



The Corporation of the City of Stratford Finance and Labour Relations Committee

MINUTES

Date: Monday, August 11, 2025
Time: 7:45 P.M.
Location: Council Chamber, City Hall

Committee Present: Councillor Hunter - Chair Presiding, Mayor Ritsma, Councillor Beatty, Councillor Biehn, Councillor Briscoe, Councillor Burbach, Councillor Nijjar, Councillor Sebben, Councillor Wordofa

Regrets: Councillor Henderson and Councillor McCabe - Vice Chair

Staff Present: Karmen Krueger - Director of Corporate Services, Adam Betteridge - Interim Chief Administrative Officer, Tatiana Dafoe - City Clerk, Tim Wolfe - Director of Community Services, Kim McElroy - Director of Social Services and Interim Director of Human Resources, Neil Anderson - Director of Emergency Services/Fire Chief, Audrey Pascual - Deputy Clerk, Nancy Roulston - Manager of Engineering, Shannon Archer - Business Integration Manager

Also Present: Members of the Public

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the Meeting to Order.

Councillor Henderson and Councillor McCabe provided regrets for this meeting.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

The *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* requires any member of Council declaring a pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof, where the interest of a

member of Council has not been disclosed by reason of the member's absence from the meeting, to disclose the interest at the first open meeting attended by the member of Council and otherwise comply with the *Act*.

Name, Item and General Nature of Pecuniary Interest

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest made by a Member at the August 11, 2025 Finance and Labour Relations Committee meeting.

3. Sub-committee Minutes

Sub-committee minutes were provided for background regarding the discussion held at the July 22, 2025, Sub-committee meeting.

4. Delegations

None scheduled.

5. Report of the Chief Administrative Officer

5.1 Policy Update – Expressions of Sympathy (FIN25-016)

Staff Recommendation: THAT Policy A.1.9 be amended to reflect the proposed changes in Attachment 2 to this Report (FIN25-016).

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT Policy A.1.9 be amended to reflect the proposed changes in Attachment 2 to this Report (FIN25-016).

Motion by Councillor Beatty

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

Committee Recommendation: THAT Policy A.1.9 be amended to reflect the proposed changes in Attachment 2 to this Report (FIN25-016).

Carried

5.2 Long Service Award Policy Updates (FIN25-020)

Staff Recommendation: THAT the revised Long Service Award Policy H.1.7 attached to Report FIN25-020 be approved.

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the revised Long Service Award Policy H.1.7 attached to Report FIN25-020 be approved.

Motion by Councillor Nijjar

Seconded by Councillor Biehn

Committee Recommendation: THAT the revised Long Service Award Policy H.1.7 attached to Report FIN25-020 be approved.

Carried

5.3 Policy Update - Flags at City Hall Policy (FIN25-021)

Staff Recommendation: THAT the Lowering Flags at City Hall Policy A.1.7 be rescinded and replaced with the Flags at City Hall Policy A.1.7 attached to Report FIN25-021.

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the Lowering Flags at City Hall Policy A.1.7 be rescinded and replaced with the Flags at City Hall Policy A.1.7 attached to Report FIN25-021.

Motion by Councillor Nijjar

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

Committee Recommendation: THAT the Lowering Flags at City Hall Policy A.1.7 be rescinded and replaced with the Flags at City Hall Policy A.1.7 attached to Report FIN25-021.

Carried

6. Report of the Clerk

6.1 Composition and Size of Council for the 2026-2030 Term (FIN25-025)

Staff Recommendation: THAT direction be provided if City Council is interested in initiating notice of intent to change the composition of City Council in time for the 2026 municipal election and that City Council identify the proposed change(s) to the composition and/or size of Council.

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT City Council initiate the notice of intent process to change the composition of City Council to 9 members (8 Councillors and a Mayor) in time for the 2026 municipal election.

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Briscoe

THAT City Council initiate the notice of intent process to change the composition of City Council to 9 members (8 Councillors and a Mayor) in time for the 2026 municipal election.

Committee Discussion: Members of the Committee held a discussion regarding the following:

- the motion being brought forward in consideration of the role of council, the amount of remuneration, and comparison of Council composition in other municipalities of the same size;
- the remuneration budget being kept the same and the salary level of the members being increased;
- the proposed change in the Procedural By-law to move from a three-step process to a two-step process resulting in a decrease in meetings;
- the decrease in the size of Council potentially resulting in an increase to the strong mayor powers;
- the discussion of the composition of Council being deferred to the same time as the discussions on the procedural by-law review;
- there being public consultation to be done if the Council composition review proceeds;
- there being concerns with the impacts to diversity and representation in Council should the decrease proceed;
- there being no requests from the public to reduce the size of Council and the remuneration having been reviewed previously by a committee;

A member requested a recorded vote.

- a member noting they are in favour of maintaining the current structure;
- the proposed change resulting in a small increase in the salary but would affect representation and diversity as well as the workload distribution;
- the current compensation only attracting certain people who can afford to do the job and the increase in remuneration would allow people who would not otherwise run for Council;

- single-tier municipalities having a similar council size as Stratford and lower-tier municipalities having smaller councils;
- there being concerns with the impact of the decrease in the Council size to the strong mayor powers and the minimum requirements to pass items;
- there being other options to explore to improve representation in Council such as allowing hybrid attendance at meetings;
- the community continuing to grow and having more Council members being beneficial to the community;
- the City being better served by having a ward system in place to increase accountability resulting in better representation; and
- there being different data points which can be collected to understand how Council can be more representative and how Council can better serve the public.

The motion was withdrawn.

Motion by Councillor Sebben

THAT a report outlining the process for undertaking a ward boundary review be referred to staff.

There was no seconder for the motion.

6.2 Appointment of Deputy Mayor (FIN25-023)

Staff Recommendation: THAT direction be given to the City Clerk on the process for selecting a Deputy Mayor for the City commencing with the 2026-2030 term of office.

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT direction be given to the City Clerk to develop a policy outlining a process for selecting a Deputy Mayor by rotation, with a maximum of four (4) Councillors permitted to serve in the role per term, and commencing with the 2026-2030 term of office.

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Briscoe

THAT direction be given to the City Clerk to develop a policy outlining a process for selecting a Deputy Mayor by rotation, with a maximum of four (4) Councillors permitted to serve in the role per term, and commencing with the 2026-2030 term of office.

Committee Discussion: Members of the Committee held a discussion regarding the following:

- it being proposed that members interested in the Deputy Mayor role put their name forward at the beginning of the term;
- the proposed process being similar to the one currently being used by Ottawa City Council to appoint a Deputy Mayor;
- there being members who may be hesitant to step in to the role at the beginning of the term but may be interested in the opportunity later;
- a member noting they like the idea of having more opportunity but have concerns regarding a lack of continuity;
- it being valuable for Council members to select a person who they trust can best step into the role.

Motion by Councillor Sebben

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT the motion be amended to include that the current process of Council selecting the Deputy Mayor be maintained.

Defeated

The Chair called the question on the original motion.

Defeated

Motion by Councillor Beatty

THAT the Deputy Mayor be appointed for a period of four (4) years.

There was no seconder for the motion.

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Briscoe

THAT the Deputy Mayor be appointed for a two-year term based on the highest number of votes and subject to the candidate accepting the role.

Members of the Committee and staff held a discussion regarding the motion as follows:

- it being questioned whether the members who will serve as Deputy Mayor are being selected based on the highest number of votes;
- where most of the Council members are new, it being better to leave the choice of Deputy Mayor to the hands of the electorate;
- the Interim Chief Administrative Officer noting that the Deputy Mayor is an important role;
- there being candidates who may wish to serve the public as a councillor only and may not be positioned to serve as a Deputy Mayor;
- a provision being added that the appointment of the member with highest votes as Deputy Mayor being subject to them accepting the role; and
- a two-year term being preferred as it allows Council the ability to pause and review.

The Chair called the question on the motion.

Defeated

Motion by Councillor Beatty

Seconded by Councillor Nijjar

THAT the current process for the selection and appointment of Deputy Mayor be maintained.

It was questioned and confirmed that appointing a Deputy Mayor is not one of the powers provided for in the Strong Mayor Power legislation.

The Chair called the question on the motion.

Carried

6.3 2026 Municipal and School Board Election Alternative Voting Methods (FIN25-024)

This item was also considered at the August 11, 2025, Council reconvene meeting.

Staff Recommendation: THAT the use of internet and telephone voting in the 2026 municipal and school board election be approved;

AND THAT free transit on election day be approved to support access and remove barriers to voting for the 2026 municipal and school board election;

AND THAT the Clerk be directed to prepare a by-law authorizing the use of internet and telephone voting in the 2026 municipal and school board election.

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the use of internet and telephone voting in the 2026 municipal and school board election be approved;

AND THAT free transit on election day be approved to support access and remove barriers to voting for the 2026 municipal and school board election;

AND THAT the Clerk be directed to prepare a by-law authorizing the use of internet and telephone voting in the 2026 municipal and school board election.

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Briscoe

Committee Recommendation: THAT the use of internet and telephone voting in the 2026 municipal and school board election be approved;

AND THAT free transit on election day be approved to support access and remove barriers to voting for the 2026 municipal and school board election;

AND THAT the Clerk be directed to prepare a by-law authorizing the use of internet and telephone voting in the 2026 municipal and school board election.

Committee Discussion: Members of the Committee and staff held a discussion regarding the following:

- it being questioned whether the recommendation is a change to the current process;
- the City Clerk noting that the recommendation is not a change but a requirement for Council to approve; and

- the City Clerk clarifying that the free transit is intended to help voters access the voter help centres where they can receive assistance.

The Chair called the question on the motion.

Carried

7. Report of the Council Committee Coordinator

7.1 Advisory Committee Renumeration (FIN25-026)

Staff Recommendation: THAT remuneration be paid to each member of Heritage Stratford, Accessibility Advisory Committee and Committee of Adjustment in the amount of \$125.00 per meeting for each Committee meeting attended and \$50.00 per meeting for Heritage Stratford site plan review meetings, Heritage Stratford permit review meetings and Accessibility Advisory Committee site plan review meetings commencing January 1, 2026;

AND THAT Policy C.3.1 Council Appointed Advisory Committees be updated to reflect the changes to remuneration.

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT remuneration be paid to each member of Heritage Stratford, Accessibility Advisory Committee and Committee of Adjustment in the amount of \$125.00 per meeting for each Committee meeting attended and \$50.00 per meeting for Heritage Stratford site plan review meetings, Heritage Stratford permit review meetings and Accessibility Advisory Committee site plan review meetings commencing January 1, 2026;

AND THAT Policy C.3.1 Council Appointed Advisory Committees be updated to reflect the changes to remuneration.

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Nijjar

Committee Recommendation: THAT remuneration be paid to each member of Heritage Stratford, Accessibility Advisory Committee and Committee of Adjustment in the amount of \$125.00 per meeting for each Committee meeting attended and \$50.00 per meeting for Heritage Stratford site plan review meetings, Heritage Stratford permit review meetings and

**Accessibility Advisory Committee site plan review meetings
commencing January 1, 2026;**

**AND THAT Policy C.3.1 Council Appointed Advisory Committees
be updated to reflect the changes to remuneration.**

Carried

8. For the Information of Committee

8.1 Advisory Committee/Outside Board Minutes

The following Advisory Committee Minutes were provided for the
information of Committee:

- Stratfords of the World (Ontario) Advisory Committee Minutes of
November 28, 2024

9. Adjournment

Motion by Councillor Briscoe

Seconded by Councillor Wordofa

**Committee Decision: THAT the Finance and Labour Relations
Committee meeting adjourn.**

Carried

Meeting Start Time: 7:45 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 8:23 P.M.