

MINUTES
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

DECEMBER 18, 2023
8:00 p.m.

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Council of Montreal West held on December 18, 2023 at the Town Hall located at 50 Westminster Avenue South.

Present:	Councillors:	Ms. Lauren Small-Pennefather	Seat 1
		Ms. Elizabeth Ulin	Seat 2
		Ms. Colleen Feeney	Seat 3
		Ms. Maria Torres	Seat 4

Absent: Mayor: Mr. Beny Masella

Also present: Me Raffaele Di Stasio, Director General
Me Claude Gilbert, Town Clerk
Ms. Sandra Sciangula, Communications Officer

Pro-Mayor Colleen Feeney acted as chairperson of the meeting.
Mr. Claude Gilbert, Town Clerk, acted as secretary of the meeting.

Seven (7) residents and visitors were in attendance.

1. Opening of the Meeting

It was moved by Councillor Maria Torres, seconded by Councillor Lauren Small-Pennefather and resolved:

That the Meeting be declared open.

Carried unanimously
#20231218-001 (2)

The Pro-Mayor called the Meeting to order at 8:05 p.m.

2. Acknowledgement of Visitors

There was nothing under this item.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

It was moved by Councillor Lauren Small-Pennefather, seconded by Councillor Elizabeth Ulin and resolved:

To adopt the Agenda of the Regular Meeting of Monday, December 18, 2023 as presented.

Carried unanimously
#20231218-002 (2)

4. Approval of the Minutes

It was moved by Councillor Elizabeth Ulin, seconded by Councillor Maria Torres and resolved:

To approve the Minutes of the Council Meetings held on the following dates:

- Regular Meeting of November 27, 2023;
- Special Meeting of December 13, 2023.

Carried unanimously
#20231218-003 (2)

5. Correspondence

There was nothing under this item.

6. Report of the Mayor

The Pro-Mayor read the report that Mayor Masella sent her. The Mayor first mentioned that he could not close out the year without taking a few moments to reflect, saying that it was unprecedented. The community debated a major decision, held a referendum and people worked together to heal divisions. For as difficult as it was, residents are moving forward and contributing to make the new Sports and Recreation Centre a defining addition to this Town. Also, eight days ago, the Mayor was able to help serve the kids and young families during Santa's Breakfast. This past Tuesday he participated in the Menorah lighting with the Jewish community. This past Saturday, he helped serve seniors during their annual dinner, adding that he always had a prejudice in favour of seniors, and loved that event. And, new for this year, he participated in the newly minted Holiday Hounds with Santa. The Mayor also wanted to thank Town employees in Administration, Recreation, Public Works, Public Security and Urban Planning, as well as fellow Councillors, who assisted him throughout the year to ensure residents continued to receive the level of service they deserved. Finally, he wished everyone a peaceful end of 2023 and a happy New Year.

7. Councillors' Reports

a) Seat Number 3

Councillor Colleen Feeney reported on matters pertaining to Finance, Recreation and topics related to the status of Age Friendly Municipality.

b) Seat Number 4

Councillor Maria Torres reported on matters pertaining to Urban Planning (1) and Environment (2).

c) Seat Number 1

Councillor Lauren Small-Pennefather reported on matters pertaining to Public Security and Urban Planning (2).

d) Seat Number 2

Councillor Elizabeth Ulin reported on matters pertaining to Public Works, Communications and Environment (1).

8. First Public Question Period

The Pro-Mayor announced the beginning of the First Public Question Period at 8:32 p.m.

Residents in attendance were invited to ask the Mayor and Councillors questions concerning matters of general interest. Questions submitted in advance were also taken.

1. Daniel Boulerice

Tabled the report he had talked about in a previous meeting concerning a bike path proposal at Westminster/Sherbrooke/Broughton intersection. Wanted to know if the Town has been informed of the Agglomeration's intentions in this file.

2. Barbara Brzezinski

Thanked elected officials and employees for their support and involvement with the development of Old Age Friendly Municipality initiatives within the scope of the MADA program.

3. Cynthia Nichols

Was curious to know how important today's rainfalls were in relation to houses being flooded. Complained about vehicles being parked in front of her house early in the morning, presumably construction workers on the nearby condo project.

4. Roy Hoffman

Thanked Council for the work it did this year for the Town.

5. Angus Mackay

Asked what the purpose is for the police presence at the Sherbrooke and Westminster level crossing, since the police does not give tickets to any motorists who cross white lines, cut off pedestrians, or otherwise ignore rules and endanger citizens. Also questioned the competence of the developers of the Easton building, who have been allowed to block traffic every day for months since it is still not finished.

6. Ellen Moore

Wondered why road workers are still using salt on roads and sidewalks when salt still kills everything on the ground and in the river. Gave the example of Westmount, which seems to be using gravel or some black amalgam that is not pure salt.

7. Stan Carny

Concerned about water pressure level at his house. Had his water entry verified by a plumber and the reading was 80 psi which is very high. Asked the Town to advise him if the neighbors also have readings of 80 psi and how it plans to alleviate the pressure.

8. Erin Matheson

Questioned the Town's maintenance of the dog park, and complained about the disrespectful and unhealthy behavior of some park users who do not clean after themselves.

9. Adam Levy

Said that the form submission process for online questions limits residents to 100 words, which is not enough to provide a thoughtful question and context. Asked that the limit be increased to 300 words. Also said that Town vehicles have minimal signage, only displaying the town logo without clear indicators of their purpose or unit. Opined that clearly marked vehicles are vital for public trust, deterring crimes and recognizing official operations.

10. Nicholas Knowles

Asked if Council had an opportunity to question Valerie Plante about the postponement of the call to tenders for the environmental review of Cavendish extension, given the fact that this infrastructure failure is the wellspring of most of traffic management woes in Montreal West.

11. Linda Hammerschmid

Thanked the Mayor for arranging the Santa Doggy Photo op, and hoped this can become an annual event, at the end of November. Also, knowing that the Town office closes December 22 and that 2024 Dog Tags are due for January 1, wondered if there will be a grace period.

12. Paul Cicek

Noted that the Mayor agreed at the last meeting that it would be time to request a reassessment by CIMA of the traffic safety for the Westminster railroad crossing. Asked if there are any plans to proceed with this in the near future.

13. Cyrille Vittecoq

In March, the Easton project supervisor had said that traffic obstructions occasioned by the construction work would end by November. Asked what the Town can do to have the developer finish and know the deadline. Also, asked if the Town may compel the developer to mitigate the obstructions and repair the potholes at this intersection.

14. Merle Mcphail

Complained that a pile of dirty snow and leaves was blown on his front lawn where there is a heritage garden. Thought that no snow was to be blown onto peoples' lawns and asked for an explanation of the policy regarding this topic.

15. Leonie Morris

Given that there is a new privacy law in Quebec, wanted to know what an appropriate policy would be on compliance and safeguarding of condo owners' personal information. Also asked if the Town provides any sort of training in ethical practices.

The First Question Period ended at 9:09 p.m.

9. Contracts and Town Clerk's Office

a) Introduction of Holocaust education in schools

WHEREAS in its audit of anti-Semitic incidents in 2022, B'nai Brith, Canada's oldest Jewish human rights organization, active nationally since 1875, noted that there has been 2,769 such incidents in Canada during the year, including 722 in Quebec;

WHEREAS Statistics Canada, in a document published July 27, 2023 on police-reported crimes in Canada, indicates in Table 6 that there were 750 police-reported hate crimes targeting religious minorities in 2022, of which 502 or 66.9% were against Jews;

WHEREAS Ontario recently became the first province to introduce mandatory Holocaust education into the elementary school curriculum;

WHEREAS, in tasking the Ontario College of Teachers with creating an age-appropriate program to teach about the Holocaust starting in Grade 6, the Minister of Education noted that, according to the first study on anti-Semitism and knowledge of the Holocaust conducted by Western University and Liberation75 in 2021, 42% of students surveyed said they had unequivocally witnessed an anti-Semitic event;

WHEREAS this same study also revealed that one in three Ontario students believe the Holocaust was fabricated, exaggerated or are unsure if it really happened;

WHEREAS studies in the United States suggest that jurisdictions that make Holocaust education mandatory see not only a reduction in anti-Semitic incidents, but also a decrease in hatred toward African Americans and Asians;

WHEREAS a study published in September 2023 by Reality Check indicates that when the study of the Holocaust begins earlier in school and is mandatory, Americans who have a greater knowledge of the Holocaust show greater warmth toward religious and racial minorities than others;

WHEREAS it is more important than ever for schools to play a key role in preserving the memory of the Holocaust, protecting children from denial and distortion often broadcast online, as Holocaust survivors age and pass away;

WHEREAS Jewish organizations urge all provinces and territories to follow Ontario's example and introduce mandatory Holocaust education in elementary schools;

THEREFORE:

It was moved by Councillor Lauren Small-Pennefather, seconded by Councillor Elizabeth Ulin and resolved:

- 1) That the Town Council of Montreal West recognize the dangers of Holocaust denial and distortion that so often target youth.
- 2) That the Town urge the Ministère de l'Éducation to introduce mandatory Holocaust education in Québec elementary schools beginning in the 2024-2025 school year.
- 3) That the Town invite the Ministère de l'Éducation to consult the Ontario curriculum and to mandate the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation and other stakeholders to determine how best to introduce this new curriculum and ensure teacher training.

Carried unanimously
#20231218-004 (2)

10. Administration and finances

a) Approval of disbursements – November 25 to December 14, 2023

It was moved by Councillor Colleen Feeney, seconded by Councillor Maria Torres and resolved:

That the list of accounts payable from November 25 to December 14, 2023 totaling \$1,479,268.51 be approved and paid as listed.

Carried unanimously
#20231218-005 (2)

b) Delegation of powers for the month of December 2023

It was moved by Councillor Lauren Small-Pennefather, seconded by Councillor Elizabeth Ulin and resolved:

To approve the report of the Director General concerning the exercise of powers delegated under By-Law No. 2005-002 for the month of December 2023.

Carried unanimously
#20231218-006 (2)

c) Grants 2024

It was moved by Councillor Colleen Feeney, seconded by Councillor Maria Torres and resolved:

That the Town of Montreal West award the following grants for the year 2024:

- Montreal West Children's Library \$89,000

• Montreal West Public Library	94,966
• The Informer	21,000
• Community Services Council	5,000
• Dr. Robert Drummond (Roots and Remembrance)	250

Carried unanimously
#20231218-007 (2)

11. Urban Department

a) Site Planning Projects and Architectural Integration Programs (SPAIP)

It was moved by Councillor Maria Torres, seconded by Councillor Lauren Small-Pennefather and resolved:

1) To acknowledge receipt of the minutes of a meeting held by the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) on December 13, 2023.

2) To approve as presented under the SPAIP the following plans submitted to this meeting, in accordance with the recommendations of the PAC as outlined in the minutes:

Address	Project
33 Fairfield	Replacement of the front door and side lite;
19 Banstead	Replacement of eighteen windows, the front door and transom, a patio door, a single door, the garage door as well as the vertical cladding, soffits, and fascia;
136 Percival	Replacement of five windows and lintels.

3) To approve with conditions under the SPAIP the following plans submitted to this meeting, in accordance with the recommendations of the PAC as outlined in the minutes:

Address	Project
456-458 Westminster N.	Demolition of the building due to fire.

4) To defer the examination of the following plans to a next meeting of this Council, in accordance with the recommendations of the PAC as outlined in the minutes:

Address	Project
456-458 Westminster N.	Reconstruction of the building due to fire.

Carried unanimously
#20231218-008 (2)

12. Public Works

There was nothing under this item.

13. Human Resources

There was nothing under this item.

14. Appointments

There was nothing under this item.

15. Deposit of Documents

a) Register of gifts received by Council Members

An excerpt of the register of gifts, marks of hospitality and benefits received by Council members, in excess of a value of \$200 each, was filed. No such benefits were entered on the register.

16. Notice of Motion, Reading and Adoption of By-Laws

a) Adoption of By-Law No. 2023-010 – By-Law Concerning Taxes of the Town of Montreal West for the Fiscal Year 2024

WHEREAS a copy of this By-Law in draft version was previously tabled at a Council meeting when the notice of motion was given, and made available in accordance with the law;

WHEREAS the purpose and scope of this by-law were summed up at the present meeting;

THEREFORE:

It was moved by Councillor Colleen Feeney, seconded by Councillor Elizabeth Ulin and resolved:

That By-Law No. 2023-010 entitled “By-Law Concerning Taxes of the Town of Montreal West for the Fiscal Year 2024” be adopted.

Carried unanimously
#20231218-009 (2)

17. Second Public Question Period

The Pro-Mayor announced the beginning of the Second Public Question Period at 9:18 p.m.

People in the room were invited to ask the Mayor and Councillors questions concerning the matters on the agenda of this meeting. Questions submitted online were also taken.

18. Termination of the Meeting

At 9:19 p.m., no questions being asked,

It was moved by Councillor Lauren Small-Pennefather, seconded by Councillor Maria Torres and resolved:

That the Meeting be terminated.

Carried unanimously
#20231218-010 (2)

Colleen Feeney
Pro-Mayor

Claude Gilbert
Town Clerk

*The annexes mentioned above are deposited
in the municipal archives in File Archives-20231218 (2)*