

**MINUTES - REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**  
Monday December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – 6:00 pm

PRESENT Mayor Sheila Maxwell  
Councillor Grant Arnold

PRESENT VIRTUALLY Councillor David Maxwell  
Councillor David Halvorsen

ABSENT Councillor Chris Kresack

ALSO PRESENT Karen Paisley, Clerk  
Leanne Maxwell, Treasurer  
Leonard Arps, Public Works Supervisor

PRESENT VIRTUALLY Olabisi Akinsanya-Hutka, HR Assistant

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Maxwell called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm  
Mayor Maxwell provided a statement of land acknowledgement.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**RESOLUTION 2025 – 230**

**Moved by: Councillor Arnold**

**Seconded by: Councillor**

**Halvorsen**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda for the regular council meeting of December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, be approved as circulated.

**CARRIED**

3. **DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

No declarations were made.

4. **TOWN HALL SEGMENT**

No members of the public had registered to speak at the Town Hall Segment.

5. **DEPUTATIONS**

Matt Pascuzzo appeared before Council to present on behalf of his client regarding a road-widening conveyance agreement tied to a recent severance at Enders Road and Hunt Road. He explained that two parcels, identified as Parts 2 and 3 on the survey, would be conveyed to the Township for \$2.00 each. Mr. Pascuzzo requested that Council permit his firm to act for the Township in this transaction to expedite the process, noting that his client is eager to finalize her mortgage and begin construction before winter conditions worsen. Council discussed the matter and agreed that the arrangement was straightforward and cost-effective. On consensus, council approved proceeding with the conveyance and authorized the Clerk to coordinate legal representation.

Mr. Pascuzzo left the meeting at 6:10 pm.

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Lucas Bauer, Engagement Partner with MNP, presented the draft audit findings and financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2024. He introduced himself as the new lead on the file and reviewed key highlights of the audit, including the qualified opinion due to non-adoption of Asset Retirement Obligations, a prior period adjustment increasing revenue, and overall financial improvements compared to the previous year. Mr. Bauer confirmed that there were no compliance issues, fraud concerns, or going concern risks identified. He noted that the Township's net debt position improved significantly and commended management for timely audit readiness and responsiveness to recommendations. Council expressed appreciation for the improvements and on consensus, confirmed acceptance of the audit as presented.

Mr. Bauer left the meeting at 6:45 pm

**6. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S)**

**6.1 Minutes – Regular Council Meeting – November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

Council present reviewed the minutes of the November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Regular Council Meeting. Mayor Maxwell requested an amendment to the minutes.

**RESOLUTION 2025 - 231**

**Moved by: Councillor Arnold**

**Seconded by: Councillor Maxwell**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the minutes for the open session of the regular council meeting of November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, be approved as amended.

**CARRIED**

**7. DISBURSEMENT LIST**

**7.1. Payroll Report**

Council reviewed the Payroll Report. There were no questions for the Treasurer.

**7.2. Payment Register**

Council reviewed the payment register, including electronic bank payments and cheque disbursements. There were no questions for the Treasurer.

**RESOLUTION 2025-232**

**Moved by: Councillor Halvorsen**

**Seconded by: Councillor Arnold**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council approved the disbursements represented by electronic bank payments, cheque numbers 7626 to 7667, totalling \$198,646.31.

HR Assistant joined the meeting at 6:55 pm

**8. REPORTS FROM MUNICIPAL OFFICERS**

**8.1. Clerk's Report**

The Clerk confirmed that the emergency tabletop exercise scheduled for December 9 was fully organized, with approximately 14–15 participants expected, including representation from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry Fire Division. The exercise will focus on evacuation

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planning and wildfire response. Asset management work continues following recent PSD Citywide training and a level-of-service workshop aimed at aligning service standards with financial targets. Integrity Commissioner agreements have been finalized and will take effect January 1, 2026. The Clerk also reported on water system adjustments at municipal facilities, noting that one well was turned off to address water quality concerns, which affected flow rates and rink flooding. A report from SASI is anticipated at the next meeting. Looking ahead, the Clerk confirmed that a ROMA 2026 delegation has been secured with the Ministry of Emergency Preparedness and Response for January 19 to discuss rural emergency services funding. She also highlighted the December 11 deadline for summer student grant applications and requested Council's direction on proceeding with two proposed positions: a Recreation Program Assistant and a Public Works Summer Student. Finally, the Clerk introduced supporting documentation for Council's consideration of the LRCA briefing under New Business.

#### 8.2. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported that the new Munisoft general ledger system was successfully installed last week and is functioning well. An extension for bank reconciliation in Munisoft, previously provided at no cost, now requires payment and has been renewed. She also attended a webinar to support ongoing financial management improvements. Facility upgrades were noted, including the installation of new door trims at the community hall to prevent drafts and pest intrusion. Regarding rink operations, the Treasurer confirmed that a water delivery was completed earlier in the day to assist with flooding, with a second delivery scheduled later in the week. She advised that additional deliveries may be required depending on conditions. The Treasurer also reported that the first invoice for gravel hauled under the OPG agreement has been submitted for payment, representing significant revenue for the Township.

#### 8.3. Public Works Report

The Public Works Supervisor provided an update on winter readiness and infrastructure maintenance. Grading and sanding of roads is ongoing to improve traction during snowpack season, and several entrance culverts have been replaced to maintain proper drainage. Pothole repairs were completed on multiple routes, and the cemetery entrance was rebuilt to address erosion issues. At the landfill, operations continue with steel being hauled out for recycling revenue. The Supervisor noted that the International truck requires clutch repair estimated at approximately \$7,000, and alternative suppliers are being explored to reduce costs. He emphasized the importance of safe driving during winter conditions and confirmed that sanding will continue as needed throughout the season.

#### 8.4. Fire Chief's Report

No report this meeting.

#### 8.5. Council Member Reports

Mayor Maxwell reported attending several virtual municipal workshops and participating in the Parade of Lights, which was well attended and showcased community spirit. She also confirmed plans to attend the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority (LRCA) Christmas reception later in the week, noting the importance of maintaining strong relationships with partner agencies.

Councillor Arnold reported attending LRCA emergent meetings focused on Bill 68 and its potential impacts on conservation authority governance. He also participated in a Conservation

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Ontario information session and attended Thunder Bay District Health Unit HR committee meetings, where discussions centered on recruitment for a new Medical Officer of Health and administrative leadership. In addition, Councillor Arnold noted his involvement in planning for LRCA's upcoming social event and emphasized the significance of ongoing dialogue regarding provincial legislative changes.

Councillor Maxwell reported attending virtual workshops and participating in community events, including the Parade of Lights. He further noted that on December 5 he conducted rink lighting setup by turning the lights on and confirming timer settings to ensure proper operation for evening use. In addition, he reset a breaker at the community hall to restore electrical functionality.

Councillor Halvorsen expressed appreciation for Council's support during his recent absence and stated that he was pleased to resume his duties. He reported no additional updates at this meeting.

#### 8.6. Other Agencies' Reports

Council reviewed reports from external agencies that were included in the Clerk's Report and provided primarily for information purposes. Highlights included a save-the-date notice for the 2026 Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) Conference, scheduled for April 22–24 at the Valhalla Hotel and Conference Centre. Council noted correspondence from the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks requesting feedback on proposed amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act*. Council also reviewed correspondence from the Town of Goderich outlining concerns regarding Bill 68 and the proposed consolidation of conservation authorities.

#### **RESOLUTION 2025-233**

**Moved by: Councillor Arnold**

**Seconded by: Councillor Maxwell**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council received the reports presented as listed in Section 8 of this evening's agenda.

#### **9. NEW BUSINESS**

##### 9.1 LRCA Briefing – Bill 68 and Conservation Authority Consolidation.

Council discussed the LRCA briefing on Bill 68, which proposes consolidation of Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into seven regional entities under a new provincial agency. Members expressed concerns about the loss of local representation, increased bureaucracy, and potential impacts on stewardship of lands donated for conservation purposes. Council emphasized the importance of maintaining locally governed, watershed-based conservation authorities and opposed the proposed "Huron-Superior Regional Conservation Authority" boundary configuration outlined in Environmental Registry Notice 025-1257.

Following this discussion, Council adopted the following resolution:

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**RESOLUTION 2025-234**

**Moved By: Councillor Arnold**

**Seconded By: Councillor Halvorsen**

**WHEREAS** the *Conservation Authorities Act* (1946) enables municipalities to establish local conservation authorities, and when municipalities choose to form such authorities, they assume responsibility for governance and funding through the appointment of a Board of Directors and the provision of an annual levy to cover expenses;

**AND WHEREAS** the municipalities within Lakehead Region established the Neebing Valley Conservation Authority in 1954 which enlarged to the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority (LRCA) in 1963;

**AND WHEREAS** local municipalities currently provide approximately 50% of total conservation authority funding, while the Province of Ontario provides approximately 5%;

**AND WHEREAS** municipalities have governed their respective conservation authorities for decades, tailoring programs and services to local watershed needs, maintaining accountable service standards, and ensuring fair and predictable costs for ratepayers;

**AND WHEREAS** conservation authorities collectively own and manage thousands of hectares of land, much of which was donated by local residents and entrusted to conservation authorities as a personal legacy for long-term protection, stewardship, and the public good, with the expectation that such lands would be cared for by locally governed conservation authorities;

**AND WHEREAS** Bill 68 (Schedule 3) proposes the creation of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency, a Crown corporation that would assume governance responsibilities and consolidate Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into seven regional authorities, with municipal cost apportionment yet to be defined;

**AND WHEREAS** the Province already possesses the authority to establish overarching legislation, regulations, and standards through the *Conservation Authorities Act* and the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Township of Conmee calls on the Government of Ontario to maintain local, independent, municipally governed, watershed-based conservation authorities to ensure strong local representation in decisions related to municipal levies, community-focused service delivery, and the protection and management of conservation lands;

**AND THAT** while the Township of Conmee supports provincial goals for consistent permit approval processes, shared services, and digital modernization, imposing a new top-down agency structure without strong local accountability and governance risks creating unnecessary cost, red tape, and bureaucracy, thereby undermining efficiency and responsiveness to local community needs;

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**AND THAT** the Township of Conmee supports efforts to balance expertise, capacity, and program delivery across the province, and requests that the province work collaboratively with municipalities and local conservation authorities to determine the most effective level of strategic consolidation to achieve both provincial and local objectives;

**AND THAT** the Township of Conmee is opposed to the proposed "Huron-Superior Regional Conservation Authority" boundary configuration outlined in Environmental Registry Notice 025-1257;

**AND THAT** the Township of Conmee recommends that the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority form the "Northwestern Ontario Regional Conservation Authority";

**AND THAT** the Ministry engage directly with affected municipalities of the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority, before finalizing any consolidation boundaries or legislative amendments;

**AND THAT** a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Environmental Registry of Ontario consultations and to:

- the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and his Opposition critics;
- local Members of Provincial Parliament;
- local Members of Parliament;
- the Association of Municipalities of Ontario;
- Conservation Ontario;
- All local municipalities; and
- All Conservation Authorities in Ontario.

**CARRIED**

#### **10. BY-LAWS**

There were no by-laws scheduled for this meeting.

#### **11. CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no resolutions from other Municipalities at this evening's meeting.

#### **UPCOMING MEETING DATES**

The list of upcoming regular Council meeting dates was available for review. No changes were proposed.

#### **13. CLOSED SESSION**

##### **RESOLUTION 2025-235**

**Moved by: Councillor Halvorsen**

**Seconded by: Councillor Arnold**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the time being 7:55 p.m., Council enter Closed Session under the authority of those paragraphs of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended, for which the meetings were closed, to consider Item 13.1, being the Closed Session minutes of the Council meeting held November 12th, 2025, under the authority of those paragraphs of the Act



for which the original meeting was closed; and under paragraph 239(2)(f) for Item 13.2, involving advice subject to solicitor-client privilege; under paragraph 239(2)(d) for Item 13.3, involving labour relations or employee negotiations; and under paragraph 239(2)(h) for Item 13.4, involving information supplied in confidence by another level of government or agency.

**CARRIED**

During closed session, the following procedural resolution was passed:

**RESOLUTION 2025-236**

**Moved by: Councillor Maxwell**

**Seconded by: Councillor Halvorsen**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the time being 8:40 pm, Council rise from closed session and report in open session.

**CARRIED**

Open session resumed.

**14. REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION**

**RESOLUTION 2025- 237**

**Moved by: Councillor Arnold**

**Seconded by: Councillor Halvorsen**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Closed Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, be approved; AND FURTHER, THAT Administration be authorized to proceed as directed in closed session.

**CARRIED**

**15. CONFIRMING BY-LAW**

By-law 2025-038

**RESOLUTION 2025-238**

**Moved by: Councillor Maxwell**

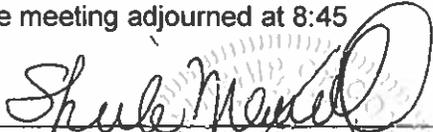
**Seconded by: Councillor Halvorsen**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT By-law 2025-038 be passed;  
AND, FURTHER, THAT the Mayor and Clerk be authorized on behalf of the Township of Conmee to affix their signatures to By-law No. 2025-038, being a By-law to confirm the proceedings of this evening's meeting.

**CARRIED**

**16. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to attend to, the mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

  
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Mayor Sheila Maxwell

  
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Clerk Karen Paisley