

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF MATTAWA

The minutes of the Regular Meeting held Monday May 12, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the Dr. S.F. Monestime Council Chambers.

Council Present: Mayor Raymond A. Bélanger
Councillor Mathew Gardiner
Councillor Fern Levesque
Councillor Laura Ross
Councillor Garry Thibert
Councillor Spencer Bigelow

Staff Present: Amy Leclerc, Clerk/Revenue Services Clerk
Paul Laperriere, CAO/Treasurer
Dexture Sarrazin, Director of Community Services
Melody Byers, Executive Assistant

*When a recorded vote is requested and the minutes indicate the recorded vote was "Unanimous" it means all Councillors present and noted above voted in favour unless otherwise indicated.

1. Meeting Called to Order

Meeting Called to Order by Mayor Bélanger at 6:00 p.m.

2. Announce Electronic Participants

Clerk announced that there was no online participation.

3. Adoption of Agenda

3.1 To Adopt the agenda as presented or amended

Resolution Number 25-93

Moved by Councillor Spencer Bigelow

Seconded by Councillor Laura Ross

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the meeting agenda dated Monday May 12, 2025 be adopted.

CARRIED – unanimous

4. Disclosures of a Conflict of Interest

Mayor Bélanger declared a conflict of interest on agenda items 7.1, 8.1 and 8.2

5. Presentations and Delegations

5.1 Andre Clement, Integrity Consultants Inc – Draft Strategic Plan

6. Adoption of Minutes

6.1 Regular Meeting of April 28, 2025

6.2 To adopt the minutes as presented or amended

Resolution Number 25-94

Moved by Councillor Mathew Gardiner

Seconded by Councillor Fern Levesque

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council adopt the minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 28, 2025.

CARRIED – unanimous

Mayor Bélanger declared a conflict of interest on item numbers 7.1, 8.1 and 8.2 and removed himself from council chambers.

7. Notice of Motions

7.1 Support to Oppose Strong Mayor Powers

Resolution Number 25-95

Moved by Councillor Fern Levesque

Seconded by Councillor Laura Ross

WHEREAS the Government of Ontario announced an expansion of strong mayor powers to an additional 169 municipalities that took effect May 1, 2025;

AND WHEREAS the Corporation of the Town of Mattawa was included in the additional 169 municipalities that gained such powers;

AND WHEREAS these powers allow mayors to unilaterally override council decisions, appoint senior municipal staff, and set budgets without majority council approval, undermining the principles of democratic governance;

AND WHEREAS municipal governance functions best through a collaborative decision-making process where elected councils, representing the collective voice of their communities, work alongside experienced municipal staff and the proposed powers has raised significant concerns regarding the centralization of power, erosion of local democracy, reduced accountability and the potential for the abuse of power;

AND WHEREAS there is no evidence to suggest that strong mayor powers have increased housing starts, contrary to the provincial government's stated justification for their implementation;

AND WHEREAS the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO) has raised concerns that strong mayor powers blur the lines between political leadership and administration expertise, threatening the neutrality of municipal public service;

AND WHEREAS the Town of Mattawa has a long history of collaborative, transparent and accountable local governance built upon a foundation of Council debated and shared decision-making;

AND WHEREAS a growing number of municipalities and elected officials across Ontario are questioning the appropriateness of the strong mayor system and are calling for its reconsideration or appeal.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Mattawa opposes the expansion of strong mayor powers and formally request that the Premier of Ontario and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing immediately remove

the Town of Mattawa from the list of municipalities that was granted strong mayor powers under the designated legislation.

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of this resolution be sent to the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and all Ontario municipalities.

CARRIED – Recorded vote and the vote was unanimous

8. Correspondence

- 8.1 Various Municipalities (Township of Zorra, Town of Plympton-Wyoming, Municipality of South Huron, Municipality of Bluewater, Municipality of North Middlesex, Town of Parry Sound, Town of Cobalt, Town of Deep River, City of Stratford, Town of Essex) – Opposition to Proposed Amendments to Expand Strong Mayor Powers

Council spoke on correspondence item # 8.1.

- 8.2 Minister of Municipal Affairs & Housing – Follow Up Letter for Strong Mayor Powers

Mayor Bélanger returned to council chambers

- 8.3 MPAC – In Touch Newsletter

- 8.4 Community Living Mattawa – 4th Annual Texan Horseshoe Tournament Donation Request

Council spoke on correspondence item # 8.4 and directed staff to return to Council with a formal response to the request.

9. Standing Committee Recommendations/Reports – Motions

10. Staff Reports – Motions

11. By-Laws

- 11.1 By-Law 25-09 – Administrative Policies & Procedures

BEING a by-law to set the Administrative Policies and Procedures governing all municipal employees.

Resolution Number 25-96

Moved by Councillor Mathew Gardiner

Seconded by Councillor Fern Levesque

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council of the Corporation of the Town of Mattawa adopt By-Law 25-09 being a by-law to set the Administrative Policies and Procedures governing all municipal employees.

CARRIED – Recorded vote and the vote was unanimous

12. Old Business

- 12.1 Council – Food Cycler Municipal Solutions

- 12.2 Beautification Committee Terms of Reference & Committee Structure

13. New Business

14. Questions from Public Pertaining to Agenda

A member of the audience requested more information on correspondence item 8.3

15. In Camera (Closed) Session

15.1 Proposed Business Plan

In accordance with the Municipal Act, 2001 Section 239 (2)(k)

k) a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the municipality or local board

Resolution Number 25-97

Moved by Councillor Laura Ross

Seconded by Councillor Spencer Bigelow

BE IT RESOLVED THAT this Council proceed in Camera at 6:58 pm in order to address a matter pertaining to k) a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the municipality or local board.

CARRIED – unanimous

16. Return to Regular Session

16.1 That the regular session reconvene

Resolution Number 25-98

Moved by Councillor Laura Ross

Seconded by Councillor Garry Thibert

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the regular meeting reconvene at 7:37 p.m.

CARRIED – unanimous

Mayor Bélanger advised the closed session was pertaining to a proposed business plan.

17. Motions Resulting from Closed Session

18. Adjournment

18.1 Adjournment of the meeting

Resolution Number 25-99

Moved by Councillor Garry Thibert

Seconded by Councillor Mathew Gardiner

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the May 12, 2025 meeting adjourn at 7:38 p.m.

CARRIED – unanimous

Raymond A. Bélanger

Mayor

Amy Leclerc

Clerk