



MUNICIPALITY OF MORRIS-TURNBERRY

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 27, 2026, 9:00 am

The Council of the Municipality of Morris-Turnberry held a special meeting in Council Chambers on January 27, 2026 at 9:00am for the purpose of budget deliberations.

Council in Attendance

Mayor Jamie Heffer
Deputy Mayor Kevin Freiburger
Councillor Jamie McCallum
Councillor Jodi Snell

Staff in Attendance

Trevor Hallam	CAO/Clerk
Sean Brohpy	Treasurer
Kirk Livingston	Chief Building Official / Drainage Superintendent / Property Standards Officer / Zoning Administrator
Mike Alcock	Director of Public Works

Others in Attendance

Rachel Hammermueller The Wingham Advance Times

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Heffer called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

Mayor Heffer noted that the members of the press in attendance would be recording the meeting for the purpose of writing articles.

2.0 ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion 11-2026

*Moved by Jodi Snell
Seconded by Kevin Freiburger*

*THAT the Council of the Municipality of Morris-Turnberry hereby
adopts the agenda for the meeting of January 27, 2026, as
circulated.*

Carried.

3.0 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST / POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

4.0 BUSINESS

4.1 BUDGET PROCESS REVIEW

Treasurer Sean Brophy provided information on the current budget process and led a discussion regarding changes that could be made.

Following a discussion, Councillor McCallum stated that he would like to have the budget finalized in March rather than April. Mayor Heffer, Deputy Mayor Freiburger, and Councilor Snell indicated a preference to have accurate budget numbers before finalizing, acknowledging the delay that results from this approach. No direction was given to staff regarding changes to the budget process.

4.2 BUDGET DELIBERATIONS

4.2.1 Municipal Drains

Mr. Livingston presented the Municipal Drain budget. There were no questions or comments from Council.

4.2.2 Building Department

Mr. Livingston presented the Building Department budget.

Following a discussion regarding the Building Department vehicle and the reserves for its replacement, Council directed staff to reduce the reserve contribution for this item from \$10,000.00 to \$5,000.00.

4.2.3 Property Standards

Mr. Livingston presented the Property Standards budget. There were no questions or comments from Council.

4.2.4 Animal Control

Mr. Livingston presented the Animal Control budget.

Councillor Snell indicated she was concerned about the estimated return on the cost of employing a dog counter. Following a discussion on the matter, staff were directed to remove the item from the budget if it proved prudent in the context of the budget overall and achieving a lower tax rate increase in the next draft.

4.2.5 Parks and Cemeteries

Mr. Alcock presented the Parks and Cemeteries budget. There were no questions or comments from Council.

4.2.6 Belgrave Water System

Mr. Alcock presented the Belgrave Water System budget. There were no questions from Council.

4.2.6.1 Belgrave Water Rate 2026

Motion 12-2026

Moved by Jodi Snell

Seconded by Kevin Freiburger

THAT the Council of the Municipality of Morris-Turnberry hereby establishes the water rate for the Belgrave Water System at \$1322.09 per user for 2026.

Carried.

4.2.7 Landfill & Waste Disposal

Mr. Alcock presented the Landfill & Waste Disposal budget.

Following a discussion regarding the practice of budgeting for the possibility of additional studies and reports for the Turnberry Landfill every year, staff were instructed to consider establishing a reserve for this potential expense so that the impact on the levy in future years could be reduced.

4.2.8 Roads

Mr. Alcock presented the Roads budget.

Mayor Heffer asked for clarification as to whether the proposed contribution to reserves for bridges and culverts is in line with the Municipality's Asset Management Plan. Mr. Brophy explained that it is less than the full requirement but is in line with an approach provided by the plan that increases the contributions over time to reach the goal.

Councillor Snell asked why the per kilometer price for Clyde Line is so much more than it was for the Lowertown paving projects. Mr. Alcock provided an explanation, including factors such as differences in road width, type of application and others.

Councillor Snell asked if there were adjustments that could be made that would reduce the roads budget significantly. Mr. Alcock noted that there were options, but they have never been put forward by staff as they are assumed to be unfavourable. Mayor Heffer asked that such ideas be put forward for the sake of the discussion. Mr. Alcock explained that non-mandatory practices, such as roadside mowing and dust control could be removed, and hard surfaced roads could be reverted to gravel, though doing any of these would be likely to cause complaints from residents. He went on to provide the option of removing some bridges and culverts, such as those with the lowest traffic counts, from the municipality's future repair and replacement schedule, allowing them to degrade over time until they are ultimately closed and removed, thereby greatly reducing the amount that will be required to be put into reserve for future repair and replacement.

4.2.9 Administration

Mr. Brophy presented the Administration budget. Mr. Hallam relayed written questions and comments submitted in advance of the meeting by Councillor Zinn. There were no questions or comments from Council.

4.2.9.1 Municipal Rebranding

A report was presented by CAO/Clerk Trevor Hallam in this regard for the consideration of Council.

Motion 13-2026

*Moved by Jamie McCallum
Seconded by Jodi Snell*

THAT the Council of the Municipality of Morris-Turnberry hereby approves the municipal branding proposal outlined in the CAO's report and the corresponding budgeted amount of \$7,500.00 and directs staff to commence the project.

Carried.

4.2.10 Policing

Mr. Brophy presented the Policing budget.

Mayor Heffer noted that of the proposed 9% increase in this draft, the policing increase makes up 1%.

Councillor McCallum asked for an explanation of the Police reserve. Mr. Brophy explained that this was set up to hold any credits from previous year's reconciliations which are then used to partially offset costs during years where the reconciliation results in an additional charge to the Municipality.

4.2.11 Fire

Mr. Brophy presented the Fire budget. There were no questions from Council.

4.2.12 Grants and Donations

Mr. Brophy presented the Grants and Donations budget. There were no questions from Council.

Councillor Snell spoke to the request from the Disneys of Huron group for \$1000.00 for a sign. She noted that the amount is not of concern, but the precedent it sets is. Councillor McCallum suggested there may be other sources of funding for heritage signage available. Mayor Heffer added that he felt it appropriate that Council provided a location for the sign, but the cost of the sign should be the responsibility of the group. Councillor Freiburger agreed with the points raised.

Motion 14-2026

*Moved by Kevin Freiburger
Seconded by Jodi Snell*

THAT the Council of the Municipality of Morris-Turnberry hereby directs staff to remove the \$1000.00 requested by the Disney's of Huron group from the 2026 budget.

Carried.

Councillor Snell spoke to the request made by the Belgrave Playground Committee. She noted that \$150,000.00 is a large sum, and while she feels it would be appropriate for the municipality to support the project further, it seems difficult given the proposed increase of the draft budget. Councillor McCallum asked Mr. Hallam if there was any in-kind contribution that could be made. Mr. Hallam was not aware of any such opportunity. Direction was given to staff to revisit the consideration of the request in the next draft.

4.2.13 Recreation

Mr. Brophy presented the Recreation budget. There were no questions from Council.

4.2.14 Streetlights

Mr. Brophy presented the Streetlight rates. There were no questions from Council.

4.2.15 Assessment Change

Mr. Brophy presented the Assessment Change for the 2026 budget year. There were no questions from Council.

4.2.16 Tax Rates

Mr. Brophy presented the proposed tax rates for the 2026 budget year. There were no questions from Council.

Mayor Heffer asked members of Council what they felt would be an appropriate increase to give staff a goal for the next draft. There was a consensus of Council that 4% to 4.5% would be acceptable. Deputy Mayor Freiburger noted that based on what was reviewed in the first draft, the reserve contributions seem to present the only opportunity for adjustment, and staff may find it difficult to reach that goal without considering some of the options tabled by Mr. Alcock, such as bridge closures.

5.0 **CONFIRMING BY-LAW**

Motion 15-2026

*Moved by Kevin Freiburger
Seconded by Jamie McCallum*

THAT leave be given to introduce By-Law 04-2026, being a by-law to confirm the proceedings of the Municipality of Morris-Turnberry meeting of Council held on January 27, 2026, and that it now be read severally a first, second, and third time, and finally passed.

Carried.

6.0 **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion 16-2026

*Moved by Jodi Snell
Seconded by Kevin Freiburger*

THAT the Council of the Municipality of Morris-Turnberry does now adjourn at 11:27 am.

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NEXT MEETINGS:

Regular Meeting of Council – Tuesday, February 3, 2026, 7:30 pm
Regular Meeting of Council – Tuesday, February 17, 2026, 7:30 pm

Mayor, Jamie Heffer

Clerk, Trevor Hallam