

**THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

CSC 3-2024

Wednesday, March 6, 2024

**Council Chamber - In Person and Electronic Meeting
Niagara Region Headquarters, Campbell West
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold, ON**

Committee: Bateman, Campion, Davies*, Diodati*, Foster (Committee Chair), Gale, Ganann*, Heit*, Ip, Redekop*, Secord, Siscoe

Other Councillors: Huson

Absent/Regrets: Bradley (Regional Chair), Grant, Whalen (Committee Vice-Chair), Zalepa

Staff: B. Brens, Associate Director, Budget Planning & Strategy, D. Carnegie, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, D. D'Amboise, Acting Associate Director, Reporting & Analysis, H. Furtado, Director, Financial Management & Planning/Deputy Treasurer, D. Gibbs, Director, Legal & Court Services, R. Hill, Legislative Assistant, D. Halliday, Compensation Specialist, T. Harrison, Commissioner/Treasurer, Corporate Services, A. Jugley, Commissioner, Community Services*, K. Lotimer, Deputy Clerk, F. Meffe, Director, Human Resources, B. Menage, Director, Procurement & Strategic Acquisitions, J. Middleton, Associate Director, Talent Development & Rewards, A.-M. Norio, Regional Clerk, D. Pasto, Risk Management Program Manager, T. Ricketts, Commissioner, Public Works, A. Rotundo, Senior Tax & Revenue Analyst, J. Spratt, Legislative Coordinator, R. Tripp, Chief Administrative Officer, M. Vink, Manager, Court Services*

Others Present: B. Fordy, Chief of Police, Niagara Regional Police Services*

1. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Foster called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

Councillor Gale read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

3. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

4. PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations.

5. DELEGATIONS

5.1 Flag Raising and Niagara Sign Lighting Policy (CSC-C 3-2024, Agenda Item 7.4))

Moved by Councillor Ip
Seconded by Councillor Siscoe

That Jana Bataineh, resident, City of St. Catharines, and Ahmed Bataineh, resident, City of St. Catharines, **BE PERMITTED** to appear before Committee as individual delegates respecting Flag Raising and Niagara Sign Lighting Policy (CSC-C 3-2024 (Agenda Item 7.4)).

Carried

5.1.1 Jana Bataineh, Resident, City of St. Catharines

Jana Bataineh, resident, City of St. Catharines, appeared before Committee to express concerns with Niagara Region's Flag Raising and Sign Lighting Policy, highlighting the absence of guidelines for requests received from Members of Council and suggested that the policy be amended to include clear guidelines for dealing with these requests.

5.1.2 Ahmed Bataineh, Resident, City St. Catharines

Ahmed Bataineh, resident, City of St. Catharines, appeared before Committee to express concerns that Niagara Region's Flag Raising and Sign Lighting Policy does not provide guidelines related to requests respecting ongoing international conflicts and suggested the policy be amended to include such guidelines.

6. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

6.1 CSD 3-2024

Update of C-F-025 Regional Development Charges Deferral Policy

Moved by Councillor Diodati
Seconded by Councillor Ganann

That Report CSD 3-2024, dated March 6, 2024, respecting Update of C-F-025 Regional Development Charges Deferral Policy, **BE RECEIVED** and the following recommendations **BE APPROVED**:

1. That C-F-025 Regional Development Charges Payment Deferral Policy section 1.6 **BE AMENDED** to remove the requirement for a letter of credit for agreements arising from conditional approval under the Industrial Use RDC Grant, as more specifically provided in Report CSD 3-2024; and

2. That C-F-025 Regional Development Charges Payment Deferral Policy sections 1.12 and 3.1.1 **BE AMENDED** to remove the Director, Legal & Court Services as co-signatory to Regional Development Charge Deferral Agreements, as more specifically provided in Report CSD 3-2024.

Carried

6.2 CSD 7-2024

2024 Property Tax Policy, Ratios and Rates

Moved by Councillor Bateman
 Seconded by Councillor Secord

That Report CSD 7-2024, dated March 6, 2024, respecting 2024 Property Tax Policy, Ratios and Rates, **BE RECEIVED** and the following recommendations, **BE APPROVED**:

1. That Regional Council **APPROVE** the following tax ratios and sub-class reductions for the 2024 taxation year:

Property Classification	Tax Ratio	Sub-Class Reduction
Residential	1.000000	
New Multi-Residential	1.000000	
Multi-Residential	1.970000	
Commercial	1.734900	
Commercial – Excess Land	1.734900	
Commercial – Vacant Land	1.734900	
Industrial	2.630000	
Industrial – Excess Land	2.630000	
Industrial – Vacant Land	2.630000	
Pipeline	1.702100	
Farmland	0.250000	
Managed Forest	0.250000	
Farmland Awaiting Development 1	1.000000	25.00%
Farmland Awaiting Development 2	Class Ratio	
Landfill Sites	2.940261	

2. That the necessary by-laws **BE PREPARED** and **PRESENTED** to Council for consideration and **BE CIRCULATED** to the Councils of the Area Municipalities for information; and
3. That Report CSD 7-2024 **BE CIRCULATED** to the Councils of the Area Municipalities for information.

Carried

6.3 CSD 10-2024
2023 Year-End Results and Transfer Report

Donovan D'Amboise, Acting Associate Director, Reporting and Analysis, provided information respecting Q4 2023 Financial Update. Topics of the presentation included:

- Background
- Deliverables
- Q4 Operating Results - Levy & Rate
- Year-end Transfers
- Reserve Balances
- Q4 Capital Results

Moved by Councillor Davies
Seconded by Councillor Heit

That Report CSD 10-2024, dated March 6, 2024, respecting 2023 Year-End Results and Transfer Report, **BE RECEIVED** and the following recommendations, **BE APPROVED**:

1. That the unaudited summarized financial results of the Niagara Region, as detailed in Appendix 1 to Report CSD 10-2024, **BE RECEIVED** for information;
2. That the 2023 year-end operating surplus for the General Tax Levy-supported programs of \$4,988 thousand **BE TRANSFERRED** to reserves as follows:
 - a) \$21 thousand to the Ontario Police Video Training Alliance (OPVTA) Reserve Fund as per NRPS recommendation to their Board (Appendix 5 to Report CSD 10-2024);
 - b) \$47 thousand to the Police Vehicle and Equipment Replacement Reserve Fund as per NRPS recommendation to their Board (Appendix 5 to Report CSD 10-2024);
 - c) \$1,910 thousand to the Police Contingency Reserve Fund as per NRPS recommendation to their Board (Appendix 5 to Report CSD 10-2024);
 - d) \$3,053 thousand to the Taxpayer Relief Reserve;
3. That the 2023 year-end operating deficit for the water and wastewater rate-supported programs of \$3,462 thousand **BE TRANSFERRED** from reserves as follows:
 - a) \$46 thousand from the Water Stabilization Reserve;
 - b) \$3,416 thousand from the Wastewater Stabilization Reserve;

4. That the 2023 year-end operating surplus for the Waste Management Special Tax Levy of \$3,534 thousand **BE TRANSFERRED** to the Waste Management Stabilization Reserve;
5. That the 2023 year-end operating surplus for the Transit Special Tax Levy of \$2,087 thousand **BE TRANSFERRED** to the Niagara Transit Commission Stabilization Reserve as per NTC recommendation to their Board (Appendix 7 to Report CSD 10-2024);
6. That the encumbrances of \$14,358 thousand (Appendix 2 to Report CSD 10-2024) **BE RECEIVED** for information and that the deferral of these expenditures be included in the 2024 operating budget;
7. That the transfers of \$10,551 thousand from the Capital Variance Projects to Capital Reserves **BE RECEIVED** for information and that the balances as per Table 6 **BE APPROVED** to be held in the Capital Variance Projects; and
8. That the \$5,590 thousand 2023 debt charge placeholder for the South Niagara Wastewater Treatment Solution Project **BE TRANSFERRED** to the South Niagara Wastewater Treatment Solution Project for substitution of approved but unissued long-term debt.

Carried

6.4 CSC-C 2-2024

Recommendations from the Joint Board of Management - Niagara Courts meeting held on February 1, 2024

Moved by Councillor Redekop

Seconded by Councillor Gale

That Memorandum CSC-C 2-2024, dated March 6, 2024, respecting Recommendations from the Joint Board of Management – Niagara Courts meeting held on February 1, 2024, **BE RECEIVED** and the following recommendations, **BE APPROVED**:

1. That Report JBM-C 2-2024, dated February 1, 2024, respecting Court Services Write-Off Recommendations for the Period Ending December 31, 2023, **BE RECEIVED**; and
2. That the delinquent cases summarized in the Analysis Section of Report JBM-C 2-2024, **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

Councillor Information Request(s):

Provide a breakdown by percentage per year for the 2200 delinquent cases valued at \$1,181,518.43, identified for write-off in 2023. Councillor Redekop.

6.5 CSC-C 4-2024 REVISED
Motion - New Funding Model Resolution

Moved by Councillor Bateman
Seconded by Councillor Ganann

WHEREAS current provincial-municipal fiscal arrangements are undermining Ontario's economic prosperity and quality of life;

WHEREAS nearly a third of municipal spending in Ontario is for services in areas of provincial responsibility and expenditures are outpacing provincial contributions by nearly \$4 billion a year;

WHEREAS municipal revenues, such as property taxes, do not grow with the economy or inflation;

WHEREAS unprecedented population and housing growth will require significant investments in municipal infrastructure;

WHEREAS municipalities are being asked to take on complex health and social challenges – like homelessness, supporting asylum seekers and addressing the mental health and addictions crises;

WHEREAS inflation, rising interest rates, and provincial policy decision are sharply constraining municipal fiscal capacity;

WHEREAS property taxpayers – including people on fixed incomes and small businesses – can't afford to subsidize income re-distribution programs for those most in need;

WHEREAS the province can, and should, invest more in the prosperity of communities; and

WHEREAS municipalities and the provincial government have a strong history of collaboration.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the Province of Ontario **BE REQUESTED** to commit to undertaking, with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, a comprehensive social and economic prosperity review to promote the stability and sustainability of municipal finances across Ontario; and

2. That a copy of this motion **BE SENT** to all local area municipalities in Niagara to be endorsed, the Premier of Ontario, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Minister of Finance, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, local MPs and MPPs.

Moved by Councillor Redekop
Seconded by Councillor Secord

That the motion **BE AMENDED** to remove all of the "Whereas" statements.

Carried

The Committee Chair called the vote on the motion, as amended, as follows:

1. That the Province of Ontario **BE REQUESTED** to commit to undertaking, with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, a comprehensive social and economic prosperity review to promote the stability and sustainability of municipal finances across Ontario; and
2. That a copy of this motion **BE SENT** to all local area municipalities in Niagara to be endorsed, the Premier of Ontario, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; Minister of Finance, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, local MPs and MPPs.

Carried

6.6 CSC-C 5-2024
Motion - Graphic Images

Moved by Councillor Ip
Seconded by Councillor Redekop

That the Office of the Deputy CAO **PROVIDE** a report to Corporate Services Committee by July 10, 2024, proposing how to govern the display of graphic images in the public right of way, with "graphic images" meaning: a visual image showing, or purporting to show any subject matter that is not in compliance with the Canadian Code of Advertising Standards and offends the standard of public decency prevailing among a significant segment of the population, including, but not limited to, images showing or purporting to show medical waste; images showing or purporting to show a fetus or any part of a fetus; or an image showing or purporting to show a dead or injured animal or human body or any part of a dead or injured animal or human body, or another definition the Office of the Deputy CAO determines to be appropriate.

Carried

7. CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

7.1 HR 2-2024
People Plan Update

Franco Meffe, Director, Human Resources, provided information respecting the People Plan Update. Topics of the presentation included:

- People Plan Approach: June 2021 - January 2023
- Employee Input
- Plan Purpose
- Top Talent
- Strong Leaders
- Healthy and Well Employees and Workplaces
- Flexible Workplace

Moved by Councillor Campion
Seconded by Councillor Diodati

That Report HR 2-2024, dated March 5, 2024, respecting People Plan Update, **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Carried

7.2 HR 3-2024
Non-Union Compensation Review Update

Marvin Reyes, Compensation Consulting Leader, and Michael Leung, Manager, People Advisory Services – Reward, Ernst & Young LLP, provided information respecting Market Trends and Compensation Philosophy. Topics of the presentation included:

- Key Drivers of Attraction and Retention
- The Costs of Hiring and Retaining Employees
- From Total Rewards to Total Value for an Individual
- Compensation Objectives and Guiding Principles
- Compensation Philosophy

Moved by Councillor Secord
Seconded by Councillor Davies

That Report HR 3-2024, dated March 5, 2024, respecting the Non-Union Compensation Review, **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Carried

- 7.3 CSC-C 1-2024
Statement of Remuneration and Expenses for Members of Council and Council Appointees for 2023

Moved by Councillor Bateman
Seconded by Councillor Ip

That Memorandum CSC-C 1-2024, dated March 6, 2024, respecting the Statement of Remuneration and Expenses for Members of Council and Council Appointees for 2023, **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Carried

- 7.4 CSC-C 3-2024
Flag Raising and Niagara Sign Lighting Policy

Moved by Councillor Siscoe
Seconded by Councillor Champion

That Memorandum CSC-C 3-2024, dated March 6, 2024, respecting the Flag Raising and Niagara Sign Lighting Policy, **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Moved by Councillor Secord
Seconded by Councillor Gale

That the motion **BE AMENDED** as follows:

That staff BE DIRECTED to review the Flag Raising and Niagara Sign Lighting Policy to provide suggestions respecting possible amendments to the policy.

Carried

The Committee Chair called the vote on the motion, as amended, and declared it,

Carried

7.5 CSC-C 6-2024
Motion respecting Graphic Images

Moved by Councillor Ganann
Seconded by Councillor Ip

That CSC-C 6-2024, being a letter from J. Arthur, Executive Director, Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada, dated March 3, 2024, respecting the Motion respecting Graphic Images, **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Carried

8. **OTHER BUSINESS**

8.1 Niagara Sign Lighting

Councillor Bateman presented a motion to light Niagara Regional Headquarters in the colours of the Palestinian flag. There was no seconder for the motion as required in accordance with the Procedural By-law; therefore the motion was not debated.

8.2 Cyber Security

Councillor Ip enquired whether Information Technology staff have been taking actions to limit the threat against Niagara Region's systems from cyber attacks. Committee Chair Foster advised information respecting this matter would be provided to Council.

9. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. in the Council Chamber, Regional Headquarters.

10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:44 a.m.

Councillor Foster
Committee Chair

Kelly Lotimer
Deputy Clerk

Ann-Marie Norio
Regional Clerk