



The Corporation of the Municipality of Brockton

## Special Council Meeting Minutes (2025 Municipal Budget)

Tuesday, January 14, 2025, 1:00 p.m.

Bruce County Council Chambers - 30 Park Street, Walkerton, ON

**Council Present:** Chris Peabody, Mayor  
Kym Hutcheon, Deputy Mayor  
Mitch Clark, Councillor  
Tim Elphick, Councillor  
B. Carl Kuhnke, Councillor  
Gregory J. McLean, Councillor  
Steve Travale, Councillor

**Staff Present:** Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer  
Fiona Hamilton, Director of Legislative and Legal Services (Clerk)  
Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer  
Jessica Pinkse, Deputy Treasurer  
Dieter Weltz, Building and Planning Manager/CBO  
Nicholas Schnurr, Director of Operations  
Colleen Gillis, Director of Community Services  
Chris Wells, Director of Fire and Emergency Services

1. **Indigenous Land Acknowledgement Statement**
2. **Acceptance of Special Council Agenda**

### **Resolution 25-02-01**

Moved By: Kym Hutcheon

Seconded By: Steve Travale

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton accept the Agenda for the Special Council Meeting (2025 Budget) on January 14, 2025 as presented.

**Carried**

3. **Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof**
4. **Council Discussion on Tax Supported Operating Budget and Capital Requests (Continued)**
5. **Non-Tax Supported Budget Operating Overview**

Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer provided an overview of the Non-Tax Supported Budget which is proposed at \$3.6 million, noting that water and wastewater rates are set by the Water Works Financial Plan. Ms. Serratore summarized the capital projects for the water and wastewater budgets.

Council asked about the increases for water and wastewater and when the Financial Plan would be reviewed as it expires in 2026. Ms. Serratore advised that the Water Works Financial Plan will be completed for 2027.

Ms. Serratore provided an overview of the Building Department, and reserve fund balances.

Council noted the reduced legal and engineering costs.

Dieter Weltz, Building and Planning Manager/CBO confirmed that the reserve fund could be used to purchase vehicles in the future, allocating the balance between by-law and property standards.

6. **Non-Tax Supported Capital Requests Overview**
7. **Council Discussion and Questions about Non-Tax Supported Operating Budget and Capital Requests**
8. **Council Discussion on Budget**

Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer advised that the current tax rate was 7% with the removal of pool flooring, removal of playground reserve fund transfer, inclusion of grant funding in the Planning Department, reduction of the Chepstow Ball Diamond donation to \$10,000, reduction for Victoria Jubilee Hall curtain request to \$8,000, and reduction of tax write-offs to \$85,000.

#### Policing

Council asked whether the police reserve fund could be used to offset the costs of the O.P.P. contract. Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer advised that a portion of the reserve funds could be used to offset the cost; however, the Municipality was waiting on information about the Court Security and Prisoner Transportation Grant funding.

Council suggested that \$60,000 of the police reserve fund be used to offset the 2025 O.P.P. contract.

#### Child Care

Council discussed whether \$30,000 could be removed from the Child Care budget given the Manager's retirement. Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer noted that staff will need to review the CWELCC application guidelines to avoid any impacts to that funding.

**Action: Staff to review the CWELCC Application and whether a reduction in wages may negatively impact the CWELCC funding.**

#### East Ridge Business Park

Council discussed using the sale of proceeds from East Ridge Business Park lands to pay off the loan. Ms. Watson cautioned on the Municipality's borrowing capacity, and Ms. Serratore advised that once the loan was converted into a debenture, the loan could not be paid off early. Council suggested deferring a decision until the amount of the construction loan is known.

**Action: Staff to bring forward a report on the status of debentures and loans.**

#### Public Works and Materials Management

Council discussed the public works shop expansion, and whether reserve funds could be used to pay for the \$25,000 engineering costs. Nicholas Schnurr, Director of Operations spoke to the benefits of starting the project now and obtaining engineering plans to guide the 20 year future of the Walkerton public works shop.

Ms. Watson noted that the process could be started in 2025 and finalized in 2026, and that the completion of engineered plans will support grant applications. As the community continues to grow, there are indications that additional equipment will be required, and the Municipality must plan for the future.

Council discussed the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Operations Technician recruitment, and whether there would be any savings until the position was filled. Ms. Watson noted that recruitment was underway, and discussed the importance of the position to accurately record infrastructure assets as development continues.

Council discussed the increased costs associated with the Hanover/Walkerton Landfill, noting that consideration must be given to Brant and Greenock residents funding a landfill that were not permitted to use.

### Recreation

Council discussed the transfer to reserves for a future recreational facility. Ms. Serratore advised that the reserve fund includes both continued maintenance of the Walkerton Community Centre, and an annual commitment of \$205,000 for a new facility. Ms. Serratore noted the lack of funds to maintain existing infrastructure, encouraging Council to continue investing in infrastructure.

Ms. Watson advised that the Municipality was waiting for updates on the Green and Inclusive Community Buildings Program Grant application, noting that reserve funds support the grant applications.

Colleen Gillis, Director of Community Services noted that \$2-3 million would be required to replace the Walkerton Community Centre floor.

Council supported maintaining the recreation reserve fund transfer as planned to ensure funds would be available for maintenance and future planning.

### Physician Recruitment

Council discussed the mandate of the Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee and whether it should be expanded to include recruitment for other healthcare positions in the future. Council commended the efforts of the Committee over the last 19 years. Council discussed the reserve funds and plans for future recruitment.

### Bruce Power Regional Soccer Park

Council discussed the utility costs for the Bruce Power Regional Soccer Park fields. It was noted that costs may have increased along with the use of the pavilion.

### User Fees

Council discussed the Budget Consultation Survey feedback and preference of increasing user fees. It was noted that the 2025 fees and charges were raised by 3%, and user fees will be monitored throughout the year when planning for the 2026 Budget.

### Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority

Council discussed concerns with the increased budget from Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority. It was noted that SVCA were still operating under a Provincial funding freeze. The Annual General Meeting for SVCA was scheduled for Friday, January 17, 2025 and Councillor McLean could relay Brockton's concerns at the meeting.

### Employee Benefits

Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer responded to questions about the timeline for a review of employee benefits advising that the Municipality's broker was conducting a market review to secure fees for 2025-2026 as the renewal would

occur in June 2025. Ms. Serratore noted the change in the current Bruce County Municipal consortium given one organization's withdrawal. Ms. Serratore clarified that the benefits budget also includes CPP, EI, and OMERS.

#### EV Charging Stations

Council asked about the revenue projection for 2025 from the EV charging stations. Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer and Colleen Gillis, Director of Community Services advised that the revenue would be reallocated into the proper account.

#### Analysis

Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer noted that staff would complete an analysis and process outstanding 2024 invoices to confirm the 2024 actuals.

Ms. Serratore advised that the Municipality previously used \$150,000 from the Rate Stabilization Reserve, such that surplus funds from 2023 could be used in 2025.

#### **Resolution 25-02-02**

Moved By: Tim Elphick

Seconded By: Gregory J. McLean

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton does now hereby recess from the Open Session at 2:22 p.m.

**Carried**

#### **Resolution 25-02-03**

Moved By: Tim Elphick

Seconded By: Gregory J. McLean

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton does now hereby return to Open Session at 2:46 p.m.

**Carried**

Council discussed the current tax rate and impacts from inflation.

### **9. Closed Session**

#### **Resolution 25-02-04**

Moved By: Steve Travale

Seconded By: Kym Hutcheon

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton enter into Closed Session at 2:50 p.m. in order to address a matter pertaining to:

- Personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees - **Parking Enforcement Confirmation, Building Code Order**
- A proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipality or local board - **Property Acquisition Negotiation**
- Labour relations or employee negotiations - **Staffing Update**
- Advice that is subject to solicitor/client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose - **Municipal Service Board Options, Heritage Property Enforcement Opinion, Zoning Enforcement Update, Building Property Dispute Opinion**

- A trade secret or scientific, technical, commercial, financial or labour relations information, supplied in confidence to the municipality or local board, which, if disclosed could reasonably be expected to prejudice significantly the competitive position or interfere significantly with contractual or other negotiations of a person, group of persons, or organization - **Utility Update**
- A position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiation carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the municipality or local board - **Road Allowance Purchase Inquiry, Strip of Land Purchase Inquiry**

**Carried**

**Resolution 25-02-05**

Moved By: Steve Travale

Seconded By: Kym Hutcheon

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby approve the direction provided to staff in Closed Session and further acknowledges the retirement of Sharon Bross, Child Care Manager effective January 13, 2025.

**Carried**

**10. Confirmation of Proceedings**

**Resolution 25-02-06**

Moved By: Tim Elphick

Seconded By: Mitch Clark

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton authorize that the following by-law be read, enacted, signed, sealed, and numbered as follows:

- By-Law 2025-003 - January 14, 2025 Budget Meeting Confirmatory By-Law

**Carried**

**11. Adjournment**

**Resolution 25-02-07**

Moved By: Tim Elphick

Seconded By: Mitch Clark

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton does now adjourn at 3:56 p.m. to meet again at 7:00 p.m. for the regular Council Meeting.

**Carried**

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Mayor - Chris Peabody

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Director of Legislative and Legal Services (Clerk) – Fiona Hamilton