

## **Special Council Meeting Minutes**

### **Special Council Meeting**

Date: January 27, 2025, 5:00 P.M.

Location: Council Chambers - Hybrid  
60 Snyder's Road West  
Baden, Ontario  
N3A 1A1

Members Present: Mayor N. Salonen  
Councillor S. Cressman  
Councillor K. Wilkinson  
Councillor H. Sidhu  
Councillor L. Dunstall  
Councillor S. Martin

Staff Present: Director of Infrastructure Services, J. Molenhuis  
Director of Development Services, H. O'Krafka  
Director of Community Services, C. Catania  
Acting CAO / Director of Corporate Services/CFO, G. Clark  
Fire Chief, R. Leeson  
Manager of Legislative Services / Municipal Clerk, K. Bos  
Desktop Support Technician, R. Ubhi  
Administrative Clerk, C. Greenley

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#### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

**Moved by:** Councillor L. Dunstall

**Seconded by:** Councillor S. Cressman

THAT the Special Council Meeting on January 27, 2025 be called to order at 5:02 p.m.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

#### **2. TERRITORIAL LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Councillor H. Sidhu read the Territorial Land Acknowledgment.

### 3. **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

There were no additions to the agenda.

### 4. **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

**Moved by:** Councillor S. Martin

**Seconded by:** Councillor L. Dunstall

THAT the Agenda as presented for January 27, 2025 be adopted.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

### 5. **DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST UNDER THE MUNICIPAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST ACT**

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest declared.

### 6. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**Moved by:** Councillor S. Cressman

**Seconded by:** Councillor S. Martin

THAT the Minutes of the January 16, 2025 Special Council Meeting be adopted as presented.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

Mayor N. Salonen pulled up COUNCILLOR MOTIONS - WHERE NOTICE HAS BEEN PROVIDED.

### 7. **Councillor L. Dunstall Notice of Motion Regarding the Assessment of Buildings and Land**

A motion was brought forward by Councillor L. Dunstall, seconded by Councillor S. Martin

THAT WHEREAS it is important to actively engage with community members and stakeholders when making decisions regarding Township properties that are used by residents and organizations;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. **Staff Preparation of Cost-Benefit Analysis:** Staff be directed to prepare a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis based on current financials and historical utilization data of Township facilities. This analysis should include a comparison of operating costs, capital requirement, revenue generation, and usage trends.

2. **Third-Party Tenant Evaluation:** The Township be directed to determine which of its facility assets could be suitable for a third-party tenant arrangement to help mitigate its operating and/or capital financing pressures.
3. **Declaration of Surplus Assets:** The Township identify and assess which of its facility assets should be declared surplus and disposed of to:
  1. mitigate ongoing financial pressures; and
  2. assist with addressing capital renewal pressures.
4. **Comprehensive Space Utilization Analysis:** Staff conduct a thorough analysis of the usage of each facility, which should include the following factors:
  1. Use by season, by time block
  2. Type of use (e.g., recreational, community, commercial)
  3. Reliance on indoor space by outdoor field users
  4. Type of user (e.g., one-off or repeat customers)
  5. Resident versus non-resident usage
  6. Revenue generation potential
5. **Fair Market Valuation:** Staff be directed to conduct a current fair market valuation of the property and land associated with each facility under review. This valuation should assist in determining realistic asset value and potential sale or lease opportunities.
6. **Third-Party Real Estate Market Analysis:** The Township engage a qualified third-party real estate organization to conduct a comprehensive market analysis of all Township buildings and associated land. This analysis should assess the market value, potential for sale, lease, or development, and provide recommendations for optimizing the Township's real estate assets.
7. **Community Engagement in Decision-Making:** Staff be directed to ensure that community members and relevant stakeholders are actively engaged in the decision-making process when determining the use, disposal, or repurposing of Township properties that serve the needs of constituents. This engagement should include consultation with residents, community organizations, and other key stakeholders to ensure that their input is considered in any decisions.

8. **Report and Recommendations:** Staff report back to Council with the findings of the cost-benefit analysis, fair market valuation, third-party real estate market analysis, community engagement efforts, and a list of recommended actions, including potential third-party tenant opportunities, surplus declarations, and facility utilization optimization.

Council asked and received a response on the following:

- Clarification regarding investigations of uses and revenues of the buildings;
- Information on the potential revenue generation potential some facilities; and
- Confirmation regarding expected timeline for return of the staff report.

A motion was brought forward by Councillor S. Cressman, seconded by Councillor H. Sidhu, THAT the motion be amended to strike out sections 5. Fair Market Valuation and 6. Third-Party Real Estate Market Analysis. The motion carried unanimously.

Council now voted on the main motion, as amended.

**Moved by:** Councillor L. Dunstall

**Seconded by:** Councillor S. Martin

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NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. **Staff Preparation of Cost-Benefit Analysis:** Staff be directed to prepare a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis based on current financials and historical utilization data of Township facilities. This analysis should include a comparison of operating costs, capital requirement, revenue generation, and usage trends.
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5. **Community Engagement in Decision-Making:** Staff be directed to ensure that community members and relevant stakeholders are actively engaged in the decision-making process when determining the use, disposal, or repurposing of Township properties that serve the needs of constituents. This engagement should include consultation with residents, community organizations, and other key stakeholders to ensure that their input is considered in any decisions.
6. **Report and Recommendations:** Staff report back to Council with the findings of the cost-benefit analysis, fair market valuation, third-party real estate market analysis, community engagement efforts, and a list of recommended actions, including potential third-party tenant opportunities, surplus declarations, and facility utilization optimization.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

**8. Councillor L. Dunstall Notice of Motion Regarding a Long-term Funding Strategy**

Councillor L. Dunstall introduced their Notice of Motion.

The motion was brought forward by Councillor L. Dunstall, seconded by Councillor S. Cressman

WHEREAS the Township of Wilmot is dedicated to creating a sustainable operating and capital budget, that balances fiscal responsibility with taxpayer affordability, ensuring the township's continued financial health;

AND WHEREAS deferring capital budget items has contributed to our current situation, with an existing infrastructure backlog of \$19 million, further deferrals would only exacerbate the issue;

AND WHEREAS addressing the Township's financial challenges requires a strategic and sustainable approach. It is both prudent and fiscally responsible to adopt a comprehensive strategy that addresses these needs.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council directs Staff to phase in the proposed capital funding increase within the tax supported Operating Budget over a period of four years, with a 9% increase included in the 2025 Operating budget;

AND THAT Staff be directed to develop a ten-year capital plan for presentation during the 2026 budget process based on a 9% increase in each of the next three years;

AND THAT Staff develop a comprehensive, long-term funding strategy that addresses both operating and capital needs, ensuring the strategy is based on accurate financial projections and actual requirements, presented to Council as part of the 2026 Budget process.

Council asked and received answers from Staff on the following:

- whether the lowering of the operating budget delays the completion of projects;
- clarification of the funding requirement and percentage of the proposed capital increase is required, after considering what has already been excluded from the budget;
- forecast of year-over-year capital funding needs;
- whether future growth can be relied upon for funding capital infrastructure projects; and
- clarification that exclusion or delay of some capital projects still leaves a deficit.

A motion was brought forward by Councillor K. Wilkinson, seconded by Councillor H. Sidhu THAT Council table the consideration of this motion until after the operating budget and capital projects on this agenda are discussed. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor N. Salonen now brought forward the item REPORTS.

## 9. REPORTS

### 9.1 Operating Budget

#### 9.1.1 Department Specific Variance Report

Council asked and received a response from staff on the following:

- Whether the Water and Wastewater increase is covered by rate increases;
- Clarification regarding best practices around Water and Wastewater increases; and
- Whether a portion of this Water and Wastewater increase is set aside for reserves.

#### 9.1.2 Office of the CAO Memberships and Training & Development

Councillor S. Cressman assumed the position of Chair at 6:00 p.m.

**Moved by:** Mayor N. Salonen

**Seconded by:** Councillor L. Dunstall

THAT Staff be directed to reduce the Office of the CAO's Operating Budget by \$5,900 for the SMART Waterloo membership from 2025 Budget; and,

THAT Staff be directed to refer SMART Waterloo to the Community Grants Program in 2026.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

**Moved by:** Mayor N. Salonen

**Seconded by:** Councillor L. Dunstall

THAT Staff be directed to send correspondence to Sustainable Waterloo Region advising that in 2026 they will apply for funding through the Community Grants Program.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

Council asked and received answers on the following:

- Confirmation that this motion does not impact 2025 funding for Sustainable Waterloo Region.

Mayor N. Salonen resumed the position of Chair at 6:03pm.

### 9.1.3 Operating Gap Request Form # 2025-08 for Growth Capital Funding

Acting CAO / Director of Corporate Services / CFO, G. Clark provided remarks.

Council asked and received a response from staff on the following:

- Clarification regarding at what point in projects are development charge exemptions funded;
- Information on the current demand for Additional Residential Units in Wilmot;
- Clarification regarding the calculation of development charges; and
- Clarification regarding the process and timeline for the collection of development charges.

**Moved by:** Councillor L. Dunstall

**Seconded by:** Councillor S. Martin

THAT Operating Gap Request Form # 2025-08 for Growth Capital Funding be removed from the 2025 Operating Budget resulting in a reduction in the operating budget of \$100,000 which is a 0.82 tax rate impact.

**Motion Defeated**

### 9.1.4 Cost of Living Adjustment

This motion was tabled until the end of 2025 Operating Budget discussion. This motion will be presented at the February 24, 2025 Special Council Meeting for Council's consideration.

THAT the 2025 Operating Budget be amended to remove the proposed 2.5% cost of living adjustment for staff compensation and replace it with a 0.00% cost of living adjustment resulting in a reduction in the operating budget of \$257,627 which is a 2.11% tax rate impact.

## 9.2 Capital Budget

### 9.2.1 Capital Budget Request Forms



9.2.1.1 2025 Capital Budget Request Form #COR-2025-001 - Annual Hardware, Software & Network Infrastructure Upgrades

Staff will provide additional information prior to final approval of the 2025 Capital Budget.

9.2.1.2 2025 Capital Budget Request Form #CS-2025-009 - New Hamburg Carnegie Library Exterior Restorations

There were no questions on Capital Budget Request Form #CS-2025-009 - New Hamburg Carnegie Library Exterior Restorations.

9.2.1.3 2025 Capital Budget Request Form #CS-2025-011 - Replace Service Vehicle 701-14

Council asked and received a response from staff on the following:

- Confirmation that required repairs to the vehicle have not yet taken place.

**Moved by:** Councillor K. Wilkinson

**Seconded by:** Councillor H. Sidhu

THAT Council directs Staff to remove 2025 Capital Budget Request Form #CS-2025-11- Replace Service Vehicle 701-14 from the 2025 Capital Budget.

**Motion Defeated**

9.2.1.4 2025 Capital Budget Request Form FS-2025-01 Fire Station Replacement and Relocation – New Hamburg Station 3, FS-2025-02 Replace Pump 621 Station 2, and FS-2025-03 Replace Aerial 639 Station 3

Council asked and received answers from Staff on the following:

- Clarification regarding the factors contributing to the need for replacement fire station;
- Whether sprinkler systems in facilities may negate the need for aerial;

- Whether Wilmot can receive aerial truck assistance from neighbouring municipalities who have one;
- Clarification of building code requirement of sprinkler systems in long term care facilities;
- Clarification regarding required length of aerial truck in the Fire Master Plan; and
- Clarification regarding where these trucks are manufactured.

By unanimous consent Council tabled the consideration of Capital Request Forms FS-2025-01 and FS-2025-03 in the 2025 Capital Budget until February 24, 2025, pending legal advice.

A motion was brought forward by Councillor S. Cressman, seconded by Councillor L. Dunstall THAT Council does now recess at 6:48 p.m. to reconvene ten minutes after the conclusion of the Regular Council Meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was brought forward by Councillor S. Cressman, seconded by Councillor S. Martin THAT Council does now reconvene at 8:28 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Council asked and received answers from Staff on the following:

- Clarification regarding the age of Pump 621;
- Explanation regarding the lifecycle of the pump trucks;
- Whether the lifespan of pump trucks can be extended;
- Clarification of risk analysis and impacts on township's insurance rates;
- Advantages and disadvantages of open station; and
- Whether there are advantages to bundling the purchase of multiple items.

Council asked staff to bring back further information on the Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS) rating and more context on the impact it may have on insurance premiums in the municipality.

By unanimous consent Council tabled the consideration of Capital Request Form FS-2025-02 in the 2025 Capital Budget until February 24, 2025, pending legal advice.

9.2.1.5 2025 Capital Budget Request Form #IS-2025-029 - Fleet & Equipment Replacement Program

**Moved by:** Councillor K. Wilkinson

**Seconded by:** Councillor S. Cressman

THAT Council directs staff to include the 2025 Capital Budget Request Form #IS-2025-029 - Fleet & Equipment Replacement Program in the 2025 Capital Budget save and except for \$45,000 in funding for the Light Duty 4x4 Pickup Truck.

**Motion Carried**

9.2.2 10-Year Capital Budget Plan

There were no questions on the presented 10-Year Capital Budget Plan.

**10. COUNCILLOR MOTIONS - WHERE NOTICE HAS BEEN PROVIDED**

10.1 Councillor L. Dunstall Notice of Motion Regarding a Long-term Funding Strategy

Council now resumed debate on the Notice of Motion.

Council asked and received a response from staff on the following:

- Whether this assists staff in planning for the next budget meeting;
- Confirmation of current percentage increase required for the 2025 capital budget;
- Clarification that moving forward with this motion still allows for further capital requests in the future above the 9%.

**Moved by:** Councillor L. Dunstall

**Seconded by:** Councillor S. Cressman

WHEREAS the Township of Wilmot is dedicated to creating a sustainable operating and capital budget, that balances fiscal responsibility with taxpayer affordability, ensuring the township's continued financial health;

AND WHEREAS deferring capital budget items has contributed to our current situation, with an existing infrastructure backlog of \$19 million, further deferrals would only exacerbate the issue;

AND WHEREAS addressing the Township's financial challenges requires a strategic and sustainable approach. It is both prudent and fiscally responsible to adopt a comprehensive strategy that addresses these needs.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council directs Staff to phase in the proposed capital funding increase within the tax supported Operating Budget over a period of four years, with a 9% increase included in the 2025 Operating budget;

AND THAT Staff be directed to develop a ten-year capital plan for presentation during the 2026 budget process based on a 9% increase in each of the next three years;

AND THAT Staff develop a comprehensive, long-term funding strategy that addresses both operating and capital needs, ensuring the strategy is based on accurate financial projections and actual requirements, presented to Council as part of the 2026 Budget process.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

#### 10.2 Councillor K. Wilkinson's Notice of Motion on Departmental Operating Budget Reductions

Councillor K. Wilkinson introduced the Notice of Motion.

Council asked and received answers from Staff on the following:

- Clarification on the proposed 5% reduction and what areas of the budget this is targeting;
- Clarification on the impact on operations.

**Moved by:** Councillor K. Wilkinson

**Seconded by:** Councillor H. Sidhu

WHEREAS the Township of Wilmot is committed to responsible financial stewardship to ensure the sustainability of municipal operations;

WHEREAS it is prudent to regularly evaluate departmental budgets to identify efficiencies and ensure alignment with Council priorities;

WHEREAS the Township of Wilmot organizational structure outlines the following departments Mayor and Council, Office of the CAO, Corporate Services, Fire Services, Community Services, Development Services, and Infrastructure Services; and,

WHEREAS the Township of Wilmot 2025 Budget includes Non-Tax Supported Operating Budgets such as Water and Wastewater Services, Building Services and Cemetery Services.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council directs Staff to identify and propose a 5% reduction to Departmental Tax Supported Operating Budgets as presented in the 2025 Budget which considers the following;

Proposed reductions that focus on operational efficiencies and non-essential expenditures, with the aim of minimizing disruptions to essential services.

Consideration of innovative strategies, including shared resources, process improvements, and revenue-generating opportunities.

AND FURTHER THAT Staff report back to Council with this information prior to the adoption of the 2025 Budget; and,

AND FINALLY THAT Council directs Staff to report back with any significant challenges in meeting the 5% reduction target in writing to Council, including proposed alternatives for achieving cost savings.

**Motion Carried**

10.3 Councillor K. Wilkinson Notice of Motion Regarding the Development of a 5-7 Year Budget Plan

Councillor K. Wilkinson introduced the Notice of Motion, aligning the numbers and ask with Councillor L. Dunstall Notice of Motion Regarding a Long-term Funding Strategy.

**Moved by:** Councillor K. Wilkinson

**Seconded by:** Councillor H. Sidhu

WHEREAS the Township of Wilmot continues to grow and respond to the needs of its residents;

WHEREAS it is essential that we adopt a forward-looking and strategic approach to fiscal planning;

WHEREAS the current annual budget process, while effective for short-term planning, does not provide sufficient clarity or direction for the medium-term financial needs of our community;

WHEREAS utilizing a financial plan, modeled after municipal best practices, will enhance transparency, predictability, and accountability in our budgetary process;

WHEREAS the 10-year Capital Plan presented in the 2025 Budget process highlighted critical infrastructure and service investments that require a well-structured funding approach; and

WHEREAS rebuilding municipal reserves is paramount to ensure financial stability and resilience against unforeseen circumstances.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council directs staff to phase in the Capital Funding needs over 4 years, with the funding increase in 2025 of \$1,098,600 equal to 9%;

AND FURTHER THAT Council directs Staff to bring back a 9% increase for 4 years to be included in the 10-Year Capital Plan; and

AND FURTHER THAT Council directs Staff to prepare a financial plan to accompany the 2026 Budget, this plan shall:

- Incorporate findings and priorities identified in the 10-year Capital Plan.
- Forecast funding strategies, including revenue generation, expenditure management, and debt servicing.
- Outline required tax increases and other measures to rebuild municipal reserves to sustainable levels.
- Detailed projections of capital and operating expenses.
- Anticipated growth-related revenues and external funding sources.
- A timeline for key projects, with prioritization based on community needs and return on investment.

- Strategies for mitigating financial risks and addressing long-term liabilities.
- Focus on strategies to rebuild municipal reserves to targeted levels, ensuring long-term financial health and the capacity to address future challenges.

AND FURTHER THAT Council directs Staff to consult with Council, residents, and stakeholders to ensure the financial plan aligns with community priorities;

AND FINALLY THAT Council directs Staff to report back to Council during the next year with progress reports on the development and implementation of the financial plan.

**Motion Carried**

10.4 Councillor K. Wilkinson Notice of Motion Regarding the People Plan / Organizational Structure Review

Councillor K. Wilkinson introduced the Notice of Motion.

Council asked and received answers from Staff on the following:

- Clarification regarding the status of the work on the People Plan / Organizational Structure Review.

**Moved by:** Councillor K. Wilkinson

**Seconded by:** Councillor H. Sidhu

WHEREAS the Township of Wilmot 2022 Budget included \$65,000 for the completion of an Organizational Structure Review / People Plan;

WHEREAS the Township of Wilmot Council received a presentation from Whitesell and Company on an overview of the Organizational Structure Review and People Plan on May 16, 2022;

WHEREAS the proposed purpose of the organizational review was to assess the existing processes, practices, staffing, and organization structure to identify opportunities for improvement that will optimize service delivery and modernization opportunities while making the best use of resources;

WHEREAS the proposed purpose of the People Plan was to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in meeting current and anticipated (5-10

years) service delivery requirements and to provide for implementation of strategic priorities;

WHEREAS the overview provided to Council on May 16, 2022, outlined an anticipated completion date of September 2022;

WHEREAS the 2022-2026 term of Council, nor their predecessors have been presented the People Plan & Final Report;

WHEREAS the Township of Wilmot Council prioritizes strategic planning to meet the current and anticipated service delivery requirements while making the best use of resources;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED

THAT Council directs Staff to report back to the March Committee of the Whole Meeting with more information on the status of the Organizational Structure Review and People Plan project including;

- The most recent Council approved People Plan or Organizational Structure;
- A list of positions changed or approved by Council since the adoption of the above;
- A comprehensive update on all expenditures related to the People Plan initiative, including a breakdown of payments made and services rendered;
- The scope of work completed to date;
- A timeline for remaining deliverables; and
- An explanation for the delay in presenting the work to Council.

AND FINALLY THAT Council directs Staff to report back to Council by September Committee of the Whole Meeting with a People Plan and Final Report for consideration.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

## **11. COUNCILLOR MOTIONS - WHERE NOTICE WAS NOT PROVIDED**

### **11.1 Councillor S. Martin Motion Regarding Traffic Calming Initiatives**

**Moved by:** Councillor S. Martin

**Seconded by:** Councillor K. Wilkinson



THAT Council directs Staff to include \$95,000 in the Capital Budget for traffic calming initiatives.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

Council asked and received a response from staff on the following:

- Clarification on the capital items that have been removed or included in the 2025 Capital Budget and how will staff prioritize with the funding level set.

By unanimous consent Council directed staff to review the 2025 Capital Budget decisions and bring back the capital budget at the funding level directed highlighting any priority items.

**11.2 Mayor N. Salonen Motion Regarding Community Grants Program**

Councillor S. Cressman assumed the position of Chair at 9:18pm.

Mayor N. Salonen introduced the motion.

**Moved by:** Mayor N. Salonen

**Seconded by:** Councillor L. Dunstall

THAT Council directs Staff to reduce the Community Services Departments 2025 operating budget by \$15,000 to reduce the funding envelope for Grants to Community Groups.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

Mayor N. Salonen resumed the position of Chair at 9:20pm.

**12. MAIN BUDGET MOTION**

**Moved by:** Councillor H. Sidhu

**Seconded by:** Councillor K. Wilkinson

THAT Council defers the consideration of the 2025 Main Budget Motion to a Special Council Meeting on Monday, February 24, 2025.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

**13. BY-LAWS**

Council asked and received a response from staff on the following:

- Information on when Council can expect a Water and Wastewater Rate study to be completed.

**Moved by:** Councillor H. Sidhu

**Seconded by:** Councillor K. Wilkinson

THAT By-Laws as attached to this Agenda be read a first, second and third time, and finally passed in Open Council.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

13.1 By-Law 2025-03 Being a Consolidated By-Law to Provide for Fees and Charges

13.2 By-Law 2025-04 Being a By-law to Establish Water and Sanitary Fees and Charges

#### 14. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements at this time.

#### 15. **CONFIRMATORY BY-LAW**

**Moved by:** Councillor L. Dunstall

**Seconded by:** Councillor S. Martin

THAT the Confirmatory By-Law as attached to this Agenda be read a first, second and third time, and finally passed in Open Council.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

#### 16. **ADJOURNMENT**

**Moved by:** Councillor S. Cressman

**Seconded by:** Councillor S. Martin

THAT we do now adjourn at 9:23 p.m. to meet again at the call of the Mayor.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**