

**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 January 12, 2023, beginning at 6:00 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:

Mayor Christine Blair	
Cllr. Laurie Sandeson	District 2
Deputy Mayor Geoff Stewart, Chair	District 3
Cllr. Mike Cooper	District 4
Cllr. Tim Johnson	District 5
Cllr. Karen MacKenzie	District 6 ( <i>arrived at 6:47 pm</i> )
Cllr. Michael Gregory	District 7 ( <i>virtually</i> )
Cllr. Lisa Patton	District 8
Cllr. Marie Benoit	District 9
Cllr. Victoria Lomond	District 10
Cllr. Wade Parker	District 11

**Regrets**

Cllr. Eric Boutilier	District 1
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**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  
 Jeanette Himmelman, Systems Analyst  
 Anna-Marie Manley, Municipal Solicitor  
 Joanna Burris, Sustainability Planner (*for Item # 10*)

**Moment of Silence**

A moment of silence was observed for the recent passing of former Councillor Jim Thomson, who served on Council from 1988 to 1994, representing the Valley/Greenfield area.

Deputy Mayor Stewart welcomed Jason Haughn to this evening's Council meeting, Colchester's Municipal Service representative from the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

**Approval of Agenda**

Moved by Councillor Johnson and seconded by Councillor Benoit

"That the agenda be approved with the following amendments:

- Add Item #9b, Bill 225;
- Add Item #12b, Upcoming NSFM By-law Meeting; and,

- Remove Item #14, Negotiations in Closed Session.” Carried unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That the minutes of the meeting held on December 15, 2022, be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

**Business Arising from Minutes**

None

**ACTION ITEMS****Asset Retirement Obligation Policy**

Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services, provided a brief overview of the Asset Retirement Obligation Policy, indicating that it relates to Public Sector Accounting Standards (PSAS) 3280. The standards come into effect this year and basically deals with legal requirements for asset retirement/remediating assets at their end of life cycle. Staff have attended a number of webinars on the subject and best practice is to implement a policy. It demonstrates the commitment to comply with the standard. An engineering firm was retained to calculate existing assets and what the liability will be. This will be reflected in the financial statements following year end. The flow chart at the back of the policy outlines the processes we have to follow to be compliant for asset retirement.

Moved by Councillor Cooper and seconded by Mayor Blair

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the Asset Retirement Obligations Policy be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

**Update Briefing on Disposal of Hazardous Substances**

Included in this evening’s package was a detailed briefing on the disposal of hazardous substances. Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor, provided Council with background information and timelines around the implementation of the Disposal of Hazardous Substances By-law and Policy. Prior to the adoption of these, there were no restrictions outside Central Colchester. The By-law now exists along with a very limited Policy which provides little guidelines for Council. The Solid Waste By-law was amended which put an absolute prohibition of the disposal of asbestos other than at the site in Kempton. However, there is some conflict between the two By-laws and direction is being sought to remedy this. A number of options were provided for Council including, but not limited to, managing through the county wide Land Use By-law process with a more detailed Policy; and keeping the by-law place and considering a complete prohibition.

Brief discussion was held on having a strong by-law in place to protect the residents of Colchester with emphasis on prohibition; and having one site for handling hazardous materials, that being the Kempton site. Further discussion was held on exploring exemptions such as the handling and disposal of biosolids.

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the matter of disposal of hazardous substances be referred to staff to explore prohibition with limiting the handling of materials to the Kempton

site and options be brought back to Council for consideration.” Carried unanimously.

**Joint Meeting with the Village of Bible Hill**

*Councillor Patton recused herself from discussion on this matter and removed herself from the Council table.*

Mayor Blair advised of a meeting last week with Five Corners Properties Inc. regarding a presentation to Council concerning development of the former Bates property. Paul Smith, Director of Community Development, was also in attendance at this meeting. Due to the property being located in the Village of Bible Hill and services being provided by the Village, a joint meeting with the Village was suggested. Proposed dates for the meeting are January 31<sup>st</sup> or February 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Village has confirmed their interest in having a Special Joint Meeting. This would be a public meeting and advertising would be required.

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That a Special Joint meeting with the Village of Bible be held on January 31<sup>st</sup> beginning at 6 pm for the purpose of receiving a presentation from Five Corners Properties Inc.” Carried unanimously.

Location for this meeting is to be determined and staff will advise Council accordingly.

*At this point, Councillor Patton returned to the table.*

**Fundy Discovery Site Washroom**

*Councillor Cooper, Alternate Chair of Council Committee, assumed the role of Chair to allow the Deputy Mayor to address Council on this topic.*

Deputy Mayor Stewart reported on the Fundy Discovery Site being quite active of late resulting in the need to have washroom facilities available for use during the ‘off season’. He would like to see options explored, such as opening the washroom during daytime hours or having a portable toilet available.

Discussion took place on other Council members receiving similar requests from constituents; portable toilets potentially being problematic; gating off access; plowing/salting responsibilities; and signage and liabilities.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That options for washroom facilities during the ‘off season’ at the Fundy Discovery Site be referred to staff.” Carried unanimously.

It was requested that if possible, this come back to Council for end of month. The CAO advised that staff have already begun having high level discussions on this, however, they want to be thorough in bringing information back to Council.

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

**Hurricane Fiona Clean-up**

*Councillor MacKenzie arrived during discussion on this item, at 6:47 pm.*

Councillor Benoit began by thanking staff for their efforts with the recent Hurricane Fiona clean-up project. The majority of the materials were cleaned up, however, a few examples were cited for the need to have another pick-up, possibly for those with extenuating circumstances.

Detailed discussion was held on piles of debris still left curbside and potential concerns this may cause due to plowing; recent windstorm contributing to downed debris; options such as possibility of materials being picked up during regular pick-up, use of private contractors, or county truck and trailer; and areas that were inaccessible during initial clean-up. Staff provided information on configuration challenges and financial impacts of original clean-up; vast area of coverage; concerns of the potential for new piles of debris with a second pick up; work at facilities behind due to initial eight-week program; and resource limitations.

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That staff explore options and resources available for a Spring clean-up for Hurricane Fiona materials and report back to Council with findings.” Carried unanimously.

#### **Bill 225**

Mayor Blair advised that Bill 225, which grants the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing ability to override lawfully established by-laws of the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), was passed by the Provincial Government. A letter was written by the Warden of East Hants requesting the legislation be repealed and that the province work with and communicate future intentions in advance with HRM and other municipal units to deal with the housing crisis. It is being requested that other municipalities consider the same.

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that a letter be written to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing expressing concerns regarding Bill 225, and that the letter be copied to NSFM.” Carried unanimously.

#### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

##### **Update on Solar/Cozy Colchester PACE Program**

Joanna Burris, Sustainability Planner, provided a brief update on the Solar and Cozy Colchester PACE Programs including status of the programs and applications; a review of FCM funding delays resulting in a program pause; communications to applicants; anticipated timelines for second and third disbursement of funds from FCM and intended use of these funds; and program relaunch details.

Brief discussion was held on possible use of Municipal funds rather than further delaying the program and cash flow concerns. The current provincial program for heat pumps was discussed and if assistance could be provided with the application process. The CAO indicated that staff should not be responding to residents on provincial programs. This is a frontline role of the MLA offices and any queries should be redirected to the province.

##### **Information Sharing to Council**

Council had previously directed staff to look into developing a proactive plan for information sharing to Council. Devin Trefry, Research, Policy and

Community Engagement Officer, provided a brief overview of staff's investigation and tools to improve on information sharing including the development of standard operating procedures to help clarify and formalize staff expectations, and the implementation of RSS Feed technology which offers Council members the option to subscribe to receive email notifications when information is added under the 'News' section of the website.

**Block Parent Program**

Staff were previously directed to bring back information to Council on the Block Parent Program. In this report, Mr. Trefry included information to restart the Program with requirement for support of the RCMP and enough volunteers to form a committee. Committees are usually comprised of community members and/or parent group from a school. A document entitled 'Starting a Block Parent Program' was included in the package for this meeting. Further information is also available at <http://blockparent.ca/>.

**NSFM By-law Meeting**

Councillor Cooper advised that he plans to attend the upcoming NSFM By-law meeting on January 26<sup>th</sup> in Halifax and inquired if anyone else was attending.

Disappointment was expressed that there will not be a virtual component for this meeting for those who cannot attend in-person.

**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 Patton and seconded by Councillor Benoit

"That the meeting go into closed session at 7:23 pm." Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Patton

"That the meeting reconvene in open session at 7:46 pm." Carried unanimously.

**Negotiations – Biosolids Contract**

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Patton

"That Council recommends to Council that staff be authorized to enter into an agreement with Envirem Organics Inc. for the hauling and disposal of biosolids for the 2023 calendar year." Carried unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

"That the meeting adjourn at 7:47 pm." Carried unanimously.

Tracey Veno  
Recording Secretary