

**MINUTES - REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**  
Tuesday February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026 – 6:00 pm

**PRESENT** Mayor Sheila Maxwell  
Councillor Grant Arnold

**PRESENT VIRTUALLY** Councillor Chris Kresack  
Councillor David Halvorsen  
Councillor David Maxwell

**ALSO PRESENT** Karen Paisley, Clerk  
Leanne Maxwell, Treasurer  
Robb Day, Fire Chief

**PRESENT VIRTUALLY** Olabisi Akinsanya-Hutka, HR Assistant

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Maxwell called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.  
Mayor Maxwell provided a statement of land acknowledgement.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Council added Item 9.4 – Highway 11/17 Road Safety under New Business.

**RESOLUTION 2026–021**

**Moved by: Councillor Halvorsen**

**Seconded by: Councillor Arnold**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda for the regular council meeting of February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026, be approved as amended.

**CARRIED**

**3. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

None declared.

**4. TOWN HALL SEGMENT**

No members of the public registered to speak.

**5. DEPUTATIONS**

None scheduled.

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

**6.1 Minutes – Regular Council Meeting – January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

Council reviewed the minutes of the January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026 Regular Council Meeting. No amendments were requested.

**RESOLUTION 2026 - 022**

**Moved by: Councillor Arnold**

**Seconded by: Councillor Maxwell**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the minutes for the open session of the regular council meeting of January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026, be approved as circulated.

**CARRIED**

*RB SM*

## 7. DISBURSEMENT LIST

### 7.1. Payroll Report

Council reviewed the payroll report. There were no questions for Administration.

### 7.2. Payment Register

Council reviewed the payment register, including electronic bank payments and cheque disbursements. The Treasurer responded to questions from Council.

## **RESOLUTION 2026-023**

**Moved by: Councillor Kresack**

**Seconded by: Councillor Halvorsen**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council approve the disbursements represented by electronic bank payments and cheque numbers 7748 to 7763 totalling \$62,005.52.

**CARRIED**

## 8. REPORTS FROM MUNICIPAL OFFICERS

### 8.1. Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on several ongoing matters, including updates to the Fire Protection Grant, noting the PPE dryer has been ordered and delivery information is pending. She advised that the FireSmart Community Grant will proceed with the same consultant who completed the 2019 work and who submitted the most competitive proposal. The Clerk also confirmed that the draft Winter Sand Storage Agreement has been sent to the Township solicitor for review. She further reported that she and the Clerk of O'Connor are reviewing the Fleming Road inter-municipal maintenance agreement schedule to confirm consistency with past practice, and that the Lakehead Rural Planning Board has confirmed the intended severance will create two residential lots, each containing an existing dwelling, and Administration has verified that building permits for both dwellings exist in municipal records.

### 8.2. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer advised Council that tax payments are being received steadily and that she has a scheduled call with MNP later in the week regarding outstanding assessment inquiries. She noted that staff continue to receive resident contact information updates and that several completed forms have already been returned. She also advised that these updates will be incorporated into municipal property files and shared with the fire department once compiled.

### 8.3. Public Works Report

No report was submitted for this meeting.

HR Assistant joined the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

### 8.4. Fire Chief's Report

The Fire Chief reported that January was a slower month, with one medical call, one motor vehicle collision, and one fire call. He confirmed that all 2025 incident reports have been filed with the Office of the Fire Marshal and that the department responded to 41 calls in 2025, including 25 medical calls and 16 fire or collision-related calls. He reviewed the 2026 training schedule, discussed recent Thunder Bay Zone meetings regarding training requirements and mutual aid challenges, and noted that he must complete a three-day Incident Safety Officer

TP SM

course with 40 hours of pre-class work, which is only offered in southern Ontario. He outlined significant challenges associated with meeting mandatory provincial certification requirements, explaining that while Conmee will technically meet minimum departmental standards once he completes the course, the legislation requires certified personnel to be present at every call, which is not possible given the department's volunteer staffing levels. He discussed ongoing regional shortages of trained personnel, the limitations of mutual aid, and the need for district-level shared-service or automatic-aid models to ensure safe and timely emergency response. He further highlighted concerns regarding constrained water sources, potential shared staffing solutions, and the broader provincial context affecting all rural fire services. The Chief also confirmed that two additional members are training for DZ licences and that the department continues to recruit, although volunteer retention remains a concern.

#### 8.5. Council Member Reports

Mayor Maxwell reported that she attended the LRMC meeting on February 3, where discussions focused on regional student transportation challenges, and advised that LRMC would be preparing a joint letter to Student Transportation Services. She also summarized Conmee's participation in the ROMA Conference, including the joint delegation with the Municipality of Oliver Paipooonge to the Ministry of Transportation on local highway safety issues. The Mayor additionally briefed Council on the landfill propane outage that occurred over the weekend, the remedial steps taken, and the importance of ensuring that propane enclosures remain accessible for service providers. She asked Public Works to address reduced parking capacity at the Community Centre due to accumulated snow and requested that the Clerk clarify whether residents are legally permitted to push snow across municipal roads following a resident inquiry.

Councillor Arnold reported that he accompanied Councillor Halvorsen on a site visit within the municipality to provide background on ongoing property and road matters. He provided updates on his upcoming meetings, including the Thunder Bay District Health Unit Board meeting on February 18, an AMO meeting on February 19, and the LRCA meeting on February 25. He advised that he will be unable to attend the February 24 Council meeting due to a prior commitment. Councillor Arnold also raised concerns regarding the issuance of building permits where severances have not yet been completed and recommended that staff ensure all necessary planning approvals and documents are in place prior to the issuance of permits.

Councillor Halvorsen discussed his attendance at the February 5 Lakehead Rural Planning Board meeting, noting there were no members of the public present and that he provided background information to the Board based on recent resident concerns. He also updated Council on correspondence from the Inspector General of Policing and advised that province-wide reviews of policing oversight, governance structures, and potential corruption investigations are underway.

Councillor Maxwell reported that he participated in the Emergency Management Committee meeting on February 5, where members continued reviewing the Emergency Response Plan. He also described responding to the landfill propane outage and assisting the Facilities Manager with snow clearing at both the landfill and Community Centre propane enclosures. He reiterated concerns regarding parking availability at the Community Centre ahead of a large private rental in March.

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Councillor Kresack reported that the Food Bank Board meeting is scheduled for February 11<sup>th</sup>. He raised concerns regarding public speculation on social media about the quality of soil being delivered to municipal properties by OPG and requested that Public Works provide Council with the official soil reports to ensure transparency and accuracy of information. He also reiterated that such documentation should be circulated promptly to Council to address future resident inquiries. Additionally, he informed Council that a resident has offered access to his property for potential fire department training related to well drafting and confined space considerations and asked that the Clerk forward the information to the Fire Chief for follow-up.

8.6. Other Agencies' Reports

Council reviewed the other agency materials provided for information under this section.

**RESOLUTION 2026-024**

**Moved by: Councillor Arnold**

**Seconded by: Councillor Halvorsen**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive the reports presented as listed in Section 8 of this evening's agenda and that Administration be authorized to proceed as directed.

**CARRIED**

9. **NEW BUSINESS**

9.1 Establish a Budget Committee/Working Group

Council discussed the need to begin 2026 budget planning. By consensus, the Budget Committee will consist of the Mayor, Councillor Halvorsen, Councillor Maxwell, the Clerk and the Treasurer.

9.2 Operational Complaint & Service Request Policy Report

Council reviewed the draft policy establishing a clear process for receiving, tracking, and responding to operational complaints and service requests. No amendments requested.

9.3 Election Voting Method – Voter Turnout Evidence and Options

Council reviewed the Clerk's report on voter turnout data and the impact of voting methods in Ontario municipalities. Council determined that Conmee will maintain traditional in-person voting for 2026, with a voter survey at the polls to assess future interest in alternative voting methods.

**RESOLUTION 2026-025**

**Moved by: Councillor Kresack**

**Seconded by: Councillor Halvorsen**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Township of Conmee retain traditional in-person voting for the 2026 municipal election, and that a voter survey be conducted at the polling station to assess community interest in alternative voting methods for future elections.

**CARRIED**

*KP GM*

**9.4 Road Safety – Highway 11/17**

Council discussed safety concerns related to two hazardous curves on Highway 11/17, including sign placement, line-of-sight issues, shading, speed advisories, and tree removal. Council directed Administration to prepare a letter to the Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge and the Ministry of Transportation outlining concerns and recommendations, and to copy the local MPP.

**RESOLUTION 2026-026**

**Moved by: Councillor Arnold**

**Seconded by: Councillor Halvorsen**

THAT Administration be directed to prepare and send correspondence to the Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge and the Ministry of Transportation regarding safety concerns on Highway 11/17, and that the Township's local MPP be copied on the correspondence.

**CARRIED**

**10. BY-LAWS**

There were no by-laws scheduled for consideration at this meeting.

**11. CORRESPONDENCE**

11.1-1 Town of Fort Frances – Support for Ontario Airport Capital Assistance Program (OACAP)  
Council directed that a letter of support be issued.

**RESOLUTION 2026-027**

**Moved by: Councillor Arnold**

**Seconded by: Councillor Halvorsen**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council received the correspondence listed in Section 11 and that a letter of support regarding the Ontario Airport Capital Assistance Program be issued to the Town of Fort Frances.

**CARRIED**

**12. UPCOMING MEETING DATES**

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

**13. CLOSED SESSION**

**RESOLUTION 2026-028**

**Moved by: Councillor Arnold**

**Seconded by: Councillor Kresack**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, at 7:58 p.m., Council move into Closed Session pursuant to Section 239 of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended, to consider Item 13.1, being the Closed Session minutes of the Council meeting held January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026, under the same authority as the original meeting; Item 13.2 and Item 13.5 involving personal matters about identifiable individuals and labour relations or employee negotiations under paragraphs 239(2)(b) and 239(2)(d); Item 13.3, which is advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, under paragraph 239(2)(f); and Item 13.4, being personal matters about an identifiable individual and a matter of law enforcement, under paragraph 239(2)(b) and 239(2)(c).

**CARRIED**

*AP gn*

During closed session, Councillor Halvorsen left the meeting at 8:18 p.m.  
During closed session, Chief Day left the meeting at 8:28 p.m.

During closed session, the following procedural resolution was passed:

**RESOLUTION 2026-029**

**Moved by: Councillor Arnold**

**Seconded by: Councillor Kresack**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the time being 8:47 pm, Council rise from closed session and report in open session.

**CARRIED**

Open session resumed.

**14. REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION**

**RESOLUTION 2026-030**

**Moved by: Councillor Arnold**

**Seconded by: Councillor Maxwell**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Closed Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026, be approved; AND FURTHER, THAT Administration be authorized to proceed as directed in closed session.

**CARRIED**

**15. CONFIRMING BY-LAW**

By-law 2026-003

**RESOLUTION 2026-031**

**Moved by: Councillor Maxwell**


**Seconded by: Councillor Kresack**


BE IT RESOLVED THAT By-law 2026-003 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. 2026-003, 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 8:58 pm.

  
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Mayor Sheila Maxwell

  
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Clerk Karen Paisley