

MINUTES
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
ADMINISTRATION & OPERATIONS

Monday, February 10, 2025, 6:30 PM
Corporation of The Township of Edwardsburgh Cardinal
Council Chambers, Spencerville Ontario

PRESENT: Mayor Tory Deschamps
Councillor Joe Martelle
Councillor Waddy Smail
Councillor Chris Ward
John Hunter (Advisory Member)
Karen Roussy (Advisory Member)

REGRETS: Deputy Mayor Stephen Dillabough

STAFF: Sean Nicholson, CAO
Dave Grant, Director of Operations/Deputy CAO
Jessica Crawford, Treasurer
Mike Spencer, Manager of Parks, Recreation & Facilities
Brian Moore, Fire Chief
Eric Wemerman, Chief Water/Sewer Operator
Chris LeBlanc, Manager of Public Works
Candise Newcombe, Deputy Clerk
Natalie Charette, Interim Clerk

1. Call to Order – Chair, Mayor Deschamps

Mayor Deschamps called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: J. Martelle
Seconded by: C. Ward

That the agenda be approved as presented.

Carried

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest or Conflict of Interest & the General Nature Thereof

None.

4. Business Arising from Previous Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes (if any)

The Mayor inquired about the feedback from the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville regarding the Land Evaluation and Area Review (LEAR). It was noted that no feedback had been received to date.

The Mayor pointed out a typographical error in the previous minutes under Councillor Inquiries/Notices of Motion, where the proposed naming of a municipal facility was attributed to "Mr. Walter" instead of "Mr. Walker."

5. Delegations and Presentations

None.

6. Consent Agenda

Moved by: W. Smail

Seconded by: J. Martelle

THAT the following consent agenda items be received as presented:

- a. 4th Quarter Facility Maintenance Report
- b. 4th Quarter Facility Statistics Report
- c. 4th Quarter Operations Report
- d. 4th Quarter Fire Report
- e. 4th Quarter Bylaw Enforcement Report

Carried

7. Discussion Items

None.

8. Action/Information Items

- a. 4th Quarter Facility Maintenance Report - CONSENT
- b. 4th Quarter Facility Statistics Report - CONSENT
- c. 4th Quarter Operations Report - CONSENT
- d. 4th Quarter Fire Report - CONSENT
- e. 4th Quarter Bylaw Enforcement Report - CONSENT
- f. 4th Quarter Treasury & Reserve Report

The Committee was given a comprehensive overview of the report, during which they discussed the fire communications equipment budget,

reviewed the current balance of \$363,000.00 in the fire vehicle reserve, and clarified the purpose of the reserve.

g. 4th Quarter Budget to Variance Report

The Committee received a detailed summary of the report, highlighting a modest Township deficit of \$44,211.00 for 2024. Members praised staff for the increase in building permits and the use of recreational facilities, as well as for effectively managing additional challenges in 2024, such as securing extra Township staff, expanding the 2024 roads program, and addressing overall cost increases in general operational expenses.

The Committee noted that the modest Township deficit indicates staff's cost estimates were sufficiently accurate, ensuring that residents were not charged more than necessary through their property taxes.

Members inquired about the variance in the budget for the proposed 2025 Township Roads program. It was noted that, upon further inspection, the Public Works Department had to expand the project scope to include drainage and sewage work.

Inquiries were made regarding the purpose of the Township working funds account, which was explained to be used as a cash flow reserve to ensure the smooth operation of regular Township business.

h. 4th Quarter Council Remuneration Report

The Committee was provided with a summary of the report, highlighting the increased participation of Council Members in educational conferences in 2024. These conferences offer additional opportunities to secure grant funding for the Township, supporting various services, such as the promotion of local development.

i. 2024 Cardinal WPCP Annual Report

The Committee was given a comprehensive overview of the report, which included a discussion on the reduction in annual flow since 1997, following the resolution of infiltration issues and the replacement of aging infrastructure.

Moved by: J. Martelle

Seconded by: W. Smail

That Committee recommends that Council receive the 2024 annual report for the Cardinal WPCP; and direct staff to submit the report to MECF prior to the March 31st deadline.

Carried

j. Cardinal-IP- Water System Summary Reports

The Committee was provided with a detailed summary of the report and discussed several key points, including the additional capacity available for new development, the reasons behind the decline in water usage in the Industrial Park, and the impact of water main breaks in Prescott on the Township's water lines.

Members discussed the 15.2% decrease in consumption within the Township, the capacity benefits of installing water meters, and the suggestion to reduce the size of the water treatment facility when considering its replacement, due to the limited number of system users. It was noted that, when replacing capital assets, it is recommended to replace them on a like-for-like basis to maintain service levels.

Moved by: C. Ward

Seconded by: J. Martelle

That Committee recommends that Council receive the 2024 Summary Reports for the Cardinal and Industrial Park Water Systems.

Carried

k. 2024 Sanitary Collection Performance Report

Committee was provided with a high-level overview of the report and discussed the intake and output limits of the Spencerville Lagoon and Industrial Park systems. The current levels of each system were reviewed, along with the Township's proximity to their respective limits, inquiring about the need to enforce usage restrictions on the Industrial Park system.

Members inquired about the life expectancy of the CIPP lining work, which was noted to last for several years, extending the asset life.

Moved by: J. Martelle

Seconded by: W. Smail

That Committee recommends that Council receive the 2024 Sanitary Collection Performance Report and direct staff to submit a copy of the report to the MECP prior to the March 31st deadline and post to the Township website.

Carried

l. 2024 MTO Report

The Committee was provided with a summary of the report, which included a discussion on increases in emergency response rates, invoices paid to date by the MTO, the cost-recovery process, and the potential for bypassing the MTO by submitting claims directly to insurance companies.

m. Fire Service Radio & Paging System Upgrade

The Committee was given a detailed overview of the report, which included a discussion on the final upgrade schedule, the effectiveness of the United Counties Communications Committee, the allocation of a dedicated budget line for the upgrades, associated costs, and current reserve balances.

n. 2024 River Route Transit Report

The Committee received a comprehensive overview of the report and discussed several key points: the growing public demand for rural transportation, the increasing dependence on the service, the potential inclusion of transportation services during Township special events, and plans for future adaptation and continued service expansion.

Members reviewed ridership metrics to assess Township resident usage, noted the rise in student ridership, evaluated the program's costs, and inquired about expanding the service to northern areas of the Township to ensure equitable access.

Committee requested that staff return to the February 24th meeting of Council with additional information regarding ridership metrics.

o. Blue Box Transition Update

The Committee was provided with a summary of the report and discussed several key points: feedback from Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional (ICI) partners regarding program changes, alternative recycling options for ineligible partners opting out of the program, and clarification on the decision not to cover certain ICI services. It was noted that future plans for municipal recycling pick-up at Township facilities would need to be explored and producer pushback on limiting the amounts eligible for pick-up reviewed. Service coverage for some institutional properties was noted to be available starting in January 2026.

Members emphasized that the intent of the system is to place the responsibility for recycling removal payment on producers. However, they noted that the proposed system resembles a user-pay model rather than a producer-pay model. There was further discussion on the contract hierarchy and concerns about increased curbside waste under the proposed collection system. Members also noted that additional time for public education would have been beneficial.

p. Revised Entranceway Bylaw

The Committee received a summary of the report and discussed several key points: allowing additional time for review and feedback on the proposed bylaw changes, common practices of neighboring municipalities, the annual number of Township culvert installations, and the rationale for narrowing the culvert installation window from July to November to avoid disrupting spring spawning.

There was also discussion on the effectiveness of a flat rate for culvert installation, gauging Committee interest in a full cost recovery system, and the factors influencing the costs of culvert installations.

Staff were requested to compile additional information and bring this item back for review at a subsequent Committee meeting.

9. Councillor Inquiries/Notices of Motion

Councillor Martelle congratulated the Township Fire Department on successfully recruiting eight new volunteer firefighters.

10. Member's Report

Member's reported on the following:

- Highlighted upcoming events of the Cardinal Festival Committee and encouraged members of the public to visit their Facebook page for event times.
- Mayor/CAO attended the St. Lawrence Economic Development Corridor meeting on March 7. Members discussed possible responses to impending tariffs from the USA, and impacts and difficulties from industrial, commercial, tourism, manufacturers and small business standpoints.

11. Question Period

None.

12. Closed Session

None.

13. Adjournment

Moved by: C. Ward

Seconded by: W. Smail

That Committee does now adjourn at 8:33 p.m.

Carried

Chair

Deputy Clerk