

# UNITED COUNTIES OF LEEDS AND GRENVILLE

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT

**To the Warden and Members of Council of the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville**

**Members, We, your Committee of the Whole, beg leave to report as follows:**

The Committee of the Whole met October 9, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. in the Council Chambers, 25 Central Avenue West, Brockville.

**Members Present:** Arie Hoogenboom, Chair  
Brant Burrow, Michael Cameron, Tory Deschamps, Roger Haley,  
Robin Jones, Jeff Shaver, Corinna Smith-Gatcke

**Staff Present:** Rick Kester, Director of Public Works  
Kim Little, Director of Corporate Services  
Jeff Carss, Paramedic Service Chief  
Pat Huffman, Treasurer  
Cherie Mills, Manager of Planning Services  
Ann Weir, Manager of Economic Development  
Geoff Clarke, Interim County Clerk/Manager of Legislative Services  
Andrea Bolton, Deputy Clerk (Recording Secretary)

**Others Present:** Emily Conger

### **1. Call to Order**

Recording Timestamp 00:00:01

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and offered regrets on behalf of Warden Peckford and Mr. Scott.

### **2. Adoption of the Agenda**

Recording Timestamp 00:00:23

**Resolution No. CW-131-2024**

**Moved by Roger Haley**  
**Seconded by Tory Deschamps**  
**THAT the Agenda for the October 9, 2024 meeting of the Committee of the Whole be adopted as circulated.**

**CARRIED**

**3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof**

Recording Timestamp 00:00:42

**4. Adoption of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**4.1 Meeting Minutes Dated September 4, 2024**

Recording Timestamp 00:00:54

**Resolution No. CW-132-2024**

**Moved by Michael Cameron**

**Seconded by Robin Jones**

**THAT the Minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting held on September 4, 2024 be adopted as circulated.**

**CARRIED**

**5. Delegations/Presentations**

**5.1 Emily Conger, Algonquin to Adirondacks Collaborative re: Road Ecology and the Right to Roam Report**

Recording Timestamp 00:01:30

Ms. Conger explained the purpose of her delegation is to discuss the Algonquin to Adirondacks' (A2A) Right to Roam Report and the death of wildlife on roadways. Ms. Conger explained the importance of this area to wildlife migration patterns owing to the Frontenac Arch and the geology of the region. Ms. Conger noted one of the threats wildlife face is climate change and the lack of ice on the St Lawrence River. She pointed to another threat to wildlife, mortality from traffic

on the roadways. She noted the Counties has taken important first steps in protecting wildlife on roadways in Leeds and Grenville, which includes evaluating the impact on turtles when developing or improving infrastructure in the Counties. Ms. Conger explained the request from the A2A is focused on the Highway 401, County Road 2 and the 1000 Islands Parkway and creating eco-passageways that permit wildlife to pass over or under roads safely; A2A is requesting the support of the Counties with respect to these overpasses and underpasses. She explained the A2A is working with the federal government and the State of New York to improve landscape connections to the Thousand Islands. She noted the A2A is asking Council to consider the recommendations in the Right to Roam Report that pertain to County Road 2, and to consider mitigation measures to enable wildlife migration around Charleston Lake on County Roads 3, 4, and 5.

Recording Timestamp 00:21:45

In response to a question by Mr. Burrow, Mr. Kester confirmed the Public Works Department is working toward protecting wildlife, and stated the information in the Report will help to inform their work.

Ms. Conger left the meeting at 9:27 a.m.

## **6. Staff Reports - Action Reports**

### **6.1 Administration**

#### **6.1.1 Economic Development Quarterly Update - Ann Weir, Manager of Economic Development**

Recording Timestamp 00:26:31

Ms. Weir provided the Committee with the Economic Development Quarterly Update, noting the Economic Development Summit will take place Friday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> and will feature the Minister of Energy and Electrification as the keynote speaker. She said the Bill Thake Memorial Economic Development Leadership Award will be announced October 15<sup>th</sup>. She explained the Ministry continues to review the Small Business Program and she met with the Assistant Deputy Minister in September to provide perspective as a new contract holder to

the program. She noted there is no further discussion with Smiths Falls until more details are provided from the Province. Ms. Weir updated the Committee with respect to August cohort of Summer Company, and noted the next Starter Company Plus cohort will graduate in October in combination with Small Business Week. She noted the featured small businesses in the Smiths Falls Starter Company program is in the most recent eNewsletter.

Ms. Weir outlined the talent attraction and workforce development activities of the Department, which include participating in Career and Training Expos and job fairs, which include promoting Maple View Lodge. Ms. Weir said staff are moving into a more proactive approach to advertisements as part of marketing and communications. She noted they have combined the Counties' eNewsletter with the Small Business Centre's eNewsletter, increasing the reach of both publications. Ms. Weir provided updated numbers and statistics related to the Business Directory, which features 4,535 businesses and includes health care and doctors, as well as coding to include grocery stores in the tourism section. She noted the success of the Adventures brochures and indicated there would be more available earlier in 2025. She explained Leeds and Grenville is now featured in the Edible Ottawa publication.

Ms. Weir noted 2025 marks the end of the Economic Development Strategic Areas of Focus. She concluded by noting that 99.45% of the companies in Leeds and Grenville are small businesses with either no employees, or with fewer than 99 employees, which is slightly higher than the provincial average. Going forward, Ms. Weir suggested that staff examine the growth that takes place at the five-year mark of businesses by utilizing focus groups based on geography and sector. She also stated staff would continue with the annual survey in 2025, and develop a business continuum strategy that moves through business start up, maturity to succession planning. Ms. Weir indicated continued support can be provided to businesses through an update of Summer Company and Starter Company Plus, a mentorship program, workshops for digital advancement and technology, and a business coach program.

Recording Timestamp 00:48:55

Mr. Haley asked if there was any discussion from the businesses with respect to the quality of broadband in Leeds and Grenville. Ms. Weir indicated she would include that in the annual business survey, saying that it has not been raised as a high priority item thus far.

### **6.1.2 Report No. CW-080-2024: 2025 Budget Timetable and Guidelines**

Recording Timestamp 00:52:23

Recording Timestamp 00:53:32

Mr. Burrow suggested that in light of the increase in OPP costs municipalities are facing in 2025 and beyond, and given the surplus being projected at the Counties, the Committee consider forgoing the 2.5% toward the Maple View Lodge redevelopment and using the surplus in its place. Mrs. Huffman noted the amounts presented represent base budgeting and do not address service level improvements in Paramedic Service or staffing for the 192-bed G. Tackaberry and Family Home. She said the 2.5% is included to service the debt related to the construction of the G. Tackaberry and Family Home.

#### **Resolution No. CW-133-2024**

**Moved by Roger Haley**

**Seconded by Brant Burrow**

**THAT the Committee of the Whole recommends that the 2025 Draft Budget Timeline presented in Report CW-080-2024 be approved; and**

**THAT staff be directed to prepare a 2025 draft Operating Budget with a target increase of 3.15% on the general levy; and**

**THAT the Operating Budget include an incremental increase of 2.5% towards the re-development of Maple View Lodge to help address future annual debenture costs and an incremental increase of 0.5% to the Dedicated Infrastructure Levy to help address the infrastructure deficit.**

**CARRIED**

### **6.1.3 Report No. CW-079-2024: 2023 Consolidated Financial Statements**

Recording Timestamp 01:18:29

#### **Resolution No. CW-134-2024**

**Moved by Corinna Smith-Gatcke**

**Seconded by Michael Cameron**

**THAT the Committee of the Whole recommends that the 2023 Consolidated Financial Statements as attached to Report No. CW-079-2024 be approved.**

**CARRIED**

**6.1.4 Report No. CW-077-2024: Operating Budget Projection Report as of August 2024**

Recording Timestamp 01:19:15

**Resolution No. CW-135-2024**

**Moved by Jeff Shaver**

**Seconded by Roger Haley**

**THAT the Committee of the Whole recommends that the Operating Budget Projection Report as of August 2024 as attached to Report No. CW-077-2024 be accepted.**

**CARRIED**

**6.1.5 Report No. CW-078-2024: Capital Budget Projection Report as of August 2024**

Recording Timestamp 01:19:58

Recording Timestamp 01:24:33

Ms. Jones noted a decision has yet to be made with respect to the Andrewsville Bridge. She encouraged Council to find a resolution to this issue within this term of Council.

**Resolution No. CW-136-2024**

**Moved by Tory Deschamps**

**Seconded by Michael Cameron**

**THAT the Committee of the Whole recommends that the Capital Budget Projection Report as of August 2024 as attached to Report No. CW-078-2024 be accepted.**

**CARRIED**

**6.1.6 Report No. CW-085-2024: 2025 Regular Meeting Schedule**

Recording Timestamp 01:33:43

Recording Timestamp 01:35:03

Ms. Jones recommended Councillors book their hotels for the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Conference for the Saturday night to ensure they are able to take part in the Sunday morning events, giving them the best experience.

Council recessed at 10:36 a.m. and reconvened at 10:51 a.m.

**Resolution No. CW-137-2024**

**Moved by Robin Jones**

**Seconded by Brant Burrow**

**THAT the Committee of the Whole recommends approval of the 2025 Regular Meeting Schedule as attached to Report No. CW-085-2024.**

**CARRIED**

**6.2 Corporate Services**

**6.2.1 Report No. CW-081-2024: Lease Agreement Extension - 32 Wall Street**

Recording Timestamp 01:35:59

**Resolution No. CW-138-2024**

**Moved by Brant Burrow**

**Seconded by Corinna Smith-Gatcke**

**THAT the Committee of the Whole recommends a fourth lease extension and amending agreement be entered with His Majesty the King in Right of Ontario as represented by Minister of Infrastructure for leased space on the second floor of 32 Wall Street in Brockville; and  
THAT the necessary by-law be prepared.**

**CARRIED**

**6.2.2 Report No. CW-083-2024: Voluntary Retirement Transition Program Policy**

Recording Timestamp 01:36:46

**Resolution No. CW-139-2024**

**Moved by Roger Haley**

**Seconded by Jeff Shaver**

**THAT Committee of the Whole recommends the adoption of the Voluntary Retirement Transition Program Policy on a trial basis to December 31, 2025; and  
THAT the necessary by-law be prepared.**

**CARRIED**

### **6.3 Public Works**

#### **6.3.1 Report No. CW-072-2024: Award of Contract No. PW-2024-18 - Supply and Delivery of Sodium Chloride Brine Solution**

Recording Timestamp 01:37:49

**Resolution No. CW-140-2024**

**Moved by Roger Haley**

**Seconded by Michael Cameron**

**THAT the Committee of the Whole recommends Contract No. PW-2024-18 for the Supply and Delivery of Sodium Chloride Brine Solution be awarded to Road Maintenance Equipment & Services Inc. for a two (2) year term in the amount of \$122,040.00, excluding taxes; and  
THAT the Committee of the Whole recommends, authorizing staff, upon satisfactory contractor performance, to exercise the option to extend Contract No. PW-2024-18 with Road Maintenance Equipment & Services Inc. for a period of up to two (2) additional one (1) year terms, based on budget, at their tendered bid prices of \$61,155.00 for Year Three and \$61,245.00 for Year Four, excluding taxes; and  
THAT the necessary by-law be prepared.**

**CARRIED**

#### **6.3.2 Report No. CW-084-2024: Lifting of Load Restrictions on Hyndman Bridge**

Recording Timestamp 01:39:31

Recording Timestamp 01:40:08

Mr. Deschamps asked if the bridge was fully open. Mr. Kester noted work needs to be completed on the surface of the bridge and one lane is open. Mr. Deschamps encouraged the Public Works Department to communicate this



information to the School Boards and Agricultural community. Mr. Kester stated they would engage social media to share the information.

**Resolution No. CW-141-2024**

**Moved by Tory Deschamps**

**Seconded by Corinna Smith-Gatcke**

**THAT the Committee of the Whole authorizes lifting the designated load restrictions limiting the weight of vehicles passing over Hyndman Bridge on County Road 22; and**

**THAT the necessary by-law be prepared to repeal By-law No. 21-75, which designates a load restriction on Hyndman Bridge in the Township of Edwardsburgh/Cardinal.**

**CARRIED**

**7. Staff Reports - Information Reports**

**7.1 Report No. CW-082-2024: Provincial Planning Statement - Summary of Major Changes**

Recording Timestamp 01:41:36

Ms. Mills presented a summary of the report, noting the changes to the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), which is issued under the Planning Act, comes into effect October 20, 2024. Ms. Mills noted the Counties is now required to base population projections and employment growth based on Ministry of Finance projections, and the Official Plan can plan for at least 20 to no more than 30 years. She said this will impact the Counties' Growth Management Strategy, which has been updated, issued and posted online. Ms. Mills explained the new PPS focuses on complete communities, noting some communities in the Settlement Areas of the Counties meets the definition of complete communities.

Ms. Mills noted the PPS continues to promote housing, and has added a focus on underutilized commercial and institutional sites, in particular shopping malls and plazas. She stated the definition of housing types has been updated to include laneway housing, garden suites, and specifically listing new housing arrangements and forms such as multi-generational housing. She explained coordination with Housing Service Managers is now required to address the full range of housing options. With respect to Settlement Area, Ms. Mills emphasized they continue to remain a focus for growth and development within strategic

growth areas, including the establishment of density targets. She said expansion of Settlement Areas are no longer restricted to the time of a comprehensive review, they can now occur at any time provided planning authorities consider seven criteria. She noted the new PPS did not make significant changes to the rural areas and rural lands in municipalities, but did not carry forward the idea of multi-lot residential lands.

Ms. Mills explained there is a focus on intensification of employment uses and support of complete communities to promote economic development, noting lands may be converted from employment areas at any time, subject to criteria. With respect to sewage, water, and stormwater, Ms. Mills said municipalities can now pass by-laws to allocate and reallocate unused municipal water and sewer capacity; it also allows for partial service provisions in some rural settlement area. Regarding Agriculture, Ms. Mills noted planning authorities are still required to protect prime agricultural lands using an agricultural system approach using provincial guidance. She noted the new PPS will make it easier to establish more housing on farms, permitting up to two additional residential uses on a farm, and saying the proposed severances on agricultural lands were not carried forward from the draft PPS. She concluded by noting that staff will be reviewing the Counties' Official Plan to ensure it complies with the new PPS. She noted they are required to undertake early engagement with indigenous communities, and collaborate with publicly-assisted post secondary institutions and school boards, as well as establishing minimum density targets for growth and development.

Recording Timestamp 01:59:04

With respect to split systems, Mr. Burrow asked if this extends to the ability to establish a Settlement Area where, in order to make it feasible, a partial service will be required; does this provide the municipality the ability to establish a split service. Ms. Mills indicated she would look into this and provide the answer to the Committee.

Recording Timestamp 02:04:18

Ms. Jones expressed concern regarding the growth study, encouraging staff to consult with the lower tier municipalities early in the process. With respect to engaging other groups such as indigenous groups, she encouraged meaningful consultation.

Recording Timestamp 02:07:35

Mr. Shaver recommended early consultation as well, noting how important it is for the Counties to avoid interfering with the momentum at the lower tier level regarding economic development and planning. He suggested if the Planning Department at the Counties requires additional resources, they should approach the Committee with that request.

**Resolution No. CW-142-2024**

**Moved by Tory Deschamps**

**Seconded by Robin Jones**

**THAT the Information Report listed on the Committee of the Whole Agenda Dated October 9, 2024 be received and filed.**

**CARRIED**

**8. Sub-Committee, Ad Hoc Committee, and Member Reports**

**8.1 Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus Update - Warden Peckford**

Recording Timestamp 02:10:35

Ms. Smith-Gatcke stated the Warden wished Council to know the next EOWC meeting she will attend will be held October 18<sup>th</sup>.

**8.2 AMO Board Update - Robin Jones**

Recording Timestamp 02:11:01

Ms. Jones noted as President of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) she is also on the Board of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). She reported the FCM conducted a survey of 10,000 people across Canada and it confirmed their major concerns are homelessness, mental health, housing, and public safety. She confirmed the briefings the AMO Board is receiving are related to the first three concerns, indicating she hopes to have more information to share with the Committee soon. She noted the ROMA Conference is coming up in January.

### **8.3 Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit Update - Robin Jones and Tory Deschamps**

Recording Timestamp 02:12:38

Mr. Deschamps reported the next meeting is the 17<sup>th</sup> of October. He noted the Finance Committee meetings were postponed because an item needed to be addressed in the audit; those documents have just become available.

Recording Timestamp 02:13:30

Ms. Jones stated there is not a lot to share with respect to the merger. She noted the timelines within which the Health Unit should have received the confirmation letter and budget from the Province have expired. She said the Transition Team have sent correspondence to the Minister, hand delivered by MPP Jordan and MPP Clark. She noted there are nine Boards of Health involved in merger discussions across Ontario and they have received no explanation for the delay. She said staff are involved in developing a budget for the new organization as well as for the existing Health Units in the event the January 1<sup>st</sup> deadline is not met. She concluded by noting the Health Units are committed to the merger, and believe this is the best path forward for the Lanark, Leeds and Grenville Health Unit. She noted the next meeting is October 10<sup>th</sup>.

## **9. Information Items**

### **9.1 Information Items List Dated October 9, 2024**

Recording Timestamp 02:15:55

This information item list was received and filed.

## **10. Unfinished Business**

### **10.1 CAO's Report - Policy and Action Requests**

Recording Timestamp 02:16:06

## **11. Announcements**

Recording Timestamp 02:16:22

## **12. Notices of By-law/Notices of Motion**

Recording Timestamp 02:16:33

**12.1 A By-law to Authorize a Lease Agreement Extension with His Majesty the King in Right of Ontario as Represented by the Minister of Infrastructure for Leased Space at 32 Wall Street, Brockville**

**12.2 A By-law to Adopt a Voluntary Retirement Transition Program Policy on a Trial Basis to December 31, 2025**

**12.3 A By-law to Authorize the Execution of Contract No. PW-2024-18 with Road Maintenance Equipment & Services Inc. for Supply and Delivery of Sodium Chloride Brine Solution**

**12.4 A By-law to Repeal By-law No. 21-75 Being a By-law to Establish Load Restrictions on Hyndman Bridge in the Township of Edwardsburgh Cardinal**

Recording Timestamp 02:16:52

Ms. Smith-Gatcke provided a Notice of Motion regarding the creation of a Finance Committee. She said this type of Committee could be of assistance in finding efficiencies and providing a Council perspective to the management of the budget.

## **13. Questions from the Media**

Recording Timestamp 02:18:12

There were no questions from the media.

**14. Questions from the Public**

Recording Timestamp 02:18:16

There were no questions from the public.

**15. Closed Meeting – Nil**

Recording Timestamp 02:18:20

**16. Adjournment**

Recording Timestamp 02:18:27

**Resolution No. CW-143-2024**

**Moved by Jeff Shaver**

**Seconded by Tory Deschamps**

**THAT the meeting of the Committee of the Whole adjourn at 11:35 a.m.**

**CARRIED**

All of which is respectfully submitted this 24<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2024.