



***Minutes of the Regular Meeting
September 17, 2025
1 Johnson Drive, Desbarats, ON
POR 1E0***

The following minutes are comprised of resolutions and the Deputy Clerk's interpretation of the meeting. The meeting was called to order at 5:55 PM.

Present: R. McKinnon, G. Grant, J. Kern, E. McKinnon,

Absent with regret: K. Stobie

Staff: J. Boucher, C. Goertzen, R. Ford, F. Labelle, D. Methot, R. Smith, P. Trotter

Res: 2025-130 J. Kern, G. Grant

BE IT RESOLVED THAT COUNCIL calls this regular meeting of Council to Order at 5:55 PM.

(cd)

Recognition of the Land Acknowledgment was given by Mayor Reg McKinnon.

No Declaration of Pecuniary Interest was filed at this time.

The minutes, statements and staff reports were approved as presented.

An addendum was presented for Council consideration. The following resolution was adopted.

Res: 2025-131 E. McKinnon, G. Grant

BE IT RESOLVED THAT COUNCIL adopt the addendum as presented.

(cd)

Robert Peace, a representative of Rock Networks, with PomeGran, was in attendance to provide Council with an update on their fibre-to-the-home project in Johnson Township. They will be hosting a community meeting in October to provide additional information to residents and answer questions. The next step in the process would be for Rock Networks to obtain homeowner consents to run the service lines from the road to homes. More information would be available to the public on this process at the community meeting in October. At the time of the meeting, the date had not been established.

Res: 2025-132 E. McKinnon, J. Kern

BE IT RESOLVED THAT COUNCIL approves the minutes of the August 20, 2025 meeting of Council as presented.

(cd)

Res: 2025-133 G. Grant, J. Kern

BE IT RESOLVED THAT COUNCIL adopts the statements for the month of August, 2025 as presented.

(cd)

Res: 2025-134 J. Kern, E. McKinnon

BE IT RESOLVED THAT COUNCIL adopts the Staff and Committee Reports for August, 2025.

(cd)

A complaint regarding the surface treatment of Gordon Lake Road was received. Based on the 2025 Roads Work Plan, only a portion of the road was to be surface treated this year and the remainder would be done as a part of the 2026 Roads Work Plan.

Hall rentals within the municipality were discussed. Area rental agreements were considered. Further information would be provided at the October Council meeting.

The following by-law adoption for the assumption of parts of Carter Side Road and Gordon Lake Road had been completed through By-law No. 2025-1142, however the municipal lawyer recommended that a stand alone by-law be adopted solely for the Carter Side Road portions.

Res: 2025-135 G. Grant, E. McKinnon

BE IT RESOLVED THAT COUNCIL adopt By-Law No. 2025-1151, being a road assumption by-law to assume parts of Carter Side Road, being Part 3 and Part 4, 1R14156.

(cd)

An updated policy regarding the sale or disposition of municipal property was presented for adoption.

Res: 2025-136 J. Kern, E. McKinnon

BE IT RESOLVED THAT COUNCIL adopts By-law No. 2025-1152, being a by-law to adopt a policy to provide guidance and the procedures governing the sale or disposition of municipal property.

(cd)

Correspondence was received from the Township of Larder regarding the request for an extension of the firefighter certification deadlines under Ontario Regulation 343/22. The municipality supported this, and adopted the following resolution.

Res: 2025-137 G. Grant, J. Kern

WHEREAS Ontario Regulation 343/22 mandates that firefighters performing specific fire protection services be certified to a prescribed standard by July 1, 2026, with certain technical rescue disciplines requiring certification by July 1, 2028;

AND WHEREAS the Township recognizes and supports the value of the certification requirements mandated by the Province of Ontario, acknowledging that standardized training enhances firefighter safety, service quality, and public trust;

AND WHEREAS the Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM) and Ontario Fire College (OFC) are actively working to provide training and certification programs, including offering over 600 courses annually, yet some certification programs and testing resources remain under development or are not yet widely accessible, particularly in the Ontario Seal Programs;

AND WHEREAS many fire departments in Ontario are staffed predominantly by volunteer firefighters who balance full-time employment with their emergency service commitments;

AND WHEREAS the certification programs are still in development and the current availability does not adequately reflect the operational realities of volunteer fire departments, especially in rural communities, where training opportunities are limited and certification demands place undue pressure on personnel and municipal resources;

AND WHEREAS when firefighter certification was first introduced in 2018, smaller/rural Municipalities raised concerns that they do not provide the same level of fire protection services as larger municipalities or urban centres.

AND WHEREAS The Province responded thoughtfully by introducing new legislation to allow municipalities to certify firefighters only to the services they actually provide.

AND WHEREAS this flexibility is appreciated and reflects a fair and practical approach, however, training programs for many of these service-specific certifications are still not available;

AND WHEREAS it is unreasonable to expect volunteer firefighters—who already balance full-time employment and community service—to independently develop curriculums and training programs in-house that meet provincial standards and adequately prepare them for certification exams;

AND WHEREAS smaller rural volunteer fire departments often lack the necessary resources, certified personnel, and specialized expertise to independently develop training curriculums or qualify for learning contracts with the Ontario Fire College; and

AND WHEREAS these departments have long relied on the Ontario Fire College's course offerings and have been patiently awaiting the release of the Ontario Seal Programs, having noted preliminary pilot initiatives in Northern Ontario and anticipating a broader rollout of these programs in the near future;

AND WHEREAS rural municipalities would welcome the opportunity to engage in dialogue with the Office of the Fire Marshal to address current barriers and explore collaborative solutions; THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Johnson respectfully requests that the Province of Ontario, through the Ministry of the Solicitor General and the Office of the Fire Marshal, extend the compliance deadlines outlined in Ontario Regulation 343/22 to a minimum of two years beyond the final release date of the Ontario Seal programs offered in the regulation for all affected certification categories; AND THAT the Province consider implementing a phased or regionally adaptive approach to certification deadlines, taking into account the availability of training programs and the unique challenges faced by volunteer fire services in Rural Ontario; AND THAT this resolution be forwarded to the Minister of the Solicitor General, the Ontario Fire Marshal, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA), the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs (O AFC), Bill Rosenberg, MPP, and all municipalities in Ontario for support and endorsement.
(cd)

Res: 2025-138 E. McKinnon, J. Kern

BE IT RESOLVED THAT COUNCIL pass By-law Number 2025-1153, being a by-law to confirm the proceedings of the meeting of Council on September 17, 2025.
(cd)

Res: 2025-139 E. McKinnon, G. Grant

BE IT RESOLVED THAT COUNCIL agrees to adjourn and to meet again on October 15, 2025 or at the call of the Mayor.
(cd)

Mayor: Reg McKinnon

Treasurer/Deputy Clerk Janet Boucher