

Council Meeting Minutes

Council Meeting

Date: December 16, 2024, 6:30 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: Acting CAO / Director of Corporate Services/CFO, G. Clark
Director of Community Services, C. Catania
Director of Development Services, H. O'Krafka
Director of Infrastructure Services, J. Molenhuis
Fire Chief, R. Leeson
Manager of Legislative Services / Municipal Clerk, K. Bos
Supervisor of IT, K. Jeffreys
Administrative Clerk, C. Greenley

1. CALL TO ORDER

Moved by: Councillor L. Dunstall

Seconded by: Councillor S. Martin

THAT the Regular Council Meeting held on December 16, 2024 be called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Motion Carried Unanimously

2. CLOSED SESSION

Moved by: Councillor L. Dunstall

Seconded by: Councillor H. Sidhu

THAT a Closed Meeting of Council be held on December 16, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. at the Wilmot Administrative Complex, in accordance with Section 239 (2) (b) of the Municipal Act, 2001, to consider the following:

- Striking Committee- Section 239(2)(b) Personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees.

Motion Carried Unanimously

3. RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION

Moved by: Councillor L. Dunstall

Seconded by: Councillor S. Martin

THAT Council reconvenes in Open Session at 7:02 p.m.

Motion Carried Unanimously

4. TERRITORIAL LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Mayor N. Salonen read the Territorial Land Acknowledgment.

5. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

We had the following additions to the Agenda.

Item 9.2.1 - Specific Interest Delegation Regarding Item 12.1 - CAO-2024-13 - CAO Recruitment Options

- Barry Wolfe

Item 10.6 - Correspondence from Mike Rice Regarding Township Priorities In Light of Critical Infrastructure Needs

6. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Moved by: Councillor S. Cressman

Seconded by: Councillor H. Sidhu

THAT the Agenda as presented for December 16, 2024 be adopted, as amended.

Motion Carried Unanimously

7. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST UNDER THE MUNICIPAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST ACT

Councillor L. Dunstall declared a conflict of interest with Item 16. Business Arising from Closed Session, the appointment of citizen members to the Wilmot Canada Day Event Task Force.

8. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Moved by: Councillor S. Martin

Seconded by: Councillor L. Dunstall

THAT the Minutes of the November 25, 2024 Regular Council Meeting and December 9, 2024 Special Council Meeting be adopted as presented.

Motion Carried Unanimously

9. DELEGATIONS

9.1 General Interest Delegations

9.1.1 Fight for Farmland Petition to Council

Kevin Thomason

Delegate K. Thomason addressed Council.

9.1.2 Segal Construction- Housing

Daniel Segal on behalf of Segal Construction.

Delegate D. Segal addressed Council.

9.1.3 Seasons Greetings

Barry Wolfe

Delegate B. Wolfe addressed Council.

9.2 Specific Interest Delegations

9.2.1 Item 12.1 - CAO-2024-13 - CAO Recruitment Options

Barry Wolfe

10. CORRESPONDENCE

Councillor H. Sidhu pulled Item 10.3 - Correspondence from Amber Grant Regarding Speed Complaint.

Councillor S. Cressman pulled Item 10.2 - 2024-01 Closed Meeting Investigation– Final Report from Cunningham, Swan, Carty, Little & Bonham LLP

10.1 2024-01 Closed Meeting Investigation– Final Report from Cunningham, Swan, Carty, Little & Bonham LLP

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

- If any costs of the closed meeting investigations are borne on the complainant.

10.2 2024-02 Closed Meeting Investigation- Final Report from Aird & Berlis LLP

10.3 Correspondence from Amber Grant Regarding Speed Complaint

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

- The potential process to use traffic calming measures, such as speed bumps in that area; and,
- Where residents can send speed concerns following the Council approved process.

Staff provided Council with information on the [Traffic Calming Request Form](#).

10.4 Correspondence from Mike Rice in Regards to Concerns Regarding Proposed 50.8% Tax Increase in Wilmot Township Draft Budget

10.5 Petition received from Kevin Thomason Regarding being an Unwilling Host

10.6 Correspondence from Mike Rice Regarding Township Priorities In Light of Critical Infrastructure Needs

11. **CONSENT AGENDA**

Councillor K. Wilkinson pulled Item 11.3 FS-2024-07 - Fire Safety Boundary Agreement Blandford Blenheim and Item 11.4 IS-2024-42 - Assumption Process for Storm Outlet in MAK Subdivision.

Moved by: Councillor L. Dunstall

Seconded by: Councillor S. Cressman

THAT Consent Agenda Items 11.1, 11.2, 11.3 and 11.4 be approved.

Motion Carried Unanimously

11.1 COR-2024-57 - Committee Appointments to the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC) (2025)

THAT Report COR-2024-57 Committee Appointments to the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC) (2025) be received for information; and

THAT Karen Hutcheson and Claire Gourlie be appointed to represent the Township of Wilmot on the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC) for a 4-year term, on until a successor is appointed ending December 31, 2028.

11.2 DS-2024-17 - Billboard Sign Renewals

THAT Report DS-2024-17 be endorsed.

11.3 FS-2024-07 - Fire Service Boundary Agreement Blandford-Blenheim

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

- Clarification on the revenue reported in the 2025 Budget for the Fire Service Boundary Agreement with Blandford-Blenheim.

THAT Report FS-2024-07, regarding the Boundary agreement between the Township of Wilmot and the Township of Blandford-Blenheim be received: and further

THAT the agreement has changed from a per capita agreement to a fee for service agreement: and further

THAT the agreement has been reviewed by both parties, including a legal review; and further

THAT the Mayor and Municipal Clerk be authorized to sign the Execution Agreement.

11.4 IS-2024-42 - Assumption Process for Storm Outlet in MAK Subdivision

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

- Clarification on cost implications of this assumption process, including legal fees.

THAT Council authorize the Mayor and CAO to execute the purchase and sale agreement for Part 1 on 58R-22163, subject to the approval of the Director of Infrastructure Services, for the amount of twenty-four thousand Canadian dollars.

12. **REPORTS**

12.1 CAO-2024-13 - Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Recruitment Options

Delegate B. Wolfe addressed Council.

The main motion was brought forward by Councillor L. Dunstall, and seconded by Councillor H. Sidhu THAT Report CAO-2024-13 be received by Council for information; and, THAT Council direct staff to proceed with Option # ____ for CAO Recruitment.

Acting CAO / Director of Corporate Services / CFO, G. Clark provided an introduction to the report.

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

- Option to proceed with RFP process, as opposed to quote process;
- Clarification on who would make the decision regarding external firm selection;
- Opportunities for the selection committee to provide input on the CAO job description; and,
- Clarification regarding the current hiring policy.

An amendment was brought forward by Councillor K. Wilkinson, seconded by Councillor Sidhu THAT the motion be amended to insert Option #1 and add and THAT Council directs staff to issue an RFP for the External Search Firm to conduct the CAO recruitment. The motion carried unanimously.

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

- Potentials costs, or hinderance of the RFP process; and,
- Clarification on the lowest compliant bidder.

Council now voted on the main motion, as amended.

Moved by: Councillor L. Dunstall

Seconded by: Councillor H. Sidhu

THAT Report CAO-2024-13 be received by Council for information; and,

THAT Council direct staff to proceed with Option # 1 for CAO Recruitment; and,

THAT Council directs staff to issue an RFP for the External Search Firm to conduct the CAO recruitment.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Mayor N. Salonen provided an introduction to the interview panel for the hiring process.

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

- Implications of all members of Council forming the interview panel;
- Clarification regarding quorum requirements; and,
- Open Meeting requirements.

Moved by: Councillor H. Sidhu

Seconded by: Councillor S. Cressman

THAT all Council Members participate in the CAO recruitment process, including the interview panel.

Motion Carried

12.2 CS-2024-34 - Community Grants Program

Director of Community Services, C. Catania provided an introduction to the report.

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

- Clarification on the requirement for recipients to have a board of director; and,
- Information on financial examiners reviewing organizations financials.

Moved by: Councillor S. Martin

Seconded by: Councillor S. Cressman

THAT Report CS-2024-34, Community Grants Program be received for information; and,

THAT Council approve amendments and Policy to the Community Grants Program for implementation in 2025 as presented in this report.

Motion Carried Unanimously

13. **BY-LAWS**

Moved by: Councillor S. Martin

Seconded by: Councillor S. Cressman

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 2024-59 Being a By-Law to Authorize the Mayor and Clerk Entering Into an Agreement with the Township of Blandford-Blenheim for Boundary Fire Coverage

14. NOTICES OF MOTION

- 14.1 Notice of Motion Regarding the Historical Financial Position of Wilmot Township

The motion was brought forward by Councillor H. Sidhu, seconded by Councillor L. Dunstall

WHEREAS Wilmot Township is currently facing a deeply challenging financial position and a significant infrastructure gap.

WHEREAS members of the public do not have a comprehensive document to reference outlining the historical position of Wilmot Township.

WHEREAS to better inform Council and the public about the factors that have contributed to this situation, it is essential to compile a comprehensive historical report on the Township's financials. This report will provide valuable context, highlight trends, and identify key policy decisions that have influenced our current financial standing.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT Wilmot Township Council directs staff to prepare a report on the Township's financials over the past two decades, including a high-level summary that provides an overview of the following:

1. The status of reserves over time, including growth, depletion, and annual balances;
2. Annual tax increases;
3. Annual debt levels;
4. Annual operating and capital budgets;
5. Annual actual operating and capital expenditures;

6. Annual contributions to reserves;
7. The Township's investments, including how they have been allocated and any returns or losses;
8. Investments spent within the community and their impact;
9. Analysis of spending habits, including any notable trends or shifts;
10. Policy improvements made in response to financial challenges; and
11. The Township's current financial position, including debt levels, revenue sources, and expenditures.

AND THAT the report include an explanation of how these factors have contributed to the current infrastructure gap and financial challenges;

AND FURTHER THAT this report be made available as a resource to improve transparency and understanding of Wilmot Township's financial history and present poor condition; and,

AND FURTHER THAT staff report back to Council in Q2 after budget deliberations, or sooner, if possible.

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

- The staff time required to complete this request.

An amendment was brought forward by Councillor S. Martin, seconded by Dunstall. THAT the motion be amended to strike out 'Q2' and replace with 'Q3.' The motion was defeated.

Council resumed debate on the main motion, as presented.

An amendment was brought forward by Councillor S. Cressman, seconded by Councillor S. Martin THAT the motion be amended to strike out 'over the past two decades' and replace with 'from 2011 forward'. The motion carried.

Council resumed debate on the main motion, as amended.

Council asked and received answers from Staff regarding:

- Estimated cost to complete this request;
- Defining significant investments; and,

- Clarification on the decision-making process of the significant investments.

An amendment was brought forward by Councillor K. Wilkinson, seconded by Councillor H. Sidhu. THAT the motion be amended to add 'and THAT Staff be directed to include in the report the costs of the acquisition, purchase, design and construction of the Wilmot Recreation Complex.' The motion was defeated.

Council now voted on the main motion, as amended.

Moved by: Councillor H. Sidhu

Seconded by: Councillor L. Dunstall

WHEREAS Wilmot Township is currently facing a deeply challenging financial position and a significant infrastructure gap.

WHEREAS members of the public do not have a comprehensive document to reference outlining the historical position of Wilmot Township.

WHEREAS to better inform Council and the public about the factors that have contributed to this situation, it is essential to compile a comprehensive historical report on the Township's financials. This report will provide valuable context, highlight trends, and identify key policy decisions that have influenced our current financial standing.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT Wilmot Township Council directs staff to prepare a report on the Township's financials from 2011 forward, including a high-level summary that provides an overview of the following:

1. The status of reserves over time, including growth, depletion, and annual balances;
2. Annual tax increases;
3. Annual debt levels;
4. Annual operating and capital budgets;
5. Annual actual operating and capital expenditures;
6. Annual contributions to reserves;
7. The Township's investments, including how they have been allocated and any returns or losses;
8. Investments spent within the community and their impact;

9. Analysis of spending habits, including any notable trends or shifts;
10. Policy improvements made in response to financial challenges; and
11. The Township's current financial position, including debt levels, revenue sources, and expenditures.

AND THAT the report include an explanation of how these factors have contributed to the current infrastructure gap and financial challenges;

AND FURTHER THAT this report be made available as a resource to improve transparency and understanding of Wilmot Township's financial history and present poor condition; and,

AND FURTHER THAT staff report back to Council in Q2 after budget deliberations, or sooner, if possible.

Motion Carried

15. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor N. Salonen provided announcements on:

- Season's Greetings

Councillor K. Wilkinson announcements on:

- Thank You to Ward 2 Town Hall attendees; and,
- Budget engagement opportunities including;
 - Send email to budget@wilmot.ca; and,
 - Budget Public Delegations on Tuesday, January 7 at 7:00 PM

Councillor S. Cressman provided an announcement on:

- Ward 1 Town Hall on Thursday, January 9, 2025 from 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM at the New Dundee Community Centre

Councillor L. Dunstall provided an announcement on:

- Ward 4 Town Hall on Saturday, January 4, 2025 from 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM at the New Hamburg Community Centre

Councillor H. Sidhu provided an announcement on:

- Ward 3 Town Hall on Thursday, January 2, 2025 at 7:00 – 8:30 PM at the Meeting Room A, Wilmot Recreation Centre, 1291 Nafziger Road, Baden

16. BUSINESS ARISING FROM CLOSED SESSION

Moved by: Councillor S. Martin

Seconded by: Councillor K. Wilkinson

THAT Council appoints the following citizens to the Heritage Wilmot and Castle Kilbride Advisory Committee for a term expiring December 31, 2026;

Heritage Wilmot and Castle Kilbride Advisory Committee

1. Matt Crawford
2. Kristen Hahn
3. Julie Molenaar; and,

THAT Council forwards the nomination of Amber Grant to the Region of Waterloo to represent the Township of Wilmot as the citizen non-voting member on the Region of Waterloo Library Board.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Councillor L. Dunstall declared a conflict of interest with this item and recused from voting.

Moved by: Councillor S. Martin

Seconded by: Councillor S. Cressman

THAT Council appoints the following citizens to the Wilmot Canada Day Event Task Force for a term expiring December 31, 2026;

Wilmot Canada Day Event Task Force

1. Janet Divita
2. Susan Hammer
3. Ed Penner

Motion Carried Unanimously

17. CONFIRMATORY BY-LAW

Moved by: Councillor S. Cressman

Seconded by: Councillor K. Wilkinson

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

18. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: Councillor L. Dunstall

Seconded by: Councillor S. Cressman

THAT we do now adjourn to meet again at the call of the Mayor.

Motion Carried Unanimously

DRAFT