



# Region of Queens Municipality Regular Council

## Tuesday, March 24, 2026

### 4:00 p.m.

## Minutes

**Present:** Mayor Scott Christian, Chair  
Deputy Mayor Maddie Charlton  
Councillor Roberta Roy  
Councillor Courtney Wentzell  
Councillor Vicki Amirault  
Councillor Jack Fancy  
Councillor Stewart Jenkins  
Councillor Wanda Carver

**Staff:** Willa Thorpe, Chief Administrative Officer  
Angela Green, Municipal Clerk

## 1.0 Call to Order

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Mayor Christian called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

## 2.0 Approval of Agenda

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14.2 – Wastewater was added by Deputy Mayor Charlton

14.3 – Police Advisory Board was added by Councillor Amirault

**It was moved by Councillor Amirault and seconded by Councillor Carver:**

**THAT** the Council of Region of Queens Municipality approve the March 24, 2026 agenda as amended.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 3.0 In Camera

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**It was moved by Councillor Roy and seconded by Councillor Wentzell:**

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality move to Closed Session at 4:05 p.m. to discuss four items:

- 3.1 Legal
- 3.2 Personnel
- 3.3 Personnel
- 3.4 Personnel

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

**It was moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Roy:**

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality return to open session at 4:50 p.m.

*The meeting recessed at 4:50 p.m. and resumed at 5:30 p.m.*

## 4.0 Adoption of Minutes

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Deputy Mayor Charlton requested that the minutes from the March 10, 2026 Regular meeting be amended to include the Citizen's Advisory Committee on Council Remuneration's recommendation, and more detail of the Chair's introductory remarks.

**It was moved by Councillor Jenkins and seconded by Councillor Amirault:**

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality approve the March 10, 2026 Regular Council Meeting minutes as amended.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

**It was moved by Councillor Carver and seconded by Councillor Roy:**

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality approve the March 17, 2026 Special Council Meeting minutes as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 5.0 Public Comment

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### 1. Stephen Fletham, Miller Waste Systems

Mr. Fletham addressed Council regarding Miller Waste Systems' bid for the recent garbage and grey box collection tenders. He advised that Miller's

submission had been deemed non-compliant on the basis that staff felt one truck per tender was insufficient to complete the work, and submitted that this was an operational concern rather than a compliance issue. He noted that Miller employs route planning technology and maintains backup vehicles to accommodate fluctuating collection volumes. He advised that Miller's bid was more than \$2 million less than the bid recommended to Council in the staff report, and requested that Miller's submission be given further review.

## 2. Stephen Anthony, Liverpool

Mr. Anthony addressed Council with concerns regarding drainage and water management in his neighbourhood. He described a situation in which a property had been filled to a height of approximately ten feet, redirecting water flow across what he understood to be provincial land and ultimately toward a drain on George Street. He noted that the redirected water had resulted in approximately four inches of water in his basement following a recent rainstorm. He also raised questions regarding a variance that he understood to have been approved at 4.5 metres, but which he believed, based on his own measurements, to be less than 2.5 metres from his property line. Mayor Christian advised that specific questions would be taken offline and that staff would follow up.

## 3. Marilyn Anthony, Liverpool

Ms. Anthony accompanied Mr. Anthony and provided additional context to his presentation, sharing photographs to illustrate the drainage situation and the proximity of the development to the property line. She indicated she had been in contact with a number of individuals regarding the matter and was awaiting follow-up before taking further steps.

## 4. Keving Colwell, Liverpool

Mr. Colwell submitted a written statement, read into the record by the Municipal Clerk. He expressed support for the transparency and accessibility of Council's communications and noted that he regularly follows Council meetings, agendas, and minutes. While acknowledging

that he has not always agreed with Council's decisions, he indicated that staff and elected officials have consistently responded promptly to his inquiries. He expressed disappointment with the conduct of some residents on social media, citing the spread of misinformation and instances of harassment directed at Council members and staff. He offered recommendations to both residents, to stay informed, engage respectfully, and hold Council to account through appropriate channels, and to Council, including disabling comments on public social media posts to redirect public discourse to more constructive formats.

## 5. Katelyn Waugh – Brooklyn

Ms. Waugh, Chair of the Brooklyn Recreation Committee, submitted a written statement read into the record by the Municipal Clerk. She responded to remarks made by a member of the public at the March 10, 2026 Council meeting, addressing three specific claims: that the committee had incurred unauthorized debt or loans; that the Brooklyn Waterfront Park lease was improperly managed; and that the committee's financial reporting was non-compliant with its bylaws. She clarified that the \$41,000 referenced was a structured 0% interest repayment arrangement through Efficiency Nova Scotia's Affordable Housing Program, not a loan, and that the energy upgrades had already resulted in a 53% reduction in energy costs. She outlined the work undertaken by the committee to investigate and address the waterfront park lease situation, and confirmed that the committee's financial reporting is conducted in accordance with its bylaws. She invited members of the public to contact the committee directly with questions and encouraged respectful engagement going forward.

## 6. Paul Deveau – Milton

Mr. Deveau addressed Council with concerns regarding the remuneration review process and the resulting Council compensation increase. He acknowledged that current compensation levels are low and that an increase is warranted, but expressed concern that the process appeared structured in a way that favoured a predetermined outcome. He questioned the selection of West Hants as a comparator municipality, noting its population of approximately 19,500 compared to Queens

County's 10,500, and suggested a combined comparison with Yarmouth would have been more appropriate and would have resulted in a lower recommended increase. He submitted that a fourth option should have been presented providing an increase similar to Option 1, but taking effect only after the next election on the basis that candidates had accepted the roles and compensation as understood at the time of their election. He also raised concerns about the perceived independence of the remuneration committee, noting that three of its members had donated to the Mayor's electoral campaign, and urged Council to take steps to protect the integrity and public perception of its governance processes.

## 7. Gary Clark – Port Mouton

Mr. Clark addressed Council regarding the 2026–2027 budget, drawing on his experience as a food bank volunteer to illustrate the financial pressures facing residents. Using a household analogy, he described the budget process as beginning with a high initial ask followed by a series of reductions, which he submitted does not reflect disciplined fiscal management from the perspective of those bearing the cost. He noted that property assessments have nearly doubled over the past decade, already driving increased municipal revenue, and that the proposed tax rate increase, when combined with assessment growth, would result in a net increase significantly higher than the figures presented publicly, estimating the impact on average homeowners at \$600 or more annually. He raised concerns about the simultaneous approval of significant Council compensation increases alongside a substantial tax rate increase, and urged Council to demonstrate restraint.

## 8. David Huskins – Liverpool

Mr. Huskins addressed Council with concerns about the cost-of-living pressures facing residents on fixed or limited incomes, noting the difficulty of affording basic necessities. He raised questions about the capacity of the municipal water supply to support further development, and expressed the view that a study of the water source had not been undertaken in many years. He urged Council to assess infrastructure capacity before committing to further expansion, and called for greater

attention to addressing existing gaps in retail and services available to residents.

## 9. Darryl Arnburg - Brooklyn

Mr. Arnburg addressed Council expressing frustration with his property tax burden, noting a significant disparity between his tax bill and that of a comparable property in a neighbouring area. He raised concerns about the Mount Pleasant Service Extension, questioning the use of general municipal tax revenues to service private developments and expressing concern about the long-term capacity of the water supply. He also raised questions about the size of the municipal equipment fleet, including the cost of registrations, and the absence of restricted licence plates which he noted are available to municipalities to reduce costs. He urged Council to demonstrate greater accountability in spending decisions and expressed concern about the sustainability of ongoing service expansions in the context of repeated tax rate increases.

## 6.0 Delegations and Presentations

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### 6.1 North Queens Board of Trade

Sean Maguire, Vice Chair, and Donald Kimball, Chair of the North Queens Board of Trade, appeared before Council to present the organization's 2026 project plans and funding request. The presentation outlined a series of improvements at Harmony Ball Park in Caledonia, including the acquisition and preparation of an adjacent lot to address parking safety concerns during tournaments, the addition of a dog park, electrical servicing of the existing gazebo, replacement of a second set of bleachers, and rehabilitation of the infield and outfield on one of the two ball fields. Total funding sought for ball park improvements was noted at \$30,000, with individual project estimates provided for each component.

The Board of Trade also presented plans for the Gateway Park project, centered on the development of a multifunctional community building at Caledonia Corner intended to serve as a community hub promoting heritage, eco-tourism, economic development, youth programming, and

accessible public services. Additional Gateway Park elements included continued landscaping and signage, a proposed wharf and boardwalk along the waterfront designed with accessibility and phased construction in mind, and future plans for an amphitheater. Total funding sought for Gateway Park was \$40,000. A summary expense sheet was provided, noting a rough estimate of \$480,000 for the proposed community building and approximately \$60,000 for the wharf and its installation.

## 7.0 Unfinished Business

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### 7.1 Clerk's Memo

The Municipal Clerk presented a memorandum providing Council with status updates on four outstanding items from the Council Implementation Report. Council was advised that negotiations for the municipal acquisition of a portion of PID #70026547 from Mogan Holdings Limited remain in progress, with staff continuing to follow up to advance the preparation of deed and executed documents. The procurement of priority dry hydrants is also in progress, with staff working to define the scope of the initiative. The transmission main project analysis is pending, with an RFP anticipated to be issued in summer 2026. Pedestrian safety improvements on College Street have not yet commenced, with staff to provide an update when work begins.

Council discussion followed. A member of Council requested clarification on the timeline for the transmission main project, noting the importance of addressing the existing line from Roy Turner Drive to Union Street and expressing that procurement activity should be initiated without further delay. The Municipal Clerk advised that the Director of Infrastructure had indicated the RFP process would be initiated in summer 2026, and noted that it remains within Council's purview to pass a motion to prioritize the item. A member of Council also requested a firmer timeline on the College Street pedestrian safety measures, citing the volume of students and children in the area and the added safety concerns during winter conditions. The Municipal Clerk committed to providing an update at the next Regular Meeting.

*The meeting recessed at 6:55 p.m. and resumed at 7:05 p.m.*

## 8.0 Staff Reports

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### 8.1 Interim Planning Review RFP Selection

Staff presented a report seeking Council direction on the selection of a consulting firm to conduct an interim review of the Municipality's Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB). Following Council's direction at the December 9, 2025 Regular Meeting to initiate the review using external resources, a Request for Proposals was issued in February 2026, with five proposals received by the March 6, 2026 closing date. On March 17, 2026, the Planning Advisory Committee and Municipal Staff, acting as the Selection Committee, evaluated the submissions and unanimously recommended UPLAND Planning and Design Studio as the successful firm, at a total project cost of \$76,500.00, excluding HST. Staff recommended that Council approve the selection of UPLAND to proceed with the interim planning review.

**It was moved by Councillor Roy and seconded by Councillor Jenkins:**

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality select UPLAND Planning and Design Studio as the consultant to conduct an interim review of the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw, for a total project cost of \$76,500.00, excluding HST.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

### 8.2 Service Club Recognition

Staff presented a report recommending the installation of service club recognition signage in Liverpool, in response to a Council motion from the May 13, 2025 Regular Meeting directing staff to identify a suitable location

and structure for community group signage. Staff proposed the installation of two 12-inch diameter signs representing the Lions Club and the Kiwanis Club, mounted on a single post adjacent to the existing Liverpool downtown wayfinding signage at the Bristol Avenue intersection. The estimated cost of the signs is approximately \$122.00 plus HST, with installation to be completed by Municipal staff using existing operational resources. Both service clubs were consulted and indicated their support for the proposed location. No development permits or additional approvals are required, as the installation falls within permitted uses under the applicable bylaw on municipally owned property.

**It was moved by Councillor Fancy and seconded by Councillor Carver:**

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality approve the installation of two (2) 12-inch diameter service club recognition signs for the Lions Club and Kiwanis Clubs, mounted on a single post at the Bristol Avenue intersection adjacent to the existing Liverpool downtown wayfinding signage, as illustrated in the rendering enclosed in this report.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

### 8.3 Gorham Walkway Rehabilitation

Staff presented a report for information on the proposed rehabilitation of the Gorham Walkway in Liverpool, which connects Main Street to the waterfront at the north end of Gorham Street. Structural concerns with the existing retaining wall were first identified in 2023, and the wall has continued to deteriorate, prompting vegetation removal as an interim stabilization measure. Staff developed an internal rehabilitation design that addresses structural stability through construction of a new modular block wall with drainage, while also introducing several accessibility and safety improvements including reduced slope, improved lighting, increased pathway width, a mid-point rest area, enhanced sightlines, accommodation for winter maintenance equipment, and measures to reduce pedestrian-vehicle conflicts at Main Street. Materials have been purchased and are stocked at Public Works, with construction anticipated to commence in spring 2026 and be completed before the end of June.

**It was moved by Councillor Wentzell and seconded by Councillor Carver:**

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality receive the report titled 'Gorham Walkway Rehabilitation' for information.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

#### 8.4 MPSE Lift Stations

Staff presented a report on the results of public procurement for required upgrades to three municipal wastewater lift stations, the Hank Snow, Town Bridge, and Cross Street Lift Stations, as part of the Mount Pleasant Service Extension (MPSE) project. Two submissions were received following a tender posted on February 2, 2026 and closed February 23, 2026, with Harbour Construction Company Limited identified as offering the best value at a bid price of \$4,239,170.00 plus HST. While the bid exceeded the Capital Investment Plan estimate of \$4.1 million by approximately \$100,000, reflecting an increase in scope, staff confirmed that the aggregate project remains on track to finish within Municipal Capital Grant Program (MCGP) funding and budget projections. Staff recommended that Council accept the bid from Harbour Construction Company Limited for the Mount Pleasant Lift Station Upgrades.

**It was moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Jenkins:**

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality accept the bid of \$4,239,170.00 plus HST from Harbour Construction Company Limited for the Mount Pleasant Lift Station Upgrades.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 8.5 Strategic Action Plan – Quarterly Update

Staff presented a report for information providing Council with the first quarterly update of the Strategic Action Plan, developed in alignment with the Council's Strategic Priorities Plan 2026–2029, which was approved at the January 27, 2026 Regular Meeting. The Strategic Action Plan, known internally as the "Now, Next, Later," organizes municipal projects into three-time horizons, Now, Next, and Later, reflecting their relative priority, and is intended to be a living document that Council may adjust as priorities evolve. Quarterly updates are provided to ensure staff accountability and to give Council the opportunity to redirect resources as needed. Financial implications of individual projects within the plan are captured in the corresponding capital and operating budgets. The plan is publicly available on the Region's website at [www.regionofqueens.com/now-next-later](http://www.regionofqueens.com/now-next-later).

**It was moved by Councillor Amirault and seconded by Councillor Carver:**

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality receive the report titled 'Strategic Action Plan – Quarterly Update' for information.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 8.6 2026-2027 Area Rate Requests

Staff presented a report outlining area rate renewal applications received for the 2026–2027 fiscal year from the Brooklyn Recreation Committee and the Brooklyn Cemetery Committee, as required under Policy 23 – Community Area Rates. A public consultation was held on February 12, 2026, followed by an advisory vote on February 13, 2026 at the Brooklyn Community Hall, with 86 ballots cast for each application. The Brooklyn Recreation Committee's proposed rate of \$0.04 per \$100 of capped assessment received 86.0% support, and the Brooklyn Cemetery Committee's proposed rate of \$0.015 per \$100 of capped assessment received 83.7% support. If approved at the requested rates, disbursements

would total \$38,000 to the Brooklyn Recreation Committee and \$14,000 to the Brooklyn Cemetery Committee, representing increases of less than 5% over 2025–2026 levels due to growth in assessed property values in the applicable districts. Staff recommended that Council direct staff to include these disbursements in the 2026–2027 operating budget.

**It was moved by Councillor Amirault and seconded by Councillor Wentzell:**

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality direct staff to include a disbursement of \$38,000.00 to the Brooklyn Recreation Committee and \$14,000.00 to the Brooklyn Cemetery Committee in the 2026-2027 operating budget.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

***The meeting recessed at 8:08 p.m. and resumed at 8:18 p.m.***

## **8.7 Operational Budget Fiscal 2026-2027**

Staff presented the fourth draft (V4) of the 2026–2027 operational budget for Council review, incorporating revisions directed by Council at the March 17, 2026 Special Meeting and additional information requested at the March 10, 2026 Regular Meeting. Since the initial draft presented on March 3, 2026, which reflected a proposed tax rate increase of 21.2 cents per \$100 of assessment, successive revisions have reduced the proposed increase to 5.5 cents per \$100 of assessment, a 74% reduction. V4 also incorporates the Utility Budget and an updated Reserve Activity Report, and includes several items for Council's consideration, including options for custodial staffing at Queens Place Emera Centre (QPEC) and the new South Queens outdoor pool, and information on the availability of a municipal benefits package for members of Council. Staff recommended that Council receive the report for information.

**It was moved by Councillor Wentzell and seconded by Councillor Carver:**

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality approve Option 2, to add three (3) full time equivalent Custodial positions at Queens Place Emera Centre.

**MOTION DEFEATED unanimously.**

**It was moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Roy:**

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality incorporate Option 5 into the budget for a cost of \$89,300.00.

**MOTION CARRIED with six (6) in favour and one (2) against.**

**It was moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Amirault:**

THAT Council for Region of Queens Municipality approve the addition of health and dental benefits for members of Council, with 50/50 cost sharing between the member and the Region.

**MOTION CARRIED with six (6) in favour, and two (2) against.**

**It was moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Wentzell:**

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality direct staff to reinstate the vacancy allowance to 50%.

**MOTION CARRIED with six (6) in favour, and two (2) against.**

**Mayor Christian requested that the remaining items of Regular Council business be differed to a future meeting, noting the lateness of the hour. Council was in unanimous agreement.**

## 9.0 Adjournment

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The Meeting was adjourned at 9:23 p.m.

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Mayor Scott Christian, Chair

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Angela Green, Municipal Clerk

Date Approved: April 14, 2026