council be accepted as presented.

Carried

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

Mayor Palmer disclosed an indirect interest in item 5.1, Norwich and District Historical Society.

4. Introduction

4.1 Community Grants Program Policy

Mr. James Johnson, Director of Finance / Treasurer, advised that the policy was attached to the agenda for Council's reference.

5. Community Grants Requests

Mayor Palmer, having declared a pecuniary interest, did not participate in item 5.1.

Councillor Couwenberg, being Deputy Mayor, assumed the Chair.

5.1 Norwich and District Historical Society

Matthew Lloyd

Mr. Lloyd provided an overview of how the requested funds would be used, including covering staffing, maintenance and utilities costs. He reviewed the previous year's statistics and some of the activities, including school group history workshops, lunch and learn sessions and strategic planning. This year's plans include working with the South Norwich Historical Society and establishing public school partnerships.

Mayor Palmer resumed the Chair.

5.2 YFC/ Upper Deck

Linda Torkelson

Ms. Jacqueline Armstrong advised that the Upper Deck is celebrating 25 years in Norwich. She also provided an overview of the free programming offered, which includes; Junior and Senior Recharge, student leadership, supper club, youth in crisis mentoring, trips to area recreation sites and businesses, and many more. She advised that all youth are welcome. Ms. Armstrong read a letter from an Upper Deck mentee, describing the benefits the program offered them.

In response to questions from Council, Ms. Armstrong explained that the budget provided includes all donations, and that the Stem to Stern program is run by a former teacher, providing an opportunity to learn woodworking skills. There was Council discussion with respect to the NCC rental fees for the 25th Anniversary Event.

5.3 Junior Achievement South Western Ontario

Megan Siddall

Ms. Mandy Deelstra advised that Junior Achievement is focussed on cultivating financial literacy skills, work readiness and entrepreneurship in youth. She also provided an overview of the programs offered, including costs for program delivery.

In response to questions from Council, Ms. Deelstra explained that programs costs are covered by donations and are free for students to attend. She provided

a brief overview of the types of topics covered in the Grade 4 half day program and the Grade 7 full day program.

There was also Council discussion about how to make connections within the schools and potentially combining classes to ensure all the students in a particular grade receive the benefits of the programming.

5.4 Tillsonburg & District Multi-Service Centre

Jen Olcsvary

Ms. Olcsvary provided an overview of the services provided by the Multi-Service Centre, including literacy programs, employment services, and home support services such as meals on wheels. She provided a brief history of multi-service centre programming and advised that current services levels are far exceeding targets and that the grant will help support volunteer recruitment, employment supports, literacy materials, technology, and subsidize client fees for seniors.

In response to questions from Council, Ms. Olcsvary explained that instances of food insecurity tripled this past year. She also provided some more information about the literacy program and the assessment process for that program.

5.4 Norwich United Church- Summer Program

Suzanne Crosby and Linda Torkelson

Ms. Korinne Thompson provided an overview of the summer day camp program, advising that it provides local youth with summer volunteer and employment opportunities and 8 weeks of camp programming for 40-45 children per week. She outlined some of the fundraising efforts, including their chicken sale, pancake day, and support from local businesses and service clubs.

In response to questions from Council, Ms. Thompson advised that grade 7 and 8 students could apply to be volunteers, and older students could apply to be paid staff. She also explained that the cost for a child to attend the camp was \$125 per week for senior kindergarten to grade 6.

5.5 Norwich Lawn Bowling Club

Mike Dymarski

Mr. Mike Dymarski explained the club is requesting support to help with operating costs, explaining maintenance of the greens is quite expensive. The club has been successful obtaining New Horizon's grants the last three years and thanks Council for the letters of support. He explained that the club provides social and recreational opportunities for the community, is 100% volunteer run and are making efforts to attract younger members.

In response to questions from Council, Mr. Dymarski advised that some local teachers are promoting the club in the local schools and the club hosts several tournaments a year.

5.6 Norwich Musical Society Band

Murray Hilliker and Leah Mitchell

Ms. Leah Mitchell and Mr. Murray Hilliker advised that the band has approximately 20 members and the conductor is the only paid position. They provided an overview of the band's activities from the previous year, including events at public schools and decoration days in Norwich and New Durham. They Thanked Council for the practice space and explained the cost of sheet music. The band is currently focussing on increasing membership and to keep cost down so they don't have to charge membership fees.

5.7 BREAK

Council recessed at 3:11 p.m.

Council resumed at 3:20 p.m.

5.8 Otterville Firefighters Club

Grant Yarmie

Mr. Dale Crombez explained that Firefighters Club would like to purchase new Christmas lights of the Village of Otterville. Last year the club replaced half of the old lights and are now asking for funding to replace the rest this year.

There was Council discussion regarding having the old Christmas decorations moved to Springford, that the lights in Burgessville were provided through donations and the lights in Norwich were purchased by the BIA.

5.9 South Norwich Historical Society

Gail Lewis

Ms. Gail Lewis advised that the grant contributes to hiring a curator for one day a week and a summer student, which makes the museum eligible for more funding programs. She provided an overview of upcoming activities, including the digitization program, repairs to the water damaged storage area, replacement of the stolen mill plaque and making the station more accessible by increasing the width of two interior doors.

In response to questions from Council, Ms. Lewis advised that the Historical Society was currently in a deficit due to having to repair a burst pipe. She also explained that the mill can be open for tours and school trips, but is never completely fully functional due to safety concerns.

5.12 Oxford County Plowmens Association

Jim Cox

Mr. Cox and Mrs. Cox requested support for the annual Oxford Plowing Match, which still publishes a full brochure and crowns a queen of the furrow. Mr. Cox advised that the event will be held on the 15th of August, however, a location has not yet been determined.

5.13 Emily Stowe Public School Home & School Association

Kayla Doan

Ms. Doan was accompanied by Ms. Heather Taylor and advised that they were seeking funds to cover the rental fee for the Association's annual fundraising auction.

In response to questions from Council, Ms. Doan explained that the fundraiser helps provide classroom resources not provided by the school board. She also explained that the association is taking steps to ensure the continuation of the healthy snack program, which does not receive any board funding.

Council recessed at 3:45 p.m.

Council resumed at 3:50 p.m.

5.13 Otterville Otters Swim Team

Lisa James

Ms. Lisa James and Ms. Jennifer Lackenbauer explained that the Tri-County swim meet is held in Otterville once every six years. The funds being requested are to cover costs associated with running the event, like portable toilets, sound system rental, and park rental fees. The date for the event is August 15th with a rain date of August 16th and approximately 400 swimmers are expected to attend.

In response to questions from Council, Ms. James explained that there are over 60 swimmers, ranging in age from 6 to 18. The event is held from 8am until 5pm, so overnight stays are not anticipated.

6. COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

Mayor Palmer, having declared a pecuniary interest, did not participate in voting for Resolution #2.

Councillor Couwenberg, being Deputy Mayor, assumed the Chair and conducted the vote.

Resolution #2

Moved by Karl Toews, seconded by Lynne DePlancke;

That the 2026 grants to organizations receive draft approval as follows:

Norwich and District Historical Society	\$31,000.00
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Carried

Mayor Palmer resumed the Chair.

There was Council discussion about the various requests all submitted by worthy organizations delivering valuable programs.

Resolution #3

Moved by Lynne DePlancke, seconded by Karl Toews;

That the 2026 grants to organizations receive draft approval as follows:

Youth for Christ (The Upper Deck)	\$6,575.00
Junior Achievement South Western Ontario	\$1,000.00
Tillsonburg & District Multi-Service Centre	\$2,340.00
Norwich United Church – Summer Program	\$3,500.00
Norwich Lawn Bowling Club	\$3,500.00
Norwich Musical Society Band	\$3,000.00
Otterville Fire Fighters Club	\$1,000.00
South Norwich Historical Society	\$7,500.00
Emily Stowe Public School Home & School Association	\$1,127.00
Oxford County Plowmens Association	\$250.00
Otterville Otters Swim Team	\$3000.00
Council Discretionary Fund	\$2,000.00
LPRCA / Norwich Museum - grass cutting service	\$6,000.00

Carried

7. By-laws
No 08-2026 To Confirm All Actions and Proceedings of Council

7.1 First and Second Reading of the Following By-law

Resolution #4

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Lynne DePlancke;

That the following By-laws be read a first and second time:

No. 08-2026 To Confirm All Actions and Proceedings of Council

Carried

7.2 Third Reading of the Following By-laws

Resolution #5

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Lynne DePlancke;

That By-law 08-2026, 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

8. Adjournment – 4:19 p.m.

Resolution #6

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, 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 10th day of February 2026.

Jim Palmer

Mayor
Jim Palmer

Kimberley Armstrong

Director of Corporate Services / Clerk
Kimberley Armstrong