



Minutes

The Council of The Regional Municipality of York

January 25, 2024
Electronic and In-Person Meeting
Council Chambers
17250 Yonge Street, Newmarket

Members: W. Emmerson, G. Chan, M. Chan, N. Davison, S. Del Duca, J. DiPaola, M. Ferri, A. Ho, L. Jackson, B. Johns, J. Jones, J. Li, I. Lovatt, T. Mrakas, S. Pellegrini, M. Quirk, M. G. Racco, G. Rosati, F. Scarpitti, T. Vegh, D. West

Staff: D. Basso, K. Chislett, P. Freeman, D. Kuzmyk, E. Mahoney, L. Mirabella, Dr. B. Pakes, C. Raynor, M. Rabeau

A. Call to Order

Regional Chair Emmerson called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

B. Land Acknowledgement

Regional Chair Emmerson made the following remarks:

We acknowledge that York Region is located on the traditional territory of many Indigenous peoples including the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat and Métis peoples and the treaty territories of the Haudenosaunee, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and Williams Treaties First Nations.

Today this area is home to many diverse Indigenous Peoples, and we recognize their history, spirituality, culture and stewardship of this land.

We also acknowledge the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation as our closest First Nation community.

C. Disclosures of Interest

None

D. Minutes of Council

D.1 Council Meeting held on December 21, 2023

Moved by Mayor Lovatt
Seconded by Mayor Del Duca

Council confirm the Minutes of the Council meeting held on December 21, 2023.

Carried

E. Presentations

E.1 Update from Public Health

Moved by Regional Councillor Rosati
Seconded by Mayor Quirk

Council receive the presentation by Dr. Barry Pakes, Medical Officer of Health.

Carried

F. Deputations

None

G. Communications

G.1 Association of Municipalities Ontario Resolution - Social and Economic Prosperity Review

Moved by Regional Councillor Ferri
Seconded by Regional Councillor Li

Council receive the correspondence from the Association of Municipalities Ontario (AMO) dated January 10, 2024 and adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS current provincial-municipal fiscal arrangements are undermining Ontario's economic prosperity and quality of life

WHEREAS nearly a third of municipal spending in Ontario is for services in areas of provincial responsibility and expenditures are outpacing provincial contributions by nearly \$4 billion a year

WHEREAS municipal revenues, such as property taxes, do not grow with the economy or inflation

WHEREAS unprecedented population and housing growth will require significant investments in municipal infrastructure

WHEREAS municipalities are being asked to take on complex health and social challenges – like homelessness, supporting asylum seekers and addressing the mental health and addictions crises

WHEREAS inflation, rising interest rates, and provincial policy decisions are sharply constraining municipal fiscal capacity

WHEREAS property taxpayers – including people on fixed incomes and small businesses – can't afford to subsidize income re-distribution programs for those most in need

WHEREAS the province can, and should, invest more in the prosperity of communities

WHEREAS municipalities and the provincial government have a strong history of collaboration

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Province of Ontario commit to undertaking with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario a comprehensive social and economic prosperity review to promote the stability and sustainability of municipal finances across Ontario.

Carried

(See Item G.2)

G.2 Association of Ontario Municipalities Ontario Resolution – Social and Economic Prosperity Review

Moved by Mayor Pellegrini

Seconded by Mayor Del Duca

Council receive the memorandum from Laura Mirabella, Commissioner of Finance and Regional Treasurer dated January 18, 2024

Carried

(See Item G.1)

H. Consideration and Adoption of Reports

H.1 Committee of the Whole Meeting - January 11, 2024

Moved by Mayor Pellegrini

Seconded by Mayor West

Council adopt the recommendations in the Minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on January 12, 2024.

Carried

I. Introduction and Consideration of Bylaws

Moved by Mayor Scarpitti

Seconded by Mayor Mrakas

Council approve and enact the following bylaws:

I.1 2024-01 - Debenture Bylaw - Town of Georgina

A bylaw to authorize the borrowing upon amortizing debentures in the principal amount of \$49,960,000.00 towards the cost of a certain capital work of The Corporation of the Town of Georgina set out in Schedule “A” to this Bylaw

I.2 2024-02 - 2024 Interim Tax Levy

A bylaw to levy against the lower-tier municipalities on an interim basis the sums of monies required during the year 2024 for the purposes of The Regional Municipality of York

I.3 2024-03 - Weston Road - Widening and Intersection Improvements

A bylaw to acquire certain lands for or in connection with widening and intersection improvements on Weston Road (Y.R. 56), City of Vaughan

I.4 2024-04 - Establish a public highway - Bathurst Street

A bylaw to establish a public highway – Bathurst Street (Y.R. 38), City of Vaughan

I.5 2024-05 - Stop up and close a portion of Bloomington Road

A bylaw to stop up and close a portion of Bloomington Road (Y.R. 40), City of Richmond Hill

Carried

J. Motions

J.1 Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Moved by Mayor Scarpitti

Seconded by Mayor Lovatt

Council adopt the following resolution, as amended:

WHEREAS the Federal government is responsible for planned immigration (economic and sponsored migrants, and refugees designated for resettlement in Canada); and,

WHEREAS since asylum seekers are not considered planned or permanent residents until they receive a positive decision on their refugee claim, settlement supports for this group fall to the Provincial government; and,

WHEREAS the total number of Asylum Claimants processed by Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) in November 2023 is almost three times the number processed in January 2023 and high levels of asylum seekers are expected to continue for the foreseeable future; and,

WHEREAS there is no centralized, coordinated system to support asylum seekers at their point of entry to access interim accommodations and support as there was with Canada's response to the Ukraine refugees;

WHEREAS on September 28, 2023, Regional Council authorized funding of up to \$4.3 million within the approved Community and Health Services budget for the Region's assistance with one interim accommodation and wraparound supports for asylum seekers in York Region until March 31, 2024; and,

WHEREAS York Region incurred \$2.7 million in costs in 2023; and,

WHEREAS the estimated cost of continuing to provide interim accommodation and wraparound supports at current service levels until the end of 2024 is \$14.1 million, representing \$12.5 million more than what remains from the \$4.3 million Regional Council approved; and,

WHEREAS York Region's 2023-24 Canada Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) allocation, including about \$2.4 million in additional funding allocated by the Province, has provided support to more than 500 households, including refugees and asylum seekers, by making their rent more affordable; and,

WHEREAS COHB has been a critical tool in helping residents, including asylum seekers and others, to move into permanent, stable housing; and,

WHEREAS without increased COHB funding, the Region's ability to assist these households will be limited, resulting in continued pressure on social services including emergency and transitional housing for people who are homeless and interim accommodation sites; and,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Council request the Federal Government to provide funding to cover the \$2.7 million in costs already incurred for the Region's asylum seeker response in 2023; and,

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Council request the Federal Government to provide funding to cover all costs the Region may incur in 2024 on the asylum seeker response if current services levels are extended to the end of 2024, estimated at \$14.1 million; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Council request the Federal government to provide increased funding through the Canada Ontario Housing Benefit to the Region, at minimum to match the enhanced provincial allocation from fall 2023; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Council request the Federal and Provincial governments to provide funding directly to community organizations and service providers (such as churches and faith organizations) that are providing interim housing and settlement supports to asylum seekers; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Council request the Federal government to establish coordinated intake for asylum claimants into Canada along with increased housing support capacity to ensure equitable and coordinated access to supports; and further,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Regional Clerk be directed to circulate this motion to the Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, the Premier, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Associate Minister of Housing, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, *as well as the Association of Municipalities Ontario, Ontario Big City Mayors, local area MPs and MPPs and other regional municipalities.*

Carried

K. Notices of Motion to Reconsider

None

L. Other Business

L.1 Observances and Days of Significance

Regional Chair Emmerson noted special awareness days and observances:

- **Bell Let's Talk Day** - January 24 - Raises awareness and helps to end stigma around mental health, and moves conversation forward to ensure mental well-being remains a priority.
- **National Non-Smoking Week** - January 21 to 27 - Educates on the dangers of smoking, helping people quit and assisting in the goal of a smoke-free Canada. Residents looking to quit can access services at york.ca/substanceuse.
- **International Holocaust Remembrance Day** - January 27 - Provides an opportunity to remember victims, survivors and heroes of the holocaust, and envision a future free of antisemitism and hate.
- **National Day of Remembrance of the Quebec City Mosque Attack** - January 29 - Honours victims and survivors of the 2017 act of terrorism that killed six people and injured five in Quebec City and serves as an opportunity to promote action against Islamophobia.
- **Black History Month in York Region** - February - Celebrates many achievements and contributions of Black Canadians and residents who have done so much to make Canada the culturally diverse, compassionate, and prosperous nation it is today.

L.2 Special Meeting of Council – May 30, 2024

Regional Chair Emmerson announced there will be a special in-person meeting of Council on May 30, 2024 regarding the York Regional Police budget and upcoming changes to the *Police Services Act*.

L.3 Regional Governance Review - Provincial Standing Committee Hearing

Regional Chair Emmerson updated Council on the Regional governance review hearing held on January 17, 2024 with the Province's Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy. Transcripts of the meeting will be available within the next few weeks.

M. Private Session

Moved by Regional Councillor Jones
Seconded by Regional Councillor Racco

Council resolve into private session at 9:53 a.m. to consider:

M.1 Appointment of a Commissioner of Public Works - Personal information about an identifiable individual

Carried

Council resumed in public session at 10:02 a.m.

M.1 Appointment of a Commissioner of Public Works - Personal information about an identifiable individual

Moved by Mayor Mrakas
Seconded by Mayor Lovatt

Council approve the appointment of Laura McDowell as Commissioner of Public Works, effective February 5, 2024.

Carried

N. Confirmatory Bylaw

Moved by Alternate Regional Councillor Johns
Seconded by Regional Councillor Davison

Council enact Bylaw No. 2024-06 to confirm the proceedings of this meeting of Council held on January 25, 2024.

Carried

O. Adjournment

Moved by Regional Councillor Racco
Seconded by Regional Councillor Ho

Council adjourn the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

Carried

Regional Clerk

Minutes confirmed and adopted at the meeting of Council held on February 22, 2024.

Regional Chair