

**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 April 13, 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. 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
Cllr. Michael Gregory	District 7
Cllr. Lisa Patton	District 8
Cllr. Marie Benoit	District 9 ( <i>virtual</i> )
Cllr. Victoria Lomond	District 10
Cllr. Wade Parker	District 11

**Staff Present**

Rob Simonds, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)  
 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  
 Jenn Martin, Economic Development Officer  
 Kelly Gratto McCarthy, HR Specialist  
 Mollie MacBurnie-Haas, IT Support

**Approval of Agenda**

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Gregory

“That the agenda be approved with the addition of Item #8b, Portapique Memorial Items.” Carried unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Lomond and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That the minutes of the meeting held on March 16, 2023, be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

**Business Arising from Minutes**

None

**ACTION ITEMS****Personnel Policy Amendments**

Kelly Gratto McCarthy, HR Specialist, advised that the proposed amendments to the six Personnel Policies are a result of the completion of the recently approved Collective Agreement (CA) with CUPE Local 3945. The recommended changes remediate some inconsistencies between the CA and these Policies so as to better align the two. Amendments include some housekeeping and language changes, as well as slight increases in the work

clothing allowance, specifically footwear and safety glasses, as well as an increase to the Wellness Program.

Brief debate was held on language in the Wellness Program regarding whether use of wording 'mental wellbeing' was required. Clarification was also sought on receipt/invoice requirements under the Wellness Program Policy and on the overtime administration for storm days. Regarding receipt requirements, Ms. Gratto McCarthy confirmed that both invoices and receipts are required for reimbursement. On the overtime for storm days, employees required to remain working would be paid at time and one-half which would be consistent with that of unionized employees covered under the CA. Personnel policies apply to non-union staff and to unionized employees when the CA is silent on a specific matter.

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

"That Council Committee recommends to Council that the amended Personnel Policies 6.16 Inclement Weather Conditions (formerly Storm Days); 6.11 Bereavement Leave; 6.21 Wearing of Work Clothing and Safety Equipment; 6.17 Group Pension Plan; 6.23 Non-Uniforms, Uniforms and identification; and 6.2 wellness Program, be approved as presented." Carried unanimously.

#### **Functional Space Analysis, Municipal Office**

Paul Smith, Director of Community Development, gave an overview of this item indicating that the Municipal Building requires major renovations to accommodate growth and to renew building services and spaces. Staff issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a Functional Space Analysis with scope of work to include cost estimates for renovations, as well as estimated costs for a new building at an alternate location. Four submissions were received in response to the RFP, which were scored based on experience, methodology, cost/value for dollars and quality of proposal. The highest scoring proposal was from Root Architecture at a price of \$56,500 excluding HST. Root Architecture completed a previous functional analysis for the building in 2011 and the quality of their work was excellent. Mr. Smith advised that at their meeting on March 30, 2023, Council granted authority to Council Committee to award the RFP for the functional space analysis.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Patton

"That Council authorizes staff to award the Functional Space Analysis for 1 Church Street to Root Architecture for a contact value of \$56,500 excluding HST, with source of funds being the Courthouse Reserve." Carried unanimously.

#### **Permanent Memorial**

Mayor Blair advised that she and other members of Council have been approached by family members regarding a permanent memorial for the April 2020 tragedy. Support is being sought to start discussions on a permanent memorial and whether it is something that is wanted. Discussion would involve the families, area residents and other affected municipalities.

Brief discussion was held on potential locations such as the Fundy Discovery Site, MacElmons Pond, and the Cobequid Trail. Further discussion took place on the importance of receiving input from those most affected and honouring their wishes; reaching out to other levels of government on funding; available

funds from the NS Remembers Legacy Society; and the possibility establishing an ad hoc committee to deal with this matter.

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That Council support advancing discussions on a permanent memorial.”  
Carried unanimously.

**FCM Resolution – RCMP Retro Pay**

*Councillor Cooper assumed the role of Chair to allow opportunity for Deputy Mayor to address Council on this matter.*

The FCM has put a request out to all municipalities across the Country to approve a resolution concerning the RCMP retro pay to be presented to MPs. There has been huge advocacy over the last few weeks relative to concerns with the RCMP retro pay and costs and impacts it will have on municipalities across the board.

Concern was expressed on the resolution as written showing interest in being involved in in the processes moving forward but does not expressly advocate for covering the current retro pay. The Deputy Mayor advised that he has been directly involved in these discussions with FCM and ensured that the intent of the resolution is both advocacy for the retro pay and being involved in future.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart and seconded by Mayor Blair

“That Council Committee recommends to Council endorsement of the following resolution:

**Prioritizing Municipal Input in Future RCMP Contract Policing Decisions**

WHEREAS, the Government of Canada has made the decision in Budget 2023 to make municipalities responsible for all retroactive costs stemming from the latest RCMP collective bargaining agreement; and

WHEREAS, these extraordinary one-time costs, which in some jurisdictions amount to millions of dollars, will cause significant hardship for communities and residents across the country, and were negotiated without meaningful consultation or a seat at the table for the municipalities responsible for paying the bill; and

WHEREAS, municipal governments are already paying a growing share of policing costs, but unlike other orders of government, cannot run deficits to spread out the impact of these extraordinary one-time sums, and have limited revenue tools; and

WHEREAS, local governments will now be forced to make difficult decisions that will impact residents, such as cutting essential services, reducing policing levels, raising property taxes significantly, and/or cancelling work on local infrastructure, at a time when Canadians' concerns about community safety and the cost of living are already rising; and

WHEREAS, going forward, it is critical that municipalities be proactively engaged in any forthcoming processes related to contract policing to prevent this occurring again; therefore;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Municipality of Colchester joins the Federation of Canadian Municipalities in calling on the federal government to commit to ensuring that local governments are meaningfully consulted, fully informed, and at the table on issues related to policing costs given the municipal role in keeping our communities safe; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Municipality of Colchester conveys this support in writing to local Members of Parliament.” Carried unanimously.

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

### **Portapique Memorial Items**

Councillor Lomond advised that she was approached by the owner of the church in Portapique regarding the removal of memorial items from the April 2020 tragedy that have been stored at the church. He is looking to sell the property and from previous discussions, it was his understanding that the Municipality would be picking up the items. The CAO indicated that he does not have a recollection of this coming before Council for decision in the past.

Discussion was held on what types of items are being stored and the volume; possibility of storing at the hangar building if only as a temporary location; offers from Council members for vehicle usage for relocating the items; concerns with the materials getting into the wrong hands; ownership of materials; and referring the matter to staff to investigate and bring back to Council when more information was available.

Moved by Councillor Lomond and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That investigating the feasibility of storage for items from the temporary memorial from the April 2020 mass shooting be referred to staff.” Carried unanimously.

### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

#### **Spring Clean-up of Leftover Hurricane Fiona Tree and Brush Debris**

This item provided an update on the request for staff to explore options and resources available for a Spring clean-up of Hurricane Fiona materials.

Since staff were directed to explore options, crews identified 40 civic addresses in the Municipality that had tree debris not picked up during the initial post Fiona clean-up in the Fall of 2022. Solid Waste staff, with support from a Public Works crew and contracted trucking services collected 52 tree and debris piles throughout the County. 13 truck loads totalling 25.47 tonnes was collected, costing \$6,681. This clean-up concluded the Hurricane Fiona collection.

A number of Council members thanked staff for their efforts in dealing with this undertaking and commended them for doing a fantastic job. There was concern expressed with the process for this additional clean-up as it was understood that it would be brought before Council before undertaking the clean-up.

**North wind Energy Turbine Failure**

This item informed Council with an update on the recent failure of the North Wind Energy Turbine. Staff are investigating options for repair/replacement costs with a further update being provided when more information is available.

**Sustainable Services Growth Fund**

The CAO advised Council of recent correspondence from the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing regarding a grant in the amount of \$1,545,178. This funding is to support infrastructure investments under the new Sustainable Services Growth Fund.

Moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the CAO be directed to sign the agreement for the Sustainable Services Growth Fund.” Carried unanimously.

**Director’s Report**

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

Detailed discussion took place on County-wide planning and dates/locations for the scheduled open houses. Some members of Council expressed disappointment that events were not being held in their districts. The Director of Community Development advised that these are the early steps of a very extensive undertaking. The open houses and pop-up events are just one component of the engagement process.

Referring to the Recreation section of the Director’s Report, concern was mentioned with the length of grant presentation meetings. For better time management, it was suggested that presenters be given an allotted amount of time with time warnings during the presentations.

**CLOSED SESSION**

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Lomond

“That the meeting go into closed session at 7:36 pm.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Gregory

“That the meeting reconvene in open session at 8:08 pm.” Carried unanimously.

**Property Matter – Sale of Municipal Land on Vickers Street, Tracker Road, and Hudson Street**

Moved by Councillor Sandeson and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council approves entering into a purchase and sale agreement for the proposed parcel as identified, to Maritime Gourmet Mushrooms Inc., contingent upon completion of subdivision of PID 2045268, 20432902, and 20448106; and,

That the Mayor and CAO be authorized to execute the purchase and sale agreement as prepared by Legal Counsel.” Carried Unanimously.

**Personnel – Interim CAO**

It was noted that at their meeting on March 30, 2023, Council granted authority to April Committee to appoint the Interim CAO.

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That Council Committee appoints Scott Fraser as Interim CAO, until such time of the appointment of the new CAO.” Carried unanimously.

CAO Rob Simonds advised that effective date and compensation details will be brought forward at a later date.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the meeting adjourn at 8:09 pm.” Carried unanimously.

Tracey Veno  
Recording Secretary