

Council Meeting Highlights



DECEMBER 2025

www.acwtownship.ca 519-524-4669 82133 Council Line, RR5 Goderich, ON N7A 3Y2

Council Meeting | December 2, 2025

Short-Term Rental Committee - Recommendation to Council

After completing its mandate, the Short-Term Rental Committee recommended adoption of the draft Short-Term Rental By-Law, which Council subsequently adopted as By-Law 68-2025.

Opposition to Proposed Consolidation of Conservation Authorities

Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh Township Council sent a letter opposing the Province's proposed legislation to consolidate Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into seven regional agencies. Council cited concerns about the loss of local decision-making, lack of consultation, potential impacts on rural and agricultural communities, and the absence of a supporting business case. The resolution affirmed the importance of locally based conservation authorities, such as the Maitland Valley Conservation Authority. This resolution was shared with provincial leaders and relevant stakeholders.

Employee Years of Service

Joy Lindsay, CBO, was recognized for five years of dedicated service, while Florence Witherspoon, Clerk, was honoured for ten years of service.

Council Meeting | December 16, 2025

Town of Goderich - Proposed Joint Use Agreement

Janice Hallahan CAO from the Town of Goderich presented a proposed Joint Use Agreement. Council directed staff to prepare a report outlining the financial considerations of a Joint Use/Community Use Agreement with the Town of Goderich, including operating and capital costs related to the Maitland Recreation Centre, the MacKay Centre for Seniors, and the Maitland Valley Medical Centre. The report will be brought forward at a Special Council Meeting for discussion and consideration.

Sunset Community Foundation - ACW Vitality Fund Proposal

Mike Niglas of the Sunset Community Foundation presented the ACW Vitality Fund proposal. Council directed staff to prepare a report outlining the logistics of allocating \$50,000 in the 2026 budget to the Sunset Community Foundation to administer on the Township's behalf, in relation to the existing ACW Community Benefits Fund. The report will be brought forward for consideration at a future meeting.

Fee By-Law Update

Planning fees are set to be increased by the annual CPI (Consumer Price Index) effective January 1, 2026.

2026 OPP Annual Billing Statement

Under the OPP cost recovery model, municipalities pay a base per-property cost for proactive policing, plus additional charges for reactive calls for service and other applicable services. The Township's 2026 OPP Annual Billing Statement shows a total calculated cost of \$1,197,892; however, the payable amount is capped at 11% above the 2025 final billing. As a result, the Township will pay the lower capped amount of \$1,057,646 for 2026, which is estimated at \$315 per property, up from \$285 in 2025.

Building Fees - Recommended Changes

Council supported updating the Building Permit Fees and that an amending by-law be brought forward for adoption. The update reflects the cumulative CPI increase from 2020 to 2025, as fees have not been revised since 2020 and have not kept pace with inflation, while remaining lower than many surrounding municipalities. Base fees and square footage rates will be rounded for consistency. Currently, the Building Department projects a deficit of \$135,000 for 2025 resulting in a balance of approximately \$664,000 in the reserve fund. The reserve fund will cover about two years of operating expenses during cyclical lows in the building industry. Best practice is to maintain reserves sufficient for three years of operating expenses. Plumbing and sewage system fees will remain unchanged, as they are already higher than those of neighbouring municipalities.

Nile Road Bridge Tender

The Nile Road bridge was identified as a priority project in 2024 by the Township's engineers, B.M. Ross and Associates Ltd. The structure, a concrete box culvert, is located on Nile Road between Lanesville Line and Cransford Line. Design work commenced following its identification, and due to construction timing constraints, the project was tendered in late 2025 for construction in 2026. Council accepted the tender from Vandriel Excavating Inc. in the amount of \$473,294.32, inclusive of HST.

Upcoming Meeting Dates

- Council Meeting – January 13, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.
- Council Meeting – February 3, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.
- Council Meeting – February 17, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.