

WHITEWATER REGION COUNCIL SUMMARY



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 4, 2026

Here is a summary of the Regular Meeting of the Council on **February 4, 2026**. 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 Comments

CAO Burton and staff presented the 2025 Quarter 4 Report. The report highlights key achievements including the development of the 2026 Budget and five-year financial projections, the establishment of a Budget Committee. The report also noted progress on key infrastructure projects, including the Beachburg Water Treatment Plant Renewal, Mine View Road Reconstruction, Cemetery Road project, and Cobden Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrades, alongside strengthened governance through policy updates, staff training, and ongoing operational advancements across planning, recreation, fire services, public works, and 25th anniversary planning for 2026. [The full 2025 Q4 Report document is available for review here.](#)

Resident Melvin Langton presented Council with a petition requesting reconsideration of the phased reconstruction plan for Zion Line and Government Road. He noted that culvert work was completed in 2024 and that full reconstruction, originally planned for 2026, was postponed. Citing heavy business, agricultural, and residential traffic, Mr. Langton urged Council to proceed with the road and infrastructure improvements in 2026 to improve travel conditions for residents and local businesses.

Mayor's Address

Mayor Nicholson highlighted several significant advancements and announcements for the municipality since the last Council meeting, including:

Ontario Municipal Housing Infrastructure Program – Health and Safety Water Stream:

The Province has awarded four grants in Renfrew County totaling \$38 million, with Whitewater Region receiving \$4 million to upgrade the Beachburg Water Treatment Plant. This funding stream reflects years of Council advocacy and previous grant applications, and Council will continue to pursue future funding for wastewater and water infrastructure improvements. The grant will support essential upgrades to Whitewater's water system without placing additional strain on municipal budgets or the tax base.

Cobden Watermain Break Response: Mayor Nicholson acknowledged the recent watermain break in Cobden and thanked residents for their patience during service disruptions. He recognized the impact on businesses, institutions, and residents, and commended staff for their diligent work, including door-to-door communication, to minimize disruptions.

ROMA Delegations (Rural Ontario Municipal Association): Mayor Nicholson provided an overview of recent ROMA delegations, highlighting discussions on rising OPP detachment costs and their impact on municipal tax rates, Bill 60, and Whitewater Region's recognition for its Age-Friendly Community initiatives. Additional discussions focused on the former Timminco Mine site,

economic development, job creation and trade, the proposed Connect Health Hub in Cobden, and ongoing advocacy for Highway 17 expansion and safety. Mayor Nicholson advised that a detailed report will be presented to Council at the next meeting.

County of Renfrew Budget: The 2026 County of Renfrew budget was finalized with an overall increase of 6.68%, with the majority of expenditures concentrated in key service areas such as health, community services, and public works.

Community Development

Council approved a by-law authorizing the Township to execute a supplemental subdivision agreement with Adrian Vereyken & Sons Developments Limited for Plan of Subdivision D-12-107 (Vereyken Subdivision). The updated agreement applies to Phases 3-5 and reflects revised geotechnical information and provisions to support the orderly completion and continued development of the remaining lots, in accordance with the Planning Act and County of Renfrew Official Plan.

Contact: Mackenzie Baird, Planner/EDO
mbaird@whitewaterregion.ca Ext. 122

Fire Department

Council directed the CAO and Fire Chief to negotiate the terms of an *Auto Extrication Agreement* with the United Townships of Head, Clara and Maria to address the lack of dedicated extrication services along a section of Highway 17 between Deux Rivières and Mackey. The agreement would formalize potential support from the Whitewater Region Fire Department, enhancing regional emergency response while maintaining primary service coverage within the Township.

Contact: Jonathan McLaren, Fire Chief
jmclaren@whitewaterregion.ca

Public Works

Council approved a one-year contract extension (Year 7 – April 1, 2026 to March 31, 2027) with Miller Waste Systems Inc. for curbside waste collection at a total cost of \$318,780.94, inclusive of non-refundable HST, and authorized the Mayor and Clerk to execute the necessary agreements. The extension maintains existing service levels and pricing structure, while allowing the Township to continue evaluating long-term waste collection options and potential joint tendering opportunities with neighbouring municipalities.

Council received the Beachburg Water Treatment Plant Renewal and Optimization Project Update for information and approved the revised change order for the replacement of the coagulant and pre- and post-chlorination dosing systems. The project, now nearing substantial completion, will enhance system reliability, support regulatory compliance, and ensure continued delivery of safe drinking water to the community.

Contact: Lane Cleroux, Manager of Public Works
lcleroux@whitewaterregion.ca Ext. 128

Corporate Management & Legislative Services

Council approved the Township of Whitewater Region's 2026 Departmental Workplan, which outlines 32 strategies across all departments to support the implementation of Council's Strategic Plan and corporate priorities, including infrastructure, financial sustainability, service levels, staffing, and economic development, with defined actions, resources, and expected results, and a mid-year progress update to be provided to Council.

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Additional information:

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