

# Minutes

## Public Meeting

May 8, 2025

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### Call to Order

Grey County Council met at the call of the Warden on the above date at 7:00 PM at the County Administration Building. The Warden called Council to order and assumed the Chair.

The Clerk took the roll call. Warden Matrosovs, Councillors Mackey, McKay, Pringle, Greig, Dobreen, Nielsen, Eccles, McQueen, Kentner, Keaveney, Paterson, Hutchinson and Dickert were in attendance.

### Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge with respect, the history, spirituality, and culture of the Anishinaabek, Six Nations of the Grand River, Haudenosaunee, and Wendat-Wyandot-Wyandotte peoples on whose traditional territories we gather and whose ancestors signed Treaties with our ancestors. We recognize also, the Metis and Inuit whose ancestors shared this land and these waters. May we all, as Treaty People, live with respect on this land, and live in peace and friendship with all its diverse peoples.

### Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### Beaver and Coyote Compensation By-law Staff Presentation

Sarah Johnson addressed those in attendance on the proposed updates to the wildlife management by-laws. Council has directed staff to review both the coyote and beaver by-laws.

The items that will be investigated during the review include compensation rates, the need for the by-laws / programs and other administrative items.

Sarah Johnson began with highlighting the beaver by-law, introduced in 1983 to help control beaver populations and manage their dam building. The current compensation is

\$25 per beaver and only licensed trappers are eligible to make a claim under the by-law. Further, the trapper must be a resident of Grey County.

The coyote / wolf control program was introduced in 1990 and provides financial compensation to trappers and hunters for removing coyotes or wolves that have attacked and/or killed livestock. Current compensation is \$50 per coyote / wolf and trappers must be a resident of Grey County. Claims are only eligible where there has been an attack on livestock.

Sarah Johnson spoke to practices and programs in other municipalities and next steps on updates to the by-law. She noted the comments heard to date, including notes that the bounties are too low, the process is cumbersome, suggestions to discontinue the program as well as the necessity of maintaining such programs.

Comments will be accepted until May 30, 2025. After consultation is complete, research and review of comments will take place.

She then spoke to the process for the public to provide input.

Questions were addressed from council regarding verification of the kill and whether that is a Grey County requirement or a requirement of the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR). It was noted that Grey County's by-law still does state verification is required because it was originally a requirement from the MNR.

Further questions were addressed regarding qualifications for compensation and whether there is a timeframe the form is valid for. Staff noted that once the form has been submitted related to a particular kill, a person doesn't continue to qualify until there is another incident. There was suggestion to consider working on this aspect further in the by-law update.

Further comments were shared regarding flexibility in municipal by-laws about dogs at large when they are working dogs used by trappers.

## **Public Comments**

Fred Manning of Meaford addressed County Council. He noted he is secretary of the Grey-Bruce Trappers Council and primarily a beaver trapper. There is not a better way to eliminate beavers and trappers are the most efficient and cost effective way to address populations. There are other means of dealing with nuisance beavers however if they aren't impacting infrastructure. Bafflers can be installed and this is an effective way of dealing with water issues.

With respect to opening it up to non-residents, there is likelihood of beavers being brought in from other jurisdictions and being claimed here. He feels that \$50 is fair and is the same as Bruce County. Costs have increased for fuel, traps, wear and tear, etc. There was a suggestion to ensure staff are taking the beaver tails when they are provided during a claim so there is not temptation to cheat the system. He spoke to beaver pelt market, noting it is not lucrative.

Howard Greig then spoke to the coyote issues. He noted he has the opportunity to talk to farmers regularly about what is impacting them. Farmers are experiencing an

emotional and financial impact of coyotes killing their livestock. The importance of agriculture in Grey and Bruce Counties was cited and the need to support the program. The program is too complicated currently. There appear to be fewer claims in areas where hunters are controlling populations. Coyotes have severely decreased populations of smaller animals because of their prevalence. Simplify the process and increase the compensation to \$100 and encourage younger hunters to participate.

Rose Bishop noted that the compensation needs to be raised. The auction prices in North Bay on average in 2024 were \$55 per beaver. The fur market is not great. It shouldn't be set so the bounty pays less than the fur barn. Inevitably, trappers won't take nuisance calls because the pay is better in the winter so the problem isn't dealt with. She spoke to the cost of starting out in trapping and operating. There is a need to have multiple traps so costs can be quite high to operate. Animals like coyotes need to be managed. This opens up a discussion on how to regenerate the ecosystem to support more animals in general. The animals don't have the space or food to survive so they come to humans looking for food. The issue needs to be addressed as a whole.

Kevin, a licensed trapper, noted that he has never seen such a population of coyotes and that they are becoming large and able to carry the livestock away. He spoke to the difficulty in making a claim in these circumstances.

## **Adjournment**

On motion by Councillors Hutchinson and Eccles, Council adjourned at 7:38 PM to the call of the Warden.

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Andrea Matrosovs, Warden

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Tara Warder, Clerk