



The Corporation of the City of Stratford Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee

MINUTES

Date: June 17, 2025
Time: 4:30 P.M.
Location: Council Chamber, City Hall

Sub-committee Present: Councillor Hunter - Chair Presiding, Councillor McCabe - Vice Chair, Councillor Beatty, Councillor Burbach, Councillor Nijjar

Staff Present: Karmen Krueger - Director of Corporate Services, Tatiana Dafoe - City Clerk, Tim Wolfe - Director of Community Services, Miranda Franken - Council Clerk Secretary

Also present: Joani Gerber – Chief Executive Officer of investStratford, Rino Bortolin - Strategic Advisor, Centre for Cities, University of Windsor

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to Order.

Land Acknowledgment

Moment of Silent Reflection

Respectful Conduct Statement

2. Disclosure 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 otherwise comply with the *Act*.

Name, Item and General Nature of Pecuniary Interest

No disclosures of pecuniary interest were made by a Member at the June 17, 2025 Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee meeting.

3. Delegations

None scheduled.

4. Report of the Director of Corporate Services

4.1 SEEDCo./investStratford Update to March 31 2025 (FIN25-018)

Staff Recommendation: THAT the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation (SEEDCo./investStratford) Update to March 31, 2025, be received for information.

Motion by Councillor McCabe

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation (SEEDCo./investStratford) Update to March 31, 2025, be received for information.

Carried

Motion by Councillor Nijjar

THAT the Housing Needs Assessment Summary Design provided by SEEDCo./investStratford dated June 2025 be received.

Carried

Sub-committee Discussion: Joani Gerber, Chief Executive Officer, SEEDCo./investStratford and Rino Bortolin, Strategic Advisor, Centre for Cities, University of Windsor, presented the report and summary.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- the support of Rino Bortolin in the authorship of the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) having been requested;

Councillor Beatty and Councillor Burbach present at the meeting at 4:34 p.m.

- the HNA being important in decision making and a requirement for Federal and Provincial funding projects, programs and applications;

- regarding the investStratford update:
 - investStratford being within budget and doing well;
 - the Annual Members Meeting having been held the week of June 9, 2025;
 - the Summer Company Entrepreneurship Networking Event coming up; and
 - the Provincial and the Federal government having aligned in a commitment to infrastructure and defense with this being an opportunity in Stratford;
- the presentation of the HNA being a high level summary;
- figures for the average numbers of homeless households having increased since 2020 and levelled over the last two years;
- income levels to support housing indicating \$388 being affordable monthly rent for 3% of the population and \$969 being affordable for 20% of the population and highlighting the need for affordable housing options across the community;
- the sharpest increase in rents being in 1 and 2 bedroom units with a 45-50% increase from 2020 to 2023;
- rental properties seeing an increase similar to homes for sale and putting pressure on renters;
- there being 970 households with a core housing need with 760 being single people and the majority being male and 145 households being two people;
- approximately 905 of the 970 households experiencing core housing needs for single or two people and not larger families;
- the typology indicating roughly 60% of current housing stock being 3 bedroom or more with 41% 3 bedroom and 19% 4 bedroom;
- projections to 2031 indicating household by size to be 11,548 people or 66% and being one or two bedroom households;

- the typology of homes required to be added being important and not only the number of homes to be added to housing stock;
- by 2035 a third of the population to be 65 years or older with many currently living in 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes; and
- in the HNA the housing needs typology being the story.

Members of the Sub-committee and Rino Bortolin discussed the summary:

- the first step being delivery of choice with new units that are smaller, spread out and mixed into neighborhoods to allow seniors to integrate in the downtown;
- the type of mix could include 4, 6 and 8-plex's embedded in neighborhoods with quality units;
- it was noted 200 new single units could accommodate seniors currently living in 2 and 3 bedroom homes and with the average family size in Stratford being 2.3 those homes to then accommodate 460 people;
- a combination of short-term rental or employment housing being accommodated by these units and natural market forces to fill the homes quickly;
- Stratford being attractive to people wanting to move here and also a need within the community as people age, downsize or young adults move out and this not being possible with rental increases;
- the immediate need being affordable rents under \$1,000 per month noting affordable housing being 30% of take home pay;
- current market rents for a bachelor being \$1,300 with take home required to be \$4,000 per month and in the medium or moderate income scale; and
- with the build of more units the market to cool and correct itself and expectation that existing units on the market to come down in value.

4.2 Festival Hydro Inc. and Festival Hydro Services Inc. 2024 Audited Financial Statements and Dividend Declaration (FIN25-019)

Staff Recommendation: THAT the Festival Hydro Inc. audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2024, be received for information;

THAT the Festival Hydro Services Inc. audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2024, be received for information;

AND THAT Council, as the sole shareholder, declare a Top-Up Common Share Dividend in the amount of \$147,478 for the year 2024, calculated in accordance with Festival Hydro's Dividend Policy, to be paid in the second quarter of 2025.

Motion by Councillor McCabe

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the Festival Hydro Inc. audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2024, be received for information;

THAT the Festival Hydro Services Inc. audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2024, be received for information;

AND THAT Council, as the sole shareholder, declare a Top-Up Common Share Dividend in the amount of \$147,478 for the year 2024, calculated in accordance with Festival Hydro's Dividend Policy, to be paid in the second quarter of 2025.

Carried

5. Report of the Director of Community Services

5.1 Waive Facility Fees for the To Stratford With Love Banquet (FIN25-015)

Staff Recommendation: THAT the report titled, "Waive Facility Fees for the To Stratford With Love Banquet" (FIN25-015), be received;

AND THAT direction be provided regarding the facility rental fee waiver request in the amount of \$3,627 for use of the Community Halls on December 13, 2025.

Motion by Councillor Nijjar

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the report titled, "Waive Facility Fees for the To Stratford With Love Banquet" (FIN25-015), be received.

Carried

Motion by Councillor Burbach

THAT the facility rental fee waiver request from To Stratford With Love Banquet in the amount of \$3,627 for use of the Community Halls on December 13, 2025 be approved.

Carried

6. Report of the Council Committee Coordinator

6.1 Take-out Container Levy (FIN25-017)

Staff Recommendation: THAT the Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee provide direction on the request from the Energy and Environment Advisory Committee to research a take-out container levy program.

Sub-committee Discussion: A member noted the take-out container levy was discussed by the Energy and Environment Advisory Committee which is progressive and interesting. Support was expressed for having the Committee undertake the required research.

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the Energy and Environment Advisory Committee are directed to undertake research to determine if an Ontario municipality has adopted a take-out container levy and what the programs include and report back to the Council Committee Coordinator.

Carried

7. Advisory Committee/Outside Board Minutes

No Advisory Committee/Outside Board minutes were provided to Sub-committee.

8. Next Sub-committee Meeting

The next Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee meeting is July 22, 2025 at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall.

9. Adjournment

Motion by Councillor Beatty

Sub-committee Decision: THAT the Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee meeting adjourn.

Carried

Meeting Start Time: 4:30 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 4:49 P.M.