

## COUNCIL COMMITTEE

A Special Session of Council Committee of the Municipality of the County of Colchester was held in the Courthouse, Truro, Nova Scotia, on Thursday, June 5, 2018 at 6:00 pm.

### Roll Call

The roll was called with the following Councillors in attendance:

Mayor Christine Blair	
Councillor Eric Boutilier	District 1
Deputy Mayor Bill Masters, Chair	District 2
Councillor Geoff Stewart	District 3
Councillor Mike Cooper	District 4
Councillor Lloyd Gibbs	District 5
Councillor Karen MacKenzie	District 6
Councillor Michael Gregory	District 7
Councillor Ron Cavanaugh	District 8
Councillor Tom Taggart	District 10
Councillor Wade Parker	District 11

### Regrets

Councillor Bob Pash	District 9
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### Also Present

Mr. Rob Simonds, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)  
 Mr. Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor  
 Mr. Mark Austin, Economic Development Officer  
 Ms. Tracey Venno, Recording Secretary  
 Mr. Devin Trefry, Acting Research, Policy and Comm. Engagement Officer

### Purpose of Meeting

The purpose of the meeting was to receive Council directive on the Code of Conduct (COC) Policy.

Moved by Councillor Taggart  
 Seconded by Councillor Cavanaugh

“That Council Committee agrees it is important to discuss policy for the Code of Conduct and to provide direction for the development of a Code, therefore Council Committee waives the requirement to give the two day meeting notice to each Councillor.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Referring to the recent FCM Conference, Councillor Stewart congratulated Councillor Taggart on being re-elected to the FCM Board as well as being elected Chair of the Atlantic Regional Caucus, and suggested that a media release be issued on this.

Moved by Councillor Stewart  
 Seconded by Councillor Gibbs

“That a media release be issued concerning Councillor Taggart being re-elected to the FCM Board and elected Chair of the Atlantic Regional Caucus at the recent FCM Conference.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

## Code of Conduct

Mr. Mark Austin, Economic Development Officer, was in attendance to present on this item noting that in August of 2017, Council passed a motion directing staff to investigate information on the UNSM Code of Conduct and the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination. In October 2017, the Municipal Government Act (MGA) was amended (Bill 10) requiring each municipal unit to adopt a Code of Conduct. Staff are seeking the directive of Council, through discussion at this meeting, to assist in establishing the framework for the COC Policy. Mr. Austin advised that the NSFM (formerly UNSM) Code of Conduct is somewhat problematic due to its vagueness.

The recent COC Workshop put on by the NSFM (formerly UNSM) was discussed with some confusion around whether the NSFM, from feedback received at the session, would be forwarding a model template. Some members of Council understood that the NSFM would have a model COC to share with municipalities by the annual meeting in November. As President of NSFM, Councillor Stewart advised that he also understood that the NSFM would have a model COC but would confirm this at the next Board meeting. It was suggested that the Municipality's implementation of a Code of Conduct Policy be held in abeyance until the NSFM model template is available.

Mr. Austin provided an overview of the framework for the COC Policy which included: Purpose, Authority, Application, Definitions, Conduct of Council, Compliance/Enforcement Procedures, and, Education and Actions for Equity. Each section was reviewed and discussed separately with Council providing feedback on what they felt should be included in the Policy.

**Purpose** – Council agreed to the five items outlined in the presentation: to communicate standards Council aspires and holds itself to; to inspire compliance of these standards; to establish a consistent and fair process for dealing with allegations and infractions; to protect and restore reputation and collaborative relations; and, to educate and communicate. Council express interest in having the Policy be inclusive of all Committees of Council.

**Authority** – Council agreed on the following points: Part III of the MGA empowers Council to exercise powers and duties by policy; and, Bill 10 amends the MGA to require municipalities to adopt a COC.

**Application** – Council agreed that the COC Policy should include wording to indicate applicable to all Council members while performing duties of Council. Additionally, it was also agreed that complainants

should also be bound to certain aspects of the COC and that geographic parameters be put in place for complaints received.

**Definitions** – Council reviewed and agreed with the definitions as presented. It was noted that the definitions would be alphabetical and be clear and concise.

**Conduct of Council** – Council agreed with items outlined in the presentation with modified wording regarding sexual solicitation. Additionally, with reference to laws, there was discussion on whether the list of specific laws should be included. On both points of discussion, Mr. Austin indicated that options would be included for Council consideration.

**Compliance/Enforcement Procedures** – Council agreed in principle with the components of the Compliance Process as outlined in the presentation. It was also agreed that complaints falling under the COC Policy would remain confidential until the validation and verification of the complaint. Brief discussion was held on complaints being dropped and Council members having the ability to clear their name. It was noted that making this a matter of public record could be built into the policy.

**Education and Action for Equity** – Council agreed that this component be included in the policy.

Mr. Austin advised that from the feedback received, a draft Code of Conduct Policy would be prepared and brought forth at a future meeting for Council consideration.

## **Adjournment**

Moved by Councillor Gregory  
Seconded by Councillor Cavanaugh

“That the meeting adjourn at 8:50 pm.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Tracey Venio  
Recording Secretary