

**COUNCIL COMMITTEE**

The Regular Session of the Council Committee of the Municipality of the County of Colchester was held in the Courthouse, Truro, Nova Scotia, on Thursday, January 16, 2020.

**Roll Call**

The roll was called with the following Councillors in attendance:

Mayor Christine Blair	
Councillor Bill Masters	District 2
Deputy Mayor Geoff Stewart, Chair	District 3
Councillor Mike Cooper	District 4
Councillor Karen MacKenzie	District 6
Councillor Michael Gregory	District 7 ( <i>arrived at 6:19 pm</i> )
Councillor Ron Cavanaugh	District 8
Councillor Bob Pash	District 9
Councillor Tom Taggart	District 10
Councillor Wade Parker	District 11

**Regrets**

Councillor Eric Boutilier	District 1
Councillor Lloyd Gibbs	District 5

**Staff Present**

Rob Simonds, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)  
 Crawford Macpherson, Director of Community Development  
 Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services  
 Michelle Newell, Director of Public Works  
 Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor  
 Tracey Veno, Recording Secretary  
 Devin Trefry, Research, Policy and Community Engagement Officer  
 Dave Westlake, Emergency Management Coordinator (*for Item No. 10*)  
 Paul Smith, Senior Planner (*for Item No. 16*)

**Approval of Agenda**

Moved by Councillor Cavanaugh  
 Seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the agenda be approved with the following amendments:

- Remove # 13, Personnel Policy – Volunteer Firefighters; and,
- Add one Negotiations and one Legal Matter in Closed Session.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes**

Moved by Mayor Blair  
 Seconded by Councillor Cavanaugh

“That the minutes of meetings held on November 4, December 3, and 12, 2019, be approved as presented.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Business Arising from Minutes**

There was no business arising from the meetings held on November 4, December 3, and 12, 2019.

**ACTION ITEMS****2020-21 Schedule of Meetings**

Council reviewed the dates for the schedule of meetings for 2020-21 with one suggested amendment to change the date for the April Committee from April 16<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>. Discussion was also held regarding the various dates for the upcoming budget meetings.

Moved by Councillor Masters  
Seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That Council approves the Schedule of Presentation, Council Committee and Council Meetings for Fiscal Year 2020-21 as amended; and,

That Council also approves the following dates for 2020-21 budget related meetings:

- February 25<sup>th</sup> and March 5<sup>th</sup> Grant Presentations;
- April 2<sup>nd</sup> for Maintenance Budget; and,
- April 23<sup>rd</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> for Additions and Deletions.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**2020 FCM Conference**

Moved by Councillor Cooper  
Seconded by Councillor Pash

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that Councillors Cavanaugh, Pash, and Masters, be approved to attend the 2020 FCM Conference, in addition to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillor Taggart (as an FCM Board Member) and the CAO; and,

That Councillor Boutilier serve as an alternate in the event that any of these selected are unable to attend.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Expense Policy for CAO and Members of Council**

*At this point in the meeting, Councillor Gregory arrived.*

Devin Trefry, Research, Policy and Community Engagement Officer, advised that Council had reviewed this item in November 2019 and at that time, it was referred back to staff for further revisions on expense eligibility for travel within districts.

Clarification was sought on the inclusion of the clause under Terms of Policy. Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor, advised that the clause was to make clear that it is not intended to cover expenses for elective or optional events being attended. The recent Council remuneration adjustment was to compensate for/offset some of these expenses. It was noted that there is an option to amend the Policy to include specific events or functions if need be.

Moved by Councillor Masters  
Seconded by Mayor Blair

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that amendments to the Expense Policy for CAO and Members of Council be approved as presented.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

#### **Sewer, Meeting House Road**

Michelle Newell, Director of Public Works, advised that this item is in response to Council’s previous directive for staff to investigate costs for an extension of sewer along Meeting House Road and Matlyn Drive in Onslow. A summary of the possible options for consideration was provided as well as estimated costs.

Discussion was held on past concerns of area residents regarding development of the area; sewer extension likely triggering the construction of multi-unit buildings in the area; number of inquiries/requests received; and surveying residents to gauge interest level in pursuing the sewer extension.

Moved by Mayor Blair  
Seconded by Councillor Pash

“That Council proceed with further exploring the possibility of sewer on Meeting House Road and Matlyn Drive.”

Motion **DEFEATED**. (*Deputy Mayor Stewart, Councillors Masters, MacKenzie, Taggart and Cooper opposed*)

#### **Tatamagouche Sewer Boundary**

Ms. Newell indicated that there is an existing property on Lake Road in Tatamagouche currently connected to public sewer but is currently outside the Sewer Service Boundary. Past practice has been for Council to approve any changes to the Boundary and staff is requesting that consideration be given to modify the Boundary to include this parcel of land.

Moved by Councillor Gregory  
Seconded by Councillor Cavanaugh

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the Sewer Service Boundary for Tatamagouche be expanded to include PID 20470456 and that the Sewer Area Rate be applied to this PID going forward.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Councillor Gregory requested that a letter be sent to the property owner advising them accordingly once Council approves this at the end of the month Council meeting.

#### **Base Level Insurance for Volunteer Firefighters**

Following a presentation previously received from the Colchester Firefighters Association and subsequent staff report on base level insurance for Volunteer Firefighters, staff were directed to bring back options and costing information for Council consideration. Dave Westlake, Emergency Management/Protective Services Coordinator, provided a brief overview of current levels and options for different levels of insurance coverage.

Discussion was held on pending coverage through WCB; budget implications; benefits of having Volunteer Firefighters to communities; and, increased

benefits being a recruitment and retention incentive. Although in support of increased base level coverage, Councillor Parker expressed concern for providing off duty coverage.

Moved by Mayor Blair  
Seconded by Councillor Taggart

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that insurance benefit coverage for Volunteer Firefighters be provided at \$200,000 and \$750/week, as presented in the Action Item.”

Motion Carried. (*Councillor Parker opposed*)

### Electronic Voting

Mr. Trefry provided the results on an investigation into electronic voting which included benefits and concerns of e-voting; potential security issues; statistics from past elections; time constraints should Council wish to proceed with e-voting; and estimated cost implications.

Moved by Councillor Masters  
Seconded by Councillor Pash

“That Council approves maintaining status quo and continue with paper ballots only for the 2020 Municipal Election.”

Motion Carried. (*Deputy Mayor Stewart opposed*)

### Code of Conduct

Rob Simonds, CAO, provided a brief recap of the timelines regarding the implementation of the Code of Conduct and advised that as Council is aware, the NSFM's current code of conduct has been with the Department of Municipal Affairs for an extended period for review. Staff received the draft Code of Conduct from NSFM on January 10<sup>th</sup>, but this draft does not include any provincial changes.

In the absence of receiving the newest Code of Conduct template, staff continued to research and review Codes of Conduct adopted by other municipalities. The Code of Conduct as presented uses the 2008 NSFM template as a base with additional information included as outlined in blue. Should Council wish to proceed with the adoption of a Code of Conduct, it should be pending final vetting by the Municipal Solicitor.

Concern with having any further delays in adopting a Code of Conduct were addressed. Discussion on the adoption of the 2008 NSFM Code of Conduct immediately was held with consideration being given for further changes at a later date, if necessary. Concern with NSFM's lack of support on this matter was also noted.

*At this point in the meeting, Deputy Mayor Stewart removed himself as Chair so he could speak on this item. Alternate Chair Councillor Cooper assumed the position of Chair.*

Referring to minutes of October and November 2008, Deputy Mayor Stewart indicated there was an Action Item presented to Council at that time with a motion being made to not proceed with a Code of Conduct. Additionally,

concern was expressed by previous comments made against NSFM and himself regarding Code of Conduct.

*At this point in the meeting, Deputy Mayor Stewart resumed his role as Chair.*

Discussion continued regarding the adoption of the Code of Conduct with concern being raised regarding the 2008 NSFM Code of Conduct being too brief, leaving too much room for interpretation.

Moved by Councillor Masters  
Seconded by Councillor Gregory

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the Code of Conduct for Members of Council be adopted, based on the draft NSFM template, with possible amendments coming forward at a later date.”

Motion Carried. *(Councillor Parker opposed)*

**1<sup>st</sup> Annual Nova Scotia  
Department of Agriculture  
Minister’s Conference**

Councillor Taggart indicated that agriculture is a big part of Colchester County and he would like to see the Municipality put a booth in the upcoming Agriculture Conference.

Moved by Councillor Taggart  
Seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That Council Committee recommend to Council that the Municipality move forward with a booth at the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Nova Scotia Agriculture Minister’s Conference being held March 3-4, 2020.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Renewable Energy Forum**

The CAO indicated that Councillor Boutilier requested that this item be added to the agenda for this evening as he would like to see the Municipality participate in the Sustainability Symposium that will be taking place in May.

Moved by Councillor Taggart  
Seconded by Councillor Masters

“That Council Committee recommend to Council that the Municipality take part in the Municipal Renewable Energy Forum and Sustainability Fair scheduled for May 9, 2020.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**INFORMATION ITEMS**

**Fundy Discovery Site – Project  
Update Phase 1B**

Paul Smith, Senior Planner, provided a detailed presentation on the Fundy Discovery Phase 1B Project Update. The presentation included a recap of 2019; information on construction and planning projects; a budget overview; and details on 2020 projects and priorities.

**Annual NS Bluegrass & Oldtime  
Music Festival**

Mark Austin, Economic Development Officer, provided information on staff’s findings relative to Council’s previous directive to explore opportunities to

keep the Annual NS Bluegrass & Oldtime Music Festival in Colchester County. A detailed report was provided in the Council package for information purposes.

**Director's Report**

A report from the Director of Public Works was circulated in the package for tonight's meeting.

**CLOSED SESSION**

Moved by Councillor Gregory  
Seconded by Councillor Cavanaugh

"That the meeting go into closed session at 8:35 pm."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Gregory  
Seconded by Councillor Cavanaugh

"That the meeting reconvene in open session at 11:10 pm."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Councillor Gregory  
Seconded by Councillor Cavanaugh

"That the meeting adjourn at 11:11 pm."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Tracey Veno  
Recording Secretary