



Stratford City Council
Regular Council Open Session
MINUTES

Meeting #: 4770th
Date: Monday, May 12, 2025
Time: 7:00 P.M.
Location: Council Chamber, City Hall

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

Regrets: Councillor Nijjar

Staff Present: Adam Betteridge - Interim Chief Administrative Officer, Tatiana Dafoe - City Clerk, Kim McElroy - Director of Social Services and Acting Director of Human Resources, Tim Wolfe - Director of Community Services, Taylor Crinklaw - Director of Infrastructure Services, Karmen Krueger - Director of Corporate Services, Neil Anderson - Director of Emergency Services/Fire Chief, Audrey Pascual - Deputy Clerk, Johnny Bowes – Manager, Asset Management

Also Present: Members of the Public and Media

1. Call to Order:

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

Councillor Nijjar provided regrets for this meeting.

Land Acknowledgment

Moment of Silent Reflection

Singing of O Canada

Respectful Conduct 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 May 12, 2025 Regular Council meeting.

3. Adoption of the Minutes:

R2025-194

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Beatty

THAT the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford dated April 28, 2025 be adopted as printed.

Carried

4. Adoption of the Addenda to the Agenda:

R2025-195

Motion by Councillor Biehn

Seconded by Councillor McCabe

THAT the Addenda to the Regular Agenda of Council and Standing Committees dated May 12, 2025 be added to the Agenda as printed.

Carried

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

5.1 At the May 12, 2025 Session, under the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, matters concerning the following items were considered:

4.1 Confidential Report of the CEO of investStratford with respect to a Proposed Disposition of Land in the Wright Business Park (CM-25-11) - Proposed or pending acquisition or disposal of land by the municipality or local board (section 239.(2)(c)) (includes municipal property leased for more than 21 years).

At the In-camera Session, direction was provided to the City Clerk regarding Item 4.1.

5.2 Added - From the May 12, 2025, In-camera Session:

4.1 Confidential Report of the CEO of investStratford with respect to a Proposed Disposition of Land in the Wright Business Park (CM-25-11) - Proposed or pending acquisition or disposal of land by the municipality or local board (section 239.(2)(c)) (includes municipal property leased for more than 21 years)

R2025-196

Motion by Councillor Hunter

Seconded by Councillor Henderson

THAT the Interim Chief Administrative Officer be authorized to execute on behalf of The Corporation of the City of Stratford an Amending Agreement with 2809185 Ontario Inc. to amend certain terms and conditions related to the sale of 105 Wright Blvd.

Carried

6. Hearings of Deputations and Presentations:

6.1 Added - Request for Delegation by Mike Sullivan

R2025-197

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Henderson

THAT Mike Sullivan be heard.

Carried

Mike Sullivan spoke to Council regarding Item 7.3 - Closed Meeting Investigation Final Report - April 2025. Highlights of the presentation included:

- a comparison of the findings from the previous Closed Meeting Investigation Report and the present report;
- there being concerns about the lack of examples in the Closed Meeting Protocol on what constitutes substantive decisions;
- Council being asked to look into Page 14 of the Protocol stating that Council can decide to litigate a matter;
- Council being requested to direct staff to amend the Protocol to provide clear examples of permitted and not permitted voting and to delete the reference about making a decision on Page 14; and
- Council being asked to weigh in on Ontario's Bill 5.

Mike Sullivan spoke to Council regarding Item 7.2 - Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Program Revised Contribution Agreement. Highlights of the presentation included:

- it being noted that taking advantage of current federal subsidies is important as they will not always be available;
- a comparison of the charging time for Level 2 versus Level 3 EV Charging Stations;
- Level 3 EV Charging Stations being sought by tourists and are in great demand;
- private Level 3 EV Charging Stations costing a significant amount for the charging sessions;
- there being a potential crisis for residential buildings due to the lack of EV Charging Stations;
- it being important to have EV Charging infrastructure in place due to the federal government's goal to be net zero by 2050 and to support the City's Community Climate Action Plan; and

- Council being urged to accept the funding from the federal government and to install as many EV chargers as possible.

Members of Council and Mr. Sullivan held a discussion regarding the following:

- it being noted that the City is not doing too bad with the installation of EV Charging Stations;
- there being a need for the City to look ahead to install EV Charging infrastructure;
- the number of EV Charging Stations within a 15-km distance from the City;
- there being private EV Charging Stations located within City limits but may not be available to the public;
- it being important to install EV Charging Stations in strategic locations within the City to support the needs of tourists; and
- there being a need to update the overnight parking restriction to allow EVs to charge using Level 2 Charging Stations for extended periods.

7. Orders of the Day:

7.1 Resolution - Asset Management Plan 2025 Update (COU25-054)

The Manager of Asset Management, referring to a PowerPoint presentation, provided an overview of the 2025 Asset Management Update. Highlights of the presentation included:

- Stratford facing the same issues as other municipalities related to infrastructure;
- asset management being a legislated requirement in Ontario;
- an overview of the stages of the asset management plan development for Stratford;

- an overview of the goals of asset management including to optimize service delivery, cost effectiveness, financial sustainability, and risk management;
- there being consequences to non-compliance including effects on grant and funding eligibility;
- the asset management plan being a living and changing document due to factors such as construction costs and CPI;
- an overview of the condition assessment being done for City assets;
- an overview of the work to be done in the next 12 months including improving data confidence and engaging with Council, staff, and the public to determine the levels of service for the community; and
- the asset management plan being critical for long term planning for the City.

Members of Council and the Manager of Asset Management held a discussion regarding the following:

- there being regular inspections conducted for bridges and culverts in accordance with Ontario regulatory requirements;
- the City completing regular maintenance and timely rehabilitations of bridges in accordance with the Ontario Structure Inspection Manual (OSIM) reports;
- it being important for Council to have accurate information about City assets;
- smaller municipalities having to make harder decisions when funding assets and there being less funding from the province;
- it being important for the public to weigh in on the decisions;
- the City using sanitary and stormwater master plans to monitor high points and high-risk areas and factoring them into the capital plan;

- it being important to think of assets that are easily visible as well as those that may be underground;
- a member noting that they are heartened to know that staff will be engaging with community groups including those who may use City assets in less traditional ways;
- it being important to follow a holistic approach to asset management;
- it being clarified that the asset rating does not pose a safety risk;
- the Manager explaining that fire hydrants while having a poor rating due to their age are inspected every year and repaired promptly to extend their useful life expectancy; and
- the goal of the next 12 months being to improve the data to support the plan.

R2025-198

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Henderson

THAT the report titled, "Asset Management Plan 2025 Update" (COU25-054), be received;

AND THAT Council adopt the City's Asset Management Plan Update 2025 as presented.

Carried

7.2 Resolution - Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Program Revised Contribution Agreement (COU25-057)

R2025-199

Motion by Councillor McCabe

Seconded by Councillor Briscoe

THAT Council authorize the entering into of the Contribution Agreement between The Corporation of the City of Stratford and Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) for the Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Program (ZEVIP);

THAT the Mayor and City Clerk, or their respective delegates, be authorized to sign the Contribution Agreement;

AND THAT the City's portion of the project costs be funded from the Parking Reserve Fund.

Members of Council and staff held a discussion regarding the following:

- a member noting that they are opposed to the project due to the lack of use of the existing stations;
- it being premature to analyze the usage data from the existing stations since some of the charging stations are still new and have not been operational for a long period;
- the Level 3 EV Charging Stations being an asset for groups running events at the Rotary Complex;
- the location of the Rotary Complex filling a gap in the availability of infrastructure as there is currently no EV Charging Stations at this site;
- the sales of electric vehicles going up and the availability of access to Level 3 Charging Stations making a big difference for tourists travelling in the region;
- the project being a good show of faith with the new federal administration that is very concerned about the balance of environmental protection and the safeguarding and growing of the Canadian manufacturing sector;
- the revised proposal striking a good balance between cost and opportunity;
- it being questioned whether the Level 2 EV Charging Stations can be upgraded to a Level 3 stations;
- the Deputy Clerk noting that the connections for the stations are different however staff will consult further and provide Council with additional information;
- the Interim Chief Administrative Officer noting that there is currently no legislation mandating developers to install EV Charging Stations however there is also no restrictions; and

- it being challenging to make decisions without enough usage data.

The Mayor called the question on the motion.

Carried

7.3 Resolution - Closed Meeting Investigation Final Report – April 2025 (COU25-058)

R2025-200

Motion by Councillor McCabe

Seconded by Councillor Beatty

THAT the Closed Meeting Investigation Final Report 36684-9 dated April 29, 2025, be received for information;

AND THAT Council's commitment to continuous education and training and use of the Closed Meeting Protocol be re-affirmed.

Members of Council and staff held a discussion regarding the following:

- it being questioned whether staff will be implementing the pieces noted in the final report and integrating them into continuous education and training;
- the City Clerk noting that the intent would be to continuously hold education and training sessions and to continue the use of the Closed Meeting Protocol as was adopted last year;
- the Mayor noting that the Chair and the Clerk have been checking during meetings and issuing cautions to ensure that the protocol is followed; and
- a member noting that Council and staff have made considerable efforts to make sure that closed meeting resolutions are not defective and it shows in the report before Council today.

The Mayor called the question on the motion.

Carried

7.4 Resolution - New Transit Office Building Project Award (COU25-056)

R2025-201

Motion by Councillor Biehn

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT the Request for Proposal (RFP-2025-18) for the design and build of a new transit office facility be awarded to Complete Building Systems Inc. in the amount of \$400,020, including HST.

Carried

7.5 Resolution - Inverness Park Playground RFP Award (COU25-059)

R2025-202

Motion by Councillor Beatty

Seconded by Councillor Henderson

THAT the Request for Proposal (RFP-2025-14) for the design, supply, delivery, and installation of an accessible playground, including accessible engineered woodchip base and the installation of an accessible pathway at Inverness Park be awarded to S.F. Scott Mfg. Co. Ltd. O/A Blue Imp. in the amount of \$116,557.24, including HST.

Carried

7.6 Resolution - Special Occasion Permit - Stratford Ladies and Men's Slo Pitch League

R2025-203

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Hunter

THAT City Council does not express concern with the issuance of a special occasion permit for the Stratford Ladies and Men's Slo Pitch league tournament to be held September 5-7, 2025 at the Stratford Packham Road Sports Complex subject to necessary permits being obtained, compliance with the City's Municipal Alcohol Risk Policy, and the required certificates of insurance being provided prior to the event.

Carried

7.7 Proclamation - Pride Month and Raising of the Pride Flag

R2025-204

Motion by Councillor McCabe

Seconded by Councillor Briscoe

THAT Stratford City Council hereby proclaims the month of June as "Pride Month" in the City of Stratford in support of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and to recognize their contributions in our municipality;

AND THAT Stratford City Council authorizes the flying of the Pride Flag on May 30, 2025 and for the month of June, to send a message of inclusivity, diversity and acceptance to all members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

Carried

8. Business for Which Previous Notice Has Been Given:

None noted.

9. Reports of the Standing Committees:

9.1 Report of the Social Services Committee

R2025-205

Motion by Councillor Henderson

Seconded by Councillor Briscoe

THAT the Report of the Social Services Committee dated May 12, 2025 be adopted as printed.

Carried

9.1.1 Stratford-Bruce Peninsula Employment Service System Manager (SSM) Consortium Member Update (SOC25-004)

THAT the report titled, "SSM Consortium Member Update" (SOC25-004), and dated April 15, 2025, be received for information.

9.1.2 Family Services Perth-Huron Counselling and Support Agreement Update (SOC25-005)

THAT the report titled, "Family Services Perth-Huron Annual Utilization Rate Summary Report" (SOC25-005), be received for information.

9.2 Report of the Community Services Committee

R2025-206

Motion by Councillor McCabe

Seconded by Councillor Beatty

THAT the Report of the Community Services Committee dated May 12, 2025 be adopted as printed.

Carried

9.2.1 Mervyn "Butch" Blake Recognition Follow-up (COM25-002)

THAT the report titled, "Mervyn "Butch" Blake Recognition Follow-up" (COM25-002), be received for information and the request filed.

10. Notice of Intent:

None noted.

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:

R2025-207

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Biehn

THAT By-laws 54-2025 to 57-2025 be taken collectively.

Carried unanimously

R2025-208

Motion by Councillor Henderson

Seconded by Councillor Hunter

THAT By-laws 54-2025 to 57-2025 be read a First and Second Time.

Carried two-thirds support

R2025-209

Motion by Councillor McCabe

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT By-laws 54-2025 to 57-2025 be read a Third Time and Finally Passed.

Carried

11.1 Award Proposal for the Design and Build of a New Transit Office Facility - By-law 54-2025

To authorize the acceptance of a proposal, execution of the contract and the undertaking of work by Complete Building Systems Inc. for the design and build of a new transit office facility (RFP-2025-18).

11.2 Award Proposal for the Design, Supply, and Installation of an Accessible Playground at Inverness Park - By-law 55-2025

To authorize the acceptance of a proposal from S.F. Scott Mfg. Co. Ltd. O/A Blue Imp. for the design, supply, delivery, and installation of an accessible playground, including accessible engineered woodchip base and the installation of an accessible pathway at Inverness Park (RFP-2025-14).

11.3 NRCan Zero Emissions Vehicle Infrastructure Program Non-Repayable Contribution Agreement - By-law 56-2025

To authorize the execution of a Non-Repayable Contribution Agreement with His Majesty the King in Right of Canada, represented by the Minister of Natural Resources to receive funds through the Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Program.

11.4 ADDED - Amending Agreement – 105 Wright Blvd. - By-law 57-2025

To authorize the entering into and execution of an Amending Agreement with 2809185 Ontario Inc. to amend certain terms and conditions related to the sale of 105 Wright Blvd.

12. Consent Agenda: CA-2024-057 to CA-2024-060

Council did not advise of any items to be considered on the Consent Agenda.

13. New Business:

13.1 Municipally-owned Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations and Installation of an Accessible Ramp at the Police Station

A member thanked the Advisory Committee for the work that they have done to advocate for the installation of accessible ramp at the Stratford Police Station. The Mayor noted that the event was well attended and recognized the work of staff, particularly the Manager of Community Facilities, and the Advisory Committee for their work on making the building accessible.

R2025-210

Motion by Councillor Hunter

Seconded by Councillor McCabe

THAT staff be directed to prepare a report regarding the usage of the City's EV Charging Stations that would include any times the stations are used simultaneously;

AND THAT staff be directed to review overnight parking restrictions to allow for extended use of the EV Charging Stations.

Members of Council and staff held a discussion regarding the following:

- the current pricing structure for the use of the EV Charging Stations being the parking rates that is charged for the use of the parking space only;
- staff intending to bring a report to Council with a proposed pricing structure for the use of the EV Charging Stations including requiring payment outside of the parking enforcement hours;
- the cost for the use of the Level 2 EV Charging Stations initially being kept at the parking rate as this rate was fairly similar to the rates charged by other municipalities as well as to encourage the use of the chargers;
- staff intending to revisit the fee structure following the installation of Level 3 Charging Stations due to their increased costs; and,
- it being added that staff investigate whether it is possible to charge a premium fee to allow regular vehicles to park in the EV charging spaces when they are not in use.

The Mayor called the question on the motion.

Carried

13.2 Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Station Requirement for Planning Applications

Motion by Councillor Henderson

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT staff investigate the inclusion of a requirement to install EV Charging Stations for new development applications.

Members of Council and staff held a discussion regarding the following:

- the Interim Chief Administrative Officer noting that requiring developers to install EV Charging Stations will represent an added cost to developments which could trickle down to renters;
- a member noting their concern given the current provincial environment which has been limiting what municipalities can do;
- a member noting that it may be more appropriate to investigate incentivizing developers to install EV Charging Stations;
- the incentives for the inclusion of EV Charging Stations in developments potentially being included in the green development standards which will be part of the Official Plan update; and,
- the City having the ability to generate enough electricity to support the adoption of increased EV Charging Stations however localized infrastructure upgrades may be needed in some areas of the City.

The motion was withdrawn.

14. Adjournment to Standing Committees:

The next Regular Council meeting is Tuesday May 27, 2025 in the Council Chamber, City Hall.

R2025-211

Motion by Councillor McCabe

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

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

- **Finance and Labour Relations Committee [7:05 or thereafter following the Regular Council meeting]; and**

- **Infrastructure, Transportation and Safety 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 May 12, 2025 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

Councillor Hunter declared a pecuniary interest regarding Item 5.1 O'Loane Trunk Sanitary Sewer Extension Project – Open House and Recommendations (ITS25-008) of the Infrastructure, Transportation and Safety Committee Agenda. Councillor Hunter owns lands that will benefit from the extension project.

15.2 Reading of the Confirmatory By-law:

The following By-laws required First and Second Readings and Third and Final Readings:

By-law 11.5 Confirmatory By-law - By-law 58-2025

To confirm the proceedings of Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford at its meeting held on May 12, 2025.

R2025-212

Motion by Councillor Biehn

Seconded by Councillor Sebben

THAT By-law 58-2025 be read a First and Second Time.

Carried two-thirds support

R2025-213

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Henderson

THAT By-law 58-2025 be read a Third Time and Finally Passed.

Carried

15.3 Adjournment of Council Meeting

R2025-214

Motion by Councillor Wordofa

Seconded by Councillor Briscoe

THAT the May 12, 2025 Regular Council meeting adjourn.

Carried

Meeting Start Time: 7:00 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 8:42 P.M.

Reconvene Meeting Start Time: 8:48 P.M.

Reconvene Meeting End Time: 8:49 P.M.

Mayor - Martin Ritsma

Clerk - Tatiana Dafoe