

**THE CORPORATION OF
THE TOWNSHIP OF SIOUX NARROWS - NESTOR FALLS**

A regular open meeting of Council was held Tuesday, September 1, 2026, in the Nestor Falls Council Chambers. A quorum of Council was present, and this was a duly authorized meeting of the Corporation of the Township of Sioux Narrows - Nestor Falls. This meeting was made available virtually, and all participants were notified that they were being recorded.

Resolution No. 119-26

Moved by Holly Chant

Seconded by Matt Rydberg

That the Mayor now calls this meeting to order to deal with matters pertaining to general.

Carried

Resolution No. 120-26

Moved By Matt Rydberg

Seconded By Holly Chant

That the Council of the Township of Sioux Narrows - Nestor Falls hereby approve and adopt the amended agenda for the September 1, 2026, Council meeting.

Carried

Disclosure of Interest – None

Any Members of Council to declare any Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof pertaining to any items as follows: On today's agenda or from a previous meeting or from a meeting at which a Member was not in Attendance.

Adoption of Minutes

Resolution No. 121-26

Moved by Matt Rydberg

Seconded by Steve Salvador

That the minutes of the August 4, 2026, regular meeting be adopted as read and published.

Carried

Correspondence –

- Sioux Narrows Arts Council- Thank You

The Sioux Narrows Arts Council thanked Council for their support of the 65th Annual Sioux Narrows Arts Festival.

Disbursements

Resolution No. 122-26

Moved by Holly Chant

Seconded by Doug Brothwell

That the August 2026 Disbursements, having been checked and found that all accounts are in order, passes same for payment in the amount of \$553,642.09 Carried.

Delegations- All Nations Health Partners -Ontario Health Team

- Community Patient Advisory Council: Strengthening the Northern Health Travel Grant

-Kim Elke presented to Council on the initiative to make changes and improvements to the Northern Travel Heath Grant.

She explained that for many in Northern Ontario, patients face many unavoidable barriers to access healthcare. Travel is essential to access certain medical care, and the current Northern Ontario Health Grant reimbursement levels do not accurately reflect northern travel costs, which results in out-of-pockets costs. Difficulties navigating the application process, costs and lack of resources lead to delayed or missed appointments, further burdening the healthcare system. Based on identified barriers, the Community Patient Advisory Council has proposed short term, medium term and long-term goals to address the financial, administrative and structural barriers over time.

The goals are as follows:

SHORT-TERM (0-6 MONTHS): REVIEW REIMBURSEMENT LEVELS

Review and consider increasing Northern Health Travel Grant per-kilometre rate, recognizing the increased likelihood of overnight stays and better reflect higher out-of-pocket costs, including fuel consumption, vehicle wear, and winter driving conditions in Northern Ontario.

Increase reimbursement caps, including length of stay restrictions, for medically required overnight travel, where same-day return is not feasible due to distance, availability of transportation or appointment scheduling.

Prioritize changes that can be implemented within existing administrative structures, with the objective of reducing immediate financial barriers to accessing medically necessary care.

MEDIUM-TERM (6-12 MONTHS): IMPROVE NAVIGATION SUPPORT

Pilot patient navigation support to assist with NHTG applications.

Prioritize support for patients who are most vulnerable or require escorts, including strong linkages for First Nations and Indigenous communities.

Focus on assistance with existing eligibility and documentation requirements, not on expanding eligibility.

LONG-TERM (12-18 MONTHS): FORMALIZE PATIENT INPUT

Establish a patient advisory mechanism specific to NHTG.

Ensure patient perspectives inform ongoing program evaluation and refinement.

Align with Ontario Health principles of patient partnership.

Discussion:

Council expressed gratitude over the initiative, highlighting that this is an issue that affects everyone. The Northern Health Travel Grant does not accurately reflect reimbursement levels,

and so many people do not have the support from family or friends to mitigate many of the barriers that come with having to travel for healthcare.

One Councilor asked if assistance would be based on income level, and Kim clarified that it would be needs based, not income based. It was asked if cross-provincial travel was being considered, as going to Winnipeg would solve so many problems. Kim explained that going to Winnipeg does not solve all the problems, and really only benefits those in Kenora and the immediate area. It does not benefit everyone in the North, and does not change the complexity of travel.

Kim noted that there is an upcoming virtual Northern Health Travel Initiative on September 9, 2026 and will share with Council for those that would like to attend.

By-Laws –

Resolution No. 123-26

Moved by Steve Salvador

Seconded by Matt Rydberg

That the By-Law to Amend By-Law 488 (Establishing a Fire Department for the Corporation of the Township of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls), having been read a first time, and deemed read a second and third time, passes the by-law as read.

Carried; with editorial changes.

Clarification: the change to the bylaw was the addition of Appendix D, the Fire Fines:

Township of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls Fire Department By-Law Appendix D:

The Township of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls will issue fines that are consistent with the Provincial Offices Fines under the Ontario Regulation 207/96 under the Forest Fires Prevention Act.

Start Fire under unsafe conditions	\$200
Start fire-fail to leave person in charge	\$200
Fail to tend fire	\$200
Fail to keep fire under control	\$200
Fail to extinguish fire	\$200
Unlawfully start fire without a permit	\$200
Unlawfully tend fire without a permit	\$200
Burn grass without a permit	\$200
Burn leaf litter/organic waste without a permit	\$200
Unlawfully start fire in restricted fire zone for cooking or warmth	\$750
Unlawfully tend fire in restricted fire zone for cooking or warmth	\$500
Unlawfully set woodfire in permanent fire installation in a campground in a restricted fire zone	\$500

Amendment:

Unlawfully start fire in restricted fire zone ~~for cooking or warmth~~	\$750
Unlawfully tend fire in restricted fire zone ~~for cooking or warmth~~	\$500

General discussion was had about the fines, and the distinction between starting a fire in unsafe conditions and Restricted Fire Zone times.

Some concern was expressed due to residents having fires during the Restricted Fire Zone, stating that there were exceptions. However, these “exceptions” come with clear criteria, such as having walls around the fire.

Further communication to the public needs to make these exceptions clear, and that any fire during a Restricted Fire Zone will be subject to municipal fines and that the provincial fines are much higher.

Staff Reports

H. Gropp –CAO– report attached. On behalf of M. Kakeeway- Fire Chief

Burn Complaints/ Fire Ban Enforcement:

The fire department responded to four complaints involving campfires during the Restricted Fire Zone and Municipal Fire Ban, all of which were located at Caliper Lake Provincial Park. They will continue to monitor and respond to reports of burning during fire restrictions, while working with the MNR and park staff to promote compliance and public safety.

Nestor Falls Equipment:

The Nestor Falls Fire Station has a new-to-us Hurst battery powered hydraulic cutters. This gives the department added capability during motor vehicle collisions and other technical rescue operations.

Dunk Tank and Grease Fire Demonstration:

The dunk tank fundraiser on August 11, raised approximately \$150. A grease fire demonstration was also conducted to educate the public on what to do, and what not to do when faced with a cooking grease fire.

Sioux Narrows Men’s Club Donation:

The Sioux Narrows Men’s Club graciously donated four Mustang life jackets for use on the fire boats. This is a valuable addition to the water rescue equipment and will provide an added level of protection for firefighters, guests, paramedics when operating on the water.

Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls Fire By-Law and Code of Conduct:

Lobstik solutions conducted a benchmarking study of the fire department to determine how it compared to similar departments regarding levels of service, training hour requirements, and remuneration. Based on the study, staff are recommending changes to the Fire and Rescue Services Code of Conduct Policy H-01.

These changes include:

- Increasing mandatory training hours from 24 hours to 50 hours per year.
- Permitting hours in public service initiatives to count towards hours.
- Increasing the rate of pay for certified members from \$20/hour to \$25/hour

General discussion was had, and Council was in agreement of the recommended changes.

R.Stelter-Director of Community Development

Several upcoming provincial and federal funding opportunities align with current Township priorities. Four programs have been identified that may support improvements to municipal facilities, recreation infrastructure, housing- enabling infrastructure and economic development planning.

Green Municipal Fund

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) is accepting applications for its Rapid Adaptation Projects program between October 6 and November 10, 2026. The program is intended for small and rural municipalities to implement projects that address climate risks and improve community resilience. Grants are available for up to \$75,000 and may cover between 70% and 100% of eligible costs depending on municipal eligibility.

Staff will be pursuing funding to address the ongoing heating and cooling challenges at the Northern Ontario Sport Fishing Centre.

Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund

The Province of Ontario established the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund to support the repair, upgrading, and development of recreation facilities across Ontario communities. The program was created through a provincial investment of \$200 million to improve and expand community sport and recreation infrastructure.

Staff would pursue funding for recreation improvements within Nestor Falls, including upgrades to the Nestor Falls Community Rink and expansion of the community trail network, with focus on the Red Pine Trail.

Municipal Housing Infrastructure Program- Non-Development Charge Municipalities Stream

The Governments of Ontario and Canada recently announced a new \$1 billion funding initiative to assist municipalities that do not levy development charges with the construction of housing-enabling infrastructure. The new Non-Development Charge Municipalities Stream is intended to support infrastructure such as roads, bridges, water systems, and other municipal projects that facilitate residential development. Applications are scheduled to open October 29, 2026.

This funding is critical to enabling future residential growth within the Township and would be used a Granite Ridge access road, removing a key barrier to future residential development. Previous applications through FedNor were unsuccessful.

Rural Ontario Development Program

Ontario's Rural Ontario Development Program provides cost-shared funding to municipalities and rural organizations undertaking projects that strengthen local economies, attract investment, and build community capacity. The program includes a funding stream specifically supporting economic development strategies and planning initiatives, offering up to 50% cost-share funding to a maximum of \$50,000.

Staff would apply for this funding to be used to develop a new Economic Development Strategy for the Township. The current strategy was developed in 2022 and would benefit from review and updating to reflect current economic conditions, housing opportunities, labour market trends, tourism development priorities, and infrastructure needs. A new strategy would provide

updated direction for attracting investment, supporting local businesses, growing the residential tax base, and advancing economic development priorities over the coming years.

Nestor Falls Government Dock Review

The review of the Nestor Falls government dock is still underway. Some solutions have been identified, but staff are continuing to conduct research and are hopeful to have a full review completed by the October Council meeting.

Council expressed optimism with the funding streams and the projects selected. Some general discussion was had regarding current Township projects. Other possible projects for funding opportunities were identified (such as the CSRIF being used for ends on the Sioux Narrows Four Season Recreation Facility) but staff clarified that they would not be able to submit multiple applications and would have to decide where the greater need would be.

It was asked if any of the grants would cover the cleaning of the airstrip and staff did not think any of the current funding would.

Reports from Committees

G.Black-

- Attended the funding announcement on August 13th by Minister Greg Rickford regarding the Bass Lake Park updates and the addition to the Sioux Narrows 50+ Centre.
- Attended the hazardous waste days in Nestor Falls August 14th and 15th.
- Attended the Police Services Board meeting on August 18th.
- Will be attending the September 2nd All Nations Health Partners virtual meeting.

D.Brothwell –

Police Services Board

Most recent meeting was August 18. Officer Duggan was in attendance. He explained that the police activity report submitted to the PSB does not include the activity on HWY 71. Officer Duggan also highlighted the low levels of crime in the area.

The report specified:

1MVC.

13 Criminal Code charges.

3 Violent Crime charges.

2 Property Crime charges.

0 Drug Crime.

Councilor Brothwell mentioned there was lots of discussion at the meeting. The Board wanted to know why patrol cruiser time is down hours (58% decrease). Officer Duggan had explained that the Kenora OPP are operating at 60% and are actively trying to recruit officers.

Councilor Brothwell expressed concern for the municipal costs staying the same, despite the amount of policing being down.

He noted that the OPP have improved visibility in communities. They were in attendance of a few local events, and the OPP police boat was spotted multiple times.

He noted that Officer Duggan had notified the Board that starting in October, they are moving OPP canine training to the Sioux Narrows office.

He also clarified that the Activity report the PSB receives can not be broken down by Sioux Narrows and Nestor Falls, in the system they are one community.

Discussion: The Township had requested an OPP presence at the Moose and Fiddle Festival but were disappointed by their attendance. An Officer showed up at the last 30 minutes, stood in the area, and then sat in their car. They were thanked them for coming, but overall were disappointed with the lack of attendance/ their representation and their time at the festival.

H.Chant-

Nestor Falls Recreation Committee

The committee is currently busy getting read for Wings and Wheels (September 5-6, 2026) at Bass Lake Park. There will be an aviation day on the Saturday and a gearhead day on the Sunday. There will be food trucks, beer gardens, live music and a cornhole tournament. Councilor Chant gave a big thank you to Tasha Monkman, for her large dedication to Wings and Wheels over the years. The event would never have come to fruition without her commitment.

Moose and Fiddle Festival

Councilor Chant volunteered in the beer gardens and emphasized that it was a great event. She gave thanks to Denise for curating the festival and to Heather and the rest of the municipal staff who made the festival such a success. She also thanked the volunteers who provided their time and support.

Councilor Chant attended the funding announcement for Bass Lake Park with Minister Greg Rickford on August 13th. She is thankful for the funding that comes to the municipality.

New Business

Resolution No. 124-26

Moved by Doug Brothwell

Seconded by Holly Chant

WHEREAS, Municipal Council recognizes the importance and requirements of policies that ensure fair and equitable practices in all areas of work; and

WHEREAS, the following policies have been discussed and reviewed;

Be it resolved that the Corporation of the Township of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls amends and approves the following Municipal Policies:

A-11-Municipal Alcohol Policy

C-11 – Fitness Centres

C-12 – Parks

C-13 – Golf Course Advertising & Fundraising Policy
C-14 – AODA Procurement
C-17 – White Moose Golf Course Rules
D-03 – Investment Policy
D-04 – Accounting for Tangible Capital Assets
D-05 – Cash Handling Policy – Committees of Council
D-06 – Strategic Asset Management Policy
E-01 – Road Name/Change
F-01 – Delegation of Powers and Duties
F-02 – Accountability and Transparency
G-01 – Building Officials Code of Conduct
H-02 – Fireworks
Carried.

Addition: Fire Policy H-01 be included.

Discussion:

General discussion as had regarding the increase of training potentially scaring off potential volunteers. Staff clarified that discussions were had with some of the current firefighters and they agreed with the increase in training hours, expressing that they did not want to work alongside someone with limited training hours, as it affects them too.

Resolution No. 125-26

Moved by Doug Brothwell

Seconded by Steve Salvador

That the Corporation of the Township of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls hereby adopts the 2026 Vote-By-Mail Procedures.

Carried

Delegations –

Laura Poad expressed the need for an upgraded pickle ball facility in Nestor Falls. She highlighted that the Sioux Narrows Four Season Facility is wonderful, but there are 15-20 regular Nestor Falls players that would benefit from a Nestor Falls facility.

She also asked if the Sioux Narrows Four Seasons Facility court was being addressed. Council asked for clarification and she explained the surface is very slippery that is dangerous with dust or pollen.

Staff agreed to research an appropriate solution that would not negatively impact the multi-uses of the facility.

She also suggested that there was enough room for four courts, not just three.

Council let her know that the Bass Lake Park revitalization would include a new pickle ball court. She expressed dissatisfaction with just the one court. She said she would be happy to give feedback and be included in any discussion regarding the pickle ball facilities.

Adjournment

Resolution No. 126-26

Moved by Holly Chant

Seconded by Matt Rydberg

That the business of the meeting having been dealt with, a motion for adjournment is so made.

Carried

Members Present-

G. Black

D. Brothwell

H.Chant

M. Rydberg

S. Salvador

Staff Present-

H.Gropp

M.Hanson

R.Stelter

C.Parkhill

Mayor

Clerk