

WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

Council Meeting Agenda Amended October 1, 2025

September 23, 2025 - 6:00 p.m.

In-person, Sanford Council Chambers, 76 Morison Dr, Windsor, NS

Virtual via Zoom (also YouTube Livestream)



West Hants
something inspiring awaits

-
1. Call to Order
 2. Attendance
 3. Announcements
 4. Approval of the Agenda, including additions or deletions
 - a) Dashboard Action Items – Information Log
 5. Declaration(s) of Conflict of Interest
 6. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes
 - a) 2025-07-22 Council Minutes
 - b) 2025-07-22 PH Minutes - Bent Ridge Geo Domes Development Agreement
 - c) 2025-08-08 Special Council Minutes
 7. Public Hearings
 - a) Bear Lake Windfarm Development Agreement – Acting Director Fougere
 8. Second Readings (as it pertains to Public Hearings)
 - a) Bear Lake Windfarm Development Agreement – Acting Director Fougere
 9. Presentations
 - a) West Hants RCMP 5 Year Multi Year Financial Plan (includes Motion)
 - b) Barrier Free Small Business Accessibility Grant Policy - Recommendation Report – Manager Johnston-Isenor **(Moved up on the agenda)**
 - c) Trail Grading and Finishing WHRMCD-07 - Recommendation Report – Manager Bennett **(Moved up on the agenda)**
 10. Unfinished Business/Postponed Motions
 - a) Elmcroft Play Structure Recommendation Report – Director Kehoe
 - b) 2025-26 Tax Rate Re the Correction from 2023-24 Budget - Councillor Ivey
 11. Mayor’s Report
 12. Financial Updates

- a) Water Consumption Ending July 31, 2025 – Director Rochon
13. Committee(s) of Council Excerpts/Recommendations
- a) Committee of the Whole Excerpts (September 9, 2025)
 - i. 2025 Fall Debenture Recommendation Report
 - ii. Appointment of Alternate Development Officer
 - iii. Diverse, Equitable, Inclusive Communities Committee Member Appointment
 - iv. Emergency Funding Request – Falmouth Wastewater Treatment Sludge Removal
 - v. O’Brien Street Renewal Engineering Services RFP Award
 - vi. Transportation Feasibility Study RFP Award WHRMPL 25-01
 - vii. Updated HMCC Taxing Resolution
 - viii. WHRM’s Active Transportation Plan
 - ix. Windsor Sidewalk Replacement Tender Award
 - b) Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee Excerpts (First Reading)
 - i. Development Agreement: PID 45053220 King St, Windsor – Planner Will Hong
14. Councillor(s) Municipal Business/Activity Monthly Reports (Districts 1-11)
15. Councillor(s) Municipal Advisory Board Activity Reports
- a) Police Advisory Board (PAB)
16. New Business (moved up on the agenda)
- a) ~~Avon View High School Ice Time Invoice – Request for Leniency Regarding Outstanding Ice Time Invoice – Councillor Bob Morton~~
 - b) Installation of Street Lights in The Crossing Request for Decision – Councillor B. Morton
 - c) Traffic Calming in The Crossing Request for Decision – Councillor B. Morton
 - d) Closure of the Windsor Court House – Proposal to Deem Property Surplus and Issue Request for Proposals – CAO Phillips
 - e) Consulting Services – Comprehensive Needs Assessment Parks & Recreation Facilities WHRMCD25-08 – Recommendation Report – Kathy Kehoe
 - f) Windsor WTP Expansion – GRID Application Recommendation Report – Director Richard
17. Correspondence
- a) Information
 - i. General Correspondence Received Activity Log (as of September 19, 2025)
2025-09-16 NSFM Letter to Elected Officials Re Strong Mayors Powers
 - b) Outgoing Correspondence Log (as of September 19, 2025) – None
17. In-Camera - None
18. Next Meeting Date / Adjournment – October 14, 2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting 6 p.m.



1. Call to Order – Mayor Zebian called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.

2. Attendance

Council:

Abraham Zebian, Mayor	Rupert Jannasch, Councillor, District 1
Chrystal Remme, Councillor, District 3	Paul Wheadon, Councillor, District 4
Debbie Francis, Deputy Mayor, District 5	Bob Morton, Councillor, District 6
Kayla Leary-Pinch, Councillor, District 7	Paul Morton, Councillor, District 8
Bonnie Smith, Councillor, District 10	Jim Ivey, Councillor, District 11

Staff:

Mark Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer	Deanna Snair, Municipal Clerk
Kari Fougere, Acting Dir. Planning & Development	Carlee Rochon, Dir. Finance
Kathy Kehoe, Dir. Community Development	Todd Richard, Dir. Public Works
Will Hong, Planner	Vanessa Lake, Planning Assistant
Kaleigh MacCarthy, Environmental Technologist	Tim Bouter, Project Engineer
Kathy Johnston-Isenor, Manager of Recreation and Community Engagement	
Kevin Bennett, Manager of Parks and Recreation Facilities	

Regrets:

Scott McLean, Councillor, District 2	John Smith, Councillor, District 9
--------------------------------------	------------------------------------

Presenter and Gallery:

Mark Stewart, EverWind	Rebecca Crump, EverWind
Brendan Chard, EverWind	Jeff Bonazza, EverWind
Claire Parsons, EverWind	Hannah Matheson, EverWind
Kelsea MacNeil, Membertou (EverWind)	Andrew Woods, Consultant
Tim Doyle, Operations NCO, RCMP	Staff Sgt. Ed Nugent, RCMP
Kyla Dow, staff support, RCMP	Lauren Streko, staff support,
RCMP	
25 members of the public	

7. Public Hearings (6:05pm)

a) Bear Lake Windfarm Development Agreement – Acting Director Fougere

Acting Director Fougere gave a presentation to review the application. Her report was circulated with the agenda and is available on the Municipal website.

The request is for a development agreement to allow 7 wind turbines within West Hants Regional Municipality. This application was previously submitted under the previous West Hants Municipal Planning Strategy (WHMPS) policy and was withdrawn; the applicants have resubmitted a new, revised, application to be considered under the new WHMPS policy. Acting Director Fougere explained that Environmental Assessment Approval was received in December 2023, and amendments were approved on April 28, 2025, for the revised development concept. She noted that the WHMPS was amended in January 2025, with new Provincial requirements for large wind farm developments. The development agreement would allow for a maximum of seven (7) wind turbines with four (4) alternate locations to be used only if issues arise at the other designated sites. Each turbine would have an 8.0MW capacity and be 211m in height. The project area is within the community of Vaughan and is designated Resource and zoned General Resource, which prioritizes resource uses. A windfarm is permitted by development agreement in this zone.

Acting Director Fougere outlined the requirements within the development agreement. The total number and location of each turbine is determined by the site plan and must be followed. Setbacks are as follows; property line setbacks equal to 1.1 times the height of the turbine or 550 metres from any turbine to a woods camp, and 4 times the height of the turbine or the distance required to meet shadow flicker and noise levels to any dwelling. Passive fire suppression is to be included as well as commitment to work with the local fire chief during construction. The project will have primary access from Highway 14 and will provide emergency access/egress to Chalet Hamlet. A stormwater management plan will be required before any permits are issued. A decommissioning fund must be established. She noted that all criteria within the West Hants Municipal Planning Strategy are considered met with no concerns that have not been addressed within her report.

The Public Information Meeting (PIM) was held on May 21, 2025, and was broadcast Live on the Municipal YouTube channel. 31 members of the public attended the PIM with several speaking during the meeting. Staff received emails from several individuals during the public comment period. Major topics included concerns about the number of windfarms in the area, environmental concerns and fire suppression, as well as support for tax revenue. The Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee discussed this application on July 10, 2025. They recommended in favour of the application and requested Council take additional factors into account when considering the file: a gate for the access road, fire suppression, water quality effects from blasting and the possibility of the community vibrancy fund to include a community park. At the First Reading held on July 22, 2025, Council amended the recommendation to include a requirement in the development agreement to gate the access road. This has been carried forward in staff's recommendation.

Mark Stewart, Director of Engagement for EverWind and Rebecca Crump, Head of Renewables for EverWind, gave a presentation on their application. A video message from Chief Terry Paul of Membertou was shared, outlining the project's commitment to community, environment, economic growth, and leadership. Mr. Stewart and Ms. Crump outlined the changes the project has gone through since 2023, incorporating feedback from the community and Council.

The original plan included 15 turbines, and this was lowered to 11 turbines following public feedback, with 7 in West Hants. The development agreement for the Chester portion of the project was approved and the permits for the Halifax portion have been issued. Additional roadways were also removed from the plan to minimize the development footprint. The nameplate capacity of the project is 88MW, with 5 turbines on Crown land, and 6 on private land. The hub height is 120m and the rotor diameter is 182m.

Mr. Stewart gave an overview of some benefits the project would bring. The project would create 6-12 part-time and full-time jobs during operation, and hundreds during construction. The estimated tax revenue for West Hants is \$22 million over the project's lifespan, or ~\$31 million across all involved municipalities. There will be \$90k in an annual Community Benefits Fund, and \$50k in scholarships. There will be a decommissioning fund, and the Community Liaison Committee (CLC) is already in place. The Community Benefits Agreement has yet to be signed with WHRM. The CLC would determine the allocation of the Community Benefits Fund.

Ms. Crump explained the project's commitment to Aircraft Detection Lighting System (ADLS) to keep the skies dark at night. The blinking red lights would only turn on if an aircraft is within 3 nautical miles from the windfarm at an elevation of 2000ft. This would not detect large commercial flights. The use of an ADLS is subject to Transport Canada approval but they have been approved in other jurisdictions.

Mr. Stewart spoke on the gated emergency access. They have heard the concerns from residents and are open to a gating solution that would allow the road to be accessible in an emergency, while reducing unintended use of the road and increased traffic. They will work with the community and Council.

Mr. Stewart discussed fire suppression. He acknowledged that the PAC/HAC requested consideration of a fire suppression system within the turbines. Condition monitoring is an early warning system for issues within turbines and can catch problems that could lead to a fire in advance. The Bear Lake windfarm is committed to having a robust condition monitoring system and a fire management plan. Consultation with the local fire department and chief determined that with or without active fire suppression, it would not change how the fire department would approach a turbine fire in practice.

If blasting is required for construction, EverWind will develop and implement a Blasting Plan, per Condition 5.5 of the Environmental Assessment approval. Groundwater wells within 800m of

blasting activities will be monitored in accordance with the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Climate Change (NSECC) procedure. Pre-blast groundwater well monitoring will include analysis for uranium and arsenic. If demonstrable changes in groundwater quantity or quality of a well due to project activity is detected, an alternative water supply of equal or better quality/quantity will be provided to the landowner.

Mayor Zebian opened the floor to questions and comments from the public at 6:41pm.

Karen Wallace had concerns that the energy would not be benefitting the people of West Hants as it is intended to power the green hydrogen and ammonia plant in Point Tupper. She was frustrated with the process and felt the residents of Vaughans were fighting a losing battle.

Colin Hines asked if the green hydrogen/ammonia plant didn't work out if there was a contingency plan. Ms. Crump replied that there is a Power Purchase Agreement in negotiation with Nova Scotia Power and that the turbines would produce power regardless of the operation of the hydrogen facility.

Angela Corscadden was concerned about the access road being gated, particularly if it was locked. She was concerned that if it was locked it would delay emergency response or evacuation.

Nancy Durnford felt the gated access was a good idea as it may prevent illegal dumping, which is an ongoing issue in the area. A secure gate would also deter ATVs from going in and damaging the road. She was also concerned for the lakes and rivers in the area and the effects due to blasting and frustration that the power generated would be going all the way to Cape Breton.

Seamus Marriott expressed three main concerns: fire suppression, property devaluation, and speculation & risk. He also mentioned that he did not yet receive responses for some of the questions he had at the PIM. He was concerned that the turbines would face an increased risk of lightning strikes that would increase the risk of wildfires. He questioned if there was adequate training for fighting forest fires. He felt that removing trees and plants at the base of the turbine was not sufficient fire prevention and that a fire suppression system should be mandatory. He felt this increased risk of fire may result in increased insurance premiums and that property devaluation would occur for the first 3-5 years as well. He suggested a 5-year \$750k Protection of Property Fund for properties within a 2.5km radius be included in the development agreement. He suggested a 3-person panel including a member of Council, a CLC member, and a realtor would review if their property value was affected by the windfarm and if they would be paid out of this fund. Any remaining funds at the end of the 5 years would be paid back to the proponents. Lastly, he expressed concern over the future of the project as he felt it was all based on speculation. The green hydrogen plant is not in operation and is described as a key component of this project, yet no offtake agreements have been signed. He asked if there was a Plan B. He also commented that Renewable Energy Systems (RES) is no longer a part of this project.

Ms. Crump responded to Mr. Marriott's concerns. She followed up on some of the concerns he had raised during the PIM and will provide more information as it becomes available. Regarding lightning strikes, Ms. Crump and Mr. Stewart explained that the turbines are grounded, and the transformer is located on the ground. Ms. Crump explained that EverWind hasn't made their final investment decision on the windfarm yet, as they need contracts in place for the construction, but everything is lined up. She reiterated that the Bear Lake project is connected to the grid and Power Purchase Agreement is being negotiated with Nova Scotia power, and power would go into the grid regardless of the operation of the green hydrogen facility. Regarding RES, she explained that they were an early development partner, before EverWind had their own internal development team in place.

Mark Kehoe expressed concern over the "over-commercialized, industrial abuse" he felt that the Vaughans area was experiencing. He spoke on the setbacks being to an adjacent "land use" and what constitutes a "land use" and why woods camps did not have the same setbacks as other dwellings. Regarding the 30 minutes of shadow flicker allowed for in the EA approval, he asked if that was cumulative with the Benjamins Mill project, as it will produce shadow flicker as well. He felt the residents of Vaughans were surrounded by windfarms and it was creating a pattern of development which would disrupt the residential uses in the area and would discourage new builds. He wondered if it was possible to push the turbines back further from residential uses. He felt the destruction of wetlands was unacceptable and if they are to be replaced, they must be put back in the Vaughans area. Mr. Kehoe also said that blasting could have ripple effects outside of the immediate area, due to the flow of water downstream into other communities, carrying dangerous contaminants.

Sarah Trask Duggan feels her family will be sandwiched between wind farms. The views from their dream home are being affected by the turbines. She also expressed concerned about effects to her property value and likened the situation to Dr. Seuss's The Lorax.

John Kennedy is fearful of the situation and its potential effects. He feels the people of Vaughan are being forgotten and/or exploited by the wind farms. He would like the residents to be protected.

Steven Hart gave an example of the visibility of windmills, explaining that the Benjamins Mill project is visible from Oulton's Meats on Highway 14. He also shared that the residents of Vaughan have fundraised \$20k for the Municipality in the event of an appeal.

Linda Skinner had concerns about the emergency egress being gated, particularly if it is locked. She is grateful for EverWind for providing the egress but felt that a gate would only cause complications in an emergency. Having the emergency egress would provide peace of mind for the community but a locked gate would only worsen existing concerns.

Jason Hart reiterated concerns about fire suppression. The ongoing drought may be an example of future weather patterns. The drier the conditions, the bigger the fire will be. He felt the windfarm

would be a huge liability for the Municipality. He expressed that many residents clearly do not want this project to go forward.

The Mayor opened the floor to questions and comments from Council at 7:52pm.

Councillor Leary-Pinch asked for clarification on the geotechnical program and a potential start date of October 1 and the shortlist they were working on. Ms. Crump explained that they have selected a geotechnical supplier, and the shortlist she referred to was for the construction contractor. Councillor Leary-Pinch expressed concerns over fire risk during the construction phase, and if personnel would be on site and have the capacity to fight or hold a fire. Ms. Crump replied that firefighters would be on site during any high-risk activity if it is warranted (i.e. another drought) and the proponents will work with the Province and the municipality if there are any concerns.

Councillor Ivey asked if they received any further guidance on risk mitigation. Industrial equipment in a forest area is a big risk, especially in drought conditions. Ms. Crump said their team did a lot of research, and if they feel a measure would be warranted, it would be implemented. Their insurance providers said the fire suppression system may be a “false sense of security” as there are other, more effective measures in detecting and preventing fires. The Condition Monitoring System is a software program that monitors every part of the turbine and will send an alert in seconds if an anomaly is detected. They are committed to prevention and caution. Councillor Ivey asked about the ability to contain or fight fires. Ms. Crump said that they will work with WHRM and Emergency Services on a containment plan, and that there is a training allowance within their budget for new firefighters.

Councillor Leary-Pinch asked if the proponents have spoken to insurers about individual homeowner insurance in the event of a fire or effects on their wells. Ms. Crump replied that they consulted with a specialist advisor. This would be covered under the EA. EverWind would have to monitor before and after. They have not investigated insurance for individual homeowners; they are working to ensure that homeowners will not need that insurance coverage.

Councillor Wheadon asked why the proponents chose Vaughan. Ms. Crump replied that EverWind purchased Nova Scotia Power’s interest in the project. EverWind wants to build its portfolio of wind.

Councillor P. Morton asked what the decibel level is at the base of a turbine if it is 40dB at a distance. Ms. Crump replied that she did not have the number for on the ground, but it would be 112dB at the nacelle. Each turbine has serrated blades which reduce noise by 1.5dB. EverWind is committed to 100% compliance for noise and shadow flicker regulations. Councillor P. Morton asked if there was any consideration for an increase to an 1600m radius if it was proven wells were affected by blasting at this distance. Ms. Crump replied that the 800m distance is a Provincial regulation based on specific criteria, and each situation will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Councillor Leary-Pinch asked how a homeowner would prove there had been an effect to their well. Jeff Bonazza, the Director of Environment and Permitting for EverWind, responded. The blast

monitor plan will outline what is to be collected. As per NSECC guidelines, they would monitor wells within 800m for yield and quality and their EA conditions require they measure for uranium and arsenic as well. Samples will be taken and compared to a baseline level. Mr. Bonazza confirmed that every well within an 800m radius of a blast will be measured.

Mayor Zebian asked what would happen if a well was affected outside the 800m radius. Ms. Crump replied that it would be handled on a case-by-case basis. They have communication plans for working with the community during construction and throughout operations. If a resident believes they have been affected by the project, EverWind will address it.

Councillor Remme asked what they are looking for when they are monitoring wells and water courses. Mr. Bonazza replied that the pre-blast check will measure the yield (amount of water), water quality, and the presence of uranium, arsenic, sediment, and other contaminants and be compared with after blasting. Environmental inspectors will be on-site to monitor watercourses during active construction. A baseline sample will be taken at the site and background samples will be taken upstream.

Councillor Remme commented that 10 years is a long time to wait for the decommissioning fund and wondered if the cost could come back on the municipality if it isn't fully funded. Acting Director Fougere replied that this part was drafted by municipal solicitor for the least impact on the municipality. There are requirements in the land leases to contribute to the decommissioning fund. The timeline is 10 years to give the proponent enough time to establish the fund. Councillor Remme asked about Section 2.2b which states the Development Officer can approve changes without public process. Acting Director Fougere replied that this is standard language in development agreements. Substantive changes would need to go back to the public process, such as the permitted uses, site plan, and setback distances, etc. Smaller changes, if all setbacks are met, can be granted by the Development Officer. This allows flexibility if the turbines must be moved by one meter due to constructability issues. Councillor Remme expressed concern that it could be interpreted as more than a small adjustment.

Councillor Leary-Pinch asked if the wording on Section 2.2b could be amended to be more specific. Acting Director Fougere confirmed that it can be amended. Ms. Crump added that they are limited by their Environmental Assessment Approval as well and would need additional fieldwork and approval for further changes. She added that Private and Crown landowners also contribute to the decommissioning fund as part of the lease agreements and that this fund will be established at year 5. EverWind will work with the Crown and the municipality to hold the bond.

Acting Director Fougere pointed out Section 2.2a states "the design shall be consistent with the layouts of Schedule B," which refers to the site plan. If something must be moved, all requirements still apply. This does limit moving any turbines.

There were no further questions or comments. The meeting moved out of Public Hearing at 8:22pm and the regular Council meeting resumed.

Mayor Abraham Zebian, Chair

Deanna Snair, Executive Assistant/Clerk