

COUNCIL COMMITTEE

The Regular Session of the Council Committee of the Municipality of the County of Colchester was conducted virtually, via Zoom Webinars and in-person on Thursday, September 15, 2022, beginning at 7:00 pm.

In peace and friendship, and in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, Deputy Mayor Stewart acknowledged that the Municipality of Colchester is in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq.

Roll Call

The roll was called with the following Councillors in attendance:

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| Mayor Christine Blair | (virtually) |
| Councillor Eric Boutilier | District 1 |
| Councillor Laurie Sandeson | District 2 |
| Deputy Mayor Geoff Stewart, Chair | District 3 (virtually) |
| Councillor Mike Cooper | District 4 |
| Councillor Tim Johnson | District 5 |
| Councillor Karen MacKenzie | District 6 |
| Councillor Michael Gregory | District 7 |
| Councillor Lisa Patton | District 8 |
| Councillor Marie Benoit | District 9 (virtually) |
| Councillor Victoria Lomond | District 10 (virtually) |
| Councillor Wade Parker | District 11 |

Staff Present

Rob Simonds, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
 Michelle Boudreau, Director of Public Works
 Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services
 Paul Smith, Director of Community Development
 Phillip Redden, Director of Solid Waste
 Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor
 Tracey Veno, Recording Secretary
 Devin Trefry, Research Policy & Community Engagement Officer
 Jenn Mantin, Economic Development Officer
 Craig Burgess, Recreation Manager
 Jeanette Himmelman, Systems Analyst

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the agenda be approved with the following additions:

- Item #14b, Colchester Courage Award Update;
- Item #14c, Gerald Gloade Presentation.” Carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That the minutes of the meetings held on June 7, August 2, 11 and September 6, 2022, with the following amendment:

- Councillor Cooper voting against the motion on the Ice Pond Drive Sidewalk Evaluation, page 2073/2074 of the August 11, 2022, minutes.” Carried unanimously.

Business Arising from Minutes

None

ACTION ITEMS**Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade
Tipping Fee Request**

At their meeting on August 25, 2022, Council granted authority to September Council Committee to make a decision on this request.

Brief discussion was held on what the approximate costs would be to waive tipping fees. Phil Redden, Director of Solid Waste, estimated costs to be in the \$200-\$300 range.

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That Council approves the request from the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade to waive tipping fees for two dumpsters from their 2022 Annual Harvest Sale and Auction.” Carried unanimously.

**Truro Heights Sewer Upgrade
Project – Tender Award**

Michelle Boudreau, Director of Public Works, provided a brief overview of this item noting that the approved budget for the project was \$1.4 million. The tenders for the project came in well over budget at approximately \$2.4 million. The goal was to have the work done prior to the provincial paving of the road next year. However, due to pricing, staff is recommending proceeding with a 950 m portion of the sewer upgrade and awarding the contract to S.W. Weeks Construction for \$1.3 million.

Discussion was held on existing sewer capacity and benefits of proceeding with upgrading a portion of the project to accommodate future development needs.

Moved by Councillor Sandeson and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That Council authorizes staff to award a contract to S.W. Weeks Construction for \$1.3M for the replacement of 950 metres of sewer line on Truro Heights Road; and,

That an internal contingency of \$50,000 be approved, to be spent only on authority of the Director of Public Works.” Carried unanimously.

**Debert Water Utility – Three-Year
Operating Budget**

Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services, presented the Three-Year Debert Water Utility (DWU) Budget, indicating that this is a requirement of the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board. There has not been a lot of change with the DWU budget since last year and the utility is in good shape with an accumulated surplus.

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the three-year Debert Water Utility operating budget (2022/2023, 2023/2024, and 2024/2025) be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

**Tatamagouche Water Utility –
Three-Year Operating Budget**

Similar to the previous item, the Director of Corporate Services, presented the Tatamagouche Water Utility (TWU) Three-Year Operating Budget. The TWU has an accumulated deficit but has been improving since last reported. A rate study is being budgeted for in 2024/25. The three-year operating budget was reviewed by the Tatamagouche Water Utility Advisory Committee and a recommendation was made by the Committee to approve.

Council discussed proceeding with a rate study sooner rather than waiting until 2024/25. The Director of Corporate Services indicated the previous study looked at paying the deficit over an eight-year period. The position of the water utility has shown some improvement and that it would probably be best to hold off until 2024/25.

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the three-year Tatamagouche Water Utility operating budget (2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25) be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

FASD Awareness Month Proclamation

Moved by Councillor Cooper and seconded by Councillor Lomond

“That Council Committee proclaims September 2022 as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Awareness Month.” Carried unanimously.

Atlantic Mayors Congress Resolution

Mayor Blair advised that the topic of Guaranteed Livable Basic Income (GLBI) was discussed at length at the recently held Atlantic Mayors Congress (AMC) in Shediac, NB. A resolution was put forth, however the Mayors and Wardens in attendance felt this was not something to make a decision on and that it should be brought back to respective Councils for consideration. A copy of the proposed resolution was included in the Council package for this evening’s meeting. Mayor Blair indicated this would be a significant ask and feels that it needs more exploration. A couple of presentations were received on this matter at the AMC, with one presenter offering to do information sessions to Councils as an opportunity to receive more information on the subject. A copy of the invitation for the information session will be forwarded to Council members.

Due to the Chair having connectivity issues, Alternate Chair Councillor Cooper assumed the role of Chair.

During discussion, a number of points were raised including the competing demands on the federal government; GBLI being a very complex issue and concern regarding how this would get operationalized; some interest in learning more on the topic; and, this should lay with the federal and provincial levels of government as it is beyond the scope of municipal government.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Gregory

“That the information on the resolution of the Atlantic Mayor’s Congress on Guaranteed Livable Basic Income, be received for information purposes.” Carried unanimously.

At this point, Deputy Mayor Stewart resumed the role of Chair.

Block Parent Program

Councillor Patton advised that she received requests from more than one constituent regarding the Block Parent Program and would like to have staff look into having the program in our communities.

Moved by Councillor Patton and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That the Block Parent Program be referred to staff to investigate and bring back information to Council.” Carried unanimously.

Saywood Bus Stop

Referring to the photos distributed in the Council package, Councillor Parker indicated that the photos are of an area on Saywood Drive where the School Board has decided to designate as a bus stop area for the new school in Bible Hill for grades primary to four aged children. The gathering area has stakes on the lawn with trees that the children are climbing, and the property owner is concerned that the children may get injured. There is also concern of children getting hit by a vehicle as traffic travels fairly fast in this area and there is limited visual lines for traffic turning off Old Courthouse Branch Road. It is an added concern in winter months as children play on the snowbanks. The property owner would like to have a cement pad area, possibly with a fence around it and a bench, for the children to gather and wait for the bus. It was advised that the owner would have no issue with providing an easement for this. Although not something the Municipality usually does, Councillor Parker advised that a cement pad was put on Burris Drive for a bus stop area.

Discussion included whether anything has been done to mitigate the safety concerns such as reaching out to the School Board to relocate the bus stop area; other places having similar situations; this being a provincial responsibility and not under municipal jurisdiction; having the Village of Bible Hill address with the School Board; the bussing garage not being flexible with such requests; contacting the area MLA; parental supervision requirements for children under 7; and concerns regarding land ownership, liabilities, and snow removal responsibilities.

Moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That staff be directed to price the cost of putting a cement pad on Saywood for a bus stop area and bring information back to Council for review and consideration.” Motion DEFEATED (*Mayor Blair, Deputy Mayor Stewart, and Councillors Boutilier, Sandeson, Cooper, MacKenzie, Gregory, and Patton opposed*).

INFORMATION ITEMS

Air Show Atlantic

Jenn Mantin, Economic Development Officer, provided an overview of the 2022 Atlantic Air Show which included an update on financials – revenues (ticket sales) and expenses; staff resource requirements; facility use and management of the event; economic impacts; and necessary actions for future opportunities to host this event.

Community Trail Funding Program – Summer 2022 Applications

Two applications were received under the Community Trail Funding Program for the Fall deadline (June 2022). The Tatamagouche Area Trails Association (TATA) requested \$20,614, 42% of project cost, for 2022 annual maintenance of the 25-km Short Line Trail. Staff have approved a grant for the requested amount pending confirmation of other funding sources. The second application is also from the Tatamagouche Area Trails Association, requesting \$22,524, 42% of project cost for capital improvements - crusher dust along a 4.7 km section of the trail and a small shelter and picnic table on the trail. Staff have approved a grant for the requested amount pending confirmation of other funding sources.

Clarification was sought on what other funding sources might be. The Director of Community Development advised that it could be provincial contributions, private donations, funding from the Trans Canada Trail, and other in-kind support from various groups.

Colchester Courage Award Update

Devin Trefry, Research, Policy, and Community Engagement Officer, advised that staff would be promoting the Inaugural Colchester Courage Awards via social media, website, and newspaper advertisements early next week with a deadline of October 14th for applications. Following the October 14th deadline, applications would be reviewed by the Nominating Committee with recommendations coming forward for Council approval.

Gerald Gloade Presentation

Councillor Sandeson, representative on the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee advised that the Committee has invited Gerald Gloade to do a “Lunch and Learn” for staff and Council on October 5, 2022. A reminder will be sent out to Council for anyone interested in attending.

Director’s Report

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

Discussion was held regarding grease in the pipes on Robie Street from fast food restaurants. Concern was expressed regarding the costs associated with the cleaning process and whether there are ways to recoup the costs. The Director of Public Works advised that she would provide an update to Council on this in November.

CLOSED SESSION

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Lomond

“That the meeting go into closed session at 8:44 pm.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That the meeting reconvene in open session at 9:01 pm.” Carried unanimously.

Property Matter – Debert Incubator Mall

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that staff be directed to proceed with issuing an RFP for the disposal of the Debert Incubator Mall as discussed in closed session.” Motion carried (*Councillor Lomond opposed*).

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the meeting adjourn at 9:02 pm.” Carried unanimously.

Tracey Venio
Recording Secretary