



THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
JOINT BOARD OF MANAGEMENT - NIAGARA COURTS
AGENDA

JBM 2-2026

Thursday, April 23, 2026

3:30 p.m.

Meeting will be held by electronic participation only

If you are interested in viewing this meeting or would like to speak to an item listed on the agenda please contact the Office of the Regional Clerk at clerk@niagararegion.ca.

	Pages
1. <u>CALL TO ORDER</u>	
2. <u>DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST</u>	
3. <u>ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION</u>	
3.1 <u>JBM-C 3-2026</u> Court Services 2025 Draft Audited Schedule of Revenues, Expenses, and Funds Available for Distribution	3 - 19
3.2 <u>JBM-C 5-2026</u> Set Fines Under the Provincial Offences Act	20 - 26
4. <u>CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION</u>	
4.1 <u>JBM-C 4-2026</u> 2025 Year End Report for Provincial Offences Court	27 - 45
4.2 <u>JBM-C 6-2026</u> Recognition of 25 Years of Excellence in Court Services	46 - 50
4.3 <u>JBM 1-2026</u> Joint Board of Management - Niagara Courts Meeting Minutes - February 19, 2026	51 - 54
5. <u>OTHER BUSINESS</u>	

6. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, September 3, 2026, at 3:30 p.m.

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

If you require any accommodations for a disability in order to attend or participate in meetings or events, please contact the Accessibility Advisor at 905-980-6000 ext. 3252 (office), 289-929-8376 (cellphone) or accessibility@niagararegion.ca (email).

Subject: Court Services 2025 Draft Audited Schedule of Revenues, Expenses and Funds Available for Distribution

Report to: Joint Board of Management

Report date: Thursday, April 23, 2026

Recommendations

1. That the draft audited Schedule of Revenues, Expenses and Funds Available for Distribution for the year ended December 31, 2025, for The Regional Municipality of Niagara Court Services (Court Services) as presented in Appendix 1 to Report JBM-C 3-2026 **BE APPROVED**;
2. That staff **BE DIRECTED** to coordinate with the auditor to finalize the statements as presented; and
3. That Report JBM-C 3-2026 **BE FORWARDED** to the Region's Audit Committee and to the Ministry of the Attorney General as per the Memorandum of Understanding, for information as required.

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to formally present and seek Joint Board of Management (JBM) approval of the 2025 draft audited Schedule of Revenues, Expenses and Funds Available for Distribution (the schedule) attached as Appendix 1 to Report JBM-C 3-2026.
- Court Services received an unmodified audit opinion which indicates that in KPMG's opinion the financial information presented, in all material respects, is in accordance with the financial reporting provisions in the Niagara Region Courts Inter-Municipal Agreement dated April 26, 2000, and Amending Agreement dated October 13, 2022.
- As per Financial Reporting and Forecasting Policy C-F-020, financial statements and/or schedules prepared for Agencies, Boards, or Commissions (ABCs) are required to be approved by the governing board of the ABC and then referred to Audit Committee for information.
- As Court Services is an ABC of the Niagara Region, the Court Services operating results included in the schedule are incorporated into the Niagara Region's consolidated financial statements. Niagara Region's consolidated financial

statements will be presented to Audit Committee on May 25, 2026, and recommended for approval at Council on May 28, 2026.

Financial Considerations

The draft audited schedule has been prepared in compliance with legislation and in accordance with the financial reporting provisions in the Niagara Region Courts Inter-Municipal Agreement dated April 26, 2000, as amended.

A copy of the draft audited schedule for the year ended December 31, 2025, is attached as Appendix 1 to Report JBM-C 3-2026.

The schedule is prepared specifically for the purposes of meeting the requirements outlined in the Niagara Region Courts Inter-Municipal Agreement, as amended, and may not be suitable for other purposes.

Analysis

The Region's external auditors, KPMG, completed the audit of the financial information in the schedule. The auditors have indicated that, in their opinion, the financial information for the year ended December 31, 2025, is prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the financial reporting provisions in the Niagara Region Courts Inter-Municipal Agreement dated April 26, 2000, as amended.

This report is fully aligned with JBM-C 4-2026 2025 Year End Report for Provincial Offences Court which outlines the financial results and distributions to municipalities of the program.

Alternatives Reviewed

The draft audited schedule of revenues, expenses and funds available for distribution is prepared in accordance with the Niagara Region Courts Inter-Municipal Agreement dated April 26, 2000, as amended, and the Financial Reporting and Forecasting Policy C-F-020. Therefore, no alternative is available.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

This report supports the Effective Region Council Strategic Priority through the delivery of fiscally responsible services, in accordance with the Inter-municipal Agreement.

Other Pertinent Reports

JBM-C 4-2026 2025 Year End Report for Provincial Offences Court

Prepared by:

Beth Brens, CPA, CA

Director

Financial Management & Planning

Recommended by:

Tim Ellis, CPA, CMA

Commissioner

Corporate Services

Submitted by:

Ron Tripp, P.Eng.

Chief Administrative Officer

This report was prepared in consultation with Adam Niece, Program Financial Specialist and Miranda Vink, Associate Director, Court Services, and reviewed by Renee Muzzell, Associate Director, Program Financial Support, Scott Crocco, Senior Legal Counsel, and Donna Gibbs, Regional Solicitor/Director, Legal and Court Services.

Appendices

Appendix 1 2025 Draft Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures and Funds Available for Distribution

Schedule of revenues, expenses and funds available for
distribution

The Regional Municipality of Niagara Court Services

December 31, 2025

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The Regional Municipality of Niagara Court Services December 31, 2025

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Independent Auditors' Report

To those charged with governance of The Regional Municipality of Niagara Court Services

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying schedule of revenues, expenses and funds available for distribution of The Regional Municipality of Niagara Court Services (the "Court Services") for the year-ended December 31, 2025 and notes to the schedule (collectively referred to as the "schedule").

In our opinion, the accompanying schedule for the year-ended December 31, 2025 is prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the financial reporting provisions in the Niagara Region Courts Intermunicipal Agreement dated April 26, 2000, and Amending Agreement dated October 13, 2022.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the "Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Schedule" section of our auditor's report.

We are independent of the Court Services in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the schedule in Canada and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of Matter

We draw attention to Note 1 in the schedule, which describes the applicable financial reporting framework and the purpose of the schedule.

As a result, the schedule may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified as a result of this matter.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Schedule

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the schedule in accordance with the financial reporting provisions in the Niagara Region Courts Intermunicipal Agreement dated April 26, 2000 and Amending Agreement dated October 13, 2022, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the schedule that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Court Services' financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Schedule

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the schedule as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the schedule.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.

We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the schedule, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Court Services' internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.

- Communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Chartered Professional Accountants, Licensed Public Accountants

Hamilton, Canada

[Date]

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The Regional Municipality of Niagara Court Services
Schedule of Revenue, Expenditures & Funds Available for Distribution
Year Ended December 31, 2025, with comparative figures for 2024

	2025 Budget	2025 Actual	2024 Actual
	\$	\$	\$
Revenue (schedules 1 & 2):			
Offence receipts and other revenue	12,997,120	9,882,539	11,797,805
	12,997,120	9,882,539	11,797,805
Controllable Expenditures (schedules 1 & 2):			
Salaries and benefits	3,325,195	2,762,153	2,562,147
Program support costs (note 4)	1,432,752	1,373,607	1,273,910
Collection charges	210,000	124,808	146,770
Legal	45,000	45,894	38,026
Call in prosecution	32,000	-	-
Payment processing costs	267,900	190,891	196,949
Telephone	8,600	8,065	9,148
Office and administration	165,165	137,724	116,595
	5,486,612	4,643,142	4,343,545
Uncontrollable Expenditures (schedules 1 & 2):			
Revenue collected on behalf of other municipalities/provinces	80,000	115,491	194,453
Victim fine surcharge	2,130,630	1,515,309	1,875,581
Adjudication	450,000	246,852	251,361
Dedicated fines	20,000	25,148	89,925
Other provincial expenditures	425,250	266,830	311,576
	3,105,880	2,169,630	2,722,896
Total expenditures	8,592,492	6,812,772	7,066,441
Excess of revenue over expenditures	4,404,628	3,069,767	4,731,365
Change in employee benefits and other liabilities	-	58,226	20,996
Transfer to Niagara Region (note 2)	(2,480,690)	(1,113,121)	(1,454,103)
Funds available for distribution (note 3)	1,923,938	2,014,872	3,298,258

The Regional Municipality of Niagara Court Services

Notes to the Schedule

December 31, 2025

1. Significant Accounting Policies

The schedule of revenues, expenses and funds available for distribution of The Regional Municipality of Niagara Court Services has been prepared by management in accordance with the financial reporting provisions in the Niagara Region Courts Intermunicipal Agreement dated April 26, 2000 and Amending Agreement dated October 13, 2022 (the "agreement").

Significant accounting policies are as follows:

Revenues

Revenues are recorded on a cash basis.

Expenses

Court Services follows the accrual method of accounting for controllable expenses. Controllable expenses are recognized as they are incurred and measurable as a result of receipt of goods or services and/or the creation of a legal obligation to pay.

Uncontrollable expenses are recorded on a cash basis.

Capital Assets

Capital assets and amortization of capital assets are not reported as expenses on the schedule of revenue and expenses and funds available for distribution.

Transfers to Reserves

Transfers to reserves are based on approval by the Board, as provided for in section 8.6 of the agreement.

Employee Future Benefits

Court Services provides certain employee benefits which will require funding in future periods. These benefits include sick leave, life insurance, extended health, and dental benefits for early retirees.

The costs of sick leave, life insurance, extended health and dental benefits are actuarially determined using management's best estimate of salary escalation, accumulated sick days at retirement, insurance and health care cost trends, long term inflation rates and discount rates. The cost is actuarially determined using the projected benefits method prorated on service. Under this method, the benefit costs are recognized over the expected average service life of the employee group. Any actuarial gains and losses related to the past service of employees are amortized over the expected average remaining service life of the employee group.

2. Transfer to Niagara Region

Transfers Related to Base Operations:

Court Services transferred \$200,000 (2024 - \$200,000) to the Niagara Region in 2025 which was transferred to the Court Services Facility Renewal reserve.

The following represents the transactions through the Court Services Facility Renewal reserve:

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Reserve held by the Niagara Region, beginning of year	4,301,104	4,101,104
Transfers during the year to reserve from operating budget	200,000	200,000
Reserve held by the Niagara Region, end of year	4,501,104	4,301,104

Transfers Related to Automated Enforcement Operations:

As permitted in the Intermunicipal Agreement, Court Services has transferred Automated Enforcement net revenues of \$913,121 (2024 - \$1,254,103) to the Niagara

Region's Transportation Services division to recover its Automated Enforcement program related costs.

3. Distribution to Area Municipalities

Court Services net revenue distribution (net expenditure recovered) by municipality is as follows:

	Budget	2025	2024
	\$	\$	\$
Region of Niagara	961,969	1,007,436	1,649,129
Niagara Falls	185,298	194,056	317,586
Port Colborne	30,122	31,546	51,095
St. Catharines	228,871	239,688	395,457
Thorold	47,638	49,890	78,265
Welland	80,999	84,828	137,001
Fort Erie	63,472	66,473	108,272
Grimsby	74,694	78,224	129,496
Lincoln	64,999	68,071	112,431
Niagara-on-the-Lake	85,989	90,054	148,017
Pelham	46,029	48,204	78,478
Wainfleet	17,655	18,490	30,346
West Lincoln	36,201	37,912	62,685
	1,923,938	2,014,872	3,298,258

Distribution to Area Municipalities (Continued)

Distribution to area municipalities for 2025 net revenues:

	Excluding Automated Enforcement	Automated Enforcement Only
	\$	\$
Region of Niagara	363,735	643,701
Niagara Falls	70,064	123,992
Port Colborne	11,390	20,156
St. Catharines	86,539	153,149
Thorold	18,013	31,877
Welland	30,627	54,201
Fort Erie	24,000	42,473
Grimsby	28,243	49,981
Lincoln	24,577	43,494
Niagara-on-the-Lake	32,514	57,540
Pelham	17,404	30,800
Wainfleet	6,676	11,814
West Lincoln	13,688	24,224
	727,470	1,287,402

3. Program Support Costs

Court Services records direct operating expenses to their respective activity. The Regional Municipality of Niagara has a consolidated cost allocation policy with a guiding principle of more closely aligning indirect costs with the support programs and services as defined by the Province in the Financial Information Return (FIR) guidelines. The methodology allocates these indirect costs to end programs/services based on usage drivers.

Under this methodology, all departments providing program/service support functions will allocate their costs using drivers specific to each type of expense.

4. Program Support Costs (continued)

Program support costs which have been allocated are:

	Budget	2025	2024
	\$	\$	\$
Finance services	211,187	230,247	175,557
Human resources services	84,568	70,165	60,790
Information technology services	214,818	199,486	153,074
Legal services	70,749	63,389	59,912
Insurance costs	3,082	2,464	1,859
Printing costs	612	441	777
Mail costs	11,400	9,733	9,445
Communications costs	1,251	698	949
Facilities costs	835,085	796,985	811,547
	1,432,752	1,373,607	1,273,910

Program Support Costs Excluding Automated Enforcement:

	Budget	2025	2024
	\$	\$	\$
Finance services	179,207	178,149	155,535
Human resources services	70,524	55,522	49,007
Information technology services	142,801	143,964	117,926
Legal services	70,749	63,389	59,912
Insurance costs	2,467	1,953	1,795
Printing costs	612	441	777
Mail costs	5,700	9,733	9,445
Communication costs	549	698	949
Facilities costs	589,225	796,985	811,547
	1,061,834	1,250,834	1,206,893

4. Program Support Costs (continued)

Program Support Costs for Automated Enforcement Only:

	Budget	2025	2024
	\$	\$	\$
Finance services	31,980	52,098	20,021
Human resources services	14,044	14,643	11,783
Information technology services	72,017	55,521	35,148
Insurance costs	615	511	64
Mail costs	5,700	-	-
Communications costs	702	-	-
Facilities costs	245,860	-	-
	370,918	122,773	67,017

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**The Regional Municipality of Niagara Court Services - Schedule 1
Court Services Schedule of Revenues, Expenses & Funds Available for
Distribution (Excluding Automated Enforcement)
For the Year Ended December 31, 2025**

	2025 Budget	2025 Actual	2024 Actual
Revenues:			
Offence receipts and other revenue	\$ 5,741,800	\$ 6,217,298	\$ 5,635,258
Total revenues	5,741,800	6,217,298	5,635,258
Controllable Expenditures:			
Salaries and benefits	2,492,598	2,220,375	2,079,224
Program support costs (note 4)	1,061,834	1,250,834	1,206,893
Collection charges	175,000	109,472	142,853
Legal	45,000	45,894	38,026
Payment processing costs	91,250	155,520	96,815
Telephone	8,600	8,065	7,673
Office and administration	113,240	119,174	87,059
	3,987,522	3,909,333	3,658,543
Uncontrollable Expenditures:			
Revenue collected on behalf of other municipalities/provinces	80,000	115,491	194,583
Victim fine surcharge	858,870	899,329	821,757
Adjudication	225,000	218,541	228,414
Dedicated fines	20,000	25,148	81,367
Other provincial expenditures	171,500	180,212	170,159
	1,355,370	1,438,721	1,496,150
Total expenditures	5,342,892	5,348,054	5,154,694
Excess of revenue over expenditures	398,908	869,244	480,564
Change in employee benefits and other liabilities	-	58,266	20,996
Transfer to Niagara Region (note 2)	(200,000)	(200,000)	(200,000)
Funds available for distribution (note 3)	\$ 198,908	\$ 727,470	\$ 301,560

**The Regional Municipality of Niagara Court Services Schedule 2
Court Services Schedule of Revenues, Expenses & Funds Available for
Distribution (Automated Enforcement)
For the Year Ended December 31, 2025**

	2025 Budget	2025 Actual	2024 Actual
Revenues:			
Offence receipts and other revenue	\$ 7,255,320	\$ 3,665,241	\$ 6,162,547
Total revenues	7,255,320	3,655,241	6,162,547
Controllable Expenditures:			
Salaries and benefits	832,597	541,778	482,922
Program support costs (note 4)	370,918	122,773	67,017
Collection charges	35,000	15,336	3,917
Call in prosecution	32,000	-	-
Payment processing costs	176,650	35,371	100,134
Telephone	-	-	1,475
Office and administration	51,925	18,550	29,536
	1,499,090	733,809	685,001
Uncontrollable Expenditures:			
Victim fine surcharge	1,271,760	615,980	1,053,824
Adjudication	225,000	28,311	22,947
Dedicated fines	-	-	8,558
Other provincial expenditures	253,750	86,618	141,417
	1,750,510	730,909	1,226,746
Total expenditures	3,249,601	1,464,718	1,911,746
Excess of revenue over expenditures	4,005,719	2,200,523	4,250,801
Transfer to Niagara Region (note 2)	(2,280,690)	(913,121)	(1,254,103)
Funds available for distribution (note 3)	\$ 1,725,030	\$ 1,287,402	\$ 2,996,698

Subject: Set Fines Under the Provincial Offences Act

Report to: Joint Board of Management

Report date: Thursday, April 23, 2026

Recommendations

1. That the Joint Board of Management recommends that Regional Council **DIRECT** the Regional Chair to send a letter to the Attorney General of Ontario requesting a review of the set fine amounts, and the costs payable upon conviction set out in *Ontario Regulation 915* under the *Provincial Offences Act*; and
2. That a copy of this resolution **BE FORWARDED** to the Honourable Doug Downey, Attorney General of Ontario, and copied to other municipalities that administer Provincial Offences Courts; the Ministry of the Attorney General, the Ontario Municipal Tax and Revenue Association, and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario for support.

Key Facts

- Delivery of Court Services is governed by Transfer Agreements entered into with the Province (MOU & Local Side Agreement); and the Inter-Municipal Agreement (IMA) entered into between the Region and the LAMs, as amended, in addition to applicable legislation, including the *Provincial Offences Act* (POA).
- With the majority of POA charges resulting in the issuance of tickets and completion of out-of-court fine payments, it is imperative that set fine values act as a strong deterrent to prevent repeat offences in support of community safety and other policy objectives of legislation.
- Since transfer in 2001, many POA set fine amounts have remained frozen, while the costs of operations and service delivery have increased substantially for Niagara Region as well as other municipalities delivering Provincial Offences Court services. Since 2020, set fines account for 71% of all expenses in Court Services. The total cost of Court Services in Niagara Region per charges filed in 2023 was \$97.99 per charge. In comparison, in 2009, it was \$44.98 per charge; a 118% increase within a 14-year period.
- A mandatory \$5 administration fee is added to every POA fine under Ontario Regulation 945; this amount has not changed since 2001 and does not reflect

current court administrative costs. Any change to set fine amounts or administration fees would require legislative changes through the Ministry of the Attorney General.

- Consequently, the POA Court has concerns regarding the effectiveness of fine values as a deterrent, in addition to the sustainability of administering POA court services at the municipal level. Several municipalities and associations have been advocating for an increase in POA fines, including the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. Most recently, the Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus (EOWC) who completed a delegation at the 2026 Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Conference which flagged the same concerns. Please see link in Appendix 1 (at item 1.1) for the full delegation.

Community Safety and Deterrence

Set fine values under the POA must act as a strong deterrent to prevent repeat offences to protect community safety and achieve other important policy objectives of legislation when enforcement action is pursued. With the majority of POA charges resulting in tickets and out-of-court fine payments, higher fines such as under the Highway Traffic Act (HTA) are essential to reduce recurrence and improve road safety. For example, given the safety risks posed by speeding, increasing set fines would achieve a greater deterrent effect for drivers generally and convicted offenders specifically.

According to the Evidence Synthesis on Impact of Traffic Fines to Improve Road Safety published in 2024 by Johns Hopkins University, increasing traffic fines by 50 to 100 percent can lead to a measurable reduction in violations (up to 15 percent fewer offences). The report emphasizes that the severity of penalties, alongside certainty and swiftness of enforcement, is a critical factor in influencing driver behavior. These findings reinforce that higher fines are not merely punitive; they serve as a proven deterrent to repeat offences and contribute significantly to improving road safety outcomes. For a full list of findings, please see link in Appendix 1 (at item 1.2).

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/International Transport Forum Road Safety Annual Report 2024 reinforces that the deterrent effect of traffic penalties depends on both the certainty of enforcement and the severity of fines. The report notes that jurisdictions which periodically increase fine amounts to maintain their real value against inflation achieve stronger compliance and greater reductions in speeding-related crashes. Countries that combined higher fines with automated enforcement observed significant declines in fatalities and serious injuries. These findings underscore that fine values must be regularly reviewed and adjusted to

preserve their deterrent impact and support broader road safety objectives. The full report can be viewed at the link provided in Appendix 1 at item 1.3

The *World Health Organization (WHO) Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023* emphasizes that effective enforcement and meaningful penalties are essential to reducing road traffic deaths and injuries worldwide. The report identifies speed management as a critical intervention and notes that penalties must be sufficiently severe to deter dangerous driving behaviors. WHO recommends that fine amounts be periodically reviewed and adjusted to maintain their deterrent effect, particularly in the context of inflation and rising enforcement costs. These findings align with global best practices and reinforce the need for Ontario to modernize POA set fines to support community safety objectives. This report can be accessed by using the link provided in Appendix 1 at item 1.4.

Lastly, the Government of Canada's *Department of Justice Contraventions Act Program Report (2024)* confirms that the deterrent effect of fines is strongly linked to their perceived severity, alongside certainty and speed of enforcement. Using behavioral science principles, the study found that individuals weigh the cost of non-compliance against the likelihood of detection, and higher fines significantly increase the perceived risk of offending. The report recommends that fine amounts be periodically reviewed to maintain their deterrent value and ensure fairness in cost recovery. These findings support the rationale for modernizing POA set fines to align with evidence-based criteria for deterrence. The full report can be viewed at the link in Appendix 1 at item 1.5.

These reports all emphasize that fines must be regularly reviewed and adjusted to keep pace with inflation and maintain their effectiveness as a deterrent.

Financial Considerations

Considering the increase in operating costs and general inflation since the 2001 transfer of POA to Region of Niagara, a lack of adjustment to the Court Administration Fee (\$5) added to each POA fine as well as set fine amounts of POA charges, presents a risk to the financial sustainability of Court Services as a self-funded operation that is not dependent on the general tax levy.

The local area treasurers have expressed concerns with distributions to local area municipalities being significantly reduced in recent years. There is concern that, despite efforts to reduce expenditures, Court Services operating results are approaching a break-even position, which heightens the risk that any future shortfall may require supplemental funding through the general tax levy to cover an operational deficit.

Analysis

Set Fines

Overall, the costs of operating the POA Court have increased significantly since the initial transfer from the Province to the Municipalities, whereas the set fine amounts for many POA charges have remained unchanged. Since 2020, set fines account for 71% of all expenses in Court Services. The total cost of Court Services in Niagara Region per charges filed in 2023 was \$97.99 per charge. In comparison, in 2009, it was \$44.98 per charge; a 118% increase within a 14-year period. This increase in total costs is consistent with other POA courts across Ontario; Municipal Benchmarking Network Canada stats indicate a median total of \$52.82 per charge filed in 2009 for all participating courts, contrasted with an increase to a median total cost of \$97.28 per charge in 2023 (84% increase).

A key example of set fines that have remained largely consistent in structure over time are Part I speeding charges, issued under section 128 of the HTA. While responsibility for administering POA matters began to be transferred to municipalities in the late 1990s, the underlying per-kilometre approach to Part I speeding fines has changed only minimally over several decades, notwithstanding broader legislative and enforcement reforms. During this same period, however, the cost of living has increased substantially, resulting in a widening gap between the real-value impact of speeding fines and contemporary economic conditions. Under Ontario's POA framework, set fines for speeding are established through set-fine orders issued by the Chief Justice of the Ontario Court of Justice. Current set-fine schedules apply a graduated, per-kilometre model, with fines increasing as the degree of speed over the posted limit increases, and with the most excessive speeds requiring mandatory court proceedings rather than out-of-court resolution.

Part I speeding charges continue to represent the most frequently issued POA offence in Niagara, forming a significant portion of enforcement activity by police services as outlined below:

- 2025: Part I speeding charges (including ~10.5 months of Automated Speed Enforcement) accounted for 57% (27,317) of all Part I charges issued in Niagara, and 44% (\$2.98 million) of the total combined Part I fine value.
- 2024: Part I speeding charges (including 12 months of Automated Speed Enforcement) accounted for 75% (55,607) of all Part I charges issued in Niagara, and 67% (\$6.6 million) of the total combined Part I fine value.

- 2023: Part I speeding charges (including ~3.5 months of Automated Speed Enforcement) accounted for 58% (22,499) of all Part I charges issued in Niagara, and 54% (\$2.6 million) of the total combined Part I fine value.
- 2022: Part I speeding charges (including zero ASE charges – prior to program launch) accounted for 38% (8,226) of all Part I charges issued in Niagara, and 21% (\$661,771) of the total Part I fine value.

Set fines for speeding as set out in Schedule B of the HTA are as follows:

Excess Speed (km)	Set Fine Amount
1 – 19 kilometres per hour over the maximum speed limit	\$2.50 per kilometre
20 – 29 kilometres per hour over the maximum speed limit	\$3.75 per kilometre
30 – 49 kilometres per hour over the maximum speed limit	\$6.00 per kilometre
50 kilometres per hour or more over the maximum speed limit	No out of court settlement; court summons required

Note: In addition to the base set fine, a mandatory victim fine surcharge and court costs apply. Fines may also be doubled where the offence occurs in a community safety zone or construction zone, in accordance with provincial legislation.

A complete listing of POA set fines are provided in Appendix 1 at items 1.6 and 1.7.

Administration Fee

Every POA charge also includes a mandatory administration fee, established under Ontario Regulation 945. Under this regulation, a \$5 fee is listed for the *service of an offence notice or summons*. This is typically an administrative cost associated with initiating a provincial offence court proceeding. This fee has remained unchanged since the 2001 transfer of POA responsibilities to municipalities. While originally intended as a nominal cost-recovery measure, it no longer reflects the actual cost of administering a charge. After more than two decades of inflation and rising operational expenses, maintaining this fee at \$5 creates a significant gap between cost and recovery of this cost. Increasing this fee is essential to support financial sustainability and reduce reliance on general tax levy funding, while ensuring fairness in cost allocation. The full Regulation can be viewed using the link provided in Appendix 1 at item 1.8.

Alternatives Reviewed

The Joint Board of Management and Regional Council could decline to pursue the opportunity to advocate for review of POA set fines and the \$5 court fee.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

Court Services aims to continually support Regional Council's Effective Region and Equitable Region objectives as they pertain to the administration of the Provincial Offences Court program as core service to residents and visitors to the region and the overall goals of enhanced program effectiveness, court modernization, fiscal responsibility and supporting community safety across Niagara.

Prepared by:

Miranda Vink
Associate Director, Court Services
Corporate Services

Recommended by:

Tim Ellis, CPA, CMA
Commissioner
Corporate Services

Submitted by:

Ron Tripp, P.Eng.
Chief Administrative Officer

This report was prepared in consultation with Adam Niece, Program Financial Specialist, Renee Muzzell, Associate Director, Program Financial Support, and Scott Fraser, Associate Director, Transportation Planning, and reviewed by Scott Crocco, Senior Legal Counsel, and Donna Gibbs, Regional Solicitor/Director Legal & Court Services.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Set Fines Under the Provincial Offences Act – Report Links

Set Fines Under the Provincial Offences Act – Appendix 1 Report Links

- 1.1 [Delegation at the 2026 Rural Ontario Municipal Association \(ROMA\) Conference](https://eowc.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/ROMA-2026-Advocacy-Package-2-1.pdf)
(<https://eowc.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/ROMA-2026-Advocacy-Package-2-1.pdf>)
- 1.2 [Evidence Synthesis on Impact of Traffic Fines to Improve Road Safety](https://publichealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/2024-10/BIGRS_Evidence-Synthesis-Traffic-Fines_v3.pdf)
(https://publichealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/2024-10/BIGRS_Evidence-Synthesis-Traffic-Fines_v3.pdf)
- 1.3 [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/International Transport Forum Road Safety Annual Report 2024](https://www.itf-oecd.org/sites/default/files/docs/irtad-road-safety-annual-report-2024.pdf)
(<https://www.itf-oecd.org/sites/default/files/docs/irtad-road-safety-annual-report-2024.pdf>)
- 1.4 [World Health Organization \(WHO\) Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023](https://www.who.int/teams/social-determinants-of-health/safety-and-mobility/global-status-report-on-road-safety-2023)
(<https://www.who.int/teams/social-determinants-of-health/safety-and-mobility/global-status-report-on-road-safety-2023>).
- 1.5 [Department of Justice Contraventions Act Program Report \(2024\)](https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/jr/cap-palc/findings-constatations.html)
(<https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/jr/cap-palc/findings-constatations.html>)
- 1.6 [Set Fines I - Ontario Court of Justice](https://www.ontariocourts.ca/ocj/provincial-offences/set-fines/set-fines-i/)
(<https://www.ontariocourts.ca/ocj/provincial-offences/set-fines/set-fines-i/>)
- 1.7 [Set Fines II - Ontario Court of Justice](https://www.ontariocourts.ca/ocj/provincial-offences/set-fines/set-fines-ii/)
(<https://www.ontariocourts.ca/ocj/provincial-offences/set-fines/set-fines-ii/>)
- 1.8 [R.R.O.1990, REGULATION 945 COSTS-](https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/900945)
(<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/900945>)

Subject: 2025 Year End Report for Provincial Offences Court

Report to: Joint Board of Management

Report date: Thursday, April 23, 2026

Recommendations

1. That this Report **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Key Facts

- Pursuant to the 2001 Memorandum of Understanding and Local Side Agreement with the Ministry of the Attorney General (“MAG”) and the Inter-Municipal Agreement, as amended, The Regional Municipality of Niagara (the “Region”) acts as agent on behalf of the 12 local area municipalities (the “LAMs”) to operate the Niagara Region Provincial Offences Court located in Welland.
- Court Services staff administer violations under the Highway Traffic Act, the Trespass to Property Act, the Liquor License Act, municipal by-laws, other provincial and federal offences, including more serious matters such as charges under the Compulsory Automobile Insurance Act, the Environmental Protection Act, the Fire Prevention and Protection Act and the Alcohol & Gaming Control Act.
- The purpose of this report is to provide the Joint Board of Management (JBM) with an overview of court operations, challenges, and successes in 2025. Appendix 1 to Report JBM-C 4-2026 provides some key operational highlights and Appendix 2 through Appendix 5 to Report JBM-C 4-2026 provide overall financial results including year end operating statements with explanations for significant variances from budget, and net revenue distribution summaries, for both Court Services base operations and Vision Zero operations.

Financial Considerations

The 2025 unaudited year-end results for Court Services and the impact on distributions of net revenues to the LAMs is provided below. This also includes year-end results for net revenues related to automated enforcement as part of the Vision Zero Road Safety Program (VZ) and the impact of these results on distributions to the LAMs. As per the Niagara Region Courts Inter-Municipal Agreement, 50% of the net revenues/net expenditures are shared with/recovered from the LAMs.

Base Operations

The approved 2025 Court Services budget for base operations provided for total net revenues of \$200 thousand with \$100 thousand to be distributed to the LAMs. As of December 31, 2025, base operations actual unaudited net revenues are \$728 thousand, in which \$364 thousand will be allocated to the Region and \$364 thousand will be allocated to the LAMs. The net revenues of \$364 thousand represent a \$264 thousand surplus over the budgeted distribution of \$100 thousand. The year-end operating statement including variance analysis for base operations is included in Appendix 2 to JBM-C 4-2026. Details of the distribution by LAM for base operations are illustrated in Appendix 3 to JBM-C 4-2026 including the 2025 budget, 2025 year-end results including variance from budget, Q2 2025 disbursements paid, and 2025 net distribution balance remaining.

VZ Operations

The approved 2025 Court Services budget for VZ operations provided for total net revenues of \$1,726 thousand with \$863 thousand to be distributed to the LAMs. As of December 31, 2025, VZ operations actual unaudited net revenues are \$1,288 thousand, in which \$644 thousand will be allocated to the Region and \$644 thousand will be allocated to the LAMs. The net revenues of \$1,288 thousand represent a \$438 thousand deficit over the budgeted distribution of \$1,726 thousand. The year-end operating statement including variance analysis for VZ operations is included in Appendix 4 to JBM-C 4-2026. Details of the distribution by LAM for VZ operations are illustrated in Appendix 5 to JBM-C 4-2026 including the 2025 budget, 2025 year-end results including variance from budget, Q2 2025 disbursements paid, and 2025 net distribution balance remaining. It is important to note that all VZ net revenues must be reinvested into road safety programs as per the Inter-Municipal Agreement, as amended.

Summary

Court Services participates in the Niagara Region's quarterly financial reporting process which provides analysis and commentary on budget to actual results. The Niagara Region Q4 2025 Financial Update Report, as well as previous reports, can be accessed on Niagara Region's external website [Niagara Region Q4 2025 Financial Update Report](https://www.niagararegion.ca/government/budget/finance/default.aspx) (<https://www.niagararegion.ca/government/budget/finance/default.aspx>).

Analysis

Revenue

Gross revenue is typically influenced by a variety of factors, including but not limited to, applications for extension of time to pay, delinquent fine rates, license suspensions and charges laid. Actual revenues and expenses varied in 2025 due to several influencing factors, largely beyond Staff's control:

- Canada Post disruptions in late 2024 and during 2025 paused the Joint Processing Centre's mailing of tickets, resulting in variations to revenue and expenditures at points throughout the year.
 - Due to Provincial Offences Act timelines, full financial impacts of reduced charging volumes in one month will not be fully realized until future months (e.g. the impact of ASE charging volumes in Q3 2025 extends into 2026).
- Variations in ASE volumes stemming from January 2025 school closures, holidays, as well as the alignment of Spring site rotations with road signage upgrades, and equipment down-time resulting from vandalism.
- Increase in credit card fees as higher transaction volumes led to increased processing costs.
- The introduction of Bill 56, the *Building a More Competitive Economy Act, 2025*, which repealed the authority for municipalities to operate ASE effective November 14, 2025.
- Increase in pre-paid fines and fewer disputes for ASE charges.
- The adjustment of VZ resources based on the elimination of ASE charges, including the elimination of 6 VZ Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) as of December 2025.
- Applications for extension of time to pay fines:
 - The number of applications from 2025 (5929) compared to 2024 (4853) increased by 22%. There is typically a correlation between extension requests and revenue, as defendants usually file for extensions for economic reasons.
- Appeals:
 - The number of appeals received and processed by staff decreased by 0.3% in 2025 (322), remaining consistent with 2024 (323).

-
- Appeals delay the resolution of matters and receipt of any resulting fine payments. In addition, the increased volume of appeals represents a significant workload increase for prosecution staff to prepare for and attend those hearings.
 - Re-opening Applications:
 - There was an 11.6% increase in applications for re-openings in 2025 (1469) compared to 2024 (1317).
 - As of September 2023, the authority to approve re-openings was downloaded to the clerk of the court, where previously this was a judicial administrative function.
 - A reopening application may result in either a delay in revenue collection or a reduction in revenue associated with the original conviction, if the application is successful.
 - Fail to Respond (“FTR”) Convictions:
 - Staff completed 14,800 FTR convictions in 2025; a 13% decrease compared to 2024 (16,974). Based on charge type, they are broken down as follows:
 - 7,993 Base Charge FTRs
 - 7,398 VZ Charge FTRs
 - It is important to note that an increase or decrease in FTR convictions does not correlate with any change of revenue following conviction; these convictions occur as a result of the individual’s lack of action related to their charge and do not necessarily result in action being taken by those individuals related to payment.
 - Suspension of driver’s licences:
 - The number of suspensions increased in 2025 by 20% (4063) compared to 2024 (3389). Suspensions occur as an enforcement method when certain fines are not paid by the default date. Revenue is impacted through either a delay in a fine being paid or not being paid at all. The likelihood of successfully collecting on revenue decreases as time passes.
 - Total Base (Non-VZ) Charges Laid:
 - A total of 30,069 base (non-VZ) charges were filed in 2025; an increase of 7.35% compared to 2024 (28,010).

Year	New Base (Non-VZ) POA Offences
2015	48,303
2016	40,026
2017	34,709
2018	31,957
2019	35,890
2020	27,308
2021	26,393
2022	25,086
2023	28,722
2024	28,010
2025	30,069

- Total ASE charges laid:
 - ASE launched in September 2023. A total of 21,510 ASE charges were filed with Niagara Court Services from January 1 to November 14, 2025; a 57% decrease from 2024 which saw 50,217 ASE charges in the first full year of operations for ASE.
- Total RLC charges laid:
 - A total of 2,846 charges were filed with Niagara Court Services in 2025, representing the first full year of operations for RLC.
 - RLC launched in March 2024, seeing 2,695 charges in 10 months of operations.
- Delinquent Fine Rates:
 - In 2025, the monthly delinquent case average was 737 cases per month for base charges, and 441 per month for VZ charges. In 2022, there was a substantial increase in delinquent fine rates (888 cases per month) which was a historic high since 2015 when rate tracking was implemented. These rates still demonstrate an historical overall increase in delinquent fines when compared to the monthly average of 518 per month for 2019-2021.
- Prepaid Fine Rates
 - Prepaid fine rates impact revenue as well as dispute rates as the payment of a fine before proceeding to Early Resolution, Trial or FTR equates to a guilty plea to the charge. The prepayment of a fine also reduces the

overall amount of time and Staff resources required to process that charge.

- The 2025 prepaid rates were as follows:
 - Base charges:
 - 36% of all base charges were pre-paid.
 - VZ ASE charges:
 - 69% of all ASE charges were pre-paid.
 - VZ RLC charges:
 - 50% of all ASE charges were pre-paid.
- Early Resolution & Trial Request Rates:
 - As of December 31, 2025, Court Services has an 87% resolution rate for matters proceeding to Early Resolution (“ER”), which is a slight decrease over 2024 (89%) due to an increase in VZ matters being set for trial; however, it still represents an increase over 2022 (85%). This resolution rate results in only 13% of those matters being set for trial.
 - Court Services experienced a 10.4% increase in the number of ER matters completed in 2025 compared to 2024. Comparison to previous years is outlined as follows:
 - 7,530 in 2025
 - 6,822 in 2024
 - 4,222 in 2023
 - 4,779 in 2022
 - 5,379 in 2021

This increase can be attributed to an overall increase in base charging volumes and dispute rates, in addition to 12 months of RLC charges, as well as Early Resolution enhancements which occurred in 2023, resulting in a more streamlined ER processing.

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- Judicial Resources & Time to Trial:
 - Availability of judicial resources limits court time allocated to Niagara to hear pending matters, which may contribute to delays in convictions and corresponding payments.
 - Time to trial was 10 months for Part I matters, and 5 months for Part III matters.
 - During 2025, Court Services experienced zero (0) court closures due to lack of judicial resources.
 - At this time, Court Services regularly has only 1.3 of the three (3) available courtrooms scheduled based on judicial resources assigned (average of 6.5 days of courts are running per week, out of maximum 15 days per week of courtroom availability). There have been multiple lengthy trials accommodated with time allocated to our schedule where possible. While there is no indication that our third courtroom will be scheduled consistently during the first half of 2026, Court Services has continued to implement numerous strategies to assist in addressing resulting backlog, such as:
 - ER meetings between defense and prosecution being held on non-presiding days to maximize court utilization when judicial resources are available onsite;
 - Continuous review of pending matters to explore potential for resolution prior to trial;
 - Review of court utilization statistics and refining time allocation for matters scheduled within the tiers to maximize the use of court time within all tiers;
 - Ongoing review of the Court Master Plan by the Trial Coordinator in partnership with MAG scheduling team;
 - Additional court dates are being provided regularly to accommodate lengthy trials and/or backlogs.

Since assuming responsibility for the administration of Provincial Offences Court in 2001, the Region has received \$24.1 million in net revenue, and as per the Inter-Municipal Agreement, the LAMs have shared \$24.1 million in net revenue (based on the unaudited 2025 results). The Region has paid the Province \$43.7 million for Victim Fine

Surcharges (VFS), adjudication fees, Part III prosecution charges, dedicated fines, monitoring and enforcement charges, and ICON processing charges.

Expenditures

Expenditures are typically impacted by several factors, including but not limited to, charging volumes and the types of charges, trial requests, number of appearances to resolution, re-opening applications, applications for extension of time to pay, appeal requests, as well as the need to undertake enforcement to collect on delinquent fines.

The overall average of court appearances to resolution in 2025 was 3.3 appearances per case for Part I and Part III matters – a slight increase over 3.2 appearances in 2024, When specifically isolating the average number of court appearances to resolution for Part III matters, since the transfer from the Crown's office to Regional Prosecutors as of June 30, 2025, there was a decrease from 6.0 appearances per case to 5.2 – demonstrating early improvement in access to justice within the first 6 months post-transfer.

In Base operations, there were reduced expenses realized in the amount of \$329 thousand in labour-related costs due to position gapping and recruitment timeframes. In VZ operations, expense reductions were realized totaling \$290 thousand in labour related expenses due to budgeted positions which had not yet been filled.

In Base operations, increased expenses occurred within the Victim Fine Surcharge costs, Payticket expenses, and fines collected from other POA jurisdictions, compared to the 2025 budgeted expenses. These increases have been partially offset by savings within external collections charges. In VZ operations, lower than budgeted expenses occurred in trial related costs including interpreter expenses and adjudication costs, as well as charge volume related expenses including credit card fees, Victim Fine Surcharge, ICON Processing Charges, and Payticket expenses.

Delinquent Fine Enforcement

In 2025, \$3.64 million in delinquent fines were collected, which represents a 21.7% increase (\$650 thousand) compared to 2024.

Despite the significant increase in delinquent fine rates over the last several years, it is important to note that there continues to be an increase in the number of lower-value fines being paid, while the overall value of the delinquent fines has decreased.

In 2014, a partnership was created between the Region and all 12 of the LAMs in the “add to tax roll” program, which has proven to be an effective enforcement tool. Since its implementation, \$2.58 million has been added to tax rolls in the Region and to date \$2.17 million has been collected, which is an 84% collection rate. In 2025, \$242,535 of that amount was collected.

Staff utilize several other enforcement methods. These include the suspension of driver’s license, plate denial, use of third-party collection agencies, and civil enforcement. Civil enforcement includes the garnishment of wages, bank accounts and the filing of Writs of Execution to secure property owned by the defendant.

Through ongoing investigative and collection efforts by staff, \$7.2 million has been secured and \$5.49 million collected (a 76.6% collection rate) since implementing the writ process in 2003. It is anticipated that these Writs of Execution will continue to contribute to revenue in future years.

Continuous Improvement

Court Services continues to leverage every opportunity to do business differently through innovation and process improvements to ensure access to justice while simultaneously increasing productivity and improving operational efficiencies.

Continuous improvement initiatives achieved in 2025 include:

- Transfer of Part III Prosecutions from Crown Prosecutor to Regional Prosecutors; resulting in enhancements due to consolidation to one team and one site. Key successes identified thus far are detailed further in this report.
- Implementation of Axon Justice (Digital Evidence Management System “DEMS”) to effectively manage the substantial increase in digital evidence resulting from the Part III prosecution transfer
- Delivery of a POA Mock Trial and Testimony information session for Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS), Ontario Provincial Police, and Niagara Parks Police officers. The session was recorded by NRPS’ Video Unit to be used as part of a provincial policing training video library.
- Creation of collections resources in partnership with Communications division to easily share information to defendants and offenders regarding options for avoiding delinquency, opting into payment plans, etc.

-
- Extensive planning related to ASE wind down, including forecasting workload, revenue and staffing needs
 - Completion of Business Impact Analysis and refreshed Business Continuity Planning
 - Continued enhancements to support bilingual services under the French Language Services Act (FLSA), including website translation, physical signage, digital signage, phone system updates. Any costs related to these enhancements were fully subsidized by FLSA funding from the Province
 - Hosting the Municipal Court Managers' Association of Ontario's POA Collections Conference
 - Upgraded courtroom technology with docking stations & monitors at the prosecution desks for better performance
 - Expanded service level alerts in Qmatic & Phone System to quickly allocate resources during peaks in business activity, resulting in reduced wait times and increasing customer service experience
 - Updated site fire plan in partnership with Facilities for enhanced coverage
 - Implementation of new digital exhibit processes for submission and secure storage
 - Updated "no fixed address" processes with an external vendor to reduce approx. \$5 thousand in annual Notice of Fine and Due Date postage fees

Part III Prosecutions Transfer

The transfer of responsibility for Part III Prosecutions from the Crown to the Region commenced on June 30, 2026, and took full effect on September 1, 2026. Although it is still early to assess all outcomes, several efficiencies have already emerged. Customer service has improved, as all prosecution services - including disclosure, screening, and Crown pre-trials - are now delivered at a single location. This "one team/ one site" model has reduced confusion and enhanced public access.

Disclosure is now available on-site at the first appearance, ensuring defendants receive the information they need to move their matters forward more quickly. Fewer matters are being adjourned due to defendants failing to request or obtain disclosure or screening. Contact information is updated at every interaction, keeping prosecution and court records current and enabling timely communication, which further reduces delays.

Before the transfer, matters were often adjourned for approximately six months. Since the transition, that timeframe has significantly improved and is now roughly ten weeks. Reducing adjournments and unnecessary appearances enhances access to justice and allows for more efficient use of Court resources and Justice of the Peace time.

Staff will continue to monitor the program and pursue further improvements wherever possible.

Customer Service

In a year-over-year comparison between 2024 and 2025, recent operational enhancements - including the implementation of alerts and refinements to staffing processes - have continued to yield positive results for customer service delivery. From 2024 to 2025, the average speed of answer for phone calls improved by 56%, dropping from 2:05 to 0:55, and the call abandonment rate was reduced from 9.1% to 4.9%. In-person service levels also improved, with average visitor wait times decreasing by 16%, from 3.5 minutes in 2024 to 2.94 minutes in 2025. In-person counter service volumes declined to 14,373 individuals served in 2025, representing a 9% decrease compared to 2024, while total phone call volumes decreased by 23% to 20,622 calls. Collectively, these results demonstrate that the recent process and duties changes have had a measurable and sustained positive impact on customer experience and service levels.

To support enforcement agencies and the LAMs, Court Services hosted two information sessions in 2025 (“POA Mock Trials & Testimony” and “The Life Cycle of a POA Charge”) which were both well-attended. Staff also continue to work with enforcement agencies and the LAMs on an ongoing basis to provide guidance in working toward consistent charging and prosecutorial practices.

A variety of information, including service changes, frequently asked questions, and answers, was updated on the Court Services webpage to assist members of the public with information regarding business changes and current court procedures.

Highlights of Court Services’ 2025 operations are provided in Appendix 1 to Report JBM-C 4-2026.

Alternatives Reviewed

Not applicable; this report is provided for information.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

This report supports the Effective Region Council Strategic Priority through the delivery of fiscally responsible services, in accordance with the Inter-municipal Agreement.

Other Pertinent Reports

Bullet list of reports that relate to this topic/subject/issue. When available, include hyperlink to provide easier reference. See hyperlink example below – include link with report title and full URL in brackets below.

- [PW 24-2025 Award of Contract 2025-T-25 Annual Strength and Resurfacing Program](https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/Meeting.aspx?Id=0133a977-aa52-4fd2-955f-528b86bff5fd&Agenda=Merged&lang=English&Item=17&Tab=attachments)
(<https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/Meeting.aspx?Id=0133a977-aa52-4fd2-955f-528b86bff5fd&Agenda=Merged&lang=English&Item=17&Tab=attachments>)
- [JBM-C 11-2023 – Court Services 2024 Operating Budget](https://www.google.com/url?client=internal-element-cse&cx=005774670460367375179:kxndu-yx3mm&q=https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx%3FDocumentId%3D33097&sa=U&ved=2ahUKEwiuiuvQ95iMAxWilokEHXkZIK4QFnoECA8QAg&usg=AOvVaw1DkZu1k_uMvTiuMABGhiX6&fexp=72913893,72913894)
(https://www.google.com/url?client=internal-element-cse&cx=005774670460367375179:kxndu-yx3mm&q=https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx%3FDocumentId%3D33097&sa=U&ved=2ahUKEwiuiuvQ95iMAxWilokEHXkZIK4QFnoECA8QAg&usg=AOvVaw1DkZu1k_uMvTiuMABGhiX6&fexp=72913893,72913894)
- [JBM-C 4-2024 – 2023 Year End Report for Provincial Offences Court](https://www.google.com/url?client=internal-element-cse&cx=005774670460367375179:kxndu-yx3mm&q=https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx%3FDocumentId%3D36796&sa=U&ved=2ahUKEwiNudf595iMAxWUK1kFHW0SPZ8QFnoECAYQAg&usg=AOvVaw1-7IhaeBcilbuEfHWI5gBv&fexp=72913893,72913894)
(<https://www.google.com/url?client=internal-element-cse&cx=005774670460367375179:kxndu-yx3mm&q=https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx%3FDocumentId%3D36796&sa=U&ved=2ahUKEwiNudf595iMAxWUK1kFHW0SPZ8QFnoECAYQAg&usg=AOvVaw1-7IhaeBcilbuEfHWI5gBv&fexp=72913893,72913894>)

Prepared by:
Miranda Vink
Associate Director, Court Services
Corporate Services

Recommended by:
Tim Ellis, CPA, CMA
Commissioner
Corporate Services

Submitted by:

Ron Tripp, P.Eng.

Chief Administrative Officer

This report was prepared in consultation with Adam Niece, Program Financial Specialist, and Renee Muzzell, Associate Director, Program Financial Support, and reviewed by Scott Crocco, Senior Legal Counsel, and Donna Gibbs, Regional Solicitor/Director, Legal & Court Services.

Appendices

Appendix 1	2025 Court Services Highlights
Appendix 2	2025 Year-End Budget vs. Actual Variance Analysis – Base Operations
Appendix 3	2025 Distribution to Local Area Municipalities – Base Operations
Appendix 4	2025 Year-End Budget vs. Actual Variance Analysis – VZ Operations
Appendix 5	2025 Distribution to Local Area Municipalities – VZ Operations

Court Services 2025 Highlights

Charging Volumes



54,425

Total Charges

Including: **30,069** Base charges

21,508 Automated Speed Enforcement charges

2,846 Red Light Camera charges

Fine Outcomes



Base Charges:

36% Prepaid

29% Disputed

35% Convicted

as Fail to Respond

Vision Zero Charges:

67% Prepaid

6% Disputed

27% Convicted

as Fail to Respond

Customers Served



14,337

Individuals served in person (-9% versus 2024)

20,622

Phone calls (-23% versus 2024)

Early Resolution



7350

Early Resolution (ER) meetings completed (+7.7% compared to 2024)

87% Of all ER matters resolved without proceeding to trial

Part III Prosecutions

Transfer of cases from the Crown Attorney to Regional Prosecutors - including the download of **> 9,000** case files

Launch of Digital Evidence Management System - **2,976** digital evidence files received from June to December 2025

Online Court



46,470

Participants in online court via Zoom in 2025

Delinquent Fine Enforcement



\$3.64 Million In delinquent fine revenue collected in 2025

\$2.17 Million Collected through tax rolls since 2014

\$5.49 Million Collected through writs since 2003

Financial



\$2.0 Million

Value of net revenue received in 2025

(\$1.0 Million

To the area municipalities)

Operations



Staff Processed:

1,469

Reopenings

5,929

Applications for extension of time to pay

4063

Drivers licence suspensions

14,800

Fail to Respond convictions

2025 Year End Budget vs. Actual - Base Operations (in thousands of dollars)

Object of Expenditure	Budget (\$)	Actual (\$)	Budget vs. Actual Variance (\$)	Budget vs. Actual Variance (%)	Note
Labour Related Costs	2,490	2,161	329	13.2%	1
Administrative	1,432	1,546	-114	-8.0%	2
Operational and Supply	238	536	-298	-124.9%	3
Equipment, Vehicles and Technology	46	52	-6	-12.5%	
Financial Expenditures	174	109	65	37.5%	4
Total Expenditures	4,381	4,403	-22	-0.5%	
Revenues	-5,741	-6,216	475	-8.3%	5
Intercompany Charges	-1	-1	0	-4.5%	
Net Expenditure (Revenue) Before Transfers and Indirect Allocations	-1,361	-1,815	455	-33.4%	
Transfer to Funds	200	200	0	0.0%	
Net Expenditure (Revenue) Before Indirect Allocations	-1,161	-1,615	454	-39.1%	
Indirect Allocations and Debt	1,061	1,251	-190	-17.9%	
Net Expenditure (Revenue) After Transfers and Indirect Allocations	-100	-364	264	-263.1%	

Note 1 - The favourable variance of \$329 is due to position gapping.

Note 2 - The unfavourable variance of \$114 is due to higher than budgeted Payticket online payments, Victim Fine Surcharge costs, and Part III Prosecution costs.

Note 3 - The unfavourable variance of \$298 is due to the higher than budgeted distribution to LAMs.

Note 4 - The favorable variance of \$65 is due to savings on collections commission fees as a result of the effective efforts of internal collections before delinquent revenue is sent to collections agencies.

Note 5 - The favorable variance of \$475 due to higher than anticipated revenues. This includes \$619 representing anomalous high-fine payments, outside of the normal course of operating results. There high-fine payments are tracked separately from regular infraction and delinquent revenues to ensure better oversight of revenues during the reforecasting and budgeting processes.

2025 Distribution to Local Area Municipalities - Base Operations

2025 Budget					
	Total	March	June	September	December
Budgeted POA Net Revenues to be distributed:	\$ 99,454	\$ 24,864	\$ 24,864	\$ 24,864	\$ 24,862
Unaudited Actual POA Net Revenues to be distributed:	\$ 363,735	\$ 0	\$ 210,988	\$ 0	\$ 152,747
Favourable/(Unfavourable) Variance	\$ 264,281	\$ (24,864)	\$ 186,124	\$ (24,864)	\$ 127,885

2025 Budgeted Distribution by Quarter								2025 Q4 Results		
Area Municipality	2025 Assessment	Apportioned	Budget Total	March	June	September	December	Distribution to LAMs	Q2 Disbursed to LAMs	Net Distribution Remaining to LAMs
Niagara Falls	\$12,916,243,434	19.26%	\$ 19,157	\$ 4,789	\$ 4,789	\$ 4,789	\$ 4,789	\$ 70,064	\$ 40,641	\$ 29,423
Port Colborne	\$2,099,653,000	3.13%	\$ 3,114	\$ 779	\$ 779	\$ 779	\$ 779	\$ 11,390	\$ 6,607	\$ 4,783
St. Catharines	\$15,953,441,680	23.79%	\$ 23,662	\$ 5,916	\$ 5,916	\$ 5,916	\$ 5,915	\$ 86,539	\$ 50,198	\$ 36,341
Thorold	\$3,320,651,509	4.95%	\$ 4,925	\$ 1,231	\$ 1,231	\$ 1,231	\$ 1,231	\$ 18,013	\$ 10,449	\$ 7,564
Welland	\$5,646,091,836	8.42%	\$ 8,374	\$ 2,094	\$ 2,094	\$ 2,094	\$ 2,093	\$ 30,627	\$ 17,766	\$ 12,862
Fort Erie	\$4,424,339,527	6.60%	\$ 6,562	\$ 1,641	\$ 1,641	\$ 1,641	\$ 1,640	\$ 24,000	\$ 13,921	\$ 10,079
Grimsby	\$5,206,514,353	7.76%	\$ 7,722	\$ 1,931	\$ 1,931	\$ 1,931	\$ 1,930	\$ 28,243	\$ 16,383	\$ 11,860
Lincoln	\$4,530,767,570	6.76%	\$ 6,720	\$ 1,680	\$ 1,680	\$ 1,680	\$ 1,680	\$ 24,577	\$ 14,256	\$ 10,321
NOTL	\$5,993,893,947	8.94%	\$ 8,890	\$ 2,223	\$ 2,223	\$ 2,223	\$ 2,222	\$ 32,514	\$ 18,860	\$ 13,654
Pelham	\$3,208,408,282	4.78%	\$ 4,759	\$ 1,190	\$ 1,190	\$ 1,190	\$ 1,190	\$ 17,404	\$ 10,095	\$ 7,309
Wainfleet	\$1,230,672,889	1.84%	\$ 1,825	\$ 456	\$ 456	\$ 456	\$ 456	\$ 6,676	\$ 3,872	\$ 2,803
West Lincoln	\$2,523,397,031	3.76%	\$ 3,743	\$ 936	\$ 936	\$ 936	\$ 936	\$ 13,688	\$ 7,940	\$ 5,748
Total	\$67,054,075,058	100.00%	\$ 99,454	\$ 24,864	\$ 24,864	\$ 24,864	\$ 24,862	\$ 363,735	\$ 210,988	\$ 152,747

2025 Year-End Budget vs. Actual - Vision Zero Operations (in thousands of dollars)

Object of Expenditure	Budget (\$)	Actual (\$)	Budget vs. Actual Variance (\$)	Budget vs. Actual Variance (%)	Note
Labour Related Costs	831	542	290	34.8%	1
Administrative	1,919	756	1,163	60.6%	2
Operational and Supply	946	671	275	29.0%	3
Occupancy and Infrastructure	0	0	0	0.0%	
Equipment, Vehicles and Technology	11	2	9	83.5%	
Financial Expenditures	35	15	20	56.2%	
Total Expenditures	3,741	1,986	1,756	46.9%	
Revenues	-7,255	-3,665	-3,589	49.5%	4
Intercompany Charges	0	0	0	100.0%	
Net Expenditure (Revenue) Before Transfers and Indirect Allocations	-3,514	-1,680	-1,835	52.2%	
Transfer to Funds	0	0	0	0.0%	
Net Expenditure (Revenue) Before Indirect Allocations	-3,514	-1,680	-1,835	52.2%	
Indirect Allocations and Debt	371	123	248	66.9%	
Net Expenditure (Revenue) After Transfers and Indirect Allocations	-3,143	-1,557	-1,586	50.5%	
Intercompany Charges-Transportation	-2,281	-913	-1,369	60.0%	5
Net Expenditure (Revenue) After Transportation Allocation	-863	-644	-219	25.4%	
Net Revenues Allocation (Region Share)	-863	-644	-219	25.4%	6
Net Expenditure (Revenue) After Net Revenues Allocation to LAMs/Region	0	0	0	0.0%	

Note 1 - The favourable variance of \$290 is due to budgeted positions in VZ which were not filled or have been eliminated due to the introduction of Bill 56, which repealed the authority for municipalities to operate automated speed enforcement (ASE) effective November 14, 2025.

Note 2 - The favourable variance of \$1,163 is due to lower than anticipated Victim Fine Surcharge, and adjudication and interpreter costs which are a direct result of lower than anticipated charging volumes and revenues.

Note 3 - The favourable variance of \$275 is due to lower than budgeted distribution to LAMs of \$219 and savings in budgeted call-in prosecutor costs.

Note 4 - The unfavourable variance of \$3,589 is due to lower than anticipated charging volumes and ticket payments, partially as a result of the labour disruptions at Canada Post as well as the end of ASE. Charging volumes of ASE and Red Light Camera (RLC) tickets are outside the control of Court Services.

Note 5 - The unfavourable variance of \$1,369 is due to lower than anticipated transfer of VZ revenues to the Transportation division to cover the operating expenditures directly related to VZ within that area.

Note 6 - The unfavourable variance of \$219 is due to lower than anticipated transfer of the Region's share of VZ net revenues per the Inter-Municipal Agreement.

2025 Distribution to Local Area Municipalities - VZ Operations

2025 Budget					
	Total	March	June	September	December
Budgeted VZ Net Revenues to be distributed:	\$ 862,515	\$ 215,629	\$ 215,629	\$ 215,629	\$ 215,628
Unaudited Actual VZ Net Revenues to be distributed	\$ 643,701	\$ 0	\$ 527,370	\$ 0	\$ 116,331
Favourable/(Unfavourable) Variance	\$ (218,814)	\$ (215,629)	\$ 311,741	\$ (215,629)	\$ (99,297)

2025 Budgeted Distribution by Quarter								2025 Q4 Results		
Area Municipality	2025 Assessment	Apportioned	Budget Total	March	June	September	December	Distribution to LAMs	Q2 Disbursed to LAMs	Net Distribution Remaining to LAMs
Niagara Falls	\$12,916,243,434	19.26%	\$ 166,141	\$ 41,535	\$ 41,535	\$ 41,535	\$ 41,535	\$ 123,992	\$ 101,584	\$ 22,408
Port Colborne	\$2,099,653,000	3.13%	\$ 27,008	\$ 6,752	\$ 6,752	\$ 6,752	\$ 6,752	\$ 20,156	\$ 16,514	\$ 3,643
St. Catharines	\$15,953,441,680	23.79%	\$ 205,209	\$ 51,302	\$ 51,302	\$ 51,302	\$ 51,302	\$ 153,149	\$ 125,471	\$ 27,677
Thorold	\$3,320,651,509	4.95%	\$ 42,713	\$ 10,678	\$ 10,678	\$ 10,678	\$ 10,678	\$ 31,877	\$ 26,116	\$ 5,761
Welland	\$5,646,091,836	8.42%	\$ 72,625	\$ 18,156	\$ 18,156	\$ 18,156	\$ 18,156	\$ 54,201	\$ 44,406	\$ 9,795
Fort Erie	\$4,424,339,527	6.60%	\$ 56,910	\$ 14,228	\$ 14,228	\$ 14,228	\$ 14,228	\$ 42,473	\$ 34,797	\$ 7,676
Grimsby	\$5,206,514,353	7.76%	\$ 66,972	\$ 16,743	\$ 16,743	\$ 16,743	\$ 16,743	\$ 49,981	\$ 40,949	\$ 9,033
Lincoln	\$4,530,767,570	6.76%	\$ 58,279	\$ 14,570	\$ 14,570	\$ 14,570	\$ 14,570	\$ 43,494	\$ 35,634	\$ 7,860
NOTL	\$5,993,893,947	8.94%	\$ 77,099	\$ 19,275	\$ 19,275	\$ 19,275	\$ 19,275	\$ 57,540	\$ 47,141	\$ 10,399
Pelham	\$3,208,408,282	4.78%	\$ 41,270	\$ 10,317	\$ 10,317	\$ 10,317	\$ 10,317	\$ 30,800	\$ 25,234	\$ 5,566
Wainfleet	\$1,230,672,889	1.84%	\$ 15,830	\$ 3,957	\$ 3,957	\$ 3,957	\$ 3,957	\$ 11,814	\$ 9,679	\$ 2,135
West Lincoln	\$2,523,397,031	3.76%	\$ 32,458	\$ 8,115	\$ 8,115	\$ 8,115	\$ 8,115	\$ 24,224	\$ 19,846	\$ 4,378
Total	\$67,054,075,058	100.00%	\$ 862,515	\$ 215,629	\$ 215,629	\$ 215,629	\$ 215,628	\$ 643,701	\$ 527,370	\$ 116,331

Memorandum

JBM-C 6-2026

Subject: Recognition of 25 Years of Excellence in Court Services

Date: April 23, 2026

To: Joint Board of Management

From: Miranda Vink, Associate Director, Court Services

The purpose of this memorandum is to recognize and celebrate 25 years of excellence in Court Services since the transfer of the Provincial Offences Act Court including prosecution, administration and collection functions (POA Court) from the Province of Ontario to The Regional Municipality of Niagara in 2001.

Background

In January 2001, responsibility for the administration of POA Court was transferred from the Province to the Region. Supported by the Niagara Region Courts Intermunicipal Agreement executed by the Region and 12 local area municipalities, including governance through the Joint Board of Management, the POA Court stands as a strong example of effective shared service delivery. Over the past 25 years, Niagara Region's Court Services team has evolved into a recognized leader across Ontario, known for service excellence, innovation, modernization, and strong partnerships in the administration of justice.

Through continuous improvement, early adoption of technology, and a steadfast commitment to public service, Court Services has modernized court operations, improved access to justice, and supported community safety outcomes across Niagara.

Highlights and Key Milestones

Over the past 25 years, Court Services has received and processed more than 1.14 million POA charges.

Since assuming responsibility for POA Court, Court Services has also achieved numerous significant milestones, highlights of which are listed below;

2001–2003 | Foundation and Early Innovation

Establishing municipal leadership in POA administration and enforcement

-
- **Transfer of POA Court from the Province** (January 2001)
Establishing Niagara Region as the local authority responsible for the administration of justice under the Provincial Offences Act.
 - **Creation of a dedicated POA Collections Department**, including specialized roles, expanded civil enforcement capacity, and the introduction of a locally developed POA Collections software solution. This strengthened delinquent fine enforcement, improving revenue recovery, and positioning Niagara as an early innovator by sharing solutions with municipalities across Ontario.

2004–2010 | Digital Services and Systems Modernization

Improving customer service, operational efficiency, and system reliability

- **Expansion of digital payment and enforcement tools**, including the launch of online ticket payments (Paytickets.ca) and Niagara's first POA Collections RFP for third-party agencies. This enhanced customer convenience while strengthening enforcement options for unpaid fines.
- **Implementation of foundational court technologies**, including the Court Administration Management System (CAMS – a local solution created in-house in collaboration between Niagara Region IT and Court Services staff), and Liberty Court Recording; modernizing case management, improving record accuracy, and streamlining court proceedings, with CAMS subsequently adopted province-wide.

2011–2016 | Enhanced Court Operations and Service Delivery

Improving access to justice, reducing court burden, and strengthening service delivery

- **Operational modernization with justice partners**, including electronic briefs with policing services, the introduction of the Prosecution Coordinator role and the official creation of Niagara Region's Prosecution Team. This supported more efficient case preparation and coordinated prosecution services.
- **Introduction of Early Resolution and alternative enforcement tools**, including both in-person and phone Early Resolution programs and Add to Tax Roll authority for delinquent fines; reducing trial request volumes, improving timeliness of resolution, and expanding delinquent fine enforcement options beyond traditional measures to enhance collection efforts and support deterrence.

-
- **Service accessibility and program realignment**, including the introduction of video interpretation services and the transfer of Parking Enforcement from POA to municipal administrative penalty programs. This served to enhance access to justice while allowing Court Services to focus on core POA mandates.

2017–2019 | Consolidation and Regional Leadership

Delivering modern, centralized, and customer-focused court services

- **System and service consolidation**, including e-ticketing with Niagara Regional Police Service and the opening of the consolidated modern accessible courthouse at 445 East Main Street, Welland. This resulted in streamlining operations, reducing reliance on paper, and improving service delivery.
- **Expansion of online public services**, including case status lookup and Early Resolution requests; providing enhanced self-serve options and improving transparency for defendants.
- **Provincial leadership in POA collections**, through expansion of Niagara's POA Collections RFP into a joint partnership with municipalities across Ontario; reducing duplication of effort, promoting consistency, collaboration and reinforcing Niagara's role as a sector leader.

2020–2022 | Resilience and Innovation During COVID-19

Maintaining and modernizing court operations during unprecedented times

- **Rapid transition to remote and virtual court services**, including court closures, Zoom trials, and hybrid Early Resolution and trial models; ensuring continuity of justice services while protecting public and staff safety, with Niagara leading Ontario as the first POA court to conduct Zoom trials.
- **Legislative expansion of clerk authority and staffing realignment**, including delegated approval of time-to-pay and fail-to-respond matters, and a staffing restructure supporting modernization and Vision Zero initiatives. This included in transfer of administrative tasks from the judiciary, improving efficiency, and aligning resources with program demands.
- **Facilitation of automated enforcement**, through amended intermunicipal agreements supporting Automated Speed Enforcement and Red Light Cameras - laying the groundwork for Vision Zero road safety initiatives.

2023–2025 | Vision Zero and Continued Modernization

Responding to increased complexity, legislative change, and evolving community needs

- **Recognition for innovation**, including receipt of the Municipal Court Managers' Association's 2023 Innovation Award, acknowledging Niagara's leadership and continuous improvement in Court Services.
- **Optimization of judicial and prosecutorial resources**, including a new Early Resolution model utilizing non-presiding days to maximize court capacity and improving scheduling efficiency.
- **Responsive implementation and adaptation for Vision Zero programs**, including the launch of ASE and Red Light Camera offences and subsequent adaptation to legislative changes under Bill 56. This demonstrated Court Services' agility in responding to evolving legislative and policy environments.
- **Expansion of access to justice and service capacity**, including bilingual court support roles and securing provincial funding to deliver obligations under the French Language Services Act; enhancing equitable access to justice across the region.
- **Transfer and modernization of Part III prosecutions**, including complex matters such as serious driving offences and Provincial Animal Welfare Services Act charges, supported by implementation of Axon Justice (Digital Evidence Management System), enabling the Prosecution Team to manage significantly increased case complexity and digital evidence volumes.
- **Ongoing police, partner, and community engagement initiatives**, including the delivery of a POA Testimony information session to Niagara Regional Police Service and Ontario Provincial Police, which was recorded for inclusion in the provincial police training video library. These sessions support strengthening consistency, preparedness, and confidence in court testimony practices across police services province-wide.

Recognition of Staff and Partnerships

These achievements reflect the dedication, expertise, and professionalism of Court Services staff, as well as the strength of Niagara Region's partnerships with enforcement and policing services, the judiciary, local area municipalities, and other community safety stakeholders.

Court Services' success has been driven by a culture of continuous improvement, innovation, and collaboration, positioning Niagara as a trusted leader in POA administration across Ontario.

Planned 25th Anniversary Open House

To mark this milestone, Court Services is planning a 25th Anniversary Open House to recognize staff achievements and showcase the Region's modern court operations. The event will:

- Offer guided tours of the consolidated, modern courthouse facility
- Highlight the work, innovation, and dedication of the Court Services team
- Recognize 25 years of service excellence and leadership in court administration
- Foster connection and shared understanding by providing opportunities for meaningful engagement with colleagues and partners who do not regularly work within the courthouse environment

Further information including the timing of the event will be shared shortly, with invitations to be extended to key partners and relevant parties.

Conclusion

The 25th anniversary of the POA transfer represents an important milestone for Niagara Region. Court Services' evolution over the past quarter century reflects the Region's commitment to effective governance, collaboration, innovation, access to justice, and community safety. These achievements are a direct result of the passion and professionalism of Court Services staff, whose work merits recognition for advancing excellence in court administration and public service.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

Miranda Vink
Associate Director, Court Services

**THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
JOINT BOARD OF MANAGEMENT - NIAGARA COURTS
MINUTES**

**JBM 1-2026
Thursday, February 19, 2026
Meeting held by electronic participation**

Committee: H. Boese (Grimsby), D. Gibbs (Niagara Region), J. McQuay (Niagara Falls), M. Montague (St. Catharines), G. Spencer (Niagara-on-the-Lake)

Absent/Regrets: M. Richardson (Welland), M. Barkway (Lincoln)

Staff: S. Crocco, Senior Legal Counsel, Litigation, S. Fraser, Associate Director, Transportation Planning, K. Lotimer, Deputy Clerk, R. Muzzell, Associate Director, Program Financial Support, A. Niece, Program Financial Specialist, M. Vink, Associate Director, Court Services

1. CALL TO ORDER

Kelly Lotimer, Deputy Clerk, called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m.

2. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

3. SELECTION OF BOARD CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

3.1 Call for Nominations for Board Chair

Kelly Lotimer, Deputy Clerk, called for nominations for the position of Chair of the Joint Board of Management - Niagara Courts for 2026.

Moved by D. Gibbs
Seconded by H. Boese

That Melissa Montague **BE NOMINATED** as Chair of the Joint Board of Management - Niagara Courts for 2026.

Carried

3.2 Motion to Close Nominations for Board Chair

Ms. Lotimer called a final time for nominations for the position of Chair of the Joint Board of Management - Niagara Courts. There being no further nominations, it was:

Moved by D. Gibbs
Seconded by H. Boese

That nominations for the position of Chair of the Joint Board of Management - Niagara Courts **BE CLOSED**.

Carried

3.3 Voting for the Position of Board Chair

There being only one nominee for the position, Ms. Lotimer announced that Melissa Montague would be the Chair of the Joint Board of Management - Niagara Courts for 2026.

3.4 Call for Nominations for Board Vice-Chair

Kelly Lotimer, Deputy Clerk, called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Joint Board of Management - Niagara Courts for 2026.

Moved by G. Spencer
Seconded by H. Boese

That Nidhi Punyarthi **BE NOMINATED** for the position of Vice-Chair of the Joint Board of Management - Niagara Courts for 2026.

Carried

3.5 Motion to Close Nominations for Board Vice-Chair

Ms. Lotimer called a final time for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Joint Board of Management - Niagara Courts. There being no further nominations, it was:

Moved by D. Gibbs
Seconded by H. Boese

That nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Joint Board of Management - Niagara Courts **BE CLOSED**.

Carried

3.6 Voting for the Position of Board Vice-Chair

There being only one nominee for the position, Ms. Lotimer announced that Nidhi Punyarthi would be the Vice-Chair of the Joint Board of Management - Niagara Courts for 2026.

At this point in the meeting, Melissa Montague assumed the chair.

4. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

4.1 JBM-C 1-2026

2026 Budget Adjustment - Court Services

Miranda Vink, Associate Director, Court Services, provided information respecting 2026 Budget Adjustment - Court Services. Topics of the presentation included:

- Budget Adjustment Background
- 2026 Budget Adjustment Summary

Moved by H. Boese

Seconded by D. Gibbs

That Report JBM-C 1-2026, dated February 19, 2026, respecting 2026 Budget Adjustment – Court Services, **BE RECEIVED** and the following recommendation **BE APPROVED**:

1. That an operating budget adjustment to the previously adopted 2026 Court Services operating budget in the amount of \$0 net, reflecting the operational impacts following the elimination of the Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) program as outlined in this report, **BE APPROVED** and **BE RECOMMENDED** to Regional Council for its meeting of March 26, 2026.

Carried

4.2 JBM-C 2-2026

Court Services Write-Off Recommendations for the Period Ending December 31, 2025

Moved by D. Gibbs

Seconded by H. Boese

That Report JBM-C 2-2026, dated February 19, 2026, respecting Court Services Write-Off Recommendations for the Period Ending December 31, 2025, **BE RECEIVED** and the following recommendation **BE APPROVED**:

1. That the delinquent cases summarized in the Analysis Section of the Report, **BE APPROVED** for write-off and removal from the Integrated Court Offences Network (ICON) system in accordance with the Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG) *Provincial Offences Act* Write-off Directive and Operating Guideline and the Niagara Region Courts approved write off criteria.

Carried

5. CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

5.1 JBM 5-2025

Joint Board of Management - Niagara Courts Meeting Minutes -
November 27, 2025

Moved by H. Boese
Seconded by D. Gibbs

That Minutes JBM 5-2025, being the minutes of the Joint Board of
Management - Niagara Courts meeting held on Thursday, November 27,
2025, **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Carried

6. OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of other business.

7. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, April 23, 2026, at 3:30 p.m.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:06 p.m.

Melissa Montague
Board Chair

Kelly Lotimer
Deputy Clerk

Ann-Marie Norio
Regional Clerk