



City of Port Colborne
Council Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, March 10, 2026
Time: 6:30 pm
Location: Council Chambers, 3rd Floor, City Hall
66 Charlotte Street, Port Colborne

Members Present: M. Aquilina, Councillor
M. Bagu, Councillor
E. Beauregard, Councillor
R. Bodner, Councillor
G. Bruno, Councillor
F. Danch, Councillor
D. Elliott, Councillor
T. Hoyle, Councillor
W. Steele, Mayor (presiding officer)

Staff Present: E. Acs, Chief Planner
B. Boles, Chief Administrative Officer
J. Beaupre, Deputy Clerk
R. Bisson, Senior Health Advisor
S. Double, Fire Chief
G. Long, Director of Development and Business Enterprises
C. Madden, City Clerk
E. Rzeczyca, Election Coordinator
S. Shypowskyj, Director of Public Works

Others Present: V. Badawey, Regional Councillor
A. Berk, KPMG
C. Jeffreys, KMPG
D. Miller, KPMG
G. Wardle, Preyra Solutions Group

1. Call to Order

Mayor Steele called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

2. **Adoption of Agenda**

There was the addition of two delegations and Appendix A was replaced for report 2026-07.

C-25- 037

Moved by Councillor F. Danch

Seconded by Councillor E. Beauregard

That the agenda dated March 10, 2026, be confirmed, as amended.

Carried

3. **Disclosures of Interest**

3.1 Councillor E. Beauregard - Brownfield Tax Increment Grant – Fraser Street and Welland Street Properties – Canal Breeze Inc. Property, 2026-26

I, Eric Beauregard, have an indirect pecuniary interest as my employer is an agent for Rankin Construction, the parent company of the Applicant.

3.2 Councillor E. Beauregard - By-law No. 7440/24/26

I, Eric Beauregard, declare an indirect pecuniary interest as I am employed by an agent of Rankin Construction, the parent company of the Applicant.

4. **Closed Session (Beginning at 5 p.m.)**

C-25- 038

Moved by Councillor D. Elliott

Seconded by Councillor T. Hoyle

That Council do now proceed to meet in Closed Session at 5:02 p.m. under the *Municipal Act, 2001* subsection 239(2)(f) advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose and subsection.

Carried

4.1 Approval of Closed Session Minutes

a. **Regular Council Meeting (Closed Session) - February 10, 2026**

b. **Regular Council Meeting (Closed Session) - February 24, 2026**

4.2 Legal Opinion Regarding Council Composition

5. Back to Open Session (Beginning at 6:30 p.m.)

C-25- 039

Moved by Councillor T. Hoyle

Seconded by Councillor F. Danch

That Council rise and reconvene from Closed Session at 6:30 p.m. with report:

4.1 Approval of the Closed Session Minutes

Regular Council Meeting (closed session) – February 10, 2026

Regular Council Meeting (closed session) – February 24, 2026

Carried

6. National Anthem

Everyone stood for the National Anthem.

7. Land Acknowledgement

The Land Acknowledgement was read:

The Niagara Region is situated on treaty land. This land is steeped in the rich history of the First Nations such as the Hatiwendaronk, the Haudenosaunee, and the Anishinaabe, including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. There are many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people from across Turtle Island that live and work in Niagara today. The City of Port Colborne stands with all Indigenous people, past and present, in promoting the wise stewardship of the lands on which we live.

8. Proclamations

There were no proclamations.

9. Presentations

There were no presentations.

10. Delegations

10.1 Gary Gaverluk - 21 Woodside Drive

Gary Gaverluk delegated to Council on item 13.4 c.

10.2 Barbara Butters - 1152 Weaver Road

Barbara Butters delegated to Council on item 13.4 c.

11. Mayor's Report

A copy of the Mayor's report is attached.

12. Regional Councillor's Report

Regional Councillor Vance Badawey provided a report to Council.

13. Consent Agenda

Councillor Bagu lifted items 13.3 e and 13.3 h, which were considered under item 14, Items Requiring Separate Discussion.

C-25- 040

Moved by Councillor D. Elliott

Seconded by Councillor F. Danch

That Council hereby approves the listed consent items on the March 10, 2026, Council agenda; and

That the consent items be approved on the recommendations as contained therein.

Carried

13.1 Approval of Minutes

a. **Special Council Meeting - February 24, 2026**

b. **Regular Council Meeting - February 24, 2026**

13.2 Receipt of Minutes of Boards & Committees

a. **Port Colborne Public Library Board - January 7, 2026**

b. **Port Colborne Museum, Heritage and Culture Board - January 20, 2026**

13.3 Staff Reports

a. **Amendments to Delegation of Authority By-law, 2026-07**

b. **Corporate Use of Resources Policy for Election Purposes, 2026-42**

c. **Comprehensive CIP Downtown CIPA Tax Increment Grant – 395 Elm Street, 2026-24**

- d. **2025 Audit Plan, 2026-38**
- f. **2025 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report, 2026-39**
- g. **Housing-Enabling Water Systems Fund – Transfer Payment Agreement, 2026-35**

13.4 Receipt of Correspondence Items

- a. **The Future of Municipal Governance in Niagara - Mayor W. Steele, City of Port Colborne**
- b. **Joint Letter from 8 Lower-Tier Municipalities of Niagara Region**
- c. **Regional Governance in Niagara - Bob Gale, Niagara Regional Chair**
- d. **Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake - NR Transportation Master Plan**
- e. **Township of Wainfleet - Notice of Public Meeting - Official Plan Review**
- f. **Niagara Peninsula Conservation - Request for Support: Coordinated Spring Flood Preparedness Communications**
- g. **Niagara Transit Q4 Microtransit Statistics and LAM Enhanced Service Requests Policy**
- h. **Township of Papineau-Cameron - Ontario Veterinary College expansion of enrollment capacity**
- i. **City of Sarnia - Mayoral Authority and Municipal Police Budget Sustainability**
- j. **Township of Casey - OMERS Bill 68**
- k. **Municipality of St. Charles - Support Moosonee - Strengthening Self-Defence Protections and Addressing Rising Home Invasions in Ontario**

14. Items Requiring Separate Discussion

14.1 City of Port Colborne Healthcare Analysis Report Prepared by KPMG, 2026-40

Renée Bisson, Senior Health Advisor, provided an introduction to the consultants from KPMG. Aaron Berk, Engagement Partner, Carrie Jeffreys, Engagement Director, and Doug Miller from KPMG and Gavin

Wardle, Clinical Data Analytics Lead from Preyra Solutions Group presented to Council on the Healthcare Analysis Report.

C-25- 041

Moved by Councillor M. Aquilina
Seconded by Councillor R. Bodner

That the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer Department Report 2026-40 be received;

That Council endorse the City of Port Colborne Healthcare Analysis Report (Appendix A) as the technical foundation to inform the development of the City's Health and Wellness Strategy and to support evidence-based healthcare planning, advocacy, and partnership development in the City of Port Colborne; and

That Council direct staff to pursue provincial, federal, and partnership-based funding and infrastructure opportunities that support healthcare infrastructure, primary care expansion, diagnostic access, and community-based health services in Port Colborne; and

That staff bring forward any resulting financial implications to Council as opportunities arise; and

That Council direct staff to continue evidence-based advocacy to ensure equitable access to healthcare services for Port Colborne residents during and beyond the transition of the Complex and Urgent Care Centre (UCC).

Carried

14.2 725 King Street – Surplus Property Declaration, 2026-43

C-25- 042

Moved by Councillor T. Hoyle
Seconded by Councillor R. Bodner

That Government Relations and Business Enterprises Report 2026-43 be received; and

That Council declare the City-owned property located at 725 King Street as surplus and that this property be exempt from the City's Sale of Land Policy process.

Carried

14.3 Brownfield Tax Increment Grant – Fraser Street and Welland Street Properties – Canal Breeze Inc. Property, 2026-26

Councillor E. Beauregard declared a conflict on this item and therefore did not vote.

C-25- 043

Moved by Councillor M. Aquilina
Seconded by Councillor M. Bagu

That Planning and Development Department Report 2026-26 be received;
and

That the by-law attached as Appendix B, being a by-law to enter into the Agreement with Canal Breeze Inc. (Rankin Construction) for a Tax Increment-Based Grant with Development Charge Grant in the Brownfield Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) under the Comprehensive Community Improvement Plan (CIP), for 46, 48 & 54 Fraser Street, 302 Welland Street with the Alma & Bell St road allowances be approved.

Carried

15. Staff Remarks

Stan Double, Fire Chief, spoke about Port Colborne's status as a Next Generation 911 (NG911) community, an upgrade to emergency communications. He also announced that the Port Colborne Fire & Emergency Services is transitioning to its digital platform at the end of the month.

Steve Shypowskyj, Director of Public Works, noted there is an active weather advisory for the rain, and this could lead to localized flooding. He also noted there is a delay for the construction start date of the childcare facility on 76 Main Street West due to a material shortage.

Bryan Boles, Chief Administrative Officer, thanked staff for work over past two weeks.

16. Councillors' Remarks

Councillor Aquilina noted there has been a lot of information regarding amalgamation and healthcare recently, and thanked staff for their efforts and for keeping the momentum towards a path forward.

Councillor Bagu noted he spoke with Steve Shypowskyj, Director of Public Works, regarding extending the walking path for Sunset Park from Schofield Avenue so residents with mobility aids can better access the park. He also noted he received several emails from residents regarding amalgamation, who expressed their opposition to the idea.

Councillor Bruno noted he received feedback from residents on amalgamation.

Councillor Hoyle noted he is against amalgamation.

Councillor Bodner inquired to Steve Shypowskyj, Director of Public Works, if the drain ends with flat gates have been checked for ice that would prevent them from working.

17. Motions

C-25- 044

Moved by Councillor R. Bodner
Seconded by Councillor M. Bagu

That Council suspend the rules of procedure pursuant to Section 26.3 of the Procedural By-law in order to consider the proposed Motion.

Carried

C-25- 045

Moved by Councillor R. Bodner
Seconded by Councillor M. Bagu

Whereas the provincial government has expressed a desire to reduce the number of municipal councillors in the Niagara Region; and

Whereas the majority of Mayors signed a joint letter stating a commitment to building a governance model that is streamlined and transparent to the public; and

Whereas the timeline for Council to enact a by-law regarding ward structures, in accordance with the Municipal Act, 2001, has passed for the 2026 election;

Therefore, be it resolved That Council endorse a three ward structure and a Council composition of 6 Councillors and 1 Mayor for the City of Port Colborne, as outlined in Final Option 2 in Appendix A of Report 2025 137, Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review – Final Report; and

That the City Clerk be directed to confirm with the Premier and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing that without provincial intervention, the above changes cannot take place until the 2030 election, and request that these changes be implemented for the 2026 election.

Carried

18. Notice of Motions

There were no notices of motions.

19. Procedural Motions

20. By-laws

20.4 By-law No. 7440/24/26

Councillor E. Beauregard declared a conflict on this item and therefore did not vote.

C-25- 046

Moved by Councillor G. Bruno
Seconded by Councillor D. Elliott

That By-law No. 7440/24/26 be passed and enacted, as presented.

Carried

C-25- 047

Moved by Councillor E. Beauregard
Seconded by Councillor M. Aquilina

That the following by-law(s) be passed and enacted, as presented:

- By-law No. 7437/21/26
- By-law No. 7438/22/26
- By-law No. 7439/23/26
- By-law No. 7441/25/26
- By-law No. 7442/26/26

Carried

20.2 By-law No. 7438/22/26

20.3 By-law No. 7439/23/26

20.5 By-law No. 7441/25/26

20.6 By-law No. 7442/26/26

21. Adjournment

Mayor Steele adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

William C. Steele, Mayor

Charlotte Madden, City Clerk



PORT COLBORNE

MAYOR'S REPORT TO COUNCIL

Tuesday, March 10, 2026

AMALGAMATION

Niagara's Mayors are speaking with one voice.

On March 4, the Mayors of Grimsby, Thorold, West Lincoln, Port Colborne, Fort Erie, Pelham, Niagara-on-the-Lake, and Wainfleet delivered a joint letter to Premier Doug Ford, outlining a clear plan to modernize regional governance in Niagara. Together, we're advancing a practical agenda to:

- ✓ Reduce duplication
- ✓ Strengthen efficiency
- ✓ Address the number of elected officials
- ✓ Support long-term economic growth
- ✓ Keep taxes low for residents

This united approach focuses on delivering smarter, more streamlined services for the communities we serve. Additionally, I submitted a letter outlining the City of Port Colborne 's position to the Province of Ontario regarding the ongoing discussion about municipal governance in Niagara. In a letter sent to Premier Doug Ford this morning, I confirmed that Port Colborne does not support municipal amalgamation and instead supports a careful, evidence-based governance review.

Port Colborne is a strong and independent community with real momentum. Forced amalgamation is neither necessary nor beneficial to our continued success. Our focus should be on practical solutions that improve efficiency and deliver better value for taxpayers. I highlighted the City's recent progress, including more than \$2 billion in new investment and job creation, accelerated housing approvals, expanded childcare spaces, and local initiatives to improve healthcare access. The City is also working with the Province to establish a municipally-owned Municipal Services Corporation to support water and wastewater servicing for the East Side Employment Lands.

The letter also highlights Port Colborne's strong economic momentum while noting that decades of research show municipal amalgamation does not produce cost savings and can reduce local responsiveness and accountability. We support a governance review that is grounded in strong analysis and meaningful consultation. Port Colborne is ready to work constructively with regional and provincial partners to find modern governance solutions that strengthen Niagara while protecting the progress our community has worked hard to achieve.”

The City will continue participating in the Niagara governance review process approved by Niagara Regional Council and advocating for practical reforms that improve coordination, reduce duplication, and maintain strong local accountability. Residents can read the letters on our website.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Following my letter to the Province outlining the City of Port Colborne's position on potential changes to municipal governance in Niagara, the City is launching a public engagement process to ensure residents are part of the conversation. Residents are invited to share their feedback through a short survey or by attending one of the City's upcoming open houses. Input from residents, business owners and community members will help inform Council's position as regional governance discussions continue.

Ways to participate:

Online survey: available on our website

Paper survey: Available at City Hall, the Vale Health & Wellness Centre, and the Port Colborne Public Library.

In-person open houses:

- Thursday, March 12 | 3–7 p.m. – City Hall Council Chambers
- Saturday, March 14 | 12–4 p.m. – Vale Health & Wellness Centre

The City will also gather feedback through small group discussions with several established community advisory groups. Feedback from all engagement opportunities will be compiled and presented to Council at an upcoming public meeting.

Learn more: Learn more and take the survey at

www.portcolborne.ca/governance

TOP HAT / POLAR PLUNGE

Each year, the City of Port Colborne celebrates the opening of the Welland Canal and the start of the shipping season by welcoming the captain of the first down-bound vessel at a Top Hat Ceremony.

Join us this month to celebrate at the 2026 Top Hat Ceremony!

This year, the event takes place on Sunday, March 22, 2026 at 8 a.m. at Lock 8 Gateway Park

The Port Colborne Fair Trade Committee will be providing a pancake breakfast with hot chocolate, tea and coffee.

More details at www.portcolborne.ca/tophatceremony

Due to the forecasted extreme cold weather earlier this Winter, and to ensure participant safety, the Port Colborne Polar Plunge in support of Special Olympics Ontario was rescheduled to March 22, 2026 at 1 p.m. at H.H. Knoll Lakeview Park Boat Ramp

Participants, teams, and spectators are all still invited to take part in the coolest event of the year. Whether you're plunging solo, with friends, or cheering from shore, every icy dip helps support over 23,000 Special Olympics athletes across Ontario.

THIS CONCLUDES MY REPORT FOR THIS EVENING