



— TOWNSHIP OF —
ASHFIELD-COLBORNE-WAWANOSH

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Monthly Council Meeting Highlights December 2024

Council Meeting | December 3, 2024

Water Works Financial Plan 2025-2030

Ryan DeVries from B.M. Ross & Associates Limited presented the proposed Water Works Financial Plan, along with the proposed changes to the water rates for the Municipal Water Systems. Council adopted the Drinking Water Financial Plan for the period 2025 to 2030 based on a 1% annual increase for 2025 and 2026 and 2% for the remaining 4 years. The plan can be viewed in full detail here www.acwtownship.ca/content/municipal-services/public-works/water-works-financial-plan

2023 Financial Statements - Seebach & Company Chartered Accountants

Presentation of 2023 Financial Statements was presented to Council by Nancy Bridge from Seebach & Company Chartered Accountants. These statements represent the “Consolidated Financial Statements” of the Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh. The Revenue/Expenditure Reports that Council receives each month show the actuals and are in greater detail. Council accepted the Financial Statements as prepared by Seebach & Company Chartered Accountants for the year ending December 31, 2023. To view the financial statements, visit <https://acwtownship.ca/content/government/treasury/acw-2023-fs.pdf>

2025 Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF)

The Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) is the Province’s main general assistance grant to municipalities. The program primarily supports northern and rural municipalities. In 2025, the Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh will receive \$1,071,400 in OMPF funding, which is the equivalent of \$336 per household. This represents a 20% increase in funding compared to 2024.

Fee By-Law Update

Planning fees are set to be increased by the annual CPI (Consumer Price Index) effective January 1, 2025.

Procedure By-Law Amendment

Council adopted By-Law 79-2024 being a by-law to amend Procedure By-Law 52-2023. Council will now include planning items in the regular Council meetings and eliminate the night planning meetings. In a staff report, Council held eight (8) “Council Meeting – Planning” during 2024 with the average length being 46 minutes.

Southwestern Ontario Isotope Coalition - Terms of Reference and Strategic Plan

The Southwestern Ontario Isotope Coalition provided their Terms of Reference for Council's review and consideration along with their Strategic Plan. Council confirms the intention to join the Southwestern Ontario Isotope Coalition as a Regional Collaborative Partner and appointed Mayor Glen McNeil to represent the Township.

2025 Tree Order

Council directed staff to proceed with the yearly tree order as per the Township's policy. The cost of the trees for the 2025 order has remained similar to 2024 but the size of the trees will be 60 to 90 cm down from approximately 120 cm. There will be 500 trees available for residents through a lottery system. Municipal Staff will advertise in February on social media, in the tax newsletter and on the municipal website how to register for the lottery system and the deadline.

Staff Appointment

Ashley McCowan has been appointed as Building Inspector to fill the vacant position.

Council Meeting | December 17, 2024

Growth and Servicing Master Plan – BM Ross & Associates Ltd, Lisa Courtney

BM Ross & Associates Ltd., Lisa Courtney presented Council with the Growth and Servicing Master Plan - Background Planning and Issues. This report compiles and documents background information that may be used to inform future studies related to servicing. This report will serve as a resource for future planning efforts and assist in directing future studies and engineering reviews. Council deemed it appropriate to adopt the plan. The plan can be seen in full detail here <https://acwtownship.ca/government/strategies-plans/growth-and-servicing-master-plan>

Annual Indexing of Development Charges - 2025

Development charge rate increases for 2025 are in accordance with the third quarter non-residential Statistics Canada Quarterly Construction Price Index of 3.3%. This increase will be effective January 1, 2025. Development charges are imposed on new development to partially recover the cost of new municipal infrastructure needed to service a growing community. Annual indexing of development charges ensures the proceeds from development charges maintain pace with the inflationary increases on infrastructure construction costs required to support growth in the Township. Development charge information is updated regularly on the Township website and pamphlets are available at the Township office.

2024 Asset Management Plan and Policy Update

Staff have been working with consultants from PSD Citywide to develop and update the Township's asset management program to meet the provincial requirements. ACW received \$50,000 in funding for this project through FCM's Municipal Asset Management Program. The 2024 Asset Management Plan (AMP) meets the July 1, 2024, requirements of O. Reg. 588/17. Bringing the Township into compliance with the regulation before the end of the year is a condition for continued funding under several provincial agreements, including OCIF. Further work is required to meet the July 2025 requirements including establishing proposed levels of service for next 10 years, updated inventory analysis, financial strategy and addressing shortfalls, and review of how growth assumptions impact lifecycle and financial strategies. Council approved the 2024 Asset Management Plan and Asset Management Policy to remain in compliance.

Notice of OLT Decision/Hearing - Z07-21 Lobo Sand & Gravel

The Tribunal scheduled a 13-day merit Hearing to proceed by video on Wednesday, July 2, 2025 at 10 a.m., through to Friday, July 18, 2025. Learn more at <https://acwtownship.ca/develop-build/planning-development/acw-z07-21-lobo-sand-gravel>

Outdoor Play Equipment Policy

Council adopted an amended Outdoor Play Equipment Policy that adds the requirement to align with the Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan, along with the Parks Concept Plan.

Council Meeting Schedule 2025

The 2025 Council Meeting Schedule has been set. The complete schedule can be found here <https://acwtownship.ca/government/council>

Accessibility Plans

Council adopted the 2025 Annual Accessibility Plan and 2024-29 Multi-Year Plan. The Plans outline legislated duties and responsibilities, past goals and achievements as well as goals moving ahead. The lower tier municipalities are required to endorse these documents and forward this acknowledgement to the County. For more information visit <https://acwtownship.ca/accessibility>

North Huron Fire Agreement Extension 2025

Council agreed to extend the Fire Agreement with North Huron for one (1) year, subject to North Huron agreeing to the same. The 2025 capital purchases by North Huron during the one-year extension should not exceed the following:

- Replacement of Rescue # 7 - \$300,000
- Extrication Equipment - \$60,000

The agreement also includes a provision that if more money is required for equipment purchases, each municipality will pay their share, subject to Council approval. Negotiations for the agreement will occur in 2025 for a renewal date effective January 1, 2026.

Full Time Equipment Operator / Labourer - Additional Staffing

Council authorized staff to hire an additional Full-Time Equipment Operator/Labourer. The rationale is to lower the dependence on seasonal employees and close the gap in service delivery time for Township residents. Currently two plow routes are managed by seasonal operators, and hiring of an additional full-time operator will help to ensure these routes are staffed.

Upcoming Meeting Dates

- Council Meeting – January 14, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.
- Council Meeting – February 4, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.
- Council Meeting – February 18, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.