

## COUNCIL MINUTES

### TOWNSHIP OF COCKBURN ISLAND COUNCIL MEETING

5:00 PM WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Meeting On-line by ZOOM

**ZOOM LINK** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84944196668>

(same link every regular meeting)

PRESENT

Mayor: Brenda Jones  
Councillors: Lee Chappell  
Jeff House  
Simon Lacombe  
Scott Stewart  
Clerk: Brent St. Denis  
Absent: Nil

(A number of ratepayers observed the meeting.)

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5:03 PM

#### Call to Order

**Declarations** of any pecuniary interest

**Delegations** – if any

**New Business** – none

**NOTE** – There will not be any Public Works Committee meetings until April or May while Darren and Alex are off. PW issues can be raised during the Council Member Concerns portion of the meeting.

Resolution # 25-01-01

Moved: J House

Seconded: S Stewart

That the January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Council meeting agenda be adopted.

CARRIED

Resolution # 25-01-02

Moved: L Chappell

Seconded: S Stewart

That the minutes of the December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024 regular meeting be adopted.

CARRIED

#### Action Items

**Adopt By-law #2025-01** being the Annual borrowing bylaw usually adopted at the first meeting. The 2025 draft is in the Council package and is modelled on last year's by-law.

Resolution # 25-01-03

Moved: J House

Seconded: L Chappell

That Be It Resolved that By-law #2025-01 being a by-law to authorize borrowing from time-to-time to meet current needs be read a first, second, third and final time, be adopted, be signed by the Mayor and Clerk, be sealed with the corporation's seal, be numbered #2025-01, and be filed with the by-law records.

CARRIED

**Budget 2025** – The Treasurer has prepared an early working 2025 Budget draft to get the ball rolling based on a 2.5% expenditure and tax rate increase in line with the December 2024 Statistics Canada report shown below. (see in Council package) There is no rush to set the rate as budget adoption has usually been about March or April.

According to Statistics Canada...***“The annual inflation rate in Canada was at 1.9% in November of 2024, easing from the 2% in the previous month and undershooting market expectations of 2%. The result was in line with the Bank of Canada’s baseline scenario that CPI inflation is due to remain close to the 2% threshold for the foreseeable future. Still, the trimmed-mean core rate was unchanged at 2.7% instead of expectations that it would ease to 2.5%....”*** NOTE- Trimmed mean is the average rate of inflation after 'trimming' away the items with the largest price changes (positive or negative). It is the weighted average of the middle 70 per cent of items.

*TREASURER’S WORKING DRAFT STARTING POINT (full draft in meeting package)*

Surplus/-deficit	-\$ 7,926	\$ 103,688	\$ 38,688
	2024 budget	2025 budget	WITH ALL
	DEFICIT	SURPLUS	EXEPTIONAL
	(actual was a surplus)		ITEMS

Resolution # 25-01-04

Moved: S Stewart

Seconded: L Chappell

That the following be taken into consideration as the 2025 township budget is being discussed;

- \$15,000 for various building electrical improvements including the McLeod House well pump
- \$10,000 for Public Works fuel
- \$40,000 for additional marina dock improvements
- \$10,000 for general dock maintenance in addition to the estimated marina operating costs

CARRIED

It was agreed to look at the General Ledger codes and layout to make it easier to compare the annual budget to actual revenue and expenditures.

**Next Table Top Emergency Exercise (February or March meeting?)** – the Office of the Ontario Fire Marshal and Emergency Management requires that we do a table-top exercise for our Annual Compliance Reporting – what can or should we be prepared to do if one of the following befalls our island? Which scenarios are more likely or more significant than others?

- major forest fire threatening hamlet (2024 exercise)
- airline crash on island (we are on flight path. Table –top exercise a few years ago.)
- Huron lake level rises significantly due to climate change
- tornado/hurricane or very major storm
- CIL barge becomes non-operational for an indefinite period
- a mental health crisis (eg domestic incident/standoff)
- medical evacuation event in very bad weather (no tug operator!)
- another COVID type pandemic
- a child or vulnerable adult becomes lost
- multiple person boat capsizing near shore
- major oil-spill in marina or nearby off-shore
- defibrillator or opioid overdose event
- Hydro service to island cut off for an indefinite period
- critically low fuel supply
- Other scenarios?
- And ask ourselves in what situations we do act and to what extent?

Resolution # 25-01-05

Moved: S Lacombe

Seconded: S Stewart

That the following potential emergency in our township be the subject of the annual table-top exercise to be conducted at the February or March council meeting;

- medical evacuation event in very bad weather and possibly no tug boat available

CARRIED

**ORNGE** inquiry concerning the two November emergencies – ORNGE representatives have agreed to meet with Council by Zoom.

Resolution # 25-01-06

Moved: J House

Seconded: S Lacombe

That whereas the Council has received a preliminary reply to its questions over ORNGE's response to two recent emergency incidents this past November,  
Now therefore be it resolved that the following two or three dates and times be suggested for a proposed Zoom meeting with ORNGE officials.

- The morning of any day from January 27<sup>th</sup> to February 3<sup>rd</sup>

- Principal issues are the considerable time it took for ORNGE to say they could or could not come – valuable time was lost waiting for a yes or no answer and what will happen next time?
- How does or should 911 help in an emergency on Cockburn Island?
- ORNGE direct phone number?

CARRIED

NOTE - Council member Jeff House offered to prepare a PowerPoint presentation for the meeting with ORNGE.

### **Bank Alternate Signer(s)**

Resolution # 25-01-07

Moved: L Chappell

Seconded: J House

That the following updates to township signing officers for banking at the Northern Credit Union be made so that a third or fourth alternate signer is available should one of the two current persons (Mayor and Clerk-Treasurer) be unavailable. The current requirement is two signatures for cheques and on-line banking transactions such as e-transfers and bill payments.

- Remove the name of the late Don Rogers
- Add Scott Stewart
- and, if she agrees, then also add Deanna Hagan

CARRIED

### **Financial Report**

Disbursements by cheque and NCU VISA, (cheques # 1209 to #1211)

#### **Northern Credit Union Bank balances as of JAN 3/25**

<u>Dock Account 101</u>	\$14,534.32
<u>Heritage Account 102</u>	\$73,020.20
<u>Operating Account 100</u>	\$141,440.50
<b>TOTAL ALL ACCOUNTS</b>	<b>\$228,995.02</b>

#### **NOTE -NCU Operating Account Balances, year-end 2023 vs 2024**

- 31-Dec, 2024..... \$ 144,441.66
- 31-Dec, 2023..... \$ 96,531.42

Current Interest Rate earned on Operating account .....3.45 %

Current Interest Rate earned on Twp Heritage Account..... 2.95 %

Current Interest Rate earned on Dock Account.....2.95 %

Resolution # 2025-01-08

Moved: S Stewart

Seconded: J House

That the Treasurer's report on bank balances and cheque disbursements (#1209 to # 1211) and the township's VISA card statement be hereby received.

CARRIED

### Council Members' Concerns

- Council Member Chappell said he liked the "to Do List" (see below and felt Council should start assigning Council members to the items. The 2025 Newsletter should be posted early enough (March?) so that folks know the docks may not be ready for traffic by the May Long Weekend
- Mayor Jones mentioned we should plan for more emergency response training. Also, that Voitto Rintala has passed away. The medical building needs a good, modern stretcher. The old backboard is badly out-of-date.

### Clerk's Report

- a) Draft Income Statement to December, 2024 (a work-in-progress) – in council package – a 2024 operating surplus is expected
- b) TO DO LIST – see at bottom of agenda
- c) Weather Station update – equipment has been returned - reimbursement request submitted to supplier (Davis)
- d) Integrity Commissioner – posted on website
- e) Township VISA Card Limit – update on request to NCU for limit increase from \$10K to \$15K
- f) Medical Building Grant – update on request to extend to end 2025
- g) PW worker contracts- current status quo - ***Term of Contract*** *This contract shall automatically renew each year with wage rates adjusted as per Council's annual budget and subject to the necessary level of medical fitness to assume the required duties.*
- h) Bill Payments – most now online (VISA, EFT, NCU-Pay-Bills) - fewer cheques.
- i) Dock and Operating Accounts Reconciliation – charge any portion of major 2024 marina improvements to Dock account? Same question for Township Heritage account. Interest rate earned is higher on the Operating Account but operating cash is not needed.

Resolution # 2025-01-09

Moved: S Lacombe

Seconded: J House

That this meeting be now adjourned and that Council meet again at 5:00 PM on Wednesday February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025 by Zoom or at the call of the Mayor

CARRIED

Time – 6:46 PM

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### ONGOING "TO DO" LIST

PW, BUILDINGS, ROADS, DOCK, TRAILS	ALL OTHER
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<b>PW SAFETY TRAINING</b>	<b>BROADBAND INITIATIVE – PROV</b>
<b>SPRING DOCK PREPARATIONS</b>	<b>ORNGE INQUIRY</b>
<b>PW CREW START SEASON DATE?</b>	<b>BLUE BOX PROGRAM</b>
<b>ROAD CALCIUM TIMING</b>	<b>MEDICAL BLDG COMPLETION .....(JEFF)</b>
<b>FALL DOCK WINTER PREP</b>	<b>WEATHER STATION ....(SIMON &amp; BRENT)</b>
<b>DOCK ISSUES ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>TWP RECORDS STORAGE.....(BRENT)</b>
<b>ROAD GRAVEL PRIORITY LIST</b>	<b>CLERK-TREASURER POSITION -2026</b>
<b>DITCHING PRIORITY LIST</b>	<b>HALL GAZEBO GRANT (NOHFC)</b>
<b>LANDFILL ISSUES &amp; ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>UPDATE NCU BANKING</b>
<b>SEASONAL FLAG MAINTENANCE</b>	<b>PROPERTY TAX REGISTRATIONS</b>
<b>TRAILS ASSESSMENT WITH NCC, CIL</b>	<b>EMERGENCY TRAINING INCL CPR</b>
<b>STREET LIGHTING UPGRADE.....(LEE)</b>	<b>MAJOR EMERGENCY PLANNING</b>
<b>SMALL TOOLS INVENTORY.....(SCOTT)</b>	<b>ON-GOING TWP FINANCIAL STATUS</b>
<b>PW CONTRACTS &amp; DUTIES REVIEW</b>	<b>HERITAGE COMM PROJECTS .....(SCOTT)</b>
<b>MCLEOD HOUSE ISSUES – LIST</b>	<b>NEWSLETTER..... (SIMON &amp; BRENT?)</b>
<b>MCLEOD HOUSE WELL</b>	<b>WEBSITE..... (SIMON &amp; BRENT?)</b>
<b>COUNCIL’S MAY ISLAND TOUR</b>	<b>MEDICAL SUPPLIES &amp; DEFIB..... (JEFF)</b>
<b>FALL WINTERIZATION..... (JEFF)</b>	