

City of Port Colborne

Council Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, March 24, 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
S. Double, Fire Chief
G. Long, Director of Development and Business Enterprises
C. Madden, City Clerk
K. Martel, Manager of Planning
S. Shypowskyj, Director of Public Works

Others Present: V. Badawey, Regional Councillor
B. McDermott, YMCA
C. Wulff, YMCA
P. Kennedy, Dillon Consulting

1. Call to Order

Mayor Steele called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. National Anthem

Everyone stood for the National Anthem.

3. 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 Hattiwendaronk, 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.

4. Adoption of Agenda

The presentation slides were added to Report 2026-53.

C-25- 048

Moved by Councillor F. Danch

Seconded by Councillor D. Elliott

That the Council agenda dated March 24, 2026, be confirmed, as amended.

Carried

5. Disclosures of Interest

5.1 Mayor Steele - Port Colborne Bocce Club Loan Agreement, 2026-46

I declare a nonpecuniary interest with this item as I am a member of the Port Colborne Bocce Club.

5.2 Councillor G. Bruno - Port Colborne Bocce Club Loan Agreement, 2026-46

Indirect nonpecuniary interest as I am a life member of the Port Colborne Bocce Club and an annual member player.

5.3 Councillor E. Beauregard - Brownfield Community Improvement Plan Tax Increment Grant With Development Charge Grant Agreement – 547 King Street, 2026-54

I, Eric Beauregard, declare an indirect pecuniary interest as I am employed by Upper Canada Consultants, an agent for the Applicant.

5.4 Councillor E. Beauregard - By-law No. 7443/27/26

I, Eric Beauregard, declare an indirect pecuniary interest as I am employed by Upper Canada Consultants, an agent for the Applicant.

5.5 Mayor Steele - By-law No. 7444/28/26

I declare a nonpecuniary interest with this item as I am a member of the Port Colborne Bocce Club.

5.6 Councillor G. Bruno - By-law No. 7444/28/26

Indirect nonpecuniary interest as I am a life member of the Port Colborne Bocce Club and an annual member player.

6. Proclamations

6.1 National Day of Mourning - April 28, 2026

C-25- 049

Moved by Councillor F. Danch
Seconded by Councillor D. Elliott

WHEREAS the National Day of Mourning has been recognized since April 28th,1991; and

WHEREAS on April 28th we honour the millions of Ontarians impacted by a workplace fatality, injury, or illness; and

WHEREAS according to the Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada, in 2024, there were 1056 workplace fatalities recorded in Canada; and

WHEREAS there were 274,022 accepted claims for lost time in 2023 due to a work related injury or disease; and

WHEREAS the National Day of Mourning has since spread to about 80 countries around the world.

NOW THEREFORE I, Mayor William C. Steele do hereby proclaim April 28th 2026, as "National Day of Mourning" in the City of Port Colborne, for workers killed or injured on the job in the hopes that the annual observance of this day will strengthen the resolve to establish safe conditions in the workplace for all.

Carried

7. Presentations

7.1 YMCA Presentation

Christian Wulff, Chief Executive Officer and Ben McDermott, General Manager, Health Fitness and Aquatics from the YMCA presented an annual update to Council.

7.2 Marina Rate and Dock Project Updates

Blair Holinaty, Marina Supervisor, presented to Council on marina rates and dock project updates.

8. Delegations

There were no delegations.

9. Mayor's Report

A copy of the Mayor's report is attached.

10. Regional Councillor's Report

Regional Councillor Vance Badawey provided a report to Council.

11. Consent Agenda

Items 11.3 b, 11.3 c and 11.3 d were lifted from the Consent Agenda and considered under item 12, Items Requiring Separate Discussion.

C-25- 050

Moved by Councillor G. Bruno
Seconded by Councillor M. Bagu

That Council hereby approves the listed consent items on the March 24, 2026, Council agenda; and

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

Carried

11.1 Approval of Minutes

a. Regular Council Meeting - March 10, 2026

11.2 Receipt of Minutes of Boards & Committees

a. Port Colborne Public Library Board - February 4, 2026

b. Healthcare Advisory Committee Meeting - February 9, 2026

11.3 Staff Reports

- a. **2025 Statement of Council Remuneration and Expenses, 2026-47**

11.4 Receipt of Correspondence Items

- a. **Association of Ontario Road Supervisors - ARS Certification - Brendan Flynn and Matthew Lannan**
- b. **City of Welland - Pilot Program Consideration**
- c. **Town of Lincoln - Support Regional Motion regarding Governance Review**
- d. **Niagara Region - Approval of 2026 Interim Levy Dates and Amounts**
- e. **Regional Municipality of York - Circular Materials Ontario**
- f. **Township of McNab/Braeside - Ontario Heritage Organization Development Grant Advocacy**
- g. **City of Ottawa - Proposed New Regulation under the Restricting Public Consumption of Illegal Substances Act**
- h. **Town of Whitby - Request for a Comprehensive Review of the Provincial-Municipal Fiscal Framework**
- i. **Township of Oro Medonte - Request for Provincial Legislation Amendments, Health and Safety Concerns**
- j. **Prince Edward County - OPP - Sustainable Police Services Funding**

12. Items Requiring Separate Discussion

12.1 City of Port Colborne Official Plan – Mid-point Update to Council, 2026-53

Paddy Kennedy from Dillion Consulting presented to Council on the mid-point update of the Official Plan.

C-25- 051

Moved by Councillor E. Beauregard

Seconded by Councillor M. Aquilina

That Planning and Development Department Report 2026-53 be received;
and

That Council endorse the Policy Directions Background Report attached hereto as Appendix A; and

That Council direct Staff to continue to engage with departments, agencies, interested parties and the public on the proposed policy directions; and

That Council direct Staff to continue the work necessary to prepare a draft of the New Official Plan for public consultation.

Carried

12.2 Port Colborne Bocce Club Loan Agreement, 2026-46

Mayor Steele and Councillor Bruno both declared a conflict on this item. Councillor Aquilina took over the position of Chair for this item.

C-25- 052

Moved by Councillor M. Bagu

Seconded by Councillor F. Danch

That Recreation and Tourism Department Report 2026-46 be received; and

That Council approve the Bocce Club Loan Agreement, attached hereto as Appendix A, between the City of Port Colborne and Port Colborne Bocce Club INC. for the purposes of installing new turf courts in place of existing gravel courts at the club; and

That the agreement by-law be brought forward for Council's consideration.

Carried

Amendment:

Moved by Councillor M. Bagu

Seconded by Councillor F. Danch

That the agreement be amended to set the interest rate at 3.5% per annum and make the loan open, with no penalty if paid off early.

Lost

12.3 Brownfield Community Improvement Plan Tax Increment Grant With Development Charge Grant Agreement – 547 King Street, 2026-54

Councillor Beauregard declared a conflict on this item.

C-25- 053

Moved by Councillor F. Danch

Seconded by Councillor T. Hoyle

That Planning and Development Department Report 2026-54 be received;
and

That the by-law attached as Appendix B, being a by-law to enter into the Agreement with Elevate Living (Sandor Drew Toth) for a Tax Increment Grant with Development Charge Grant in the Brownfield Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) under the Comprehensive Community Improvement Plan (CIP), for 547 King Street, be brought forward for Council's approval.

Carried

13. Staff Remarks

Greg Zwiep, Manager of Recreation and Tourism, updated Council on the upcoming easter activities at the Vale Health and Wellness Centre. He also noted that they have signed a new 5-year agreement with the Minor Baseball League, and that they are working with the Niagara River Lions to coordinate an open practice.

Stan Double, Fire Chief, thanked his staff for their participation in the polar plunge, and also noted the same water safety crew for the event also performed a separate water rescue that day at Mudd Lake.

Steve Shypowskyj, Director of Public Works, explained that the street sweeping program will be starting on March 30, 2026, and encouraged residents to keep vehicles off the road. He also noted they are in the process of completing their ditching program, which started on Lorraine Road.

Gary Long, Director of Development and Business Enterprises, spoke to Council about the rehabilitation of Wharfs 18.1, 18.2, and 18.3. He also noted that he will be attending meetings in Ottawa and Toronto to speak about this issue.

Kelly Martel, Manager of Planning, noted they have received two development applications that are currently in progress. The first application is for 547 King Street, and that Public Meeting will be on April 7, 2026. The second one is a resubmission on the secondary plan and zoning by-law amendment from Elite.

They are working to set up an open house and a Public Meeting for the second application. They are also looking for ways to collaborate with developers in the pre stages.

Bryan Boles, Chief Administrative Officer, thanked everyone for their continued work on the regional governance and public engagement. He noted a report regarding regional governance public engagement will be coming forward in April. He also noted he will be attending various meetings in Ottawa and Toronto over the next several days.

14. Councillors' Remarks

Councillor Bodner inquired to Steve Shypowskyj, Director of Public Works, about the lights not flashing on the sign indicating the Clarence Street Bridge was raised.

Councillor Hoyle raised the topic of with high winds on dead end streets which has resulted in some street ends filling with debris.

Councillor Danch inquired to staff about the removal of a burnt trailer from a property. He also raised concerns about the functionality of bridges and traffic movements.

Councillor Elliott thanked staff for putting up the tent at the Polar Plunge event. He also noted concerns about bridge traffic when emergency vehicles need to travel on the bridge.

Councillor Bruno inquired to Gary Long, Director of Development and Business Enterprises about the PC Forge

Councillor Aquilina also noted the sign light issue at the Clarence Street Bridge. She explained that she received an inquiry from a resident on the Schneider Road / Yager Road area regarding the new water pumping coming through, and she inquired to Steve Shypowskyj, Director of Public Works, about whether fire hydrants would be installed in the area. She also congratulated Brandon Flynn for receiving his ARS Certification. Lastly, she noted the Polar Plunge event was a success.

15. Motions

There were no motions.

16. Notice of Motions

There were no notices of motions.

17. By-laws

17.1 By-law No. 7443/27/26

Councillor Beauregard declared a conflict on this item.

C-25- 054

Moved by Councillor M. Aquilina

Seconded by Councillor R. Bodner

That By-law No. 7443/27/26 be enacted and passed, as presented.

Carried

17.2 By-law No. 7444/28/26

Mayor Steele and Councillor Bruno both declared a conflict on this item.

Councillor Aquilina took over the position of Chair for this item.

C-25- 055

Moved by Councillor E. Beauregard

Seconded by Councillor T. Hoyle

That By-law No. 7444/28/26 be enacted and passed, as presented.

Carried

17.3 By-law No. 7445/29/26

C-25- 056

Moved by Councillor M. Bagu

Seconded by Councillor D. Elliott

That By-law No. 7445/29/26 be enacted and passed, as presented.

Carried

18. Closed Session

C-25- 057

Moved by Councillor D. Elliott

Seconded by Councillor F. Danch

That Council do now proceed to meet in Closed Session at 9:15 p.m. under the
Municipal Act, 2001:

- Subsection 239(2)(c) a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipality or local board.
- Subsection 239(2)(k) a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the municipality or local board.

Carried

18.1 Approval of Closed Session Minutes

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

18.2 Staff Reports

a. Report 2026-52 - Potential Acquisition of Lands

b. Verbal Update on Governance Review

19. Back to Open Session

C-25- 058

Moved by Councillor M. Bagu

Seconded by Councillor M. Aquilina

That Council rise and reconvene from Closed Session at 10:24 p.m. with report:

18.1 Approval of the Closed Session Minutes

That the Regular Council Meeting (Closed Session) minutes dated March 10, 2026, be approved.

18.2 a. Report 2026-52 - Potential Acquisition of Lands

That Report 2026-52 be received for information.

Carried

20. Procedural Motions

There were no procedural motions.

21. Confirmatory By-law

21.1 By-law No. 7446/30/26

C-25- 059

Moved by Councillor T. Hoyle

Seconded by Councillor R. Bodner

That By-law No. 7446/30/26 be enacted and passed, as presented.

Carried

22. Adjournment

Mayor Steele adjourned the meeting at 10:25 p.m.

William C. Steele, Mayor

Charlotte Madden, City Clerk



PORT COLBORNE

MAYOR'S REPORT TO COUNCIL

Tuesday, March 24, 2026

GOVERNANCE REVIEW -NEXT STEPS

As we are all aware, governance has been a hot topic in Niagara over the last several weeks. In port Colborne, we remain committed to ensuring our community remains strong and independent, one defined by its unique marine heritage and continued momentum. We strongly believe that forced amalgamation is neither necessary nor beneficial to our ongoing success. Past amalgamation efforts have not yielded positive outcomes for Port Colborne, particularly in areas such as healthcare and transit. Moreover, decades of research indicate that municipal amalgamation does not deliver meaningful cost savings and can reduce local responsiveness and accountability.

At the same time, we recognize that there are legitimate regional challenges that warrant careful consideration. Pressures related to infrastructure funding, water and wastewater costs, and regional roads are significant and require innovative, collaborative solutions. A thoughtful review of governance—focused on improved coordination, efficiency, and value for taxpayers—is both appropriate and necessary.

We will continue to keep Council and the public informed as this matter evolves. Our next Council meeting will include a staff report to share the

feedback we have received from our recent survey and public engagement sessions.

TOP HAT / POLAR PLUNGE

Each year, the City of Port Colborne proudly marks the opening of the Welland Canal and the start of the international shipping season with the longstanding Top Hat Ceremony, an iconic waterfront tradition that reflects our city's deep connection to the marine industry.

On Sunday, we welcomed the first vessel of the season, the Algoma ship *Radcliffe Latimer*. As part of this time-honoured ceremony, Captain Kemp was presented with the ceremonial Top Hat, a symbol of safe passage and the beginning of another successful navigation season along this vital Great Lakes corridor. Despite the rainy weather, residents and visitors gathered along the canal to take part in this longstanding Port Colborne tradition.

The day's celebrations continued with our annual Polar Plunge, a spirited community event that brings residents together in support of local causes. We extend our sincere thanks to all those who took the plunge into the chilly Lake Erie waters, as well as to everyone who donated or came out to cheer on participants. We raised more than \$24,000 in support of Special Olympics Canada. Your enthusiasm and generosity are what make this event such a success year after year.

A special thank you to our events team, communications team, public works and Port Colborne Fire & Emergency Services for their continued

dedication and support. Their presence, both in the water and on land—helped ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all participants.

UNITED WAY

I want to extend my personal appreciation to city staff for their support in this year's United Way campaign. Our fantastic teamwork has once again brought the Municipal Cup, or "Cuppy," as we like to call him, home to Port Colborne for the third consecutive year. We were presented with the trophy at the United Way Campaign Celebration & Awards Breakfast on March 12. I would also like to recognize Annie Beck, recipient of the Ambassador of the Year Award, for her outstanding leadership and commitment to supporting the United Way campaign. [Congratulations](#), Annie, a very well-deserved honour!

I am proud of the continued generosity of our staff and the positive impact it has on our community.

THIS CONCLUDES MY REPORT FOR THIS EVENING