



Stratford City Council Regular Council Open Session MINUTES

Meeting #: 4757th
Date: Monday, October 28, 2024
Time: 7:00 P.M.
Location: Council Chamber, City Hall

Council Present: Mayor Ritsma - Chair Presiding, Councillor Beatty, Councillor Biehn, Councillor Burbach, Councillor Henderson, Councillor Hunter, Councillor Nijjar, Councillor Sebben, Councillor Wordofa

Regrets: Councillor Briscoe and Councillor McCabe

Staff Present: Joan Thomson - Chief Administrative Officer, Tatiana Dafoe - City Clerk, Kim McElroy - Director of Social Services, Tim Wolfe - Director of Community Services, Taylor Crinklaw - Director of Infrastructure Services, Karmen Krueger - Director of Corporate Services, Adam Betteridge - Director of Building and Planning Services, Neil Anderson - Director of Emergency Services/Fire Chief, Dave Bush - Director of Human Resources, Audrey Pascual - Deputy Clerk, Mike Mousley - Manager of Transit, Kelly Stone - Supervisor of Housing

Also Present: Members of the Public and Media

1. Call to Order:

Mayor Ritsma, Chair presiding, called the Council meeting to order.

Councillor McCabe and Councillor Briscoe provided regrets for this meeting.

Land Acknowledgment

Moment of Silent Reflection

Singing of O Canada

Respectful Workplace Policy Statement

2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof:

The *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* requires any member of Council declaring a pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof, where the interest of a member of Council has not been disclosed by reason of the member's absence from the meeting, to disclose the interest at the first open meeting attended by the member of Council and to otherwise comply with the *Act*.

Name, Item and General Nature of Pecuniary Interest

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest made by a member at the October 28, 2024 Regular Council meeting.

3. Adoption of the Minutes:

R2024-425

Motion by Councillor Nijjar

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford dated October 15, 2024, be adopted as printed.

Carried

4. Adoption of the Addenda to the Agenda:

R2024-426

Motion by Councillor Hunter

Seconded by Councillor Wordofa

THAT the Addenda to the Regular Agenda of Council and Standing Committees dated October 28, 2024, be added to the Agenda as printed.

Carried

5. Report of the Committee of the Whole In-Camera Session:

5.1 October 28, 2024 Committee of the Whole In-camera Session

The October 28, 2024, Committee of the Whole In-camera Session was cancelled.

6. Hearings of Deputations and Presentations:

6.1 ADDED - Request for Delegation Regarding Item 7.1 – Boathouse Roof Membrane & Railing Replacement – Tender Award (COU24-124)

R2024-427

Motion by Councillor Nijjar

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT Jane Marie Mitchell be heard.

Carried

Jane Marie Mitchell spoke to Council regarding the Boathouse Roof Membrane & Railing Replacement - Tender Award. Highlights of the presentation included:

- an overview of potential materials to be used for roofs to help with minimizing solar absorption;
- an overview of the benefits of installing white roofs;
- concerns regarding the materials used on the roof of the Allman Arena;
- the importance of taking steps to reduce local temperatures and the effects of rising temperatures to the community;
- an inquiry regarding the definition of the environmental lens or climate lens;
- concerns regarding the materials to be used on the roof of the boathouse;
- an overview of the strategies and goals outlined in the City's 2023 Corporate Energy and Emissions Plan;
- a highlight of the City's role in meeting the goals set out in the Plan;
- the City having an opportunity to show leadership by procuring materials that are in line with research to battle climate change;

- the City having the opportunity to bring awareness to measures that can be taken to lower energy needs and emissions through its facility projects; and
- a recommendation to change the current roof of the boathouse to a white surface.

The Director of Community Services provided the following comments regarding the concerns raised during the presentation:

- there being consultation with the Climate Change Programs Manager, for all capital projects, to discuss what climate initiatives can be done for the projects;
- staff currently looking at a feasibility study to look at the seven highest emitters in facilities and what measures can be taken to meet the City's climate goals;
- the Allman Arena being a heritage building so the roof material used was kept as close to the original colour and a higher insulated value was used to help with heat retention and to keep the cooling effect; and
- the paver stone to be used on the boathouse being a light colour to help with the reduction of heat.

6.2 ADDED - Request for Delegation Regarding Item 7.2 – Respectful Workplace Policy Options (COU24-126)

R2024-428

Motion by Councillor Henderson

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT correspondence from Mike Sullivan dated October 28, 2024 be received.

Carried

R2024-429

Motion by Councillor Hunter

Seconded by Councillor Biehn

THAT Mike Sullivan, Jane Marie Mitchell and Sharon Collingwood, be heard.

Carried

Mike Sullivan spoke to Council regarding the Respectful Workplace Policy. Highlights of the presentation included:

- urging Council to reject the proposed amendments to policies designed to permit banning of citizens;
- an overview of Mr. Sullivan's experience of being banned and the process that occurred in relation to the ban;
- concerns with the proposed changes to the policies and the lack of clarity regarding the complaint process;
- concerns regarding the removal of the actions of Council from the policies;
- concerns regarding the addition of the frivolous and vexatious section to the policy; and
- the proposal creating a confusing mix of policies.

Jane Marie Mitchell spoke to Council regarding the Respectful Workplace Policy. Highlights of the presentation included:

- a comparison of similar policies from the City of Cambridge and the Town of Elliott Lake with the proposed policy;
- an overview of the definition of actions addressed in the Town of Elliott Lake's policy;
- concerns regarding the costs of the Respectful Workplace Policy complaints for the City;
- an overview of the City of Cambridge's Decorum Policy and how it compares to the City of Stratford's Procedural By-law provisions;
- concerns with the definitions and process outlined in the current City of Stratford's Respectful Workplace Policy and their application;
- an overview of Ms. Mitchell's experience with the investigation in relation to the Respectful Workplace Policy complaint against her;

- concerns about the action of Council members not being covered in the policy; and
- a recommendation for public consultation to be conducted prior to approving the policy.

Sharon Collingwood spoke to Council regarding the Respectful Workplace Policy. Highlights of the presentation included:

- an overview of the struggles of many Ontario Councils regarding respectful workplace policies;
- there being concerns about the duplication of policies as there are already many codes of conduct available;
- concerns regarding the legality of the provisions of the policy;
- concerns regarding the complexity and inaccessibility of the policy;
- concerns regarding the application of policy to the public without public consultation or meeting;
- concerns regarding the frivolous and vexatious elements in the policy; and
- the Bracken case being noted.

7. Orders of the Day:

7.1 Resolution - Boathouse Roof Membrane & Railing Replacement – Tender Award (COU24-124)

R2024-430

Motion by Councillor Beatty

Seconded by Councillor Nijjar

THAT the Tender for the supply and installation of a new roofing system and waterproofing for the Boathouse, be awarded to Grand Valley Roofing & Coatings Inc. at a total cost of \$105,997.39, including HST;

THAT the Tender for the supply and installation of a new railing system for the Boathouse, be awarded to Kee Safety Ltd. at a total cost of \$129,743.21, including HST;

THAT the Tender for the supply and installation of a new interlocking paver system for the Boathouse, be awarded to A Touch of Dutch Landscaping and Garden Services Ltd. at a total cost of \$27,484.99, including HST;

THAT Recreation Capital Reserve Fund R-R11-RECR be used to provide the funding required;

AND THAT if additional work is required, subject to approval by the Director of Community Services, an additional contingency be authorized to fund any potential issues that are not within the approved Tender scope of work from Recreation Capital Reserve Fund R-R11-RECR.

With respect to a member's enquiry regarding the contingency limit for the project, the Director of Community Services noted that generally there is a 10% contingency in place and anything more substantial is brought to Council for consideration.

The Mayor called the question on the motion.

Carried

7.2 Resolution - Respectful Workplace Policy Options (COU24-126)

The Director of Human Resources, referring to a PowerPoint presentation, provided an overview of the report. Highlights of the presentation included:

- an overview of the current Respectful Workplace Policy and the incidents that have taken place which has caused concerns;
- there being confusion regarding the provisions and application of the policy;
- staff being directed by Council to review the policy at its July 22nd meeting;
- an overview of the options being provided by staff as noted in the report;
- an overview of the staff recommendation relating to Option 1 as noted in the report; and

- an overview of the next steps if Option 1 is approved by Council.

Members of Council and the Director of Human Resources held a discussion regarding the following:

- the proposed changes providing clarity regarding the process and application of policies;
- an overview of the legislative requirements relating to the Council Code of Conduct and Workplace Policy for employees;
- changes to the process to address concerns about rectifying behaviour;
- the policy setting out expectations regarding respectful behaviour and conduct;
- restitution being part of every process involved; and
- the policy not stopping members of the public from going through the delegation process to speak to Council regarding their ideas and concerns.

R2024-431

Motion by Councillor Hunter

Seconded by Councillor Nijjar

THAT Council direct the Director of Human Resources to implement Option 1 in Report COU24-126 – Separate the current Respectful Workplace Policy H.1.36 into three (3) separate policies and update the City’s Respect in the Workplace web page;

THAT Council adopts the Public Conduct Policy;

AND THAT Council accepts the Administration Policy “Respectful Workplace Policy H.1.36” as information.

Members of Council held a discussion regarding the motion as follows:

- there being concerns that the Council direction was for the application of policy to be reviewed and not only for the policy to be broken down into three pieces;

- there being no change to the policy and concerns that the outcome will be the same as before;
- the policy being required to protect staff from harassment;
- there being concerns about not creating a policy that is tailored to needs of Stratford;
- the need for creating other ways for the public to engage with Council outside of the formal process of delegation;
- the importance of having a policy to ensure that staff are treated respectfully; and
- there being concerns from the public about the application of the policy and how it has discouraged them from participating.

A member requested a recorded vote.

Discussion continued as follows:

- there being a need to support staff as well as to provide the public with the opportunity to speak up;
- the proposed policy being different from the current one; and,
- there being provisions in the new policy for communication with the complainants and the list of offences being made clearer.

A recorded vote was taken on the motion.

In Support (7): Councillor Biehn, Mayor Ritsma, Councillor Henderson, Councillor Beatty, Councillor Hunter, Councillor Nijjar, and Councillor Burbach

Opposed (2): Councillor Sebben, and Councillor Wordofa

Carried

7.3 Resolution - Deputy Mayor Appointment 2024-2026 (COU24-125)

R2024-432

Motion by Councillor Beatty

Seconded by Councillor Wordofa

THAT Councillor Nijjar be appointed as Deputy Mayor for the remainder of the term from November 14, 2024 to November 14, 2026.

Members of Council held a discussion regarding the motion as follows:

- it being important to share the workload and the possibility of breaking up the term into one-year periods to give everybody a chance; and
- the selection and appointment process of other municipalities, including the City of Ottawa, being noted.

The Mayor called the question on the motion.

Carried

8. Business for Which Previous Notice Has Been Given:

None scheduled.

9. Reports of the Standing Committees:

9.1 Report of the Infrastructure, Transportation and Safety Committee:

R2024-433

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Sebben

THAT the Report of the Infrastructure, Transportation and Safety Committee dated October 28, 2024, be adopted as printed.

Carried

9.1.1 Avon Trail Blazing Request (ITS24-018)

THAT the request from the Avon Trail to blaze the Stratford Side Trail from the Devon Street playground through the City to the TJ Dolan natural area be approved.

10. Notice of Intent:

None scheduled.

11. Reading of the By-laws:

The following By-laws required First and Second Readings and Third and Final Readings and were taken collectively upon unanimous vote of Council present:

R2024-434

Motion by Councillor Beatty

Seconded by Councillor Henderson

THAT By-laws 125-2024 to 127-2024 be taken collectively.

Carried unanimously

R2024-435

Motion by Councillor Nijjar

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT By-laws 125-2024 to 127-2024 be read a First and Second Time.

Carried two-thirds support

R2024-436

Motion by Councillor Hunter

Seconded by Councillor Nijjar

THAT By-laws 125-2024 to 127-2024 be read a Third Time and Finally Passed

Carried

11.1 Award Tender for the Supply and Installation of a New Roofing System and Waterproofing for the Boathouse - By-law 125-2024

To authorize the acceptance of a tender and execution of a contract with Grand Valley Roofing & Coatings Inc. for the supply and installation of a new membrane roofing system and waterproofing for the Boathouse.

11.2 Award Tender for the Supply and Installation of a New Railing System for the Boathouse - By-law 126-2024

To authorize the acceptance of a tender and execution of a contract with Kee Safety Ltd. for the supply and installation of a new railing system for the Boathouse.

11.3 Award Tender for the Supply and Installation of a New Interlocking Paver System for the Boathouse - By-law 127-2024

To authorize the acceptance of a tender and execution of a contract with A Touch of Dutch Landscaping and Garden Services Ltd. for the supply and installation of a new interlocking paver system for the Boathouse.

12. Consent Agenda: CA-2024-174 to CA-2024-180

12.1 CA-2024-176

R2024-437

Motion by Councillor Henderson

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT CA-2024-176, being a resolution from the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury regarding the Ontario Deposit Return Program, be endorsed.

Carried

13. New Business:

13.1 Housing Specialist Services

A member highlighted the unique services being offered by the Housing Specialist. The member noted that the specialist collaborates with investStratford to simplify adding rental units to properties and they assist residents with understanding the process and the Building and Planning requirements. The member urged anyone who is interested to contact the Housing Specialist.

13.2 Communities in Bloom 2025

A member provided an update regarding the Communities in Bloom National Symposium. The member noted that Stratford received the 5 Bloom Gold Standard which is the highest award. The member recognized the work done by staff, volunteers, and residents. Stratford also received the Best Downtown Award and the member recognized the work done by the merchants, the Downtown Stratford Business Improvement Area, and Destination Stratford. Stratford will be hosting the next national symposium to be held on October 16-19, 2025.

14. Adjournment to Standing Committees:

The next Regular Council meeting is November 12, 2024, in the Council Chamber, City Hall.

R2024-438

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Nijjar

THAT the Council meeting adjourn to convene into Standing Committees as follows:

- **Social Services Committee [7:05 or thereafter following the Regular Council meeting]; and**
- **Community Services Committee [7:10 or thereafter following the Regular Council meeting]**

and to Committee of the Whole if necessary, and to reconvene into Council.

Carried

15. Council Reconvene:

15.1 Declarations of Pecuniary Interest made at Standing Committees

The Municipal Conflict of Interest Act requires any member of Council declaring a pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof, where the interest of a member of Council has not been disclosed by reason of the member's absence from the meeting, to disclose the interest at the first open meeting attended by the member of Council and otherwise comply with the Act.

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest made at Standing Committee meetings held on October 28, 2024, with respect to the following Items and re-stated at the reconvene portion of the Council meeting:

Name, Item and General Nature of Pecuniary Interest

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest made by a member at the October 28, 2024 Council Reconvene meeting.

15.2 Reading of the By-laws (reconvene):

The following By-law required First and Second Readings and Third and Final Readings.

By-law 11.4 Confirmatory By-law - By-law 128-2024

To confirm the proceedings of Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford at its meeting held on October 28, 2024.

R2024-439

Motion by Councillor Beatty

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT By-law 128-2024 be read a First and Second Time.

Carried two-thirds support

R2024-440

Motion by Councillor Hunter

Seconded by Councillor Henderson

THAT By-law 128-2024 be read a Third Time and Finally Passed.

Carried

15.3 Adjournment of Council Meeting

R2024-441

Motion by Councillor Henderson

Seconded by Councillor Sebben

THAT the October 28, 2024, Regular Council meeting adjourn.

Carried

Meeting Start Time: 7:00 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 8:25 P.M.

Reconvene Meeting Start Time: 8:39 P.M.

Reconvene Meeting End Time: 8:40 P.M.

Mayor - Martin Ritsma

Clerk - Tatiana Dafoe