



CITY OF BATHURST
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES

Monday, March 10, 2025
6:30 pm
Council Chambers - City Hall

Present	Mayor K. Chamberlain Councillor P. Anderson Councillor D. Branch Councillor S. Brunet Councillor R. Hondas Councillor D. Knowles Councillor J.-F. LeBlanc Councillor S. Legacy Deputy Mayor M. Willett
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Absent	Councillor M. Skerry
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Appointed Officials	A. Parker, City Clerk L. Foulem, Corporate Communications Manager C. Legacy, Director of Economic Development S. Morton, Director of Human Resources C. Roy, Executive Administrator Donald McLaughlin, Development Officer Todd Pettigrew, CAO
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1. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

2. PUBLIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENTATIONS

2.1 Bathurst Regional Airport by Alain Guitard

The president of the Northern New Brunswick Airport Authority (NNBAA) provided an update on the Bathurst Regional Airport's challenges and future plans. The airport has faced significant struggles over the past five years, starting with the grounding of the Boeing 737 Max in 2019 due to safety concerns, which led to reduced flights. Following the two-year pandemic, a pilot shortage further complicated operation. During the most recent meeting with Air Canada, the airport asked when daily flights would resume, but the response indicated that, given the current challenges, daily flights are not expected in the medium to short term.

The airport is now working to develop a sustainable model to support four flights per week, but this remains difficult with the current staffing levels. It's crucial to maintain staffing for air

ambulance services, which adds a significant cost, especially considering the ongoing expenses required to maintain the runway for these operations.

To address these challenges, the airport secured funding from ACCOA and has scheduled a consultant to assess the airport's operations from March 17 to 19. The consultant's goal is to help create a viable operational model that could support more commercial flights. Currently, the airport is operating at a deficit of approximately \$50,000 per month. However, they have also secured a gap loan from RBC for up to \$300,000, which will help sustain operations until June. The consultant's review is part of their efforts to stabilize and improve the airport's financial situation.

The primary concern is to avoid losing the airport's certification, as it is issued by Transport Canada, which is very strict with its requirements. Currently, there are grandfather clauses in place, but if the airport loses its certification and applies for it again in the future, it will need to be reclassified. The grandfather clauses will no longer apply, and the airport will have to meet the new regulations. While some of these new requirements may be straightforward, others, such as those related to zoning, could be more complex to navigate.

2.2 Chaleur Regional Service Commission - Community Development by Jennifer Pitre

The Chaleur Regional Service Commission's (CRSC) Director of Community Development gave an update on the community development initiatives in the Chaleur Region. The presentation demonstrated the services being provided in the community.

- Chaleur Eat Fresh
 - A bulk food buying initiative
 - 6177 bags sold in 2024
 - 8 distributions centres
 - Over 40 volunteers
 - Overt 350 volunteer hours monthly
 - Savings of \$123,540 for participants in 2024
- Food Hub
 - Universal Breakfast Program
 - 47 schools
 - 3 regions: Chaleur, Restigouche and Acadian Peninsula
- Snacks at the library
 - Provide free healthy snacks at three provincial libraries in the region.
- Healthy School Snacks
 - Provide reduced cost for healthy snacks in several local schools.

Regional Plan

- Mapping of community initiatives and assets

- Promotion of 211
- Free tax clinics and super clinics
- Suicide Prevention toll box
- Intergenerational activities to support vulnerable seniors
- Planet Youth Chaleur
- Pabineau Sports and Recreation
- Chaleur Volunteers

Community Transportation Service

- 1007 drives in 2024
- 1920 deliveries of food

Public Transportation

- Pilot project starting in 2025 until 2028

Public Safety

- Chaleur Emergency Kits

A list of all sports activities in the Chaleur region is included in the Chaleur Sports, Recreation and Leisure Booklet.

Coming Up

- Study on affordable housing
- Feasibility study for a new youth centre/initiative
- Co-Action initiatives
- Renewal of the sports and leisure booklet
- CCNB Food Security
- Homeless backpacks

3. NEW BUSINESS

3.1 Grant Committee Recommendations

On February 26, 2025, the Grant Committee convened to review new grant applications for 2025. Councillor Leblanc presented the Committee's recommendations, and Council agreed to introduce a motion at the next regular public meeting to accept the proposed recommendations.

3.2 Economic Development Advisory Committee by Chris Legacy

The proposed Terms of Reference for the Economic Development Advisory Committee was presented. They are consistent with the City's commitment to effective committee governance and its ongoing focus on advancing economic development.

The Economic Development Advisory Committee will provide strategic, non-binding advice to Council on economic development matters. Its focus will be to foster business growth, improve municipal policies, and enhance Bathurst's competitive position. Acting as a liaison between Council, the business community, and the public, the Committee will identify economic challenges and opportunities, recommend policy improvements, and support initiatives that drive investment and job creation. Through collaboration with key stakeholders, research, and public engagement, the Committee will contribute to shaping a sustainable and thriving local economy.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting is adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Amy-Lynn Parker, City Clerk