

WHITEWATER REGION COUNCIL SUMMARY



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 20, 2026

Here is a summary of the Regular Meeting of the Council on **May 20, 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.

Mayor's Address

Mayor Nicholson reported that he was pleased to see water levels along the Ottawa River beginning to recede, with the flood warning ending today. He extended thanks to staff for their efforts throughout the flooding event, including road closures, monitoring, and sandbagging operations. While recovery efforts are ongoing, support will continue to be provided as needed. The Mayor also recognized Public Works Week and expressed appreciation to the Public Works team for their ongoing work behind the scenes to keep the municipality operating smoothly. In addition, he highlighted the importance of childcare services in the community and noted the upcoming addition of 31 new licensed childcare spaces. He thanked Council, County Council, and staff for their collaboration in helping bring this initiative forward.

Presentations

Council received an update on the Joint Municipal Services Corporation (JMSC) Water and Wastewater Services Feasibility Study led by LAS with participating Ontario municipalities. The study is assessing the feasibility of a shared services corporation to manage water and wastewater systems, with potential benefits including economies of scale, reduced financing costs, improved long-term planning, and stronger risk management. The proposed model would oversee operations, capital planning, billing, regulatory compliance, and governance through a skills-based board, with any participation decisions remaining with individual councils. [Full presentation can be found here.](#)

Council also received an update from Bill Smith, Executive Director of the Killaloe Community Resource Centre, on the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) expansion. The project proposes a new 31-space childcare centre (15 toddler, 16 preschool) at The Arc at Logos Land in partnership with Summerhill Properties. The project is currently in design, with construction expected to begin in mid-to-late summer and opening following completion and licensing approvals.

Public Meeting

A public meeting was held to receive information and hear comments regarding a proposed Zoning By-law Amendment for 1662 Westmeath Road, in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act. No members of the public attended the meeting, and no comments or submissions were received.

Corporate Management & Legislative Services

Council received a report outlining proposed delegation requests for the 2026 Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Conference. The Township plans to meet with several provincial ministries to advocate for priorities related to municipal governance, financial sustainability, infrastructure, housing, economic development, community wellbeing, environmental stewardship, and emergency management. The report also noted planned discussions with Hydro One and the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) regarding regional energy opportunities and challenges.

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Community Development

Council approved an amendment to extend the Township's current Development Charges By-law by removing its June 30, 2026 expiry date. Recent provincial legislation allows development charge by-laws to remain in effect for up to 10 years, enabling the Township to maintain existing development charge rates and continue collecting growth-related funding for infrastructure and municipal services. The amendment is administrative in nature and avoids the need for a full development charges review until a comprehensive update is completed in 2027–2028.

Following a public meeting, Council approved a zoning amendment for 1662 Westmeath Rd, rezoning portions of the property from Rural (RU) to Rural – Exception Eighty-Four (RU-E84). The amendment satisfies conditions of previous severance approvals by establishing a 40-metre rear yard setback to protect adjacent wetlands and reducing the required setback from a waste disposal site to 165 metres based on supporting studies. The application was consistent with provincial, county, and Township planning policies and will now proceed through the standard notice and appeal process.

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Public Works

Council received the Draft Transportation Master Plan (TMP), a long-term strategic document developed with Egis and the County of Renfrew to guide transportation planning and infrastructure investment through 2034. The TMP provides a framework for a safe, efficient, and sustainable multi-modal transportation network, including roads, active transportation, and future growth planning. Key recommendations include updated policies for road classification, access management, traffic calming, all-way stop controls, and pedestrian crossovers, along with measures to improve road safety and support coordinated land use and infrastructure planning. The draft TMP is now open for public and community feedback for a 30-day review period. Following consultation, staff will review input received and return to Council with a final Transportation Master Plan for adoption and implementation.

Council approved a partnership with Royal Canadian Legion Branch 550 Cobden for the installation of commemorative crosswalks in Cobden, Beachburg, Foresters Falls, and Westmeath, including a municipal contribution of up to \$3,000. The crosswalks will honour fallen and current veterans and members of the Canadian Armed Forces. Council also authorized the Mayor and Clerk to execute the necessary agreement with the Legion and

directed staff to submit a request to the County of Renfrew for approval of the crosswalks on County roads.

Council awarded Tender 2026-09 to Da-Lee Services Inc. dba Da-Lee Dust Control for \$122,763.26, inclusive of non-refundable HST. The contract will provide 260,000 litres of dust suppressant for application on the Township's gravel road network, helping improve road conditions, reduce dust, and enhance safety. The project exceeds the approved budget by \$7,763.26, which will be funded through the working funds reserve.

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Finance & Administration

Council approved the 2026 Pembroke & Area Airport Commission budget and the Township's requisition contribution of \$18,899.12. The airport serves as a key piece of regional transportation infrastructure, supporting economic development, tourism, and essential aviation services across the Ottawa Valley. Whitewater Region's contribution is based on its share of the total assessment among the six participating municipalities and is funded within the Township's approved 2026 operating budget.

Council received a report reviewing Council remuneration for the 2026-2030 term. Following a comparison with other municipalities in Renfrew County, staff determined that the Township's current compensation framework remains fair and competitive, and no significant changes are proposed. Salaries will continue to be adjusted annually based on the same cost-of-living increases applied to staff, while existing mileage, conference, and expense allowances will remain in place. Any approved changes will take effect with the new term of Council beginning after the 2026 municipal election.

Council approved the 2026 property tax rates and amendments to the Township's 2026 budget and user fees by-laws. The changes reflect updates to commercial recycling funding and provincial tax policy adjustments. The 2026 municipal levy is set at \$8.3 million, with the average residential property seeing an increase of approximately \$144.53 in annual property taxes.

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Additional information:

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