



Municipality of West Elgin

Minutes

Special Meeting of Council

July 15, 2024, 4:00 p.m.

Council Chambers

160 Main Street

West Lorne

Present: Mayor Leatham
Deputy Mayor Tellier
Councillor Navackas
Councillor Denning
Councillor Statham

Staff Present: M. Badura, CAO/ Treasurer
L. Gosnell, Manager of Operations & Community Services
Terri Towstiuc, Clerk

1. Call to Order

Mayor Leatham called the Special Meeting of Council to order at 4:01 pm.

2. Adoption of Agenda

Moved: Deputy Mayor Tellier

Seconded: Councillor Statham

That West Elgin Council hereby adopts the Special Meeting Agenda of July 15, 2024, as presented.

Carried

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

No disclosures

4. Delegations - Pool Fee Concerns

4.1 Larry Schneider

Mr. Schneider addressed West Elgin Council as a voice for the community and pool users. Mr. Schneider advised Council that the cost increase for the pool is too significant for all to use, while also acknowledging the price increase for materials and wage. As a crucial part of the community, the Rodney pool is a local gathering place for families to be active and keep fit while keeping physically and mentally healthy and connected. Children can learn water safety and accurately listen and follow instructions through swimming lessons and interact with friends during open swims. Residents need a place to cool down in the summer, have fun and be kids. Mr. Schneider provided comparisons to neighbouring municipal pool's programs and fees along with YMCA pricing and program. Mr. Schneider urged Council to reconsider the fee increases and be creative to find more sponsors to subsidize the pool, as well provide better advertising for pool activities and programming.

4.2 Dan Soos

Mr. Soos addressed West Elgin Council as a local resident, business owner and Vice-Chair of the Economic Development Committee. Mr. Soos advised Council that this is an opportunity to better service our community and foster full inclusivity at the Rodney Pool by offering free swimming and skating and advised that all of Chatham-Kent open summer swims at outdoor pools are free of charge. Mr. Soos urged Council to reconsider the fee increase to open swim and aquafit, indicating that it is irresponsible of Council to rely on service clubs for sponsorship as they are the driving force behind the installation of the pool, parks, splash pad and skate park. Mr. Soos advised the increase of over 60% to aquafit will deter usage, which is vital for older residents physical and social engagement. Offering open swims for free allows every child to access the pool, regardless of the family financial situation, and increase physical wellbeing, social interaction and community spirit, while providing accessibility to recreation and investing in the community's future.

5. Rodney Pool Fee Discussion

CAO/Treasurer Badura provided West Elgin Council and the public with a presentation regarding the Rodney Pool, which included an overview of operating fees for the nine weeks the pool is open each year, and the substantial deficit the pool continues to obtain annually. Ms. Badura presented a year-over-year

operating costs statement and revenue, and factors that contribute to the rising costs at the pool including inflation, aging facility and energy prices. The annual fee increases were presented, and information regarding the funding gap to source the remaining funds required to cover the annual deficit. Funding sources for the pool include generous club and business sponsorship, user pay system and a significant portion from the general tax base.

6. Confirmatory By-law

Moved: Deputy Mayor Tellier

Seconded: Councillor Statham

That By-law 2024-51 being a By-law to confirm the proceeding of the Special Meeting of Council held on July 15, 2024, be read a first, second and third and final time.

Carried

7. Adjournment

Moved: Councillor Denning

Seconded: Councillor Statham

That the Council of the Municipality of West Elgin hereby adjourn the Special Meeting of Council at 5:03pm to meet again at 4:00pm, on Thursday, July 18, 2024, or at the call of the Chair.

Richard Leatham, Mayor

Terri Towstiuć, Clerk