

WHITEWATER REGION COUNCIL SUMMARY



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 3rd, 2025

Here is a summary of the Regular Meeting of the Council on **September 3, 2025**. Full agendas can be found here: <https://whitewaterregion.civicweb.net/Portal/>. The video is available on our YouTube page. This summary does not constitute the official record of the meeting and approved Minutes should be consulted for that purpose.

Presentation and Public Meetings

- Kris Eve, representing the Country Boys and Cobwebs Hockey Organizations, raised concerns about the new ice allocation policy. He highlighted the groups' 40+ year history with the municipality and noted that moving their ice time from 9:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. would challenge older members and likely reduce participation. He also expressed concern that the policy favors outside youth organizations over established local groups, urging Council to reconsider its impact on long-standing community programs.
- Kristen Neimi, RCDSB Director of Education, presented the board's partnership with the Re-Nature Foundation to create outdoor learning spaces at 19 elementary schools by 2026. Re-Nature will manage grants and projects, while RCDSB handles support and maintenance. She requested municipal resolutions to access funding through the FCM's Growing Canada's Community Canopies program, offering up to \$50,000 per school at no cost to municipalities.
- Taylor Hanrath from the County of Renfrew provided an update on the C201 – Brooms Creek Culvert and Dam reconstruction in Foresters Falls, which required a detour due to the culvert closure. Work was delayed over six weeks awaiting a Lakes and Rivers Permit, but emergency work began July 2nd, and the permit was issued July 31st. The project, originally set to finish December 5th, is now expected to continue through winter into 2026.

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Mayor's Address

Council Mayor Nicholson noted his attendance at 18 meetings and events over the past two weeks, including participation at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Conference in Ottawa with Councillors Tabbert, Trimm, Olmstead, and the CAO. At AMO, they attended seven delegations and two additional meetings, with discussions focused on a range of community priorities:

- Municipal Infrastructure: With the Ministry of Infrastructure, seeking additional capital funding to address a \$7M annual shortfall, relief for wastewater debt, and access to rural infrastructure grants.
- Economic Development: With the Ministry of Energy and Mines and the Ministry of Red Tape Reduction, discussing the Timminco Minesite, critical mineral potential, and the viability of a Class III Industrial Park, with fall follow-up planned.

- Seniors' Supports: With the Ministry of Seniors, reviewing ways to sustain senior home supports and future grant opportunities.
- Flood Management: With City of Ottawa staff, exploring improved flood mapping, communication strategies, and partnership opportunities with the County of Renfrew.
- In partnership with the Township of Bonnechere Valley (i) and City of Pembroke (ii-iv):
 - i. Recycling Services: With MECP, advocating for an integrated recycling collection service to avoid inefficiencies, higher costs, and risks to the landfill with the Township of Bonnechere Valley.
 - ii. Post-Secondary Education: With the Ministry of Colleges and Algonquin College, stressing the importance of expanding trades programs to support youth retention and housing/construction needs.
 - iii. Healthcare: With the Ontario Medical Association, addressing the shortage of family doctors, hospital staffing challenges, and specialist shortages in rural communities.
 - iv. Property Assessments: With the Ministry of Finance, advocating for the restart of MPAC property assessments to reflect current market values.

Mayor Nicholson emphasized the importance of these discussions in advancing key files for the municipality and thanked staff, Council, and partners for their preparation, collaboration, and advocacy efforts that made these delegations effective.

Community Services

Council approved the award of RFP 2025-20 for Astrolabe Arena asbestos abatement to Innovative Environmental Group Inc. at \$19,692.17, inclusive of H.S.T. The work, including stairwell abatement, debris removal, and reconstruction, will be completed by November 1, 2025, with public access maintained via the back stairwell.

Council received the draft "Ice Allocation" policy for information and directed staff to consult with user groups before final approval. The update aims to ensure fair, consistent ice scheduling while balancing community access, program growth, and operational needs. Staff will continue with research and data collection, along with gathering additional information from user groups, with the final policy expected in October 2025.

Contact: *Stephanie Plebon, Manager of Parks & Recreation*
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Community Development

Council approved the transfer of a 2.1-acre portion of 2271 Mine View Road to the County of Renfrew for a new paramedic base. The sale, at \$68,750 per acre, will generate about \$144,375 in net revenue to support relocating the Township's snow storage and site improvements. The transfer aligns with strategic goals by optimizing municipal assets, co-locating emergency services, and reinvesting proceeds into operations.

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Public Works

Council approved the award for the supply and delivery of bulk coarse highway salt to Windsor Salt Ltd. for the 2025/2026 and 2026/2027 winter seasons, following a County of Renfrew tender. The unit prices are \$116.83 and \$120.68 per tonne, and the purchase supports the Township's operational needs while aligning with cooperative purchasing policies.

Council approved a sole-source contract with CIMA CANADA INC. (CIMA+) for engineering design services to address deficiencies at the Cobden Wastewater Treatment Plant, at an upset limit of \$253,351.87 inclusive of HST. CIMA+'s prior involvement as an independent third-party expert positions them to efficiently design corrective measures, including membrane replacement, to improve plant performance and ensure compliance.

Council received the mid-year landfill budget update and approved \$11,454.17 for parts to repair the John Deere 655K Crawler Loader. Unplanned equipment repairs and operational costs have put pressure on the 2025 budget, with reserve funds recommended to cover any shortfall. Repairs will proceed to maintain safe and efficient landfill operations.

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Announcements

Members of Council announced the following:

- Deputy Mayor Regier announced that Makenzie Baird has been recruited to the position of Planner/EDO-contract through Spring 2026, and expressed appreciation to all summer students who contributed to serving the Whitewater Region this year.
- Councillor Tabbert congratulated Whitewater Region firefighters who participated in the most recent challenge.
- Councillor Moore highlighted an upcoming event on September 14th in Beachburg for the annual "Fiberfest".
- Mayor Nicholson announced that Kula Wellness will be holding its Grand Re-Opening on September 6 at 11:00 a.m., and congratulated Sour Joe's, Beautiful Homes & Gardens the Valley Market, and Wild Grounded Retreats on receiving recognition through Community Votes Renfrew County 2025.

Closed Session

Council convened in closed session to discuss negotiation strategies and instructions related to Sno-Goers and Whitewater Seniors Home Support and Active Living, with staff remaining in the room.

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Additional information:

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