



J. Paul Dubé, Ombudsman

BY E-MAIL

March 10, 2026

Council for the Town of LaSalle
5950 Malden Road
LaSalle, ON N9H 1S4

Dear Members of Council for the Town of LaSalle:

Re: Closed meeting complaint

My Office received complaints that council for the Town of LaSalle contravened the open meeting rules in the *Municipal Act, 2001* (the “Act”)¹ at its November 25, 2025 meeting. The complainants raised concerns that the resolution to enter *in camera* did not contain sufficient information about the matter to be discussed and that the discussion may not have fit under the cited exception – in this case, matters that may be discussed *in camera* under another Act.

I am writing to share the outcome of my Office’s review. Based on the evidence, I found that the closed session was permitted under the exception for matters that may be discussed *in camera* under another Act, and that the resolution contained sufficient information in the circumstances.

Ombudsman’s Role and Authority

The Act gives anyone the right to request an investigation into whether a municipality has complied with the Act in closing a meeting to the public. Municipalities may appoint their own investigator. The Act designates the Ombudsman as the default investigator for municipalities that have not appointed their own.

My Office is the closed meeting investigator for the Town of LaSalle.

¹ SO 2001, c 25.

483 Bay Street, 10th Floor, South Tower / 483, rue Bay, 10^e étage, Tour sud
Toronto, ON M5G 2C9

Tel./Tél. : 416-586-3300 Facsimile/Télécopieur : 416-586-3485 TTY/ATS : 1-866-411-4211

www.ombudsman.on.ca

Facebook : facebook.com/OntarioOmbudsman X : x.com/Ont_Ombudsman YouTube : youtube.com/OntarioOmbudsman



My Office has investigated hundreds of closed meetings. To assist municipal councils, staff, and the public, we have developed an online digest of open meeting cases. This searchable repository was created to provide easy access to the Ombudsman's decisions on, and interpretations of, the open meeting rules. Council members and staff can consult the digest to inform their discussions and decisions on whether certain matters can or should be discussed in closed session, as well as issues related to open meeting procedures. Summaries of the Ombudsman's previous decisions can be found in the digest: www.ombudsman.on.ca/en/info-public-bodies-and-officials/municipalgovernment/municipal-meeting-digest.

The Ontario Ombudsman also has the authority to conduct impartial reviews and investigations of hundreds of public sector bodies. This includes municipalities, local boards, and municipally-controlled corporations, as well as provincial government organizations, publicly funded universities, and school boards. In addition, the Ombudsman's mandate includes reviewing complaints about the services provided by children's aid societies and residential licensees, and the provision of French language services under the *French Language Services Act*. Read more about the bodies within our jurisdiction here: www.ombudsman.on.ca/en/make-complaint/what-we-can-helpyou/organizations-you-can-complain-about.

Review

In response to the complaints, my Office reviewed the open and closed meeting minutes and agendas. My Office also made inquiries with the Town's Clerk and reviewed relevant legislation.

November 25, 2025 meeting

On November 25, 2025, council for the Town of LaSalle held a regular meeting beginning at 6:00 p.m. Council discussed several unrelated items before moving into closed session at 7:06 p.m., citing the exception for matters that may be discussed in closed session under another Act at section 239(2)(g) of the Act. The resolution to go *in camera* notes the discussion regards "specifically the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*."

In closed session, council received an update from the Town's Chief of Police regarding a request made to the Town's Police Services Board as part of ongoing negotiations. Council was briefed by the Chief of Police on a draft response to the request, and at the conclusion of the discussion, directed the response be sent. Council returned to open session at 7:15 p.m. and adjourned the meeting.

Applicability of the exception for matters permissible for closed discussion under another Act

Section 239(2)(g) of the Act permits a municipality to hold a closed session to discuss “a matter in respect of which a council, board, committee or other body may hold a closed meeting under another Act.”

Council relied on this exception in holding its closed session on November 25, 2025, referencing matters under the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*. The Clerk advised my Office that the closed session discussion was specifically permissible under section 44(2)(j) of the *Community Safety and Policing Act*, which states that a meeting may be closed to the public if the subject matter being considered is “a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the board.”

The discussion in closed session related entirely to ongoing negotiations carried out by the Town’s Police Services Board, as indicated by the Clerk and the closed meeting minutes my Office reviewed. Accordingly, the discussion would have been permitted in a closed meeting under the *Community Safety and Policing Act*, which brings it within the exception in s. 239(2)(g) of the *Municipal Act*.

Resolution to proceed *in camera*

Under section 239(4) of the Act, before moving into a closed session, a municipality, local board, or committee of either must state by resolution in open session that a closed meeting will be held. It must also state the general nature of the matter to be considered at the closed meeting.

The Ontario Court of Appeal has noted that the resolution to go into a closed meeting should provide a general description of the issue to be discussed in a way that maximizes the information available to the public while not undermining the reason for excluding the public.² My Office has consistently explained that merely citing the exception being relied upon will generally not be sufficient to satisfy the requirements of section 239(4).³ However, my Office has also previously found that there may be instances when a resolution cannot include further information about the nature of the discussion to be had without undermining the reason for discussing the matter in closed session.⁴

² *Farber v. Kingston (City)*, 2007 ONCA 173, online: <<https://canlii.ca/t/1qtzl>>.

³ *Norfolk (County) (Re)*, 2024 ONOMBUD 17 (CanLII), online: <<https://canlii.ca/t/k81rh>>.

⁴ *Amherstburg (Town of) (Re)*, 2022 ONOMBUD 11 (CanLII), online: <<https://canlii.ca/t/jr5rc>>.

In this case, the resolution to move *in camera* on November 25, 2025 cited the exception from the Act and referenced the particular legislation being relied upon. The Clerk advised my Office that further information could not be provided in the circumstances without undermining the reason for discussing the matter in closed session. In the circumstances, I agree that more information could not have been provided and the resolution satisfied the requirements of the open meeting rules.

Conclusion

I find that council for the Town of LaSalle did not contravene the open meeting rules at its November 25, 2025 meeting. I thank the Town for its co-operation during my investigation. The Clerk has confirmed that this letter will be included as correspondence at an upcoming council meeting.

Sincerely,



Paul Dubé
Ombudsman of Ontario

Cc: Jennifer Astrologo, Clerk

Cette lettre est aussi disponible en français