



Inter-Governmental Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 19, 2025, 4:04 p.m.

MS Teams

1. Inter-Governmental Affairs Committee Meeting 09-2025

Chair: Councillor Trevor Giertuga

2. Members

Mayor Ken Boshcoff
Councillor Mark Bentz
Councillor Shelby Ch'ng
Councillor Kasey Etreni
Councillor Trevor Giertuga

3. Officials

John Collin, City Manager
Krista Power, Director of Legislative Services & City Clerk
Leanne Lavoie, Executive Administrator

4. Resource Persons

Larry Joy, Policy Assistant to the Mayor
Michelle Williams, Manager – Communications & Public Relations
Kayla Dixon, Commissioner – Infrastructure & Operations
Gillian Matson, Solicitor II

5. Guests

Tammy Cook, CAO - Lakehead Region Conservation Authority

6. Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

Director of Legislative Services & City Clerk Krista Power administered nominations for Chair of the Inter-Governmental Affairs Committee.

Councillor Trevor Giertuga put forward their name for the position of Chair.

There were no other nominations for the position of Chair.

MOVED BY: Councillor Kasey Etreni

SECONDED BY: Mayor Ken Boshcoff

WITH RESPECT to the position of Chair on the Inter-governmental Affairs Committee, we recommend that Councillor Trevor Giertuga be appointed Chair of the Committee until November 14, 2026, or until such time a replacement has been appointed.

CARRIED

Krista Power administered nominations for Vice-Chair of the Inter-Governmental Affairs Committee.

Councillor Kasey Etreni nominated Councillor Shelby Ch'ng for the position of Vice-Chair. Councillor Shelby Ch'ng agreed to let their name stand for the position of Vice-Chair.

There were no other nominations for the position of Vice-Chair.

MOVED BY: Councillor Kasey Etreni

SECONDED BY: Councillor Trevor Giertuga

WITH RESPECT to the position of Vice-Chair on the Inter-governmental Affairs Committee, we recommend that Councillor Shelby Ch'ng be appointed Chair of the Committee until November 14, 2026, or until such time a replacement has been appointed.

CARRIED

Councillor Trevor Giertuga assumed the Chair.

7. Disclosures of Interest

8. Agenda Approval

MOVED BY: Councillor Shelby Ch'ng

SECONDED BY: Mayor Ken Boshcoff

WITH RESPECT to the November 19, 2025 meeting of the Inter-Governmental Affairs Committee, we recommend that the agenda as printed, including any additional information and new business, be confirmed.

CARRIED

9. Confirmation of Previous Minutes

MOVED BY: Councillor Mark Bentz

SECONDED BY: Councillor Shelby Ch'ng

THAT the Minutes of Meeting 08-2025 Inter-Governmental Affairs Committee, held on October 15, 2025, be confirmed.

CARRIED

10. Presentation/Deputation

10.1 Lakehead Region Conservation Authority

CAO - Lakehead Region Conservation Authority Tammy Cook appeared before committee and provided a PowerPoint presentation relative to the implications of Bill 68, and the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) Notice 025-1257.

The presentation included:

- Background of Lakehead Region Conservation Authority (LRCA)
- Overview of mandatory and non-mandatory programs run by LRCA
- Overview and history of the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway and other LRCA projects
- Review of two proposals by the Provincial Government: Bill 68 Plan to Protect Ontario, and ERO Notice 025-1257
- The Provincial Government proposes consolidating Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into seven large regional bodies under a new Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency, removing local governance
- LRCA would become part of the Huron-Superior Regional Conservation Authority, which would include 80 municipalities

- Huron-Superior Regional Conservation Authority hub is 1300 km away from Thunder Bay
- There would be less representation from the north, therefore there is concern that regional priorities may not be heard
- Assets, debts and reserves would be pooled with other municipalities, LCRA has significant reserves, including \$3.6 million which is solely for Thunder Bay, the majority of which is set aside for the floodway
- Some municipalities in the proposed regional conservation authority have no debt, and some have large debt
- Budget would be set by region in the future
- Provincial Government is asking for input on the proposed changes
- LRCA Board discussed potential options for a regional conservation authority, and they propose adding an 8th region, Northwestern Ontario Regional Conservation Authority
- Next steps were reviewed

There was discussion relative to the concerns raised regarding Bill 68 and ERO Notice 025-1257. It was noted that the Mayor's office would reach out to the Hon. Kevin Holland, MPP - Thunder Bay Atikokan.

The Government of Ontario is seeking consultation relative to the proposed changes. Comments may be submitted via the ERO website until December 22, 2025.

MOVED BY: Councillor Shelby Ch'ng
 SECONDED BY: Councillor Kasey Etreli

WITH RESPECT to Bill 68 and ERO Notice 025-1257, we recommend that City Council advocate to the Government of Ontario to maintain local, independent, municipally governed, watershed-based conservation authorities to ensure strong local representation in decisions related to municipal levies, community-focused service delivery, and the protection and management of conservation lands;

AND THAT while we support provincial goals for consistent permit approval processes, shared services and digital modernization, imposing a new top-down agency structure without strong local accountability and governance risks creating unnecessary cost, red tape, and bureaucracy, thereby undermining efficiency and responsiveness to local community needs;

AND THAT City Council support efforts to balance expertise, capacity, and program delivery across the province, and request that the Province work collaboratively with municipalities and local conservation authorities to determine the most effective level of strategic consolidation to achieve both provincial and local objectives;

AND THAT City Council be opposed to the proposed “Huron-Superior Regional Conservation Authority” boundary configuration outlined in Environmental Registry Notice 025-1257;

AND THAT City Council recommend that the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority form the “Northwestern Ontario Regional Conservation Authority”;

AND THAT the Ministry engage directly with affected municipalities of the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority, before finalizing any consolidation boundaries or legislative amendments;

AND THAT careful consideration be given to the financial ownership of reserve funds that have been collected by the LRCA over many years, through municipal funding;

AND THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to:

- The Environmental Registry of Ontario consultations prior to the deadline of December 22, 2025,
- The Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and the Opposition critics,
- Local Members of Provincial Parliament,
- Local Members of Parliament,
- The Association of Municipalities of Ontario,
- Conservation Ontario,
- All local municipalities within the LRCA Area of Jurisdiction, and
- All Conservation Authorities in Ontario;

CARRIED

The above noted resolution will be presented to City Council at their December 2, 2025 meeting, for Council’s information and input.

11. Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) 2026 Conference

The 2026 Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Conference will be held January 18-20, 2026 in Toronto, Ontario.

There was discussion relative to the effectiveness of delegations at conferences vs. dedicated lobby days. In the past, dedicated lobby days could be scheduled for a municipality to see many Ministers and spend more time with them. It was noted that CAOs of Ontario municipalities were advised that lobby days will be limited because Ministers are accessible at ROMA and AMO.

There was discussion relative to how many members of IGAC would attend ROMA. It was noted that most delegations include two to four representatives. Those who have attended recent conferences advised that there is value in attending.

MOVED BY: Councillor Kasey Etreni

SECONDED BY: Councillor Mark Bentz

WITH RESPECT to the 2026 ROMA Conference, being held January 18-20, 2026, we recommend that all expenses for this conference be paid for Mayor Ken Boshcoff, Councillor Trevor Giertuga, Councillor Shelby Ch'ng, City Manager John Collin and Policy Assistant Larry Joy;

AND THAT these expenses be paid through the Inter-Governmental Affairs Committee budget.

CARRIED

Advocacy strategy going forward will be discussed further at the December 10, 2025 IGAC meeting.

12. Correspondence

12.1 Request for Support – Modernization of Northern Ontario Highways

Correspondence from Jason Veltri, Executive Coordinator - Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA), dated November 3, 2025 requesting support for a resolution advocating for the modernization of Northern Ontario's highway network through a coordinated 2+1 program.

There was discussion relative to the correspondence.

MOVED BY: Councillor Mark Bentz

SECONDED BY: Councillor Shelby Ch'ng

WITH RESPECT to correspondence from Jason Veltri, Executive Coordinator - NOMA, dated November 3, 2025, we recommend that the Mayor's office follow up with Hon. Kevin Holland, MPP - Thunder Bay Atikokan.

CARRIED

12.2 Buy Canadian with VIA Rail Procurement

Correspondence dated November 5, 2025 from Charla Robinson, President - Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce and Jamie Taylor, CEO - Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission to The Right Honourable Mark Carney Prime Minister of Canada, requesting that the Buy Canadian Policy announced in September 2025 be applied to VIA Rail's upcoming rail car procurement.

There was discussion relative to the correspondence. It was noted that Mayor Ken Boshcoff also sent a letter to Prime Minister Carney relative to the Buy Canadian Policy and VIA Rail.

MOVED BY: Councillor Mark Bentz
SECONDED BY: Councillor Shelby Ch'ng

WITH RESPECT to correspondence dated November 5, 2025 from Charla Robinson, President - Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce and Jamie Taylor, CEO - CEDC, we recommend that the issue of advocating for applying the Buy Canadian Policy to VIA Rail's upcoming rail car procurement be referred to City Council for discussion.

CARRIED

13. Outstanding Items

Memorandum from Executive Administrator Leanne Lavoie, dated November 13, 2025 providing the Inter-Governmental Affairs Committee Outstanding Items List, for information.

14. New Business

15. Next Meeting

There was discussion relative to whether meetings should continue virtually or be in person. Some members requested a later start time, particularly for in person meetings. It was noted every second meeting could be in person, starting at 5:00 p.m., with virtual meetings starting at 4:00 or 4:30 p.m. It was also noted that meeting should be in person when MPs or MPPs are invited.

It was determined that the schedule will be discussed further at the next IGAC meeting.

The next regular IGAC meeting is scheduled for December 10, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. via Microsoft Teams.

16. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:26 p.m.