



## The Corporation of the Town of Tecumseh

Public Works & Engineering Services

**To:** Mayor and Members of Council

**From:** Phil Bartnik, Director Public Works & Engineering Services

**Date to Council:** Tuesday, May 13, 2025

**Report Number:** PWES-2025-33

**Subject:** South Port Sailing Club  
Request for Financial Assistance to Dredge Pike Creek

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### Recommendations

It is recommended:

**That** Report PWES-2025-33 South Port Sailing Club, Request for Financial Assistance to Dredge Pike Creek, **be received**;

**And that** Council direct Administration to **provide a written response** to the South Port Sailing Club advising that the Town of Tecumseh will not be providing financial assistance to dredge Pike Creek.

### Background

The Town of Tecumseh received a letter from the South Point Sailing Club (SPSC) on January 9, 2025, requesting financial assistance from the Town to dredge the Pike Creek channel from the SPSC into Lake St. Clair (refer to Attachment 1).

The letter outlined several key points made by the SPSC, which included:

- Dangerously low water levels within Pike Creek and Lake St. Clair which impact vessel access to the Lake and result in potential damages to sail boats;

- That dredging "...is a must and financial assistance from the Town of Tecumseh will be necessary to ensure dredging can be completed to the degree which is needed to keep the channel safe...";
- In 1992, The Village of St. Clair Beach entered into a 50/50 partnership with SPSC for dredging costs in the Pike Creek and the Channel to Lake St. Clair;
- Estimated costs for dredging are still being requested from the contractor;
- Dredging permits have been filed and are pending approval; and
- The SPSC is also a port of entry for Canada Border Services, with a phone unit and dock space for any boaters entering or returning to Canada. Both Nexus Marine and Telephone reporting is available.

Subsequently, SPSC provided additional correspondence on March 31, 2025, which identified the estimated costs of \$48,750 plus HST for the proposed 2025 dredging of Pike Creek.

## Comments

The Pike Creek is a natural watercourse starting at Lake St. Clair and is approximately 17.7 km in length, serving a watershed of 87 km<sup>2</sup> that spans between the Town of Tecumseh (Tecumseh) and the Municipality of Lakeshore (Lakeshore). Refer to Attachment 2 for the Pike Creek Watershed Plan. The section of Pike Creek from Lake St. Clair to the Tecumseh Road bridge is designated as a Natural Watercourse and is under the regulated authority of upper levels of government. Pike Creek south of the Tecumseh Road bridge is designated as a Municipal Drain under the *Drainage Act* with sections of it being maintained and repaired by both Tecumseh and Lakeshore. Attachment 3 depicts the delineation between the Natural Watercourse and Municipal Drain sections of the Pike Creek.

Upon review of Tecumseh's GIS property fabric as well as the municipal boundary between Tecumseh and Lakeshore, the 'Pike Creek channel' from the SPSC to Lake St. Clair **is not located within Tecumseh** and is located wholly within Lakeshore (refer to Attachment 4).

Through discussions with Lakeshore Administration, they indicated they have not been approached by the SPSC requesting financial assistance for the 2025 dredging works, even though that section of the Pike Creek channel is wholly within Lakeshore. Lakeshore Administration also advised that they have been approached in the past by private organizations looking for financial assistance for dredging works, including the South Port Sailing Club for Pike Creek, and the Sandbar Waterfront Grill for Puce River. It has been Lakeshore's practice to deny these requests as the dredging would largely benefit these private organizations and not the municipal residents at large.

In speaking with a member of the SPSC, they indicated that dredging works on the Pike Creek channel typically take place on an annual basis, with the exception being during times of high lake levels. The proposed 2025 dredging will be the fourth consecutive year of dredging works following the record high levels of Lake St. Clair experienced in 2019 and 2020. The member also indicated that the SPSC has largely been relying on fundraising/community support to raise funds for the annual dredging works.

A review of the current water levels in Lake St. Clair utilizing the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Monthly report for March 2025 identified an elevation of 174.96 (metres above sea level). This is lower than the mean from March 2024 by 0.24 metres, but still on par with the all time mean for March (1918 to 2025 data set) of 174.94. The six-month projections, April to September 2025, are forecasting the monthly mean to be slightly below the all time mean elevations (refer to Attachment 5).

## **Financial Implications**

The SPSC letter referenced a 1992 partnership between the SPSC and The Village of St. Clair Beach for a 50/50 cost sharing of dredging costs in the Pike Creek and the Channel to Lake St. Clair. The SPSC is currently requesting Tecumseh assist with the dredging costs at the same 50/50 cost share. The estimated cost for the proposed 2025 dredging of Pike Creek is \$48,750 plus HST, which if agreed to, would translate to a cost of \$24,375 for the Town for this current request.

In review of the SPSC letter and its attachments (being the 1992 partnership agreement), The Village of St. Clair Beach (Village) entered into an agreement with a contractor and SPSC to facilitate the dredging works of Pike Creek. The SPSC paid \$30,000 to the Village up front into escrow to ensure payment for the complete works. In return the Village was responsible to obtain all the necessary approvals for the dredging works and it also submitted a grant application to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Small Craft Harbours Branch on a 50/50 basis totalling \$15,000, for which they were successful. Once the dredging works were completed and paid using both the grant funds and funds from escrow the Village then returned to the SPSC the monies then remaining in the escrow account. The agreement did not identify the Village as being a financial partner or having any financial responsibility for the 1992 dredging works.

Additionally, a search of the Town's financial records since amalgamation (in 1999) indicates that Tecumseh has not participated in providing any financial assistance to the SPSC for dredging activities.

As it was noted in the letter that the facilities of the SPSC and Pike Creek in general are used by Canadian Border Services as an Entry Port and are also patrolled by the Coast Guard and police services in the area, it is suggested that resort could be had to those higher government agencies for potential financial support.

## Recommendation

Given the above discussions and information provided within this report, it is Administration's recommendation that a written response be provided to the South Port Sailing Club advising that the Town of Tecumseh will not be providing financial assistance to dredge Pike Creek.

## Consultations

Chief Administrative Officer  
Financial Services  
Legislative Services & Clerk  
South Port Sailing Club  
The Corporation of the Municipality of Lakeshore

## Link to Strategic Priorities

Applicable	<a href="#">2023-2026 Strategic Priorities</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sustainable Growth: Achieve prosperity and a livable community through sustainable growth.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Health and Inclusion: Integrate community health and inclusion into our places and spaces and everything we do.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Service Experience: Enhance the experience of Team Tecumseh and our citizens through responsive and respectful service.

## Communications

Not applicable ☒

Website ☐ Social Media ☐ News Release ☐ Local Newspaper ☐

This report has been reviewed by Senior Administration as indicated below and recommended for submission by the Chief Administrative Officer.

Prepared by:

Phil Bartnik, P.Eng.  
Director Public Works & Engineering Services

Reviewed by:

Robert Auger, LL.B.  
Director Legislative Services & Clerk

Reviewed by:

Tom Kitsos, CPA, CMA, BComm  
Director Financial Services & Chief Financial Officer

Recommended by:

Margaret Misek-Evans, MCIP, RPP  
Chief Administrative Officer

<b>Attachment Number</b>	<b>Attachment Name</b>
1	South Port Sailing Club Letter dated January 9, 2025
2	Map: Pike Creek Watershed Plan
3	Map: Delineation between the Natural Watercourse and Municipal Drain sections of the Pike Creek
4	Map: Pike Creek from the South Port Sailing Club to Lake St. Clair
5	Department of Fisheries and Oceans – Great Lakes Water Levels – March 2025