

**COUNCIL COMMITTEE**

A Special Session of Council Committee of the Municipality of the County of Colchester was conducted via Zoom Webinars, on Monday, April 17, 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.

**Attendance**

The roll was called with the following Council members in attendance:

- Mayor Christine Blair
- Councillor Eric Boutilier District 1
- Councillor Laurie Sandeson District 2
- Deputy Mayor Geoff Stewart, Chair District 3
- Councillor Mike Cooper District 4
- Councillor Tim Johnson District 5
- Councillor Karen MacKenzie District 6 *(arrived at 6:21 pm)*
- Councillor Michael Gregory District 7
- Councillor Lisa Patton District 8
- Councillor Marie Benoit District 9
- Councillor Victoria Lomond District 10
- Councillor Wade Parker District 11

**Also Present**

- Rob Simonds, Chief Administrative Officer
- Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services
- Paul Smith, Director of Community Development
- Michelle Boudreau, Director of Public Works
- Phillip Redden, Director of Solid Waste
- Tracey Veno, Recording Secretary
- Devin Trefry, Research, Policy, and Community Engagement Officer
- Jenn Mantin, Economic Development Officer
- Craig Burgess, Recreation Manager
- Tim Smith, IT Manager

**Purpose**

The purpose of this meeting was for Council to give consideration to additions and/or deletions including grant requests from not-for-profit organizations, community event grants and other miscellaneous items as part of the budget process.

At the conclusion of the meeting(s), it is anticipated that the operating budget and general tax rates will be set. The decisions made at this Special Council Committee meeting will require Council approval at their next regularly scheduled meeting. For the sake of simplicity, each separate motion will not be considered by Council individually, rather the entire package and tax rates as a whole.

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That budget deliberations this evening go until 9:00 pm, recessing to April 24<sup>th</sup> to complete anything remaining on the agenda, if necessary.” Carried unanimously.

**Non-Profit Grant Applications**

**West Colchester Community Development Association**

Moved by Councillor Lomond and seconded by Councillor Boutilier

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from the West Colchester Community Development Association.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Lomond and seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That the West Colchester Community Development Association receive a grant in the amount of \$5,000.” Carried unanimously.

**Burnside Pembroke Community Park Association**

Moved by Councillor Cooper and seconded by Councillor Lomond

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from the Burnside Pembroke Community Park Association.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Sandeson and seconded by Councillor Boutilier

“That the Burnside Pembroke Community Park Association receive a grant in the amount of \$4,150.” Carried unanimously.

**Alton Recreation Centre**

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from the Alton Recreation Centre.” Carried unanimously.

Although the amount being requested is \$1,500, Councillor Parker noted that during the presentation, the presenter indicated that \$1,500 would not likely be enough to cover what is needed.

Moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the Alton Recreation Centre receive a grant in the amount of \$2,500.” Carried unanimously.

**Debert Military Museum**

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Boutilier

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from the Debert Military Museum.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That the Debert Military Museum receive a grant in the amount of \$2,000.”  
Carried unanimously.

**Colchester Crime Stoppers**

Moved by Councillor Lomond and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from Colchester Crime Stoppers.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Johnson and seconded by Councillor Lomond

“That Colchester Crime Stoppers receive a grant in the amount of \$2,500.”

**CCRCE – Tatamagouche Regional Academy Food Program**

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from CCRCE – Tatamagouche Regional Academy Food Program.” Motion carried (*Deputy Mayor Stewart and Councillor Boutilier opposed*).

Although support for the overall project was expressed, it has not been Council’s past practice to support school board programs. Concern was expressed with the number of schools in the region and supporting one initiative could create the opening for many more requests.

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That CCRCE – Tatamagouche Regional Academy Food Program receive a grant in the amount of \$4,000.” Motion carried (*Councillor Boutilier opposed*).

**Creamery Square Association (Memorial)**

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from the Creamery Square Association.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the Creamery Square Association receive a grant in the amount of \$1,500 for a memorial.” Carried unanimously.

**Creamery Square Association (Garden Beds)**

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Lomond

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from the Creamery Square Association.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the Creamery Square Association receive a grant in the amount of \$500 for garden beds.” Carried unanimously.

**Earlton Community Centre Society**

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from the Earlton Community Centre Society.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the Earlton Community Centre Society receive a grant in the amount of \$2,000.” Carried unanimously.

**Truro Pride Society**

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That Council support the request for a grant from the Truro Pride Society.” Carried unanimously.

It was suggested that a name change to Truro-Colchester Pride Society would be better serve the communities.

Moved by Councillor Sandeson and seconded by Councillor Boutilier

“That the Truro Pride Society receive a grant in the amount of \$5,000.” Carried unanimously.

**Trauma Recovery for Exploited Youth (TREY)**

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Lomond

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from Trauma Recovery for Exploited Youth (TREY).” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That Trauma Recovery for Exploited Youth (TREY) receive a grant in the amount of \$5,000.” Carried unanimously.

**Cantabile Choral Society**

*Councillor Sandeson recused herself from discussion on this matter.*

Moved by Councillor Lomond and seconded by Councillor Boutilier

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant for the Cantabile Choral Society.” Motion carried (*Councillors Cooper and Johnson opposed*).

There was some concern expressed regarding support for this request, specifically on this organization having sufficient funds in their bank and there not being a need for this request; and, the funds being used to support two children for one year and the grant program not being intended to provide support for individuals.

Moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Mayor Blair

“That the Cantabile Choral Society receive a grant in the amount of \$500.” Motion carried (*Councillors Cooper and Johnson opposed*).

**Canadian Mental Health Association**

Moved by Councillor Lomond and seconded by Mayor Blair

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from the Canadian Mental Health Association – Colchester-East Hants Branch.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the Canadian Mental Health Association – Colchester-East Hants Branch receive a grant in the amount of \$3,000.” Carried unanimously.

Responding to a request on budget and status of requests, Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services advised that there is \$80,000 in budget with approximately \$37,000 in approved grants thus far.

**The Trustees of the Riverside Community Hall Association**

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Parker

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from the Trustees of the Riverside Community Hall Association.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Lomond and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the Trustees of the Riverside Community Hall Association receive a grant in the amount of \$5,000.” Carried unanimously.

**Brule Community Centre Association**

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from the Brule Community Centre Association.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the Brule Community Centre Association receive a grant in the amount of \$5,000.” Carried unanimously.

**Creamery Square Association (Boatshop)**

Discussion was held on not having the capacity to run this program and the overall viability of the project.

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Mayor Blair

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from the Creamery Square Association (Boatshop).” Motion DEFEATED (*Deputy Mayor Stewart, Councillors Boutilier, Sandeson, Cooper, Johnson, MacKenzie, Patton, Benoit, Lomond, and Parker opposed*).

**Central New Annan Community Association**

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from the Central New Annan Community Association.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the Central New Annan Community Association receive a grant in the amount of \$5,000.” Carried unanimously.

**Truro-Colchester Seniors Safety Program**

Brief discussion took place and although there was support for the program, the request of \$25K for wages does not meet criteria under Policy.

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Boutilier

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from the Truro-Colchester Seniors Safety Program.” Motion DEFEATED. (*Deputy Mayor Stewart, Councillors Boutilier, Sandeson, Cooper, Johnson, MacKenzie, Gregory, Patton, Benoit, Lomond, and Parker opposed*).

**Cobequid Speed Skating Club**

Clarification was sought on what the funds would be used for. Craig Burgess, Recreation Manager, advised that it is for the purchase of skates and safety mats. There was some concern with supporting such a request due to the number of sport associations in the area and the potential for increased number of asks in future. Discussion took place regarding other funding opportunities the organization may be able to tap into, such as the Jump Start Program.

Moved by Councillor Lomond and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from Cobequid Speed Skating Club.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Boutilier

“That the Cobequid Speed Skating Club receive a grant in the amount of \$3,000.” Carried unanimously.

**Kempton & Area Recreation Association**

Councillor Patton noted that this group has a new Executive as well as new volunteers.

Moved by Councillor Patton and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from the Kempton & Area Recreation Association.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Patton and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That the Kempton & Area Recreation Association receive a grant in the amount of \$5,000.” Carried unanimously.

**Northumberland Arts Council**

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from the Northumberland Arts Council.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the Northumberland Arts Council receive a grant in the amount of \$5,000.” Carried unanimously.

**Truro Colchester Welcome Network Association**

Moved by Councillor Cooper and seconded by Councillor Boutilier

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from the Truro Colchester Welcome Network Association.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Sandeson and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the Truro Colchester Welcome Network Association receive a grant in the amount of \$5,000.” Carried unanimously.

### **Autism Nova Scotia Truro Chapter**

With preliminary discussion being to not support this request, Council members were reminded that this is very similar to a previously approved request from the Canadian Mental Health Association. However, it was noted that the intended use of the funds is primarily for wages, which goes against policy.

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That Council not support the request for a grant from Autism Nova Scotia Truro Chapter.” Motion carried (*Councillor Cooper opposed*).

### **Truro Housing Outreach Society**

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from the Truro Housing Outreach Society.” Motion carried (*Councillor Cooper opposed*).

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the Truro Housing Outreach Society receive a grant in the amount of \$5,000.” Motion carried (*Councillor Cooper opposed*).

Concern was expressed regarding the name of the organization with a suggestion that it would be better named Truro-Colchester Housing Outreach Society. The Manager of Recreation Services would take this suggestion back to the organization.

### **Cobequid Society for Athletic Excellence**

This request was withdrawn.

### **CARMA – Colchester Chapter**

Moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Lomond

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from CARMA – Colchester Chapter.” Motion carried (*Councillor Cooper opposed*).

Discussion was held on organizations having funds in the bank and at what point would/should Council not support.

Moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That CARMA – Colchester Chapter receive a grant in the amount of \$3,000.”  
Motion carried (Councillor Cooper opposed).

A suggestion was made to have the Committee that was struck to review the Grants to Non-profit Policy revisit having criteria in the Policy specific to organizations having sufficient funds in the bank.

### **Debert Legion**

Given that the funds being requested was to purchase a generator to better enable the Legion to serve as a comfort centre, discussion was held on the Legion being better able to serve in this capacity rather than the Fire Hall. Further discussion took place on whether funding support to service clubs is permitted under the MGA; having staff to look into other ways for the Legion to apply for funding; and re-evaluating in future.

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Lomond

“That the Municipality support the request for a grant from the Debert Legion.”  
Motion DEFEATED (*Mayor Blair, Deputy Mayor Stewart, Councillors Sandeson, Cooper, MacKenzie, Gregory, and Patton* opposed).

This concludes the requests under the Grants to Non-Profits Policy. The Director of Corporate Services advised that amounts approved are within the budgeted allotment with a balance of \$6,350 remaining for potential requests throughout the year.

## **Community Event Grants**

### **Canadian Grand Master Fiddling Association**

Moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That the Municipality support the request for a community event grant from the Canadian Grand Master Fiddling Association.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the Canadian Grand Master Fiddling Association receive a grant in the amount of \$500.” Carried unanimously.

### **Hook – in with Fibre Friends V.2.0**

Moved by Councillor Lomond and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the Municipality support the request for a community event grant from Hook – in with Fibre Friends V.2.0.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Patton and seconded by Councillor Boutilier

“That the Hook – in with Fibre Friends V.2.0 receive a grant in the amount of \$1,260.” Carried unanimously.

#### **Hubtown Street Hockey Association**

Concern was raised regarding the organization not being flexible in moving to any locations outside of the Town of Truro.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Lomond

“That the Municipality support the request for a community event grant from Hubtown Street Hockey Association.” Motion DEFEATED (*Mayor Blair, Deputy Mayor Stewart, Councillors Sandeson, Cooper, Johnson, MacKenzie, Patton, Benoit and Parker opposed*).

#### **North Shore Senior Citizens – 50 Anniversary Celebration**

Due to time of event, this grant request was considered at their meeting on March 30<sup>th</sup>. \$1,500 was approved at that time for the North Shore Senior Citizens – 50 Anniversary Celebration.

#### **CFFA – Inaugural Training Symposium**

Due to time of event, this grant request was considered at their meeting on March 30<sup>th</sup>. \$3,000 was approved at that time for the CFFA – Inaugural Training Symposium.

#### **AMANS 2023 Spring Conference**

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the Municipality support the request for a community event grant from the Association of Municipal Administrators NS for a community event grant.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Mayor Blair

“That the Association of Municipal Administrators NS receive a grant in the amount of \$3,000.” Carried unanimously.

The Director of Corporate Services provided a recap of funding approved for Community Event Grants noting that \$9,260 has been approved out of the \$60,000 allotment, leaving a balance of \$50,740 for requests throughout the year.

### **Annual Grants**

A list of the annual grant recipients was included in the budget documentation.

Clarification was sought on the amount for the Debert Military Museum being \$2,000. This amount should be \$100 as approved to offset water connection and disconnection charges. The Debert Military Museum did request additional funding previously and Council agreed to top up to \$2,000 for one year and then revert back to the \$100 annual grant. The Museum could then apply on an as needed basis through the Grant to Non-profit Program on a go forward basis.

**Other**

Before proceeding to the “Other Additions & Deletions Items” a questions was about whether the balanced budget includes the amounts as requested. Mr. Fraser advised that approval of amounts as noted would still result in a balanced budget.

**Public Works Capacity Studies - \$250,000**

Due to increased growth in Colchester, the capacity studies will involve multiple communities and will determine the ability of the existing water and sewer systems to accommodate future growth over the next 20 years. The studies will also identify any upgrades needed, which will in turn feed into our long-term capital budget plan. The work will focus on Brookfield, Debert, Hilden, Tatamagouche, Valley (and in turn Bible Hill) and Truro Heights. The Canada Community Building Fund (Gas Tax) can be used to offset this cost as the agreement allows for capacity studies of this nature to be funded.

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Boutilier

“That Council supports funding for the Public Works Capacity Studies.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That \$250,000 be included in the budget for the Public Works Capacity Studies.” Carried unanimously.

**Facilities Coordinator – \$49,200**

With increased demands for property coordination brought forth by property acquired in recent years as well as the need for maintenance of existing properties, senior staff are looking to implement a new Facilities Coordinator position for Colchester. The Facilities Coordinator would be responsible for overseeing the day to day operational and long-term upkeep of the Municipality’s facilities, assets, and related infrastructure through risk management, asset management, business management, and operations and maintenance. Facilities include but are not limited to Municipal offices, Debert facilities, tourism, and cultural assets.

Brief discussion was held regarding the amount for this position. Mr. Fraser indicated that by the time the position is filled it will be about halfway through the fiscal year. A question was raised regarding the qualification requirements. Staff noted that some of the things being looked at are engineering technician qualifications and, building systems and construction knowledge. A position such

as this would save money in the long term, providing overall financial benefits to the organization.

Move by Councillor Patton and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That Council supports funding for a new Facilities Coordinator position.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Sandeson and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That \$49,200 be included in the budget for the Facilities Coordinator position.” Carried unanimously.

**Public Works Admin Support Term Position \$44,608**

Public Works is looking to retain a one year term position for admin support . The funding allotment would cover 3/4 of the fiscal year. Due to increased workload including capacity studies for each community, and recent doubling of sewer connection requests, this has created a need for additional administrative support.

Move by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Lomond

“That Council supports funding for Public Works Admin Support term position.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That \$44,608 be included in the budget for the Public Works Admin Support term Position.” Carried unanimously.

**Two Grounds Maintenance Term Positions - \$66,856**

Given increased property demands, it is recommended that two term grounds maintenance positions be hired in 2023/24 to look after mowing. This will ensure facilities are kept up as well as allow existing staff to focus on key priority maintenance in parks and transportation/sewer collection systems. In recent years, several facilities have been added to the County including the Fundy Discovery Site.

Brief discussion was held on these positions creating capacity to assist with outside projects as requested from time to time. Staff confirmed that these positions will assist with capacity issues within the organization.

Moved by Councillor Lomond and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council supports funding two term Grounds Maintenance positions in 2023/24.” Carried Unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That \$66,856 be included in the budget for two term Grounds Maintenance positions in 2023/24.” Carried unanimously.

### **County-wide Planning - \$100,000**

Due to internal staff capacity issues and the likelihood of not being able to fill a Planner position vacancy, the \$100K is intended to cover external consulting fees for the second component of the county-wide planning initiative requiring completion at the end of 2024. In 2022 – 2023, Council allocated \$100,000 to complete the community engagement component and contracted Upland Planning and Design to complete this initial phase at a cost of \$87,000. This will be complete in the early summer of 2023 and work on the Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law should begin immediately.

Moved by Councillor Lomond and seconded by Councillor Boutilier

“That Council supports funding for County-wide Planning Initiative for external consulting costs.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Lomond and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That \$100,000 be included in the budget for the County-wide Planning Initiative.” Carried unanimously.

### **Debert Business Park Master Plan - \$45,000**

Staff will engage consultants to develop a comprehensive Business Development Concept Plan & Market Analysis for the Debert Business Park (DBP). This plan is intended to provide strategic direction and vision to determine the short (2-3 year) and medium (5-10 year) goals of DBP. The plan will provide the following components:

- A site audit of the suitability & sustainability of existing assets, development lands, infrastructure and services, archaeology requirements, existing businesses and exposure, proximity to community assets, and synergies for new businesses.
- Evaluation of the highest and best use of our existing development lands, with a focus on strategic sector-based land use considerations.
- Site preparation considerations and concept planning to include future roads, lot configuration, lot sizing, and infrastructure requirements.
- An evaluation of economic opportunities that feeds into a high-level marketing and promotions plan.

Insights from this plan will be a key component in determining future land use planning, and feed into our upcoming county-wide plan.

It was confirmed that this Plan does not include the Debert Airport.

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That Council supports funding the Debert Business Park Master Plan.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That \$45,000 be included in the budget for the Debert Business Park Master Plan.” Carried unanimously.

#### **TCPEP - \$5,000 Increase to Annual Funding**

The Truro Colchester Partnership for Economic Prosperity is requesting an additional \$5,000 in funding. Last year a one-time increase of \$5,000 was requested. This increase set funding to \$69,350. Due to inflationary pressure, the request is that funding of \$69,350 become permanent annual funding. Attached is the request from TCPEP which outlines seven core business functions TCPEP has been providing to support economic development in the community.

Moved by Councillor Johnson and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That Council supports the request for an increase in annual funding for TCPEP.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Johnson and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the annual funding for TCPEP be increased by \$5,000.” Carried unanimously.

#### **Cliffs of Fundy (COF) - \$50,000 Increase**

Cliffs of Fundy is a designated UNESCO global geopark. It receives funding from both Cumberland and Colchester to operate as well as other levels of Government. Notably ACOA has provided funding. The mission of the Cliffs of Fundy is to celebrate and connect our geo-heritage, tides, landscapes, and cultures through collaboration with our diverse communities and the promotion of sustainability and economic growth. Attached is the presentation made by Cliffs of Fundy as well as the draft operating budget requesting an additional \$50,000 in funding.

Responding to a query on this additional funding being for one year or into the future, it was confirmed that it is the hope of the COF staff that municipal funding will be reduced in future years. The main reason for the increase this year related to the Unesco designation revalidation. Mayor Blair indicated that this \$50,000 is for this year only and will be reassessed in future years.

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Lomond

“That Council supports the request for an increase in funding for 2023/24 for the Cliffs of Fundy Geopark.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Mayor Blair

“That additional funding in the amount of \$50,000 for the Cliffs of Fundy Geopark be approved for 2023-24.” Carried unanimously.

**Scotia Pool - \$100,000**

Currently Scotia Pool receives an annual grant of \$75,000. During grant presentations Scotia Pool put forth a request for an additional \$100,000 for the 2023/24 fiscal year. The request for additional funds was made for the next 3 years as follows:

23/24 - \$175,000	(\$75,000 existing plus additional request of \$100,000)
24/25 - \$175,000	(\$75,000 existing plus additional request of \$100,000)
25/26 - \$125,000	(\$75,000 existing plus additional request of \$50,000)

Scotia Pool has provided financials and attendance stats as part of the presentation which was included in the distributed materials.

Lengthy debate was held on the importance of Scotia Pool to the community; therapeutic benefits of the warm water pool; sustainability and long-term viability of the pool; fundraising opportunities; funding support from other levels of government including the Village of Bible Hill; capacity issues at the RECC if Scotia Pool were to close; pricing discrepancies between the two pools; and, opportunity to have a member of Council serving on the Board.

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Boutilier

“That Council support the request for additional funding for Scotia Pool.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor MacKenzie

“That additional funding in the amount of \$100,000 be approved for Scotia Pool for 2023-24.” Carried unanimously.

**RECC - \$150,000 Additional Funding**

Currently RECC receives \$600,000 annually from Colchester as an operating grant. During the first night of budget deliberations, General Manager Matt Moore presented the budget for the RECC and requested an increase to \$750,000 annually. His presentation highlighted cost pressures the facility is facing which are resulting in the request for additional funding. Funding for the RECC has been \$600,000 annually since 2016/2017. Included in the package for this evening’s meeting was a copy of Matt Moore’s budget presentation.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That Council supports the request for an increase in annual funding for the RECC.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Mayor Blair seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That the annual funding for RECC be increased by \$150,000 for 2023/24.”

***Amendment***

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the increased funding for the RECC be contingent upon approval of same by the Town of Truro.” *Motion DEFEATED (Mayor Blair, Councillors Johnson, MacKenzie, Benoit, Lomond, and Parker opposed).*

The amending motion having been defeated, the original motion was voted on and carried with Councillor Boutilier opposed.

**Major Floods Reserve - \$100,000**

The Major Flood program began in 2012/13 with annual funding to the reserve of \$50,000. This increased over time to an annual allocation of \$100,000 to the reserve. Projects are co-funded by the Town and Province with the County’s share coming from the Major Flood reserve. A recommendation has been put forth to fund the reserve in the amount of \$100,000 for fiscal 2023/24.

Clarification was sought on which projects this reserve funds and the possibility of changing the name to Joint Flood for better clarity.

Further discussion was held on the need for a separate natural disaster reserve. Council agreed that staff bring back information for Council consideration regarding a Natural Disaster Reserve Fund.

Moved by Councillor Lomond and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council supports funding to the Major (Joint) Flood Reserve.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That funding in the amount of \$100,000 for the Major (Joint) Flood Reserve be approved.” Carried unanimously.

With no further budget items for discussion, Mr. Fraser advised that we have a balanced budget, with no changes to the tax rates. If Council is satisfied, staff will advance to the end of the month for final approval.

**Other**

Discussion took place on whether funds for the RCMP retro pay as well as future infrastructure/capacity needs have been allocated in this budget. Also speaking of the funding used for Hurricane Fiona, concern was expressed with depleting reserves and the need for being prudent with funds.

The Director of Corporate Services indicated that we could tap into reserves, but it does not look like it will be necessary. Referring to the RCMP retro pay, the

Special Operating Reserve, which we contribute \$900,000 annually to, would need to be used, however, there are still too many unknowns on this.

Raising the deed transfer tax from one to one- and one-half percent was also discussed. Mr. Fraser advised of the process for changing the deed transfer tax, specifically, amending the By-law through First and Second Readings.

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That staff investigate increasing the deed transfer tax from 1% to 1.5%.” Carried unanimously.

Further discussion was held on the fiscal responsibilities of an increase in the tax rates to accommodate growth and positioning ourselves on moving forward, and concerns with increasing taxes in an election year. It was noted that considering a tax increase when we have a balanced budget whilst transferring \$900,000 to the Special Operating Reserve would be concerning.

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the Operating Budget be approved with the Additions/Deletions as set out at the April 17<sup>th</sup> Special Budget meeting, and the residential and commercial tax rates remain unchanged at \$0.885 and \$2.28 respectively; and

That an item be prepared for April Council for final approval.” Carried unanimously.

## **Adjournment**

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Benoit

The meeting adjourned at 8:56 pm.

Tracey Veno  
Recording Secretary