

CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF RYERSON

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES

March 25, 2025 AT 6:00 P.M.

The regular meeting of Council of the Corporation of the Township of Ryerson was held **March 25, 2025** at 6:00 p.m. This was a hybrid meeting combining in person, electronic meeting via Zoom and phone.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor George Sterling called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Attendance was announced, and it was noted that the meeting is being recorded.

Council members attending in person or electronically: Mayor Sterling, Councillors: Abbott, Miller, Patterson and Robertson.

Staff in attendance: Brayden Robinson and Nancy Field

Public attending in person or electronically: Nieves Guijarro, Barry Burton, Ana Cultraro, Dino Cultraro, Roman Kaczynski, Josh Lilley and Alice Hewitt.

Notice of this meeting was posted on the website.

1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

R- 49 - 25 Moved by Councillor Abbott, Seconded by Councillor Patterson

Be it resolved that Ryerson Township Council adopt the March 25, 2025, agenda as circulated.

(Carried)

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

R- 50 - 25 Moved by Councillor Miller, Seconded by Councillor Robertson,

Be it resolved that the minutes from the regular meeting on March 11, 2025 be adopted as circulated.

(Carried)

3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST: None noted.

4. REPORTS:

4.1 CAO/Treasurer

Brayden provided Council with the 2025 library budget, the 2025 final budget, the By-laws to set tax ratios for 2025, set and levy rates for taxation for 2025 and provided a report on the shared services subcommittee. Resolutions noted below.

R- 51 - 25 Moved by Councillor Robertson, Seconded by Councillor Patterson,

Be it resolved that Ryerson Township Council approve the 2025 net Library budget in the amount of \$188,150.00. Ryerson's share to be \$41,506.00 and we rescind R-44-25.

(Carried)

R- 52 -25 Moved by Councillor Abbott, Seconded by Councillor Robertson,

Be it resolved that Ryerson Township Council adopt the 2025 Budget Report, excluding expenses as per Ontario Regulation 284/09.

(Carried)

R- 53 -25 Moved by Councillor Miller, Seconded by Councillor Abbott,

Be it resolved that leave be given to introduce a Bill #13-25, being a By-law to Set Tax Ratios for 2025 and further; That By-law # 13-25 be read a First, Second and Third time, Signed and the Seal of the Corporation affixed thereto and finally passed in Council this 25th day of March, 2025.

(Carried)

R- 54 -25 Moved by Councillor Abbott, Seconded by Councillor Robertson,

Be it resolved that leave be given to introduce a Bill # 14-25 being a By-law to Set and Levy the Rates of Taxation for 2025 and further; That By-law #14-25 be read a First, Second, and Third time, Signed and the Seal of the Corporation affixed thereto and finally passed in Council this 25th day of March, 2025.

(Carried)

R- 55 -25 Moved by Councillor Abbott, Seconded by Councillor Miller,

Be it resolved that Ryerson Township Council appoint Delynne Patterson to represent the Township of Ryerson in an informal Shared Service Committee with Tri Council partners. Furthermore, that the CAO attend these meetings and support the gathering of information related to committee discussions.

(Carried)

4.2 CLERK

Nancy provided Council with the Flag and Proclamation policy. Resolution noted below.

R- 56 - 25 Moved by Councillor Patterson, Seconded by Councillor Abbott,

Be it resolved that Ryerson Township Council adopt the Flag and Proclamation Policy amended to remove 4.6 – Dignitary Visits.

(Carried)

COUNCIL REPORTS:

4.3 Councillor Patterson provided Council with a report regarding the Almaguin Highlands Health Centre.

4.4 Councillor Abbott provided Council with a report on hazmat.

5. BUSINESS ARISING/ACTIVITY LOG:

Council reviewed the correspondence provided regarding the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). discussions were had. See resolution noted below.

R- 57 - 25 Moved by Councillor Robertson, Seconded by Councillor Miller,

WHEREAS, Solar Bank Corporation, has submitted an application to the Township of Armour for approval of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) to be located at Concession 6, Part Lot 3, 219 Peggs Mountain Road in Burk's Falls; and

WHEREAS, Armour Township is encouraging public engagement and the concerns from the surrounding Townships who share infrastructure and the waterway; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Ryerson has received information from their ratepayers through delegations to Council and correspondence regarding the risks associated with BESS and of the opposition to the proposal from our community; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Ryerson recognizes the critical importance of safeguarding the health, safety, and well-being of the members of this community and surrounding communities,

and of its firefighters, and acknowledges the potential risks associated with the proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS); and

WHEREAS, the Township of Ryerson's fire department has expressed significant concerns regarding the safety of firefighting operations in the event of a fire involving a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), which could pose unique and hazardous challenges; and

WHEREAS, the proposed BESS site is located within a high-risk wildland fire zone, where the presence of such a facility could increase the risks to firefighting personnel, requiring specialized training and equipment not currently available to the Township's fire department; and

WHEREAS, in the event of a fire at the proposed BESS facility, traditional firefighting methods such as the application of water may be ineffective and could lead to contaminated lithium-ion firewater runoff that would pose a significant environmental threat to ground and water courses, particularly to the nearby Magnetawan River, a vital water source for the region; and

WHEREAS, it is a potential hazard, and because battery storage technology is in its infancy and its unknown what the long-term environmental impact of proposed BESS facility would be.

WHEREAS, from a coverage standpoint regarding the municipal liability policy and the possible risk of a third-party claim received due to firefighting activity releasing pollutants, the added likely policy response for environmental liability coverage, and the increased cost to the fire departments for this added coverage.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Township of Ryerson Council, by way of this resolution indicate our firm opposition to the application submitted by Solar Bank Corporation for a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), due to the risk of hazardous chemical contamination and the harm that would cause to the Almaguin Area, the community, the environment, and the added risks to the fire services.
2. A copy of this resolution be sent to the Planning Board of Ryerson Township for their records and consideration in evaluating the proposal, with a strong recommendation to take these safety and environmental concerns into account.
3. The Township of Ryerson shall notify Armour Township of our opposition to the application; by sending a copy of this resolution and a written submission to Armour Twp. in opposition to the proposed amendments, so we are entitled to appeal the decision.
4. The Township of Ryerson shall notify neighboring municipalities of Ryerson's opposition to the application and encourage them to consider these risks in their own assessments of the proposal.

(Carried)

R- 58 - 25 Moved by Councillor Abbott, Seconded by Councillor Miller,

Be it resolved that Ryerson Township Council amend By-law 32-24 Building By-law to include Schedule F, Administrative Fees.

(Carried)

6. COMMUNICATION ITEMS

General Information Items Received:

- Council received the Almaguin Highlands Health Council meeting minutes for March.
- Council received the February minutes from the Historical Society.
- Council received the November minutes from the Southeast Almaguin Highlands Fire Services Committee.

- Council received the Parry Sound District EMS Committee representative nomination resolution from the Township of Armour.
- Council received the Parry Sound District EMS Committee representative nomination resolution from the Village of Burk's Falls
- Council received an email from the Almaguin Community Economic Development (ACED) regarding joint services and budgets.
- Council received the budget projection for 2025-2028 from the Almaguin Community Economic Development (ACED).
- Council received the draft Joint Services Agreement from the Almaguin Community Economic Development (ACED).
- Council received the March meeting minutes from the Historical Society.
- Council received the minutes from the Facility and Functions Committee meeting.
- Council received 2025 Fire Department budget resolution from the Village of Burk's Falls
- Council received 2025 Library budget resolution from the Village of Burk's Falls
- Council received 2025 Arena budget resolution from the Village of Burk's Falls
- Council received 2025 Tri-R Landfill budget resolution from the Village of Burk's Falls
- Council received a resolution from the Village of Burk's Falls appointing a member to the Shared Services Committee.
- Council received a resolution from the Village of Burk's Falls regarding Option 2 for the library build.

7. CONFIRMING BY-LAW

R- 59 -25 Moved by Councillor Robertson, Seconded by Councillor Miller,

Be it resolved that leave be given to introduce a Bill # 15-25, being a By-law to confirm the meetings of Council and further; That By-Law # 15-25 be read a First, Second, and Third time, Signed and the Seal of the Corporation affixed thereto and finally passed in Council this 25th day of March 2025.

(Carried)

8. CLOSED MEETING:

R- 60 -25 Moved by Councillor Abbott, Seconded by Councillor Patterson,

Be it resolved that we move to a closed meeting at 6:54 p.m., pursuant to the Municipal Act 2001, c.25, Section 239(2)(f) as the subject matter being considered is regarding advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communication necessary for that purpose; The general nature of the closed meeting is regarding Shared Services Agreement.

(Carried)

9. ADJOURNMENT:

R- 61 -25 Moved by Councillor Miller, Seconded by Councillor Patterson,

Be it resolved that we do now adjourn at 7:18 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for April 8, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

(Carried)

Original signed by George Sterling

MAYOR

Original signed by Nancy Field

CLERK