

COUNCIL MINUTES

TOWNSHIP OF COCKBURN ISLAND COUNCIL MEETING

5:00 PM WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19th, 2025

Meeting On-line by ZOOM

ZOOM LINK <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84944196668>

(link is the same for every regular meeting)

PRESENT

Mayor: Brenda Jones
Councillors: Lee Chappell
Jeff House
Simon Lacombe
Scott Stewart
Clerk: Brent St. Denis
Lynn Jackes: Observer (CT orientation)
Absent: Nil

(A number of ratepayers observed the meeting.)

Time – 5:00 PM

Call to Order

Declarations of any pecuniary interest

Delegations – if any

New Business – if any

Resolution # 25-11-01

Moved: S Lacombe

Seconded: L Chappell

That the NOVEMBER 19th, 2025 Council meeting agenda be adopted.

CARRIED

Resolution # 25-11-02

Moved: J House

Seconded: S Lacombe

That the minutes of the October 8th regular meeting be adopted.

CARRIED

Public Works Committee meeting – Council and available Public Works crew

Resolution # 25-11-03

Moved: S Lacombe

Seconded: L Chappell

That we enter into Committee of the Whole so that an informal discussion with staff can be held regarding Public Works and related matters.

Time – 5:02 PM

CARRIED

Council Member Stewart chaired the PW session. Items raised during the Public Works Committee of the Whole included;

NOTES

Council member Stewart reported that things were quiet with planning for 2026 being the greatest preoccupation.

There was a discussion about whether culvert installation needed 2 workers or not. And whether to have Cockburn Island Logging (CIL) do it.

Use this as a training opportunity,

The conversation centered on the problem culvert on the 20th. It was suggested the problem was less that of beavers and more related to the uphill land contour.

The culverts in the problem location were installed only a few years ago but now are crushed. Should we purchase our own transit?

Is Cockburn Island Logging redoing some of the D St ditching work? Darren did additional work on D St but not yet completed. Might be finished in Spring.

CIL will fill the 500-gallon township diesel tank and balance of gas on their next trip.

The docks have been moved in for winter.

The culverts in the problem location were installed only a couple years ago but now are crushed.) and were crushed when PW was removing to correct improper installation from a couple of years ago.

Check to see if pressure washer was drained.

Resolution # 25-11-04

Moved: J House

Seconded: S Lacombe

That we return to Open Session

Time – 5:21 PM

CARRIED

Resolution # 25-11-05

Moved: J House

Seconded: L Chappell

It was agreed that Cockburn Island Logging be asked to install/repair the problem culvert on the 20th in the spring and that this be used as a training opportunity for the PW crew.

CARRIED

Action Items

Zoning By-law (ZB) and Portable Storage Containers (Sea Cans)

This item was tabled until the February 2026 meeting.

CEGP (Fire Grant) Extension Request

Resolution # 2025-11-06

Moved: L Chappell

Seconded: S Lacombe

That whereas the Province has granted and advanced the township an amount of \$22,500 under the Community Emergency Grant Program (CEGP),
And whereas the unique access challenges that face out township due to our remote location have prevented the completion of the project this fiscal year, particularly as it relates to wildlands forest fire training,
Now therefore be it resolved that we ask the Province for a one-year extension so that the project can be satisfactorily completed.

CARRIED

Consider a simpler long-term NCC annual Support Grant scenario – over the past weeks the Clerk has communicated with NCC representatives to consider a plan to formalize the annual NCC Support Grant process.

Resolution # 2025-11-07

Moved: J House

Seconded: S Lacombe

That whereas the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) has, for years, voluntarily provided a support grant to the township to compensate for the loss of tax revenue resulting from the conversion of forest lands from Residential assessment to Managed Forest, MF (25% of levy) or Exempt (0% of levy),

And whereas the fluctuations in these assessments have seemingly stabilized since the early years allowing now for a simpler and more direct calculation,

Now therefore be it resolved that the Council accepts the suggestion that a revised method of calculating the grant be considered along the following lines which will closely approximate the NCC's traditional share of "forest revenue" of a little under 60%. The Clerk-Treasurer is to bring this matter back to Council once further discussions with NCC have concluded. It is understood that this proposal is still under consideration internally within NCC so for its part this is also not yet final.

The proposal outline is as follows;

- *NCC would continue to provide annual payments of \$40,000 (in 2026 dollars) to the Township comprising the sum of the voluntary support grant (base amount) and tax payment.*
- *To ensure that the support payment doesn't become stagnant and is adjusted for inflation, each year the new base amount would be equal to the base amount of the previous year plus an inflation adjustment equal to Council's agreed tax increase percentage.*
- *This new process would start in 2026 but could be used for the 2025 Support Grant invoice and possibly to adjust the 2024 invoice. (Details and permissions to be determined).*

- *Future assessment shifts from Residential to MF and/or Exempt would be adjusted for as they came along. (Details of the process to be determined with advice sought from the Ministry of Finance as it concerns impacts to the OMPF grant over time).*

CARRIED

Adopt Closed Session Minutes (a housekeeping matter)

Resolution # 2025-11-08

Moved: L Chappell

Seconded: J House

That whereas our municipal audit firm (BDO LLP of Sault Ste. Marie) has requested that the Closed Session minutes of Council be explicitly adopted rather than, as now, implicitly adopted with the open public minutes,
Now therefore Council hereby adopts the minutes of all previously held Closed Sessions associated with already-adopted public meeting minutes and that, according to common municipal practice, Closed Session minutes and notes are to remain Confidential to all but Council members and the Administration. And in future Closed Session minutes are to be explicitly adopted as recommended.

CARRIED

Cockburn Island Addition Provincial Park Proposal

Resolution # 2025-11-09

Moved: J House

Seconded: S Lacombe

That whereas the Province's Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) has proposed establishing a new 477-acre park to be known as the Cockburn Island Addition Provincial Park in the southwest area of the island, on land it now owns outright (former Schramm property),
And whereas the township has not yet been officially informed or contacted about this plan,
Now therefore be it resolved,

- that the Ministry confirm that, in effect, there are no actual changes from the current use of this area including that it conforms to our municipal Zoning Bylaw,
- that the Province undertake to ensure that the level of payments-in-lieu of taxes are such that it recognizes its value to the network of Provincial parks.
- That given the ecological sensitivity of the natural sand dunes along the island's south shore and various species-at-risk plus the lack of island visitor infrastructure on our island that this area **not** be the subject of any tourism promotion campaigns – that the area be left as peaceful and undisturbed as it is now
- And further that No Signage should be erected, No Open fires allowed and No Camping allowed.

CARRIED

Financial Report

Receive report on disbursements by cheque, transfer, auto-debit, NCU “pay bills” and NCU VISA. Please note that for this meeting the consolidated disbursement sheet covers September and October to deal with former statement overlaps. Going forward it will be the prior month. More efficient for the Treasurer (current and next) and still full disclosure (and more) for the Council. It’s not dependent on Council meeting dates by covering a month at a time. Easier to use for bank and VISA statement reconciliations. This adjustment is needed as our payments and revenue move from cheques to VISA, EFTs, bank Pay Bills and e-transfers.

Northern Credit Union Bank balances as November 16th, 2025

Dock Account 101	\$15,953.47
Heritage Account 102	\$75,053.60
Operating Account 100	\$115,728.06
1 YEAR 3 PT 1 LANDFILL GIC 403	\$10,000.00
1 YEAR 3 PT 1 OPERATING GIC 404	\$150,000.00

TOTAL \$366,735.13

Current Interest Rate earned on Operating account2.45 %
 Current Interest Rate earned on Twp Heritage Account 1.95 %
 Current Interest Rate earned on Dock Account.....1.95 %
 Both GICs3.1%, one-year from Sept/25

Resolution # 2025-11-10
 Moved: S Stewart
 Seconded: L Chappell

That the Treasurer’s report on bank balances, cheques, auto-debit payments, EFTs, e-transfers and the VISA card statement(s) be hereby received.

CARRIED

Council Members’ Concerns

- Council member Stewart pointed out that Lake Huron appears to be down about 3 feet compared to last year. This may cause problems for some of our docks. Ramps and other adjustments may be necessary especially if the winter precipitation and ice cover are inadequate. Should we remove the dock gravel and timber?

Clerk’s Report

- a) Tulloch Engineering and our Landfill ARO (Asset Management Obligation) – island visit in spring 2026
- b) Weather permitting the totes with old documents plus helipad cones and light will be delivered by Brent to Brenda’s garage in in Thessalon tomorrow.
- c) Clerk requests clarification re: follow-up communications with the owner of Lot #47, C Street after the July 9th Council meeting. (Lee emailed the property-owner about

relocating the old cabin by 2027 but received no reply. He understands, however, that they will remove it from the township lot at their cost as Council directed.)

Adjournment

Resolution # 2025-11-11

Moved: S Stewart

Seconded: S Lacombe

That this meeting be now adjourned and that Council to meet again by Zoom at 5 PM Wednesday DECEMBER 10 th or at the call of the Mayor.

CARRIED

Time – 6:15 PM