



**Township of Howick Council Minutes  
Tuesday, January 27, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.  
Howick Council Chambers**

**1. Call to Order**

Reeve Harding called the Regular Council Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

**2. Confirmation of the Agenda**

**Moved by: Councillor Grimes**

**Seconded by: Deputy Reeve Gibson**

That the Council of the Township of Howick hereby adopts January 27, 2026, Council Agenda as presented.

**Carried.**

**3. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest under the “Municipal Conflict of Interest Act”**

None.

**4. Minutes of Previous Meetings**

**Moved by: Deputy Reeve Gibson**

**Seconded by: Councillor Rognvaldson**

That the Council of the Township of Howick hereby adopts the following minutes:

**4.1 December 16, 2025 Special Budget Meeting**

**4.1.1 January 13, 2025 Council Meeting Minutes**

**Carried.**

**5. Reporting Out from Closed Council Meeting**

Reeve Harding reported that Council met in closed session at 6:00 p.m. this evening in order to discuss the following:

1. an employment matter involving an officer position of the Township of Howick Fire Department;
2. An unpaid invoice involving the Development and Protective Services Department; and

3. A Grant application.

**6. Public Meetings/Hearings**

None.

**7. Delegations and/or Presentations**

**7.1 Morley Crewson, Curbside Collection Concern and Waived Recycling Fee**

Council called upon Morley Crewson to address council and welcomed him to the council meeting. Mr. Crewson lives on Water Street in Fordwich and stated that Water Street is a dangerous roadway for curbside garbage and recycling collection and snow removal as it is accessed from Patrick Street just before the bridge in Fordwich. For the past four years Mr. Crewson has lived at his current Water Street address, he has completed all snow removal on Water Street and transported his garbage and recycling to the Howick Landfill. There is now an issue over the newly implemented tipping fee associated with disposing of his recycling at the Howick Landfill.

The Manager of Public Works confirmed that Public Works staff are currently not providing snow removal services on Water Street. Council expressed concern over why we are not plowing Water Street. Council directed staff to look into the situation and come up with a resolution.

Mr. Crewson requested that Council exempt him from paying the new recycling tipping fee at the Howick Landfill.

**8. Consent Agenda**

None.

**9. Regular Agenda**

**9.1 Planning – Huron County Planner Sarah Kurtz**

**10.1.1 PLN-2026-01, Housekeeping Update to Howick Zoning By-law**

Huron County Planner Sarah Kurtz presented her report regarding a housekeeping update to the Howick Zoning By-law. With Council's direction, a draft of the amendments will be circulated to staff and for public viewing then brought back to Council for presentation at the March 10<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. Updates include the definitions, general provisions for consistency across municipalities, increase lot sizes to align lot standards with available servicing, eliminate the extractive resources zoning on the two properties in Howick that have surrendered their licensing etc. Ms. Kurtz will ensure the proposed amendments are agreeable with Township staff prior to circulation.

**Moved by: Deputy Reeve Gibson**

**Seconded by: Councillor Rognvaldson**

That Howick Council initiate a Housekeeping Amendment to the

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Howick Zoning By-Law and direct staff to circulate the draft amendment for public review under the Planning Act

**Carried.**

**10. Municipal Drains - Drainage Superintendent Scott Richardson**

**10.1 DRN-2026-01, Merkley Municipal Drain**

Drainage Superintendent Scott Richardson presented that a request for major improvement was received for the Merkley Municipal Drain. The drain starts in Morris-Turnberry, runs across Belmore Line into Howick, where the open drain begins. The landowners would like to see the open drain enclosed for better farming practices and to eliminate the need for a culvert. MVCA has no objections, however, the work will need a permit. There will be no financial implications to the Township.

**Moved by: Councillor Grimes**  
**Seconded by: Deputy Reeve Gibson**

That Howick Council in accordance with Section 78 of the Drainage Act, proceed with the request for improvement for the Merkley Municipal Drain.

And That Council appoint Spriet Associates Engineers & Architects to investigate, design and prepare a report for Merkley Municipal Drain.

**Carried.**

**11. Staff Reports**

**11.1 Chief Building Official Ed Podniewicz**

**11.2 Fire Chief/Manager of Development & Protective Services - Josh Kestner**

**11.2.1 DPS-2026-01, 2026 Fire Protection Grant Transfer Payment Agreement**

The Manager of Development & Protective Services/Fire Chief presented his report that the Howick Fire Department successfully secured \$16,800.00 in funding through the Fire Protection Grant through the Ontario Fire Marshal's Office. This project is fully funded through the grant and will have minimal, if any financial impact to the Township.

**Moved by: Councillor Rognvaldson**  
**Seconded by: Councillor Grimes**

That the Council of the Township of Howick receives report DPS-2026-01, 2026 Fire Protection Grant Transfer Payment Agreement for information purposes;

And Further That Council approve entering into a Transfer Payment Agreement with the Province of Ontario;

And Further That Council enact By-law 4-2026, being a by-law authorizing the CAO/Clerk and Reeve to execute said Agreement.

**Carried.**

### **11.2.2 DPS-2026-02, Agreement of Purchase and Sale**

On October 21, 2025, Council directed staff to draft the agreements of purchase and sale of the main property location for the proposed future new fire hall. Staff seeking approval to execute this agreement and any other agreements associated with closing the sale of this property. A couple of stipulations have been made by the property owner and staff have agreed with what has been proposed. Survey is being completed for the property, once this is finalized, the properties from Huron County and MTO will also be transferred to the Township.

**Moved by: Councillor Grimes**

**Seconded by: Councillor Hargrave**

That Howick Council authorize the sole source purchase of property legally described as Plan 276, Park Pt Lot 17, RP22R5697 Parts 1 and 2, Gorrie;

And That Council passes By-law 5-2026 to execute the purchase and sale agreement;

And That the CAO/Clerk and Reeve be authorized to sign closing documents and any other documents required to complete the transaction on behalf of the Township thereafter.

**Carried.**

### **11.2.3 DPS-2026-03, Hiring Recruit Firefighters**

The Howick Fire Department had six available positions for Volunteer Firefighters. The Fire Department advertised for new recruits, received several applications, completed interviews and have selected five candidates who have completed the initial training and orientation sessions. Staff feel confident with proceeding of the hiring of the new five recruits.

**Moved by: Deputy Reeve Gibson**

**Seconded by: Councillor Grimes**

That the Council of the Township of Howick approve the hiring of Mara Cutting, Jake Caesar, Julian Wojtecki, Wade Schefter, and Nathan Wombwell as Recruit Firefighters with the Howick Township Fire Department effective January 27, 2026.

**Carried.**

## **11.3 Manager of Public Works – Scott Price**

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## 11.4 Manager of Recreation and Facilities - Brady Ropp

### 11.4.1 REC-2026-02, +VG Architects Daycare Design Proposal

The Manager of Recreation and Facilities, Brady Ropp, presented his report. The original planning phase for the daycare facility was completed by a different architectural firm. Due to some creative differences, staff have proceeded with a different architectural firm that specializes in the design of childcare centres after visiting one

that they designed. Preliminary estimates from the architect for Howick's proposed 49 childcare spaces are estimating the cost to construct the facility to be between \$2.0 to \$2.5 million with \$197,500.00 in fees associated with +VG for the design, tendering and contract administration for the construction of the facility.

Staff are recommending proceeding to enter into the agreement with +VG Architects, as the completion of the project is supposed to be at the end of 2026. The design and construction costs are not included in the draft 2026 budget as staff are still determining the combination of sources to fund the daycare construction with. Howick Township will receive \$2 million in Infrastructure funding under the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care fund. The remaining funds required to complete construction of the facility will be determined once tender prices are received. The fee proposal includes cost estimates for +VG to provide complete drawings including furnishings, outdoor play spaces, etc.

Members of the public voiced concerns regarding the proposed timeline of the project. Would the Township be able to secure a contractor for the project with such short notice and short timeline for project completion? Members of the public also suggested holding a public meeting to discuss the demand and public's willingness to pay for a childcare facility.

Staff advised that a public survey was completed in 2025. Out of the 53 respondents, all 53 were in favour of a licenced child care centre being built in Howick Township. The Recreation Department's Before and After School program and the Day Camp Programs have also helped to demonstrate the need for these types of services. Council directed Staff to get clarification on the timeline of completion and funding outlined by Canada Wide Early Learning and Childcare. Would we still receive all of our funding if we are unable to open the childcare facility by December 31, 2026?

**Moved by: Councillor Rognvaldson**  
**Seconded by: Deputy Reeve Gibson**

That Howick Council accept the attached agreement from +VG

Architects for the design of a daycare facility;

And That Council approve the Consulting Services Architectural

Fee outlines in Proposal No. 250376P;

And That Council authorize the CAO/Clerk to proceed with drafting a by-law to enter into an agreement with +VG Architects for the services outlined in said proposal, for the child care centre project.

**Carried.**

## **11.5 Treasurer/Manager of Finance - Amy Van Meeteren**

### **11.5.1 FIN-2026-03, December 5-30, 2025 and January 1-21, 2026 Accounts Payable**

Treasurer Amy Van Meeteren is seeking council's approval of the January 1<sup>st</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> payables, as the 2026 Municipal Budget has not yet been passed.

**Moved by: Deputy Reeve Gibson**  
**Seconded by: Councillor Grimes**

That the Council of the Township of Howick receive report FIN-2026-03, December 5-30, 2025 and January 1-21, 2026 Accounts Payable, for information;

And That Council approve payment of the January 27, 2026 Accounts Payable in the amount of \$113,926.50.

**Carried.**

## **11.6 CAO/Clerk Caitlin Gillis**

### **11.6.1 ADM-2026-02, Amendments to the Consolidated Fees and Charges By-law 60-2024**

CAO/Clerk reported that the recycling tipping fee was approved at the December 16, 2026 Special Council Meeting and the updated 2026 Planning Fees were given to staff at the end of 2025 for January 1, 2026 implementation.

**Moved by: Deputy Reeve Gibson**  
**Seconded by: Councillor Rognvaldson**

That Howick Council accept report ADM-2026-02, Amendments to the Consolidated Fees and Charges By-law 60-2024, for information;

And That consideration be given to By-law 6-2026, being a by-law to amend Schedule "B" and schedule "J" of the Consolidated Fees and Charges By-law 60-2024, to amend the Waste and Planning

Fee Schedules.

Carried.

**12. Committee and Board Reports**

**None Submitted.**

**13. Correspondence**

Council discussed the Victoria Street Well Association letter. Staff don't believe that there is enough room for each individual residence to drill their own well. Staff are recommending that the Victoria Street Well Association hire an engineer to assess the system and submit recommendations for improvements. All properties on the well would then be required to split the costs, including the Gorrie Hall. There are currently six (6) properties on the well and five (5) is the limit before it becomes a small drinking water system. Staff are also recommending that the Gorrie Hall property doesn't have the space to drill its own well.

**13.1 Gorrie Hall Letter – Victoria Street Well Association**

**13.2 Saugeen Conservation – Meeting Minutes November 20, 2025**

**13.3 County of Wellington – Notice of Open House and Public Meeting**

**13.4 Ministry of Agriculture Food and Agribusiness – 2026 Agricultural Impact Assessment**

**14. Unfinished Business**

**15. Council Reports**

**15.1 Council Member Reports**

Reeve Harding provided an update regarding the post office situation in Wroxeter. Canada Post has requested a meeting with the CAO/Clerk and Reeve to discuss temporary community mailboxes in Wroxeter like Fordwich has. Village Management has suggested a central location in the downtown parkette instead of several locations throughout the village. The CAO/Clerk, Manager of Public Works, Reeve Harding and Wroxeter Village Management Chair have a meeting scheduled with Canada Post representatives for February 3, 2026. The Chair of Fordwich Village Management asked to be included in this meeting as his inquiries about streetlights have gone unanswered from Canada Post.

**Reeve's Verbal Update from County Council**

Reeve Harding announced that a local Howick Township business, Oats and Honey was the successful recipient of the 2025 Starter Company Plus Grant offered by the County of Huron. Oats and Honey received \$3,700.00.

**15.2 Requests by Members**

**15.3 Notice of Motions**

**15.4 Announcements**

**16. Other Business**

**17. Enactment of By-laws – First, Second & Third Reading**

**Moved by: Deputy Reeve Gibson**  
**Seconded by: Councillor Grimes**

That the Council of the Township of Howick give first, second, third and final reading to By-laws 4, 5 and 6 of 2026;

**By-Law 4-2026**

Being a By-law to Authorize the Execution of an Agreement Between the Corporation of the Township of Howick and His Majesty the King in right of Ontario as Represented by the Ministry of the Solicitor General for the Fire Protection Grant – Ontario Transfer Payment Agreement.

**By-Law 5-2026**

Being a By-law to Authorize the Execution of an Agreement Between the Corporation of the Township of Howick and Ruth Ann Neable for the Purchase and Sale of Plan 276 PARK PT LOT 17 RP22R5697 PARTS 1 AND 2, Gorrie

**By-Law 6-2026**

Being A By-Law to amend Schedule “B” – Waste Collection and Disposal, to add Recycling Landfill Tipping fees, and to replace Schedule “J” – 2026 Planning fees, of the Consolidated Fees and Charges By-law 60-2024

**Carried.**

**18. Retire to Special Council Meeting – 2026 Budget**

**Moved by: Deputy Reeve Gibson**  
**Seconded by: Councillor Grimes**

That Howick Council retire to a Special Council Meeting to consider Draft # 2 of the 2026 Budget at 8:21 p.m.

**Carried.**

**Agenda moved to Special Council Agenda – Draft # 2 2026 Budget at 8:21 p.m**

**Agenda Returned to the Regular Council Meeting Agenda at 9:57 p.m.**

**19. Motion to Reconvene into Open Session**

**Moved by: Councillor Rognvaldson**  
**Seconded by: Councillor Grimes**

That Howick Council reconvene into Open Session at 9:57 p.m.

**Carried.**

**20. Confirming By-law**

**By-law 7-2026**

**Moved by: Deputy Reeve Gibson**  
**Seconded by: Councillor Rognvaldson**

That the Council of the Township of Howick give first, second, third and final reading to By-law 7-2026;

Being a By-law to Confirm the Proceedings of the Council meeting held on January 27, 2026.

**Carried.**

**21. Adjournment**

**Moved by: Councillor Hargrave**

**Seconded by: Councillor Grimes**

That the Council of the Township of Howick adjourn the January 27, 2026 Council meeting at 9 :58 p.m.

**Carried.**

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**Reeve, Doug Harding**

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**CAO/Clerk Caitlin Gillis**