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THE TOWNSHIP OF TARBUTT
Minutes of the Special Council Meeting

MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2026 at 3:00 pm
Tarbutt Municipal Office
27 Barr Road S., Desbarats, Ontario

PRESENT: Lennox Smith, Mayor
David Farrar
Darren McClelland
Jacqui Nagel
Ursula Abbott

STAFF: Jillian Hayes Elliott, Treasurer
Paul Ackland, Fire Chief
Jared Brice, Deputy Clerk/Planning Coordinator
Mike Pigeon, Road Superintendent
Carol Trainor, CAO/Clerk

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Smith called the Special Council meeting to order at 3:00 in order to discuss the draft 2026 budget.

2. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

3. FINANCIAL AND INVESTMENT UPDATE

Treasurer J. Hayes presented a report providing a brief update of the Township's current investment and financial situation.

Resolution No: 2026 – 50

Moved by: D. McClelland Seconded by: D. Farrar

Be it resolved that the Financial and Investment Update provided by the Treasurer dated March 23, 2026 be received.

Carried

4. DRAFT 2025 BUDGET

J. Hayes provided a report regarding tax arrears collection in 2025, one of the primary responsibilities of the Treasurer. The active management of arrears has resulted in greater compliance and a reduction in arrears over previous years.



Resolution No: 2026 – 51

Moved by: U. Abbott

Seconded by: J. Nagel

Be it resolved that the Tax Arrears Collection report for 2025 provided by the Treasurer be received.

Carried

a. Projected Revenues

Total arrears and overdue amounts owing to the municipality are down so tax revenue is closer to where it should be. The draft budget has been prepared with a recommended 3% property tax increase for a total revenue increase of \$37,113.00 in an attempt to stay ahead of inflationary rates on the cost of day to day operations such as fuel, hydro, propane, social services (ADSAB), policing and general operating expenses.

New grants for 2026 include the Community Emergency Preparedness Grant (CEPG) and the Pothole Prevention and Repair Program (PPRP) for 2025/26. The Township also received the Fire Protection Grant for the second consecutive year which funds equipment and supportive systems for cancer prevention.

b. Protection to Persons and Property

Fire Chief P. Ackland was in attendance to discuss his departmental budget. Training expenses continue to rise due to provincial certification requirements and volunteer turnover. The Township successfully applied for the Fire Protection Grant which will be used to purchase bunker gear. The department is seeking approval to have the bunker gear cleaned at Huron Shores to save the expense of shipping it to North Bay.

The pumper will require new tires which may cost as much as \$10,000 but the Chief felt that this purchase could be deferred to the next budget year. Chief Ackland noted that the tanker is older than the pumper and is a standard, which not all department members are licensed to drive. It will be important to ensure that additional members are trained and certified to drive the tanker this year.

The total proposed Fire budget is \$121,620.21 with no increase to firefighter honourariums in 2026.

Highlights of the "Protection to Persons and Property" budget:

Community Emergency Management benefits from the Community Emergency Preparedness Grant this year. The funds will be used to purchase a new emergency generator, a potable water system for the admin building/fire hall,



and radios. There are not currently enough radios to go around, between the Emergency Control Group and the Fire Department.

Policing costs increased further to \$107,363.00 despite the 11% cap.

Building: The proposed Central Algoma CBO contract has not yet been finalized, and the actual cost is yet to be determined. The amount paid will be a dependent on the number of municipalities that participate in the shared service contract, based on the average number of permits issued over the last four years and the assessment of each municipality.

The total Protection budget is \$183,563.00 (not including Fire).

c. Transportation

The Roads budget has been provisionally approved by the Roads Committee. M. Pigeon advised that the addition of the slip tank and pump should be included, as discussed at the last council meeting, which will save wear and tear on the backhoe and grader, and countless hours for staff driving to fuel up. Under the new arrangement, savings attained on fuel will cover the cost of the slip tank and pump.

This winter has caused a significant increase in fuel consumption, and while some of that cost will be returned from the shared services agreement, the cost of fuel continues to rise.

The small equipment/tools and dust control lines were reduced by \$1000 each, and the bi-annual bridge inspection quote came in under budget. Diesel and gasoline lines were increased to allow for the recent significant increase to fuel prices.

Councillor Farrar supported the purchase of a 12 to 14 foot dump trailer, as discussed in the past. Aside from addressing safety concerns, the dump trailer would save diesel as the backhoe would not be needed for patching. M. Pigeon will look into possible sources and quotations.

J. Hayes recalculated the total Transportation budget to \$438,338.60 to include the above noted items and estimates.

P. Ackland and M. Pigeon left the Budget meeting.

d. General Government

Council, Administration and general operating expenses for 2026 include another significant increase to the cost of daily operations and legal expenses.



Election expenses will be incurred in 2026, estimated to be slightly higher than 2022 with the same number of staff and systems.

A 2.1% wage increase has been recommended for all employees and Council based on the October 2025 CPI. OMERS contributions have increased slightly as three part time staff are making contributions.

The General Government total for 2026 is \$683,118.27 which includes Council and Administration, school board levies, contract services, the MPAC levy, insurance, auditor and legal expenses, which remain well above average.

e. Environmental

The Joint Landfill Committee has resumed meetings and are discussing moving forward with Johnson taking over administrative management of the site from Tarbutt in 2027. Landfill expenses (waste and recycling) will be shared evenly with Johnson Township for 2026. With the switch to Producer Responsibility for residential recycling as of January 1, the townships will no longer be paying to have recycling removed although there are ancillary expenses with the change.

There will be additional expenses to relocate the scrap metal bin and add a second non household bin to continue to divert waste from the back cell. The goal continues to be to divert as much waste as possible from the cell to extend the life of the landfill. A concrete pad will also be added underneath the bins to prevent ruts and trenching, which causes drainage issues, snow accumulation, difficulty packing, and will ease bin removal.

Johnson engaged Tulloch in 2024 for a feasibility study to investigate the possibility of a new, third cell. At this time the Ministry has not been approached regarding whether such expansion is possible, but this shared expense would be significant.

The total Environmental budget was increased to \$190,091.25.

f. Social, Family and Health Services

Costs for social services such as affordable housing, children's services, housing services, Social Assistance, paramedic services and board expenses provided by ADSAB are paid by the Township on behalf of residents. Algoma Public Health services as well as annual donations to the local hospital and seniors services provided throughout the district are also paid through property taxes collected by the municipality. The cost of health and social services continues to rise, which is reflected in levies paid by the municipality on behalf of residents.



The total Social, Family and Health Services budget for 2026 is \$451,746.00.

g. Recreation and Cultural Services

Covering the Library agreement, MacLennan Hall, Parks maintenance, and Recreation, the proposed budget is \$51,162.95.

Staff will be applying to NOHFC for a grant for up to \$200,000 to cover essential interior and exterior upgrades to the MacLennan Hall.

h. Planning and Development

Covering Planning Board expenses, Zoning By-law and Site Plan Control development, the Township’s portion of the Joint Official Plan, and Planning Advisory services, this total is reduced over 2025. The services of a professional planner were required extensively in preparation for and during the OLT hearing. If the Official Plan moves to approval stages in 2026, the Township’s Zoning By-law could follow shortly thereafter.

The Planning and Development budget totals \$63,500.

Summary

Treasurer J. Hayes noted that this budget had been prepared with a recommended 3% tax increase to keep ahead of inflation and ongoing expenses. After deliberation and consideration of needs for 2026, Council recommended a tax increase of 4% to cover known and unknown costs.

Resolution No: 2026 – 52

Moved by: D. Farrar

Seconded by: D. McClelland

Be it resolved that the Draft 2026 budget be presented, as amended; and That Council approves the budget with a property tax increase of 4% in 2026 to cover the rising cost of operating expenses.

Rescinded on April 22, 2026 by resolution no. 2026-56.

5. BY-LAWS

Resolution No: 2026 – 53

Moved by: D. Farrar

Seconded by: D. McClelland

Be it resolved that leave be granted to introduce By-law 2026 – 08 being a By-law authorizing the Mayor and the Clerk to enter into agreement with His Majesty the King in Right of Ontario as represented by the Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Response for the Community Emergency Preparedness Grant; and



That said By-law be read a first, and taken as read a second and third time and finally passed this twenty third day of March, 2026.

Carried

Resolution No: 2026 – 54

Moved by: J. Nagel

Seconded by: U. Abbott

Be it resolved that leave be granted to introduce By-law 2026 – 09 being a By-law to confirm the proceedings of the Special Council Meeting held this Twenty Third day of March , 2026; and

That said by-law be read a first, and taken as read a second and third time and finally passed.

Carried

6. ADJOURNMENT


Resolution No: 2026 – 55

Moved by: U. Abbott


Seconded by: J. Nagel

Be it resolved that this Special Council meeting of March 23, 2026 be adjourned at 5:27 pm, to meet again on Wednesday, April 22, 2026 at 3:00 to receive the Audited Financial Statements from the Auditor.

Carried



Lennox G. Smith, Mayor



Carol O. Trainor, Clerk