

COUNCIL COMMITTEE – PRESENTATION MEETING

The Council Committee/Presentations Meeting of the Municipality of the County of Colchester was conducted virtually via Zoom Webinars and in person, on Tuesday, March 5, 2024.

In peace and friendship, and in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, Councillor Cooper 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	<i>(virtual)</i>
Councillor Eric Boutilier	District 1 <i>(regrets)</i>
Councillor Laurie Sandeson	District 2
Deputy Mayor Geoff Stewart	District 3 <i>(regrets)</i>
Councillor Mike Cooper, Chair	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
Councillor Victoria Lomond	District 10
Councillor Wade Parker	District 11 <i>(regrets)</i>

Others Present

Dan Troke, Chief Administration Officer (CAO)

Tracey Veno, Recording Secretary

Tim Smith, Manager of Information Systems *(for Technical Support)*

Presentations

Rural Communities Foundation of Nova Scotia

Hugh MacKay appeared before Council to provide information about the Rural Communities Foundation of Nova Scotia (RCFNS), a registered charity and member of the Community Foundations of Canada, and the Nova Scotia Not-for-Profit Coalition. The organization provides support to rural Nova Scotia communities through fund development and granting. It supports community-based initiatives in rural Nova Scotia to improve the understanding of issues facing rural communities; helps to find local solutions to problems and challenges; and supports local enhancements for sustainability of rural environments. Highlights of the presentation included various projects initiated and supported including the Dave Gunning Zero Hunger Fund, which is a campaign aimed at supporting 'Free Pantries' in Nova Scotia schools, currently focused in Antigonish, Guysborough, Pictou and Richmond counties. The goal is to raise \$100,000 for grants of up to \$5,000 to local schools. The ask of the organization is to help provide awareness and support for the campaign, as well as consider providing a donation.

Points of discussion included intent of the program is to provide grants in local schools; amounts raised to date total approximately \$50,000; importance of raising awareness through a strong social media presence; and funds being raised in Colchester staying within Colchester schools. Brief discussion was also held on Second Harvest, a food rescue charity. Mr. MacKay indicated that he was not familiar with the organization and welcomed receiving contact information.

Moved by Councillor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That the presentation on Rural Communities Foundation of Nova Scotia be received.” Carried unanimously.

Colchester Community Support Society (Colchester Food Bank)

Shelly Deviller, Executive Director, appeared before Council to present a proposal for financial assistance for the Colchester Community Support Society (CCSS). Included in her presentation was information on how CCSS is funded; budget and financial challenges; funding sources; staffing and volunteers; areas serviced; growing crisis of food insecurities; a new Client Choice Market and various other educational initiatives; board membership and governance; CCSS policies and standard operating procedures; increased community engagement and outreach to rural communities; and the initiation of a community garden project. Ms. Deviller indicated that the CCSS is looking for financial assistance in the amount of \$20,000 to assist with programs that will help teach community food literacy skills as well as continue with emergency response to the need of food in our communities.

Discussion was held on the importance of education on how to use food and understand best before dates; demands on volunteers; costs of pantries in schools; Town of Truro contributions; increased number requiring assistance; current financials; understanding client needs; product from the deer culling going to Feed NS; offers of support for deliveries; and overall support for efforts by staff and volunteers at CCSS.

Moved by Councillor Gregory, seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the presentation on the Colchester Community Support Society be received and referred to budget deliberations.” Carried unanimously.

Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That the meeting adjourn at 7:11 pm.

Tracey Veno
Recording Secretary