Province of Quebec

Municipality of Chichester

Regular meeting of the Chichester Municipal Council held January 13th, 2025 at 7:00pm, held at the Municipal Office.

At which were present, in person, in his worship Mayor Donald Gagnon, Councillors Neil Maloney, Corey Bissonnette, Chrissy Ann Payne, Louis Schryer, Dustin Denault and Jacques Fleury.

The Director General, Alicia Jones, is present.

**1.**  **Opening of the meeting**

Mayor Gagnon welcomes everyone and declares the meeting open.

**2. Adoption of the agenda**

001-25/01 Moved by Chrissy Ann Payne to accept the agenda as presented and amended.

Adopted

**3. Conflict of Interest (if applicable)**

None.

**4. Adoption of the minutes**

002-25/01 Moved by Louis Schryer that the minutes of the regular meeting of December 2nd, 2024 be adopted.

Adopted

003-25/01 Moved by Neil Maloney that the minutes of the special meeting to adopt the 2025 budget of December 9th, 2024 be adopted.

Adopted

**5.**  **Visitors**

 None.

**6.**  **Mayor's MRC report**

 The Mayor has no report.

**7.**  **Committee reports**

***Security public***

Councilor Fleury, Chair of the public security committee, gives a verbal report.

***Roads & Environment***

Mayor Gagnon, Chair of the Roads and Environment Committee, gives a verbal report.

004-25/01 *Tender – Snowplow contracts 2025-2026-2027*

Moved by Dustin Deneault to proceed with the call for public tenders for the snowplow contracts for the transfer site and the municipal roads for the next three seasons, 2025-2026-2027, as discussed.

Adopted

 ***Planning and development***

Councilor Maloney, Chair of the Planning and Development Committee, gives a verbal report.

***Admin & Finance***

Councilor Schryer, Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee, gave a verbal report.

The Council members complete and sign their annual Declaration of Pecuniary Interests as required by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

*Notice of motion – ByLaw respecting taxation*

A notion of motion is given by Louis Schryer and a draft by-law is presented regarding municipal taxation 2025.

005-25/01 *Annual Contributions and Donations*

Moved by Corey Bissonnette to approve annual contributions and donations as follows:

 Harrington Hall $1,000

 Upper Pontiac Sports Complex $6,000

Residence Meilleur $2,500

 Student bursaries $250 each

 ( DWKS, ESSC and Pontiac Scholarship Fund)

Adopted

006-25/01 *Membership – FQM & ADMQ*

Moved by Neil Maloney to approve the expenses for the 2025 annual memberships, and possible conferences, for the FQM & ADMQ and to authorize the DG to attend the events.

Adopted

007-25/01 *Legal mandate 2025*

Moved by Dustin Denault to approve the legal mandate and retainer for 2025, as presented by Me Nerio de Candidio from the firm Beaudry-Bertrand.

Adopted

008-25/01 *Pro-Mayor 2025*

Moved by Chrissy Ann Payne that this Municipality name Councillor Neil Maloney as Pro-Mayor for the year 2025 and to authorize him to represent the Municipality, in the absence of the Mayor, at any sitting of the Council of the MRC Pontiac.

Adopted

***Leisure , Recreation , Tourism & Marketing***

Councillor Payne, Chair of the Leisure, Recreation, Tourism and Marketing Committee, gives a report.

**8. Questions from the Public**

None.

**9.**  **Presentation of accounts**

009-25/01 Moved by Corey Bissonnette that bills be paid according to the list distributed.

Adopted

**10.**  **Correspondence**

010-25/01 *Cellular coverage*

WHEREAS cellular coverage remains insufficient in many regions of Quebec, limiting access to an essential service for residents and visitors;

WHEREAS the Quebec government is committed to deploying complete cellular coverage throughout the province by October 2026, recognizing its importance to citizens' quality of life and socio-economic development, particularly in a context where automation is becoming an essential solution to the labour shortage;

WHEREAS reliable cellular services are essential to guarantee access to information, health services and public safety interventions, and that deficient coverage compromises the safety of people in areas with limited coverage or on the move, particularly in the event of an emergency requiring rapid intervention by first responders;

WHEREAS Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) procedure CPC-2-0-17 imposes license conditions on cellular service providers (CSPs), including mandatory roaming, tower sharing and the prohibition of site exclusivity, in order to promote network access for subscribers of another CSP when service is available;

WHEREAS this same procedure does not oblige CSPs to seek service from another provider in the event of non-existent coverage in a given region, thus limiting the scope of the measure;

WHEREAS the Government of Quebec and the CRTC grant substantial subsidies to telecommunications companies for the construction of new cellular infrastructures to improve coverage in the regions;

WHEREAS despite the presence of more than 8,500 cellular towers in Quebec, the exclusive use of these towers by a single CSP limits access for other providers and constitutes a major obstacle to the deployment of optimal cellular coverage for the entire population;

THEREFORE, it is moved by Councillor Dustin Denault:

- TO ASK the Liberal Party of Canada, the Conservative Party of Canada, the New Democratic Party of Canada and the Bloc Québécois :

To include in their electoral platforms for the next federal election the obligation for all cellular service companies to enter into roaming agreements so that cellular service customers, regardless of their provider, can benefit from the presence of cellular sites in the region where they are located;

- TO TRANSMIT a copy of this resolution to the Quebec Minister of Finance, Mr. Eric Girard, who is responsible for fulfilling the government's commitment to provide cellular service throughout the inhabited territory in the present mandate;

- TO TRANSMIT a copy of this resolution to the heads of the telecommunications companies, namely BCE (Bell), Videotron, Rogers, TELUS and Cogeco.

Adopted

011-25/01 *Billing for Sûreté du Québec services*

WHEREAS the municipalities served by the Sûreté du Québec have just received their invoices for the year 2025;

WHEREAS the average increase announced is 6.47%, but that the increases for several municipalities are much higher, even considerable;

WHEREAS the 2025 invoicing marks the end of the transitional period leading to a 50-50 sharing of the invoice for Sûreté du Québec services between the Government and municipalities. This period was characterized by the establishment of a 7% increase ceiling and a 2% floor;

WHEREAS during negotiations on the new formula in 2019, the Ministère de la Sécurité Publique had assured its municipal partners that increases would be around 3% per year once the transitional period was over, and that this formula would protect the municipal world from increases of the nature announced for 2025;

WHEREAS the inflation rate is now less than 2%;

WHEREAS the media have recently reported on the management of police overtime in the regions, which is putting considerable pressure on the overall cost of Sûreté du Québec services billed to municipalities;

WHEREAS the legitimate questions raised by many elected officials concerning the real impact of the number of unfilled police positions and the significant use of overtime, whereas an effective police service requires stability and a long-term community presence;

WHEREAS the imprudent increase in Sûreté du Québec costs and their impact on the invoicing imposed on municipalities;

WHEREAS the municipal world is not involved in determining the working conditions of police officers and the management of the Sûreté du Québec;

WHEREAS the total amount invoiced to municipalities for 2025 is over $444.8 million, a considerable amount that should give municipalities a say in the management of these services.

It is proposed by Councillor Louis Schryer that the Municipality of CHICHESTER ask the Minister of Public Security, Mr. François Bonnardel:

* To mandate an external firm to analyze the management of the Sûreté du Québec, following the example of the process carried out with municipal transport companies, which led to the identification of possible solutions to save several hundred million dollars;
* Maintain a ceiling and a floor on invoice increases in both the permanent and transitional formulas, until such time as the analysis has identified ways of controlling the uncontrolled rise in the cost of Sûreté du Québec services.

That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Minister of Public Security, Mr. François Bonnardel, to the MNA for the Pontiac riding, André Fortin, to the Director General of the Sûreté du Québec, Ms. Johanne Beausoleil, and to the President of the Fédération québécoise des municipalités (FQM), Mr. Jacques Demers.

Adopted

**11.**  **Varia**

 None.

 **12. In-camera session**

 Not required.

 **13.**  **Date of next meeting**

012-25/01 Moved by Neil Maloney that the next regular council meeting be held on Monday, February 3rd, 2025.

Adopted

 **14.**  **Closing of the meeting**

013-25/01 Moved by Louis Schryer that the meeting be adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Adopted

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I, Donald Gagnon, Mayor, certify that the signing of these minutes is equivalent to my signing of all the resolutions it contains, in accordance with article 142 (2) of the Municipal Code.

*The French version is the official version - The French version is the official version*