



The Corporation of the County of Northumberland
Special County Council Meeting
Minutes

March 6, 2024, 2:30 p.m.
Council Chambers
555 Courthouse Road, Cobourg, ON K9A 5J6
Hybrid Meeting (In-Person and Virtual)

Members Present: Warden Brian Ostrander
 Deputy Warden Olena Hankivsky
 Councillor Lucas Cleveland
 Councillor Robert Crate
 Councillor Scott Jibb
 Councillor John Logel
 Councillor Mandy Martin

1. Notices

1.a Accessible Format

If you require this information in an alternate format, please contact the Accessibility Coordinator at accessibility@northumberland.ca or 1-800-354-7050 ext. 2327.

1.b Meeting Format

This Special Council meeting was held using a hybrid meeting model. The public were invited to attend in-person in Council Chambers, view the meeting via the live stream, or join online or by phone using Zoom Conference Technology.

1.c Closed Session Order

- Closed Session took place immediately following item 14
- After Closed Session, Council considered New Business item 18.a

1.d Estimated time of Adjournment 5:00 p.m.

2. Call to Order

Warden Brian Ostrander called the meeting to order at 2:34 p.m.

2.a Territorial Land Acknowledgement

3. Approval of the Agenda

3.a Agenda dated March 6, 2024

Council Resolution 2024-03-06-172

Moved by Deputy Warden Olena Hankivsky

Seconded by Councillor John Logel

"**That** the Special County Council Agenda for Wednesday, March 6, 2024 be approved."

Carried

4. Declaration of Interest

- No declarations

5. Presentations

N/A

6. Adoption of Minutes

N/A

7. Business arising from the Minutes

N/A

8. Communications

N/A

9. Determination of Items Requiring Separate Discussion

N/A

10. Adoption of Items Not Requiring Separate Discussion

N/A

11. Consideration of Items Requiring Separate Discussion

N/A

12. Enactment By-laws

N/A

13. New Business

13.a Town of Cobourg's Emergency Care Establishment Licensing By-law and Potential Impacts to the Homelessness System - Presentation

Jennifer Moore, CAO

Rebecca Carman, Associate Director Housing & Homelessness

Council Resolution 2024-03-06-173

Moved by Councillor Jonh Logel

Seconded by Councillor Robert Crate

13.a (1)

“Whereas the Council Procedural By-law 39-2023 allows for delegations at Standing Committees only; and

Whereas Council may choose to waive a Rule of Procedure established by this by-law and that requires a two-thirds majority vote;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved That Council approve hearing delegations from members of the public / organizations regarding 310 Division Street, Cobourg and the Town of Cobourg's Emergency Care Establishment Licensing By-law, at the March 6, 2024 Special County Council Meeting.”

Carried

a. Delegation

a. Ike Nwibe, Executive Director, Transition House

Council Resolution 2024-03-06-174

Moved by Councillor Robert Crate

Seconded by Councillor Scott Jibb

13.a (2)

"That County Council receive the delegation from the following members of the public / organizations

regarding 310 Division Street and the Town of Cobourg's Emergency Care Establishment Licensing By-law for information:

- Ike Nwibe, Executive Director Transition House."

Carried

Council Resolution 2024-03-06-175

Moved by Councillor Mandy Martin

Seconded by Councillor John Logel

13.a (3)

"**That** County Council receive the staff presentation regarding 'Town of Cobourg's Emergency Care Establishment Licensing By-law and Potential Impacts to the Homelessness System' for information."

Carried

14. Media Questions

15. Closed Session

Council Resolution 2024-03-06-176

Moved by Councillor Scott Jibb

Seconded by Councillor Mandy Martin

"**That** this Council proceed with the next portion of the meeting being closed to the public at 3:38 p.m.; and

Further That the meeting is closed to the public as permitted under the Municipal Act Sections 239. (2.f) and (2.k) in order to address matters pertaining to advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose and confidential negotiations (Direction on Negotiations and Town of Cobourg's Emergency Care Establishment Licensing By-law), and that Jennifer Moore, Lisa Horne, Kate Campbell, Darrell Mast, Rebecca Carman, Bill Smith, Maddison Mather, and Cheryl Sanders remain present."

Carried

[Council recessed in Closed Session at 3:40 p.m. until 3:48 p.m.]

[Councillor Cleveland left the Closed Session meeting at 4:57 p.m. until 4:58 p.m.]

[Councillor Crate left the Closed Session meeting at 5:38 p.m. until 5:40 p.m.]

[Councillor Martin left the Closed Session meeting at 5:43 p.m. until 5:45 p.m.]

[Council recessed in Closed Session at 6:05 p.m. until 6:08 p.m.]

16. Motion to Rise and Results from Closed Session

Council Resolution 2024-03-06-177

Moved by Councillor Robert Crate

Seconded by Councillor Mandy Martin

"**That** this Council rise from Closed Session at 6:08 p.m.; and

Further That the confidential resolution moved in Closed Session regarding matters pertaining to advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose and confidential negotiations (Direction on Negotiations and Town of Cobourg's Emergency Care Establishment Licensing By-law), is hereby referred to this open session of Council for adoption."

Carried

17. Closed Session Business - Public Updates

N/A

18. New Business (Continued)

18.a Report 2024-042 'Emergency Management Evacuation Shelter Services'

Lisa Ainsworth, Director Corporate Services

Colleen McCabe, Health, Safety, Emergency Risk Manager

Council Resolution 2024-03-06-178

Moved by Deputy Warden Olena Hankivsky

Seconded by Councillor Lucas Cleveland

“**That** County Council, having considered Report 2024-042 ‘Emergency Management Evacuation Shelter Services’, refer this matter back to staff and to report back to County Council on March 20, 2024 if required.”

Carried

19. Proclamations

N/A

20. Media Questions

21. Confirming By-law

21.a A By-law to confirm the proceedings of a Special Meeting of County Council held on March 6, 2024

Council Resolution 2024-03-06-179

Moved by Councillor Mandy Martin

Seconded by Councillor John Logel

"**That** By-law 12-2024 being a By-law to confirm the proceedings of a Special meeting of County Council held on March 6, 2024 be introduced, be deemed to be read a first, second and third time, be passed, signed and sealed."

Carried

22. Adjournment

Council Resolution 2024-03-06-180

Moved by Councillor Robert Crate

Seconded by Deputy Warden Olena Hankivsky

"**That** Council adjourn at 6:20 p.m."

Carried

Brian Ostrander, Warden

Maddison Mather, Clerk



The Town of Cobourg's Emergency Care Establishment By-law and potential impacts to the homelessness system

Jennifer Moore
Chief Administrative Officer

Rebecca Carman
Associate Director, Housing and Homelessness

March 6, 2024

Agenda

- ▶ Roles and Responsibilities of Service Manager
- ▶ Current State of Sheltering
- ▶ Timeline and Process for 310 Division
- ▶ Town of Cobourg's Emergency Care Establishment License By-law (E.C.E)
- ▶ Risks to County Sheltering – E.C.E. By-law

Roles and Responsibilities of Service Manager



- ▶ Governed by Provincial Legislation – *Housing Services Act, 2011*
- ▶ Delegated to create 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan that is updated every 5 years
 - ▶ Approved by County Council and then submitted to the Province
- ▶ Fund local homelessness and housing systems through levy and flow-through funding

Homelessness in Northumberland

- ▶ Current By-Name List – 94
 - ▶ Single = 85
 - ▶ Single with children under 18 = 6
 - ▶ Family = 3
- ▶ Monthly By-Name-List (BNL) – January 2022 to January 2024
 - ▶ Average = 76
 - ▶ Max = 94
 - ▶ Min = 61
- ▶ Over 90% experiencing chronic homelessness
- ▶ Housed off BNL:
 - ▶ January 2022 – December 2023 = 60
 - ▶ January-February 2024 = 5

Homelessness in Northumberland

- ▶ Shelter Benefits
 - ▶ Assisted 62 households transition from homelessness to housing in 2023
- ▶ Housing Stability Program
 - ▶ Supported 16 people experiencing homelessness achieve permanent housing since April 2023
- ▶ Homelessness Services are part of one system encompassing:
 - ▶ Financial assistance (OW, ODSP)
 - ▶ Health Care
 - ▶ Mental health
 - ▶ Substance use treatment
 - ▶ Justice

Current State of Sheltering in Northumberland

- 1) Transition House (22 shelter beds)
- 2) Overflow Motel (15 beds)
- 3) Family Diversion (4 families)
- 4) Warming Hub (up to 20 individuals at a time)
- 5) Ad hoc County funded motel beds (as needed)
- 6) Cornerstone Family Violence Prevention Centre (15 women plus children)

Who is Supported by Northumberland's Shelter System



- ▶ Families and individuals
 - ▶ Experiencing homelessness
 - ▶ At-risk of experiencing homelessness
 - ▶ Seeking emergency accommodations
 - ▶ Fleeing family violence
- ▶ People can be impacted by:
 - ▶ Lack of affordable housing/rental crisis
 - ▶ Inability to pay rent/mortgage
 - ▶ Illness, personal crisis or relationship separation
 - ▶ Job loss or reduced hours of work
 - ▶ Substance use
 - ▶ Closure/removal of rental units (e.g. Fire Code, Building Code, Public Health, sale of property by landlord, or other reasons)

How do shelter providers support individuals?

- ▶ Safe and secure temporary accommodation
- ▶ 24-hour support for residents
- ▶ Case management:
 - ▶ Goal setting and action planning
 - ▶ Assistance with permanent housing, finances, & employment
 - ▶ Access to community services
 - ▶ Facilitating and advocating on behalf of residents with community agencies and resources



Common Shelter Best Practices

- ▶ 1:10 staff-to-client ratio
- ▶ Low-barrier
 - ▶ means improving access to shelter services by lowering barriers to entry such as:
 - ▶ sobriety requirements
 - ▶ Income requirements
 - ▶ space for couples
 - ▶ space for pets
 - ▶ accessibility features
- ▶ Private and semi-private rooms
- ▶ Supports available
 - ▶ Wraparound services
 - ▶ Individualized housing plan
 - ▶ Diversion

Common Shelter Best Practices

- ▶ Established understanding of client's rights and responsibilities
- ▶ Standardized staff training
- ▶ Trained staff can be more effective than security
 - ▶ Mental health and de-escalation training
 - ▶ Security can bring peace of mind, but can also be triggering

Progress made in 2023



We provided

1,093

shelter/housing benefits
(homeless or at risk)

We kept safe

133 emergency
shelter users

119 warming
room users

We have added

2 new street outreach positions
for our community

We invested

\$2.3M

in response to homelessness

of which we allocated

\$1.7M in emergency
shelter support

310 Division Street Timeline/Process

- ▶ **June 2023** – Vink Report on sheltering system recommendations
- ▶ **November 15** – County Council provided direction to staff to purchase 310 Division for the purpose of a modernized shelter
- ▶ **December 4** – County introduces purchase via media release, launches webpage with background, FAQs, and question portal, launches social media awareness campaign, and invites public to December 6 meeting to learn more.
- ▶ **December 6** – Special County Council – introducing purchase to public and hearing from community delegations
- ▶ **December 6** – MOU signed between County and Transition House
- ▶ **December 8** – Transaction Closed – 310 owned by County
- ▶ **December – ongoing** – Transition House undertaking site preparation and operational planning for relocation of service

310 Division Street Timeline/Process

- ▶ **January 10 – February 23** – engagement of public, service providers, shelter users
- ▶ **January 23 – ongoing** – planning for operational launch and legal agreement between County and Transition House
 - ▶ January 23 – ongoing – work with legal counsel to draft agreement
 - ▶ February 2 – met with Transition House Executive to discuss terms of a legally binding agreement
 - ▶ **February 14 – met with Town of Cobourg staff, shared high level themes**
 - ▶ February 29 – Grant application submitted to OTF for 310 Division
- ▶ **March 20** – community engagement report will be shared with Council
- ▶ **March/April** – County/Transition House Agreement presented to Council

310 Division Street - Community feedback highlights

- ▶ **Support for service model**
 - ▶ Collaboration with partners for onsite services
 - ▶ Improved privacy, dignity, accessibility for clients, with private sleeping quarters
- ▶ **Clarification required**
 - ▶ Definition of 'low barrier' shelter
 - ▶ Prohibition on use/distribution of substances onsite/not a safe injection site
 - ▶ Number of clients to be accommodated onsite
- ▶ **Community safety and wellbeing**
 - ▶ Downtown crime concerns
 - ▶ Loitering
 - ▶ Security measures at 310 Division
- ▶ **Community engagement**
 - ▶ Establishment of Transition House Community Liaison Committee
- ▶ **Shelter operations**
 - ▶ Research/best practice-based shelter operations
 - ▶ Staff training
 - ▶ Agreement with Town of Cobourg (Whitby/Durham-style agreement)
- ▶ **Increase in local mental health & addiction services**

Agreement with Transition House

- ▶ Presenting to County Council in the coming months
- ▶ Some of the terms will include:
 - ▶ Long-term accountability mechanism (control of public asset)
 - ▶ Community Liaison Committee
 - ▶ Community engagement activities (including correspondence with County and Cobourg)
 - ▶ Commitment to operating as a Low-Barrier Shelter (not no-barrier; not safe-injection site)
 - ▶ Commitment to adherence to property standards by-law
 - ▶ Payment terms (mortgage plus interest)
 - ▶ Good standing with annual service agreements, Operating audit, capital reserve planning, quarterly reporting
 - ▶ Consideration of security enhancements

Town of Cobourg's Emergency Care Establishment License By-law (E.C.E)



- ▶ Published on February 21 for February 28 Cobourg Council Agenda
- ▶ Effective March 28, 2024
- ▶ The by-law requires **all** shelters to:
 - ▶ Schedule maintenance for litter, waste accumulation and debris from shelter occupants within 500 metre radius
 - ▶ Have a code of conduct for shelter occupants that aligns with the Town's Nuisance By-law
 - ▶ Submit operational plans and occupancy levels to the Town for approval
 - ▶ 24/7 contact information for a Local Contact who is available to respond to matters involving the E.C.E. within **1 (one) hour response** by email or phone for any issue with the shelter
 - ▶ Shelter directors/officers are **personally liable** for the adherence to the by-law, including occupants behaviour offsite
 - ▶ Fines range between \$500 - \$100,000 per day or partial day
 - ▶ Provide 24/7 security onsite and 500 metre radius

Highlighted Risks/Impacts to County Sheltering E.C.E. By-law Town of Cobourg



- ▶ May impact Cornerstone Family Violence Prevention Centre; Transition House programming at 10 Chapel St, Family Diversion and Motel Overflow; ad hoc county funded motel beds
- ▶ Instability and concern for shelter staff and clients – uncertain future of operations re: ability for shelter services to continue operations after March 28
- ▶ Inability to attract/keep Board members because of the personal liability
 - ▶ Infeasibility of monitoring behaviour and actions of shelter clients once they leave the premises
- ▶ Cost prohibitive implementation (*security, garbage, behaviour*)
- ▶ Proof of insurance that includes a \$2,000,000 liability limit per occurrence for property damage and bodily injury, and identifies the Town being added as additional insured.
- ▶ Duplication of existing municipal services (by-law, police services)

Highlighted Risks/Impacts to County Sheltering E.C.E. By-law Town of Cobourg



- ▶ Potential concerns about the legality of the by-law
- ▶ Potential contravention of Human Rights – implementation of by-law may discriminate against or impose barriers shelter users based on protected grounds including:
 - ▶ Receipt of public assistance
 - ▶ Sex and family status
 - ▶ Disability
- ▶ Once by-law is in force shelters may not remain operational and there could be an increased presence of individuals living rough, including encampments in Cobourg, overcrowding and unsafe dwellings.
 - ▶ Unable to flee situations of family/relationship violence, and human trafficking
- ▶ Under the County's Emergency Management Plan, Annex H, the County may be unable to operate an Emergency Shelter Facility within the Town of Cobourg
 - ▶ E.g.: Solar eclipse – April 8, 2024

Thank you

Questions or comments.