

## 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 May 11, 2023, 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:

Mayor Christine Blair	
Cllr. Eric Boutilier	District 1
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>virtual</i> )
Cllr. Michael Gregory	District 7
Cllr. Lisa Patton	District 8
Cllr. Marie Benoit	District 9
Cllr. Victoria Lomond	District 10
Cllr. Wade Parker	District 11

### Staff Present

Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services  
 Michelle Boudreau, Director of Public Works  
 Paul Smith, Director of Community Development  
 Phillip Redden, Director of Solid Waste  
 Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor  
 Tracey Veno, Recording Secretary  
 Devin Trefry, Research, Policy, and Community Engagement Officer  
 Craig Burgess, Recreation Manager  
 Jeanette Himmelman, Systems Analyst

### Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the agenda be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

### Approval of Minutes

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That the minutes of the meetings held on March 20 & 23, April 11, 13, and 17, 2023, be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

### Business Arising from Minutes

None

### ACTION ITEMS

#### Public Participation Program Policy

Paul Smith, Director of Community Development, advised that the purpose of this item is to bring forward amendments to the Public Participation Program Policy to conform with legislation, specifically section 214 (1)(d) of the *Municipal Government Act*.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the Public Participation Program Policy be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

**Proposed Amendments –  
Municipal Fees Policy**

This item proposes amendments to the Municipal Fees Policy to include new fees associated with the recently adopted Dangerous and Unsightly By-law, the Civic Address By-law, and to recover operating costs of municipal electric vehicle charging stations. The Director of Community Development also advised that of the inclusion of fees relative to possible amendments to Outdoor Fire By-law which will be dealt with later on the agenda this evening.

Fees for EV charging stations, reimbursement to various organizations, and the hourly charge of \$1.50/hour for the EV charging stations was discussed. Scott Fraser, Acting CAO, advised that the hourly fee appears to be the norm provincially. The absence of fees under the Nuisance By-law was also discussed. Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor advised if there are violations under the Nuisance By-law, the RCMP would issue a Summary Offence Ticket.

Moved by Councillor Patton and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the amendments to the Municipal Fees Policy, be approved as presented.”

**Dangerous or Unsightly Premises  
Policy**

Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor, advised that there were some Policy provisions that needed to be put in place following the adoption of the Dangerous or Unsightly (D&U) Premises By-law. This Policy, as presented, is intended to read in conjunction with Section XV of the MGA and with the new By-law, detailing the procedures to be followed when staff are investigating a complaint and making initial orders, and when the D&U Committee is holding a hearing. An overview of the Policy was provided.

Brief discussion was held on Section 9 and the possibility of including of additional training for Building Officials when dealing with Dangerous or Unsightly Premises. The Solicitor advised that this would be administrative in nature and suggested that this should be discussed with the Director.

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the Dangerous or Unsightly Premises Procedures Policy be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

**Outdoor Fire By-law**

The Director of Community Development presented details on proposed amendments to the Outdoor Fire By-law. These proposed amendments result from a request of the Village of Bible Hill and the Bible Hill Fire Brigade due to increasing concern with brush burning and public safety risks. The amendments are intended to augment Provincial fire restrictions and to help strengthen enforcement. Amendments include updated penalties and the inclusion of a new fees section to encourage compliance as well as several administrative amendments intended to clarify existing provisions. Additionally, Mr. Smith indicated that Council could also give consideration to developing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Village of Bible Hill relative to fees collected.

Discussions took place on the inclusion of fireworks in the Outdoor Fire By-law with interest expressed on receiving feedback from the Bible Hill Fire Brigade; designated coverage area of the By-law and possibility of including other areas through amendments to Schedule A; outdoor wood furnaces; and concern regarding fees and penalties being harsh. Referring to the fees and penalties, the Municipal Solicitor advised that the fees and penalties as outlined in the By-law mirror the Summary Proceeding Act.

Moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Boutillier

“That Council Committee advance the draft amendments to the Outdoor Fire By-law to First Reading and that staff be directed to develop a Memorandum of Understanding with the Village of Bible Hill to direct any fees under the By-law to the Village as a measure of compensation for costs incurred.” Carried unanimously.

### **Colchester Ground Search and Rescue Funding Request**

Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services, advised that this item is to consider a grant application made by Colchester Ground Search & Rescue (CGSAR). Their grant application was submitted under the Grants to Non-Profit Program, however, was omitted due to an administrative oversight. By policy, grants for non-profit typically focus on capital costs for community facilities, community programming and specific project costs. This grant request for \$5,000, for the purchase of equipment due to increased membership, is more operational in nature as it is for protective services. Mr. Fraser noted that CGSAR receives annual funding in the amount of \$56,000. The financial statements as provided by CGSAR show a \$26K surplus for the year and a bank balance of \$82K. In discussions with the Protective Services Coordinator, it was suggested that CGSAR could accept a smaller number of members as a possibility to reduce costs.

Detailed discussion was held on the importance of CGSAR and the service they provide and supporting this request for additional one-time funding. Further discussion was held on the CGSAR current financial statements and providing funds with sufficient funds available; other funding partner contributions including Towns of Truro and Stewiacke, Millbrook First Nations and the Province; requesting increases from other partners; increased level of funding the County has provided over the last few years; membership utilizing personal funds for equipment; and the possibility and viability of funding CGSAR through the general tax rate or area rate, similar to what is done for fire brigades.

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Lomond

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that a one-time increase in annual funding in year 23/24 from \$56,000 to \$61,000 be granted.” Motion carried (*Councillors Cooper and Parker opposed*).

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That staff be directed to look into the viability of establishing a tax/area rate to fund Colchester Ground Search and Rescue.” Motion carried (*Councillor Cooper opposed*).

**Tender Award – Truro Heights  
Crosswalk at Morley Avenue**

Michelle Boudreau, Director of Community Development, advised that this item is to have Council give consideration to entering into an agreement with the Province for the installation of a new signalized crosswalk on Truro Heights Road at Morley Avenue. Council's approved capital budget includes the installation of a new signalized crosswalk at this location. Provincial approval was required and obtained for the project. The Province is planning to repave the Truro Heights Road this year and have agreed to include the installation of the signalized crosswalk as part of their tender with the County reimbursing them for the cost of the work. As such, Council is required to pass a resolution agreeing to pay for the crosswalk installation.

Moved by Councillor Sandeson and seconded by Councillor Patton

"That Council Committee recommends to Council that the Director of Public Works and the Acting Chief Administrative Officer be authorized to sign the Cost Share Agreement No. 2023-24." Carried unanimously.

**Police Advisory Board**

Devin Trefry, Research, Policy, and Community Engagement Officer, indicated that as per the previous directive of Council relative to re-establishing a standalone Police Advisory Board (PAB), staff were directed to investigate options for the size/composition of the PAB prior to writing the Minister. As per Section 57 of the Nova Scotia Police Act, there are two options for Police Advisory Board composition – a five-member board or seven-member board.

Moved by Councillor Parker and Seconded by Councillor Gregory

"That Council Committee recommend to Council that it proceed with steps to establish its own five-member Policy Advisory Board as outlined in the Police Act." Motion DEFEATED (*Mayor Blair, Deputy Mayor Stewart, Councillors Boutilier, Sandeson, Cooper, Johnson, and Lomond opposed*).

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Lomond

"That Council Committee recommend to Council that it proceed with steps to establish its own seven-member Policy Advisory Board as outlined in the Police Act." Carried unanimously.

**Deer**

Councillor Parker raised the issue of growing deer population in the urban core. He indicated that he is constantly receiving calls from residents about this ongoing and worsening problem and that something needs to be done. He has spoken with the Town of Truro regarding the successes of the program they initiated to deal with deer and expressed interest in the County undertaking a similar program.

Discussion was held on ways to control the population; the possibility of issuing of Summary Offences Tickets as a deterrent for feeding deer; and, having staff investigate what can be done including reaching out to the Town for details on their program.

Moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Benoit

"That staff be directed to investigate the Town of Truro program on deer culling and bring back information to Council for consideration." Carried unanimously.

**INFORMATION ITEMS****Memorial Items**

As per previous directive of Council regarding memorial items being stored at the Portapique Church, staff have been in contact with the owner of the Church and have plans to gather the materials by mid-May. Location for the safe, temporary storage will be determined. Staff plan to take photos and catalogue the materials when retrieved from the Church, which should help to inform a more permanent solution moving forward

**Director's Report**

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

Councillor Parker inquired about the Old Courthouse Branch sidewalk as he understood that this would be done in fiscal 23-24. The Director of Public Works confirmed that as agreed with the Village of Bible Hill, it was approved for fiscal 24-25. Further discussion was held on continued assessment of the Robie Street grease issue; and, ongoing efforts relative to the groundwater into the sewer system.

Deputy Mayor Stewart advised that the Closed Session item is being withdrawn from the agenda as it was dealt with during the Joint Council Session earlier this evening

**ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

"That the meeting adjourn at 8:49 pm." Carried unanimously.

Tracey Veno  
Recording Secretary