Municipality of Waltham

This public sitting of the Council is recorded.

Minutes of a regular meeting held at the usual place and time on January 14th 2025, under the chairmanship of Her Worship Mayor Mrs. Odette Godin with the presence of the following councilors # 1 Mrs. Brenda Landry, #2 Mr. Leonard Godin, #3 Mrs. Ramona Marion, #4 Mr. Brendan Adam, #5 Mr. Elwood Allard and # 6 Mr. Tyler Rochon

Mrs. Annik Plante Director General is also present.

Statement by the mayor (Decorum)

01-14-01-25 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Moved by councilor Marion and seconded by councilor Landry to adopt the agenda as presented.

Adopted

02-14-01-25 ACCEPTANCE OF LAST MONTH'S MINUTES

It was moved by Councilor Rochon and seconded by Councilor Adam to accept the minutes of last month's meeting, with the following modification to the wording:

The minutes should indicate that Councilors Allard, Rochon, and Adam formally registered their opposition by voting against the motion regarding the position being designated as a permanent position. However, Mayor Godin exercised her right to cast a tiebreaking vote, resulting in the motion's approval.

Adopted

VISITORS: 2 visitors are present and a question period is organized.

- No questions were asked

COMMITTEES REPORT:

- The arena:
  - Councilor, Landry, mentioned that the Upper Pontiac Sports Complex would like to express their appreciation for the $5,000 contribution from the Municipality of Waltham.
  - The arena is experiencing issues with a high level of calcium in the water. They will be seeking a grant to cover the estimated $47,000 cost of the repairs
- It was reported that there are currently no issues at the transfer site; however, the municipality will be implementing new procedures under the new EEQ program from the MRC Pontiac
- An EEQ information session is scheduled for council members and municipal employees on January 20, 2025
- The road committee has no issues to report; however, Mayor Godin mentioned the incident that occurred on December 27, 2024, on Black River Road, where part of the road was flooded. She emphasized that the Municipal Employees responded immediately when informed by the mayor of the problem.

  They contacted Kidd and Sons to bring sand immediately as the incident impacted road safety.

Mayor's report:

Mayor Godin provided an update on her recent activities:

• She attended three meetings at the MRC Pontiac, which all focused on HR issues.
• Mayor Godin also participated in a Public Security meeting that addressed their priorities.

• Mayor Godin mentioned that the SQ has increased their staff, and that Pontiac is an ideal location for training these officers.

• Mayor Godin also noted that the SQ is currently working on 66 cases involving non-residents of Quebec.

03-14-01-25 TAX RATES FOR 2025

It was moved by Councilor Marion and seconded by Councilor Landry that the Municipality of Waltham establish the following tax rates for the fiscal year 2025:

- The mill rate is set at **0.61 mills**.

Adopted

04-14-01-25 TARIFFS FOR 2025

It was moved by Councilor Rochon and seconded by Councilor Adam that the Municipality of Waltham adopt the following tariffs for the year 2025:

- **Garbage and Recycling**: $150 per household
- **Environmental Tax Rate for Residences**: $128 per household
- **Environmental Tax Rate for Vacant Lots**: $65 per tax bill

Adopted

05-14-01-25 INTEREST RATE FOR 2025

Moved by councilor Marion seconded by councilor Godin to set the interest rate for late payment of taxes for 2025 at 12 %.

Adopted

06-14-01-25 DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF RECCOMMENDATION

It was moved by Councilor Adam and seconded by Councilor Marion that the Municipality of Waltham formally accept the recommendation of Fire Chief Mr. Larry Perry to appoint Mr. Jason Pilon as Deputy Fire Chief for the Waltham Fire Department.

Adopted

07-14-01-25 PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

Whereas the Municipality of Waltham wishes to promote citizen engagement and encourage active participation from residents in financing local quality-of-life improvement projects;

Whereas the MRC Pontiac has allocated a budget of $30,000 for participatory budgeting projects, with equal contributions from participating municipalities;

Whereas the MRC Pontiac has defined intervention priorities for the region, including: tourism, culture and heritage, economic growth, agriculture, socio-community, sports and recreation, and the environment;

Whereas the objectives of the participatory budgeting policy include improving living environments and involving citizens in decision-making regarding local public expenditures;

Whereas the municipal council has expressed interest in participating;

It is proposed by the municipal **councilor Rochon** and seconded by **councilor Adam,**
AND unanimously RESOLVED,

THAT the municipality of Waltham agrees to participate in the Participatory Budgeting program presented by the MRC Pontiac.

It is further resolved that the municipality will allocate a contribution of 5000.00 $ from its budget to participate in the participatory budgeting program.
Finally, it is resolved that the municipality will participate by offering

- One Call for Projects:
  The entire municipal contribution will be allocated to financing the projects selected in the framework of a single call for projects.

Adopted

08-14-01-25 COST OF LIVING FOR 2025

It was moved by Councilor Rochon, seconded by Councilor Landry, to grant a 2.5% increase to all employees, including the members of the Council of Waltham, for the year 2025.

Adopted

09-14-01-25 CELLULAR COVERAGE

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

WHEREAS the Government of Quebec has committed to deploying complete cellular coverage across the territory by October 2026, recognizing its importance for 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 poor coverage compromises the safety of people in areas with limited coverage or when roaming, particularly in the event of an emergency requiring rapid intervention by first responders;

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

WHEREAS this same procedure does not, however, require CSPs to request the service of 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 provide significant subsidies to telecommunications companies for the construction of new cellular infrastructure in order to improve coverage in the regions;

WHEREAS despite the presence of more than 8,500 cell 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;

It is proposed by **Councilor Rochon** and seconded by **Councilor Adam**

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 platform 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 cell sites in the region where they are located;

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

TO TRANSMIT a copy of this resolution to the directors of telecommunications companies, in particular BCE (Bell), Videotron, Rogers, TELUS and Cogeco.

Adopted

10-14-01-25 BILLING OF MUNICIPALITIES SERVED BY SÛRETÉ DU QUÉBEC SERVICES

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

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

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

WHEREAS during the negotiations for the new formula in 2019, the authorities of the Ministry of Public Security assured its municipal partners that the increases would be approximately 3% per year once the transitional period was over and that this formula would protect the municipal world from increases of the nature of those announced in 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 causing significant pressure on the overall cost of the Sûreté du Québec service billed to municipalities;

WHEREAS the legitimate questions from several elected officials concerning the real impact of the number of unfilled police positions and the significant use of overtime when an effective police service requires stability and a long-term community presence;

WHEREAS the reckless increase in the costs of the Sûreté du Québec and their impact on the bill 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 billed to municipalities for 2025 amounts to more than $444.8 million, a considerable amount that should give municipalities a say in the management of these services.

It is proposed by Councilor Godin and seconded by Councillor Adam

THAT the Municipality of Waltham ask the Minister of Public Security, Mr. François Bonnardel:

To mandate an external firm to analyze the management of the Sûreté du Québec, similar to the approach taken with municipal transport companies, which identified possible solutions to save several hundred million dollars;

To maintain a ceiling and a floor for the increase in bills in the permanent formula as well as in the transitional formula until the analysis has identified ways to control the inconsiderate increase in the cost of Sûreté du Québec services.

That a copy of the resolution be sent to the Minister of Public Security, Mr. François Bonnardel, to the Member of Parliament for the riding of Pontiac Mr. Andre 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

11-14-01-25 PAYMENT OF THE BILLS

Moved by councilor Godin and seconded by councilor Marion to pay the bills of the month in the amount of $67 445.81.

Adopted

Certificate of availability

I, Annik Plante, Director General of the Municipality of Waltham,
certify that there are funds available for the expenses approved above.
Given at Waltham, on the 14th day of January 2025.

Annik Plante
Director General/Secretary Treasurer

12-14-01-25 CLOSED

Moved by councilor Allard and seconded by councilor Rochon to close the meeting at 8:00 P.M.

Adopted

Mayor Mrs. Odette Godin

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Director General/Secretary Treasure Mrs. Annik Plante

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