



**Township of Howick Council Minutes
Tuesday, March 18, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.
Howick Council Chambers**

1. Call to Order

Reeve Harding called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed all in attendance.

2. Confirmation of the Agenda

Moved by: Deputy Reeve Gibson

Seconded by: Councillor Rognvaldson

That the Council of the Township of Howick hereby adopts the March 18, 2025, Council Agenda as presented.

Carried.

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

None declared.

4. Minutes of Previous Meetings

Moved by: Councillor Grimes

Seconded by: Deputy Reeve Gibson

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

4.1 February 25, 2025 Council Meeting Minutes

Carried.

5. Delegations and/or Presentations

None.

6. Public Meetings/Hearings

None.

7. Consent Agenda

Items on the Consent Agenda are considered routine and are enacted in one motion. Prior to the motion being voted on, any Council Member may request that one or more items be removed from the Consent Agenda and discussed and/or voted on separately.

Moved By: Councillor Rognvaldson

Seconded By: Councillor Grimes

That Consent Agenda items 7.1 to 7.3 be received for information and approved.

7.1 FIN-2025-13, Accounts Payable to March 12, 2025

For Information Only.

7.2 FIR-2025-06, February 2025 Department Update

For Information Only.

7.3 PW-2025-07, February Department Update

For Information Only.

Carried.

8. Regular Agenda

8.1 Planning – Huron County Planner Jenn Burns

9. Municipal Drains - Drainage Superintendent Scott Richardson

9.1 DRN-2024-02, Blind Lake Municipal Drain

Drainage Superintendent Scott Richardson provided an overview of his report. The purpose of report is to consider a section 78(5) improvement. The landowner is constructing a new hog barn and requires new drainage for the driveway. Request was received February 7, 2025. The landowner will be responsible for the entire cost of the structure. A Section 78 request streamlines the process so that there is not Court of Revision. MVCA has already provided comments on this application. The landowners will be eligible for 1/3 grant from OMAFRA for this project.

Moved by: Deputy Reeve Gibson

Seconded by: Councillor Grimes

That the Council of the Township of Howick, in accordance with Section 78(5) of the Drainage Act, proceed with the request for minor improvement of the Blind Lake Municipal Drain;

And That Council appoint RJ Burnside & Associates Limited to investigate, design and prepare a report for the new crossing on the Blind Lake Municipal Drain.

Carried.

10. Staff Reports

10.1 Chief Building Official Ed Podniewicz

10.2 Manager of Development & Protective Services/ Fire Chief Josh Kestner

10.3 Manager of Public Works Jamie McCarthy

10.3.1 PW-2025-06, 2025 Spring Maintenance Gravel Tender Results

The spring maintenance gravel tender was sent out in February. Low tenders were received from McKenzie & Henderson and Donegan's Haulage. Tenders came in lower than expected. In response to a question from Council, the Manager of Public Works advised that due to the heavier than normal winter, additional sand was ordered in mid-February.

Moved by: Deputy Reeve Gibson

Seconded by: Councillor Rognvaldson

That the Council of the Township of Howick receives report PW-2025-06, Tender Results RFT PW-2025-01, 2025 Spring Maintenance Gravel;

And That Howick Council award Tender PW-2025-01 to McKenzie & Henderson Limited in the amount of \$263,600.00 exclusive of HST;

And That Council approve By-law No. 15-2025 being a By-law to Authorize the Entering Into and Execution of an Agreement between the Corporation of the Township of Howick and McKenzie & Henderson Ltd. for the supply, crushing, loading, hauling and application of maintenance gravel.

Carried.

10.4 Manager of Recreation Brady Ropp

10.4 Treasurer Amy Van Meeteren

10.4.1 FIN-2025-14, 2024 Property Tax Adjustments

Treasurer Van Meeteren provided that the report is looking for approval of all adjustments made to the tax roll in 2024 for minutes of settlements, reconsideration, supplementals, consents, etc. The net increase to the municipal tax portion of \$32,101.79.

Moved by: Councillor Grimes

Seconded by: Councillor Rognvaldson

That the Council of the Township of Howick accept this report and approve the tax assessment adjustments for the Minutes of Settlements (RFR), 357 reductions, Post Roll Adjustment Notices (PRANS) and Farm Tax Incentive Program adjustments (TIA) for the tax year of 2024 in the amount of \$32,101.79.

Carried.

10.4.2 FIN-2025-15, Township Board Fees and Charges Update

Updating the Consolidated Fees and Charges By-law to add the basement rental fee for the Gorrie Hall.

Moved by: Deputy Reeve Gibson

Seconded by: Councillor Grimes

That the Council of the Township of Howick receive this report;
And That a By-law be enacted to amend Schedule H of the Consolidated Fees and Charges By-law 60-2024, to come into effect March 18, 2025.

Carried.

10.5 CAO/Clerk Caitlin Gillis

10.5.1 ADM-2025-02, Amendment to the Voter List Management Services Agreement

The Amending Agreement for the Voter's List Management Agreement to not give login access to Howick's Voter List to a third party. Candidates will still be provided with information from the Voter's List.

Moved by: Deputy Reeve Gibson

Seconded by: Councillor Rognvaldson

That the Council of the Township of Howick accept report ADM-2025-02 for information;

And That Council approve the Amendment to the Voter List Management Service Agreement;

And That Council authorize the CAO/Clerk to sign and execute the amendment to the Voter List Management Services Agreement.

Carried.

10.5.2 ADM-2025-03, Belmore Community Centre – Engineering Services Proposal

CAO/Clerk Gillis provided a summary of the report. Burnside's proposal was sent to the Belmore Community Centre Board for their reference. The Belmore Community Centre Board met on Monday, March 17 and discussed the proposal. An email was sent from Chair Jeremy Underwood to the CAO/Clerk requesting a meeting between Burnside, Township Staff and board members to review the proposal. The email is attached to the meeting minutes. The Arena Board is not in favour of going ahead with the proposal as written at this point.

The steel decking was painted in 2022 for cosmetic purposes only. It was not part of the original structural engineering report completed by Burnside. CAO/Clerk Gillis advised that there is a tight timeline between the Maple Syrup Festival and Belmore Homecoming if they would like the sandblasting and repainting completed before Homecoming. Council directed staff to proceed with requesting a meeting with Burnside and members of the Belmore Arena Board.

11. Committee and Board Reports

Moved by: Councillor Grimes

Seconded by: Deputy Reeve Gibson

That the Council of the Township of Howick approve the following Board or Committee minutes:

11.1 Belmore Arena Board Meeting Minutes – December 16, 2024

Carried.

12. Correspondence

12.1 Fordwich & Community Parks Association – re. Annual Men’s Slow Pitch Tournament May 23 to May 25, 2025

Moved by: Deputy Reeve Gibson

Seconded by: Councillor Rognvaldson

That Council of the Township of Howick hereby declares the Men’s Slow Pitch Tournament scheduled for Friday, May 23, 2025 to Sunday, May 25, 2025 at the Fordwich Ball Park and hosted by the Fordwich & Community Parks Association, to be of municipal significance.

Carried.

12.2 Howick Minor Hockey – re. Request for an increase in profit share for their 2025 Hockey Banquet

Moved by: Councillor Hargrave

Seconded by: Councillor Grimes

That the Council of the Township of Howick approve an extra 25% net bar profits for Howick Minor Hockey for their annual banquet scheduled for April 17, 2025.

Carried.

12.3 Maitland Valley Conservation Authority re. 2025 Naturalization and Grass Maintenance, Gorrie Conservation Area & Grass Maintenance Agreement

Council discussed the naturalization of the South side of the Gorrie Conservation Area property that took place in 2024. The Township received several complaints about the overgrown weeds and risk of ticks and a breeding ground for mosquitos. Gorrie residents are used to seeing the North side of the Conservation Authority as park land. If the Conservation Authority is going to pursue naturalization, it should be a controlled return to nature with

native plants, not simply letting weeds and grass grow wild.

Council decided to let Maitland Valley Conservation Authority take control of both the North and South side of the property. Township staff will only cut a buffer on either side of the Gorrie trail. The Township will also post a public notice in the What's Happening in Howick notifying the public that the Township does not own the property and are only cutting a buffer strip on either side of the trail. All comments and concerns on the naturalization are to be directed to back to MVCA.

Moved by: Councillor Grimes

Seconded by: Councillor Rognvaldson

That the Council of the Township of Howick accept the letter from Maitland Valley Conservation Authority regarding the 2025 Naturalization and Grass Maintenance at Gorrie Conservation Area and direct township staff to proceed with only mowing a buffer strip on either side of the trail.

Carried.

12.4 Huron County Federation of Agriculture – re. Annual MP/MPP Local Politicians Forum, March 28, 2025, 10AM-2PM, Clinton Legion

Moved by: Deputy Reeve Gibson

Seconded by: Councillor Rognvaldson

That the Council of the Township of Howick send Marvin Grimes and Doug Hargrave as a representative to the Huron County Federation of Agriculture MP/MPP Local Politicians Forum on Friday, March 28, 2025 at the Clinton Legion.

Carried.

12.5 Jessi Koehler, Resident of Howick re. Business Case for Updating Bylaw to Allow Backyard Chickens in Howick Township, A Proposal for Sustainable Urban Agriculture

Moved by: Deputy Reeve Gibson

Seconded by: Councillor Grimes

That Council of the Township of Howick direct the By-law Enforcement Officer to investigate a policy for the keeping of backyard chickens in the

urban areas.

Carried.

12.6 The Town of Goderich – re. Support for an Ontario-wide licensing framework for rideshare companies

Moved by: Councillor Grimes

Seconded by: Deputy Reeve Gibson

That the Council of the Township of Howick approve endorsing the Town of Goderich resolution regarding implementing an Ontario-wide licencing framework for rideshare companies.

Carried.

12.7 Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission – re. Broadcasting Notice of Consultations, March 6, 2025

12.8 Avon Maitland District School Board – re. Board Meeting Highlights, February 25, 2025

12.9 City of Sarnia – re. Carbon Tax

12.10 Huron County Economic Development – re. Departmental Update, January 2025

12.11 Huron County Economic Development - re. Thrive Summit 2025 Save the Date

Moved by: Deputy Reeve Gibson

Seconded by: Councillor Grimes

That the Council of the Township of Howick nominate Councillor Rognvaldson to attend the 2025 Thrive Summit.

Carried.

12.12 Facile Perth – re. Invitation for Building Bright Futures in Rural Ontario Breakfast and Learn March 25, 2025

12.13 Township of Limerick re. Ontario Deposit Return Program

12.14 County of Northumberland re. Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus

Canadian and Ontario Governments Negotiations with the United States Government on Trade Tariffs

13. Unfinished Business

14. Council Reports

14.1 Council Member Reports

Reeve's Verbal Update from County Council

County Council was advised by staff to provide a grant for the improvement of the Menesetung Bridge in Goderich. There was a lot of water damage at Huronview Home for the Aged. Huron County passed their 2025 budget with a levy of 5%, a 3.11% tax rate increase. Next week County Council will have two-day meetings to update their strategic priorities.

Councillor Grimes advised that the Belmore Maple Syrup Festival is taking place on Thursday, April 10 and Saturday, April 12.

CAO/Clerk Gillis advised that Barry Schaefer of the Belmore Homecoming Committee will be attending the April 8 Council meeting as a delegation. The Homecoming Committee is requesting garbage cans and recycling bins and for the township to waive disposal fees for Homecoming activities. Manager of Public Works Jamie McCarthy looked through emails and found that Carol forwarded request to David Martin in 2016/17 but no record of response was received. She will speak to the Public Works Lead Hand whether he remembers what was provided for the last homecoming. Reeve Harding mentioned the Fair Board has 40-gallon drums, likely stored in one of the sheds at the HCC.

14.2 Requests by Members

14.3 Notice of Motions

14.4 Announcements

The Howick 170th Homecoming Planning Committee is meeting on Monday, March 24, 2025 at the Howick Community Centre at 7:00p.m. in the library. Anyone interested in being involved with this event is invited to attend.

Councillor Hargrave and Reeve Harding would like to proceed with a moratorium, by-law or policy against the installation of new utility poles for high-speed internet or other infrastructure projects in the Township of Howick. Councillor Hargrave spoke to Huron County Warden Jamie Heffer and learned that Elgin County is also not happy with the

installation of new utility poles. It doesn't make sense with the size of equipment in agricultural areas. Councillor Hargrave, Reeve Harding, CAO/Clerk Caitlin Gillis and Public Works Manager Jamie McCarthy are attending a meeting at MPP Lisa Thompson's office in Blyth on Friday, March 21, 2025 to discuss and will report back to Council.

15. Other Business

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

16.1 By-law 15-2025

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 15-2025;

Being a by-law to Authorize the Entering Into and Execution of an Agreement between the Corporation of the Township of Howick and McKenzie and Henderson Ltd. for the Supply, Crushing, Loading, Hauling and Application of Maintenance Gravel.

Carried.

16.2 By-law 16-2025

Moved by: Councillor Hargrave

Seconded by: Deputy Reeve Gibson

That the Council of the Township of Howick give first, second, third and final reading to By-law 16-2025;

Being a By-law to amend Schedule "H" of the Consolidated Fees and Charges By-law 60-2024, to amend the Township Boards Fee Schedule.

Carried.

16.3 By-law 17-2025

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-law 17-2025;

Being a By-law to Authorize the Entering Into and Execution of an Amending Agreement with Comprint Systems Incorporated (operating as "DataFix") for use of their Election Management System known as VoterView.

Carried.

By-law 18-2025 was not considered at this time.

~~16.4 By-law 18-2025~~

~~Moved by:~~

~~Seconded by:~~

~~That the Council of the Township of Howick give first, second, third and final reading to By-law 18-2025;~~

~~Being a By-law to Authorize the Entering Into and Execution of an Agreement with R.J. Burnside & Associates for Engineering Services for the Belmore Community Centre.~~

Carried.

17. Closed Session

Moved by: Councillor Rognvaldson

Seconded by: Councillor Grimes

That a closed meeting of Council of the Township of Howick be held on Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at 8:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Township Office, in accordance with Section 239(2) of the Municipal Act, 2001, for the purpose of considering the following matters:

- b) personal information about identifiable individuals, including municipal or local board employees
- d) labour relations and employee negotiations

Carried.

Agenda moved to Closed Agenda

Returns to Open Agenda

18. Motion to Reconvene into Open Session and Reporting Out

Moved by: Councillor Grimes

Seconded by: Deputy Reeve Gibson

That the Council of the Township of Howick reconvene into Open Session at 9:02 p.m.

Carried.

Reeve Harding reported that Council met in Closed Session to discuss matters involving identifiable individuals including municipal staff and labour relations and employee negotiations regarding human resource matters and hiring within the Public Works Department.

19. Confirming By-law

19.1 By-law 19-2025

Moved by: Councillor Rognvaldson
Seconded by: Councillor Hargrave

That the Council of the Township of Howick give first, second, third and final reading to By-law 19-2025;

Being a By-law to Confirm the Proceedings of the Council meeting held on March 18, 2025.

Carried.

20. Adjournment

Moved by: Councillor Hargrave

Seconded by: Councillor Grimes

That the Council of the Township of Howick adjourn the March 18, 2025 Council meeting at 9:03 p.m.

Carried.

Reeve, Doug Harding

CAO/Clerk Caitlin Gillis