

Village of South River
Council Meeting – December 9, 2025

The meeting of the Council of the Village of South River was held virtually and in person on Thursday December 9, 2025. A quorum was present. In attendance were Mayor Jim Coleman, Deputy Mayor Bill O’Hallarn, Councillor Brenda Scott, Councillor Teri Brandt, and Councillor Robert Brooks.

Staff in Attendance: Don McArthur, Clerk Administrator – In person
Janet Wedseltoft, Chief Financial Officer – In person
Candice Robertson, Administrative Assistance – In Person

Guest: South River Machar Fire Chief Risto Maki
April Savard

1. Call to Order - The meeting was called to order by Mayor Jim Coleman at 2:00 p.m.

The Village of South River acknowledges the Robinson-Huron and Williams Treaties on the land of the Anishinabek that we meet today. We seek to work respectfully with Indigenous people, and are thankful for their teachings and stewardship of the land.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof – Nil

3. Delegation and Public Meeting –

1. Patterson Rezoning Public Meeting By-law 48-2025
2. April Savard – Recreation Initiative

In regard to 3.1 Patterson Rezoning public meeting, Clerk Administrator D. McArthur welcomed everyone to the public meeting and noted the purpose of the public meeting is to discuss the amending zoning by-law 17-95 from Rural (RU) to first density residential (R1). Council invited comments and questions in support or opposition oral or written. Robert Weaver submitted a written response stating his thoughts and concerns of the rezoning. M. Paradis inquired about a proposal of a subdivision, and wanting the wetlands noted as EP and if you could just rezone 2 lots and not the whole property. The Clerk Administrator replied there is no proposal for subdivision but there is interest and that would be a separate process. If subdividing the land owner would need to follow the guidelines for that process. Typically, it involves studies and reports such as functional servicing reports that detail water, sewage, stormwater, utilities, roads, and transportation needs, geotechnical, hydrogeological, environmental, grading and drainage, landscape and composite utility plans. M. Paradis followed by asking if the land owner would need an environmental assessment to build. Clerk Administrator responded if they were to build one house they would need to apply for a driveway and building permit, if multi lots they would be required to do a severance and follow those guidelines. J. Murray suggested that rezoning would encourage more housing to be built on this property, and if the Village was planning on building a road. Clerk Administrator stated to build more than one house would need to be sub divided and go through the planning board, and any road put in would be done by the developer. M. Paradis then stated to clarify a road extension and water would be the expense of the builder. Council agreed with the statement. E. Macintosh inquired about lots 10 & 12 on Poplar that are parkland, will they be sold? Councillor Brant explained those parcels may be deemed surplus property in the future but 10&12 are not part of this application for rezoning. That would require another public meeting to rezone them if they are to be offered for sale. Councillor Brandt then asked for the clarification that as of today you can only build one house on property, if rezoned you still can only build one house on the property, to build additional houses the owner would need to go through the severance process with the Planning Board. Clerk Administrator confirmed that is correct. The land owner chose to change the zoning prior to going through the severance process. R. Weaver asked if there is a setback how close you can build to the EP. Clerk Administrator did not believe currently as it stand there is and would look into it. J. Murray wanted to know the restrictions to how many trees can be cut down. Clerk Administrator stated there is a by-law for protecting trees that is more restrictive in residential zoning than rural, where forestry is an accepted use.

All guest for public meeting left meeting at 2:27pm

In regard to 3.2 April Savard presented to Council introducing herself as a resident of Laurier by Trout Creek and was a nurse for many years and was in a severe motor vehicle accident and couldn’t walk, talk or care for herself. Yoga was recommended as therapy and now has become a yoga teacher herself seeing the success first hand. A. Savard asks to do classes by donation and have the space at the Community Centre donated and 50% of proceeds from the donations going to the South River food bank. This would be low cost and accessible to everyone over 18. R. Weaver from the Good Happening Food Bank added he met April a few days ago and when April suggested donating to the food bank, he let the board members know at their meeting and it was suggested that April says she is donating to a charitable organization and if asked can say the food bank as the

food bank can't advertise donations. Councilor O'Hallarn inquired if this would be a conflict with the chair yoga already offered at the Seniors friendly circle. A. Savard replied she does not want to compete with anyone and noted this is for 18+ vs only being offered to the seniors and if it was an issue would not go chair yoga and just do the other styles.

A Savard and R. Weaver left the meeting at 2:43pm

356-2025 Scott/ Brooks

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Village of South River does hereby read a first, second and third time and finally pass By-law# 48-2025, being a zoning by-law amendment to rezone parts of the property known as CON 3 PT LOT 6 REM PCL 6491 at Eagle Lake Rd from Rural (RU) to Residential R1 with the signatures of the Mayor and the Clerk-Administrator and the corporate seal affixed.

Carried

4. Adoption of Minutes – Council November 25, 2025

357-2025 Brooks/Scott

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Village of South River does hereby adopt the minutes of the Council meeting November 25th 2025 as presented.

Carried

5. Accounts and Finance

5.1 Accounts Reports -

1. November 2025 Income Statement and Machine Time
2. November 2025 Cheque EFT and Online Payments
3. 2026 Municipal Fee Schedules
4. Realtax Fee Schedule 2026
5. FCM Membership 2026-2027
6. Grant Donation Summary 2022-2025

In regard to 5.1.6 Council reviewed the donation summary as requested at the previous council meeting, wanting to donate to the Good Happening Food Bank. Clerk Administrator let Council know the Parc Association is closed and we donated \$1000 to them and they returned \$500.

358-2025 Brandt/Brooks

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Village of South River does hereby approve the membership in FCM for 2026 at a cost of \$539.97

Carried

359-2025 Scott/Brooks

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Village of South River does hereby support a donation to the Good Happening Food Bank Donation in the amount of \$500.

Carried

360-2025 Brandt/Brooks

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Village of South River does hereby receive the reports from Accounts and Finance #1 to #6.

Carried

6. Reports from Municipal Staff and/or Committees

6.1 Reports from Municipal Staff and Related Business –

1. LUMI Internet Municipal Voting
2. Train Station Committee Minutes November 26 2025
3. Integrity Commissioner Renewal - ADR Chambers
4. Welcome Sign Options

In regard to 6.1.1 Council discussed LUMI internet municipal voting, discussing pros and cons. Noting it could increase voters, but there are some residents that would not want to vote online and suggested a blend of internet and paper voting. Council deferred to the next Council meeting.

In regard to 6.1.2 Council noted the heat has been turned off in the train station and has been shut down for the winter. There is a promotional video done by the Economic Develop Officer to highlight the rental space. Train Committee is meeting in March about having historical displays in the train station for the summer.

In regard to 6.1.4 Council reviewed options for the welcome sign at the entrance of South River on Highway 124 or to just refresh the current sign.

361-2025 Brandt/Brooks

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Village of South River does hereby approve the renewal of Integrity Commissioner services from ADR Chambers for the years 2026-2028 as per the proposal presented.

Carried

362-2025 Scott/O'Hallarn

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Village of South River does hereby accept the staff and committee report #1 to #4 as presented.

Carried

6.2 Reports from Shared Services –

1. SRM Library Board Meeting Minutes November 20, 2025- Draft
2. SRM Community Centre Chief Operator Report November 2025
3. SRM Fire Chief Report for December 2025
4. SRM Fire Committee Meeting Minutes Nov 27 2025 - Draft

In regard to 6.2.1 Council reviewed the South River Machar Library board meeting minutes, noting in the new year the library is preparing a strategic plan. April Savard has joined as a new member on the board, and the new computers are working well.

In regard to 6.2.2 Council reviewed the South River Machar Community Centre Chief Operator report. Council discussed the doors being replaced to the compressor room as per TSA and the engineer report stated the roof on the arena is in good condition but is not designed for the addition of solar panels.

In regard to 6.2.3 South River Machar Fire Chief Risto Maki reviewed the November report discussing dispatch and response times for the month and year to date. Also reviewing the number of hours worked in November and year to date. As well as training and equipment maintenance.

In regard to 6.2.4 Council reviewed the South River Machar Fire Committee meeting minutes which outlined the future need to renovate or relocate the fire hall. The minutes gave estimates for new build and to renovate current location. It also highlighted the apparatus replacement schedule noting the trucks and pumps have a 25-year lifespan showing the date purchased, the replacement date and estimated replacement costs as pump 4 will be the next truck to be replaced.

South River Machar Fire Chief left the meeting at 4:40pm

363-2025 Brandt/Brooks

BE IT RESOLVED THAT this Council of the Village of South River does hereby accept the reports from Shared Services Staff and Committees #1 to #4.

Carried

6.3 Reports from Regional Committees --

1. ACED Minutes Oct 23 2025 and November Directors Report
2. JBC November Statistics and Nov 21, 2025Minutes
3. POA Managers Report, May 22, 2025 Minutes and 2026 Draft Budget
4. Input Proposed Boundaries for Regional Consolidation of Conservation Authorities
5. CAPB Minutes October 1, 2025
6. Board Health Minutes Apr 23, 2025 and Sept 24, 2025
7. EMPC Meeting Minutes November 19, 2025 - Draft

364-2025 Brooks/Scott

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Village of South River does hereby receive the Reports from the Regional Committees: Items #1 to #7.

Carried

7. By-Laws and Resolutions –

1. Resolution Support Almaguin Highlands Special Olympics Baseball Team
2. Resolution Mandatory Fire Certification
3. By-law 49-2025 OCWA Fixed Price Services Agreement 2026-30

365-2025 Brandt/O'Hallarn

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Village of South River does hereby approve a donation to the Almaguin Highlands Special Olympics Baseball Team in the amount of \$200.

Carried

366-2025 Scott/Brooks

WHEREAS Ontario Regulation 343/22 mandates that firefighters performing specific fire protection services be certified to a prescribed standard by July 1, 2026, with certain technical rescue disciplines requiring certification by July 1, 2028;

AND WHEREAS many fire departments in Ontario are staffed predominantly by volunteer firefighters who balance full-time employment with their emergency service commitments;

AND WHEREAS the certification programs are still under development, and current availability does not adequately reflect the operational realities of volunteer fire departments—particularly in rural communities—where training opportunities are limited and certification demands place undue pressure on personnel and municipal resources;

AND WHEREAS existing training programs and established level of service are designed to meet the needs identified in the current Community Risk Assessment and ensure the continued safety of the community;

AND WHEREAS it is unreasonable to expect volunteer firefighters—who already balance full-time employment and community service—to independently develop curriculums and in-house training programs that meet provincial standards and adequately prepare them for certification exams;

AND WHEREAS these mandatory certification requirements pose significant challenges for small, rural, and northern municipalities due to limited financial and training resources, geographic barriers, and reliance on volunteer fire departments;

AND WHEREAS the implementation of these requirements, without additional flexibility or provincial support, may negatively impact the Village's ability to recruit and retain volunteer firefighters and to provide adequate fire protection services to its residents;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council for the Corporation of the Village of South River formally opposes the mandatory firefighter certification requirements as currently outlined in Ontario Regulation 343/22;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Honourable Premier of Ontario, the Minister of the Solicitor General, the Ontario Fire Marshal, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), and all neighbouring municipalities for their support.

Carried

367-2025 Brooks/Scott

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Village of South River does hereby read a first, second and third time and finally pass By-law#49-2025, being a by-law to enter into a five-year agreement with the Ontario Clean Water Agency to operate the water treatment plant with the signatures of the Mayor and the Clerk and the corporate seal affixed.

Carried

8. Correspondence

1. SRM Agricultural Society Breakfast Dec 21 2025
2. AMO - Railroad Drainage Issue
3. Enbridge Rate Application Notice
4. Honourable Rob Flack - Bill 17 Minor Variances
5. AHCC Dec. 2025 Newsletter
6. Labour Market Group November Reports
7. Municipality of Wawa - Upholding Women's Rights, Leadership, and Environmental Health in the Implementation of Ontario Bill 5
8. Brantford City - Professional Activity (P.A) Day on Municipal Election Day

368-2025 Brooks/Scott

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Village of South River does hereby receive the Correspondence: Agenda Items #1 to #8.

Carried

9. Council Roundtable (Items of Interest) – Nil

Candice left the meeting at 5:12pm

10. In Camera –

1. JBC Staff Negotiations
2. Surplus Property 309 Hwy 124
3. Personnel Committee Minutes Dec 2 2025

369-2025 Brandt/Brooks

BE IT RESOLVED that this meeting of the Village of South River Council be closed under Subsection 239. (b) a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipal or local board purposes and (d) labour relations or employee negotiations and that this Council proceed in Camera at 5:12p.m. for the purpose of discussing issues related to the above.

Carried

370-2025 Brooks/Scott

BE IT RESOLVED THAT this Council adjourn the Closed meeting and reconvene in Open Session at 6:18p.m. with Mayor Jim Coleman as Chair.

Carried

371-2025 Brandt/O'Hallarn

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Village of South River does hereby support the Joint Building Committee recommendation for a wage grid for the Deputy Chief Building Official as presented in JBC Resolution 2025-018.

Carried

372-2025 Brandt/O'Hallarn

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Village of South River does hereby approve the Clerk-Administrator to work with the realtor and potential leaser for the surplus property at 309 HWY 124 with the intent of securing a long-term lease or sale as per the terms presented in camera.

Carried

373-2025 O'Hallarn/Brandt

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Village of South River does hereby accept the report from the personnel committee for the 2026 wages for the Clerk-Administrator, Fire Chief and a Chief Financial Officer as per their employment contracts.

Carried

374-2025 O'Hallarn/Brandt

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Village of South River does hereby approve the Christmas Staff Appreciation as recommended by the personnel committee.

Carried

11. Confirming By-law – By-law #50-2025

375-2025 Brandt/O'Hallarn

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Village of South River does hereby read a first, second and third time and finally pass By-law# 50-2025, being a by-law to confirm the proceedings of Council at its meeting held on the 9th day of December 2025 with the signatures of the Mayor and the Clerk-Administrator and the corporate seal affixed.

Carried

12. Adjournment

376-2025 O'Hallarn/Scott

BE IT RESOLVED THAT this Council of the Village of South River does hereby adjourn to meet again as the South River Council on Tuesday, January 13th, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. in the South River Council Chambers located at 63 Marie Street or at the call of the Mayor. Time of Adjournment: 6:05 p.m.

Carried

Bill O'Hallarn, Deputy Mayor

Don McArthur, Clerk-Administrator