

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 September 12, 2024, 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 (arrived 6:11 pm)
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

Dan Troke, Chief Administrative Officer
 Michelle Boudreau, Director of Public Works
 Paul Smith, Director of Community Development
 Phil Redden, Director of Solid Waste
 Anna-Marie Manley, Municipal Solicitor
 Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services
 Tracey Veno, Recording Secretary
 Jenn Mantin, Economic Development Officer
 Craig Burgess, Recreation Manager
 Mollie MacBurnie-Haas, IT Support Technician

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Cooper, seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That the agenda be approved with the following amendments:

- Remove Item #7, Council Proceedings and Committees Policy; and,
- Add Item #12b, RECC Cash Flow.” Carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Boutilier

“That the minutes of the meeting held on August 15, 2024, be approved as circulated.” Carried unanimously.

Business Arising from Minutes

None.

ACTION ITEMS**Appeals Committee Terms of Reference**

The Director of Community Development advised that the purpose of this item is to adopt the Terms of Reference for the Appeals Committee as presented,

contingent upon the Appeals Committee By-law being approved at Second Reading at the end of the month.

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council Committee recommends Council approve the Appeals Committee Terms of Reference, and its effect being contingent on Council’s passage of Second Reading for the Appeals Committee By-law.” Carried unanimously.

**Community Events Grant
Request – Atlantic Dairy
Championship Show**

Councillor Lomond declared a conflict of interest and recused herself from discussion on this matter.

The Recreation Manager indicated that a request has been received for a community event grant from Atlantic Holstein Promotions for the Atlantic Dairy Championship Show being held October 9-13, 2024, at the Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition grounds in Bible Hill. It was noted that the request meets the criteria under the Community Event Grants Policy, and this is the first request from this group.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier, seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that funding in the amount of \$5,000 be approved for the 2024 Atlantic Dairy Championship Show.” Carried unanimously.

**Tatamagouche Water Utility –
Three-Year Operating Budget**

At this point, Councillor MacKenzie joined the meeting.

The Director of Corporate Services presented a brief overview of the Tatamagouche Water Utility (TWU) Three-Year Operating Budget, noting the accumulated deficit of approximately \$168K, as well as revenue and expenses remaining fairly consistent over previous years. Three-year operating budgets are a requirement of the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (UARB). Following last years’ submission, the UARB requested a rate study be completed for the TWU, which is now underway. The accumulated deficit in the Tatamagouche Water Utility is expected to improve following the rate study. The Tatamagouche Water Utility Advisory Committee met to review the budget, and a recommendation was made that the three-year operating budget be approved.

Moved by Councillor Gregory, seconded by Mayor Blair

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the three-year Tatamagouche Water Utility operating budget (2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27) be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

**Debert Water Utility – Three-
Year Operating Budget**

Similar to the previous item, the Director of Corporate Services presented the Debert Water Utility (DWU) Three-year Operating Budget. Revenue and expenses have remained consistent and there is an accumulated surplus of \$90K. A rate study will also be done for the DWU.

Responding to a query on cost for the rate studies for both the Tatamagouche and Debert Water Utilities, the Director of Corporate Services confirmed that it would be approximately \$10K.

Moved by Councillor Benoit, seconded by Councillor Patton

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the three-year Debert Water Utility operating budget (2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27) be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

**Tax Exemption Request –
Portapique Mass Casualty
Memorial Society**

This item deals with a request for a tax exemption request from the Board of Directors of the Portapique Mass Casualty Memorial Society for the property being used as a memorial site, Whispering Wings Memorial Garden (AAN #06251951). The Director of Corporate Services advised that the property has a residential assessment of \$4,700 and the estimated exemption would be approximately \$41.60 annually. The Society meets the criteria for a tax exemption.

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Lomond

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the request for a tax exemption to the Portapique Mass Casualty Memorial Society for property AAN #06251951, effective 2024-25, be approved.” Carried unanimously.

J Class Road Paving Program

The Director of Public Works advised that in 2023, Council approved entering into the Three-Year J Class Road Cost Share Program for fiscal 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27. However, in 2023, Council elected not to put forward any road paving requests for the 2024/25 construction season. This item relates to submitting roads for construction in the 2025/26 season under the Program.

Discussion was held on the ongoing debate around paving of roads; roads being one of the main issues of constituents; the status of the Service Exchange Agreement as it relates to roads; what other municipalities are doing; current and other funding mechanisms; concerns about funding work on provincial owned roads and how it might affect the Service Exchange Agreement going forward; and, staff resources for pulling together a prioritized list of J Class Roads for Council consideration.

Moved by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Mayor Blair

“That Colchester County participate in funding J-Class roads with the Province under the 50% funding program for fiscal 2025-26.” Motion carried (*Deputy Mayor Stewart, Councillors Boutilier and Cooper opposed*).

INFORMATION ITEMS

Director’s Report

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

RECC Cash Flow

This item provided an update to Council on RECC Cash Flow and their request for an advance in 2024/25 funding. The CAO confirmed that the funds were approved during the 2024/25 budget deliberations and therefore, there would be no issues/impacts with advancing the funds.

CLOSED SESSION

Moved by Councillor Gregory, seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the meeting go into closed session at 6:58 pm.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Benoit, seconded by Councillor Gregory

“That the meeting reconvene in open session at 7:34 pm.” Carried unanimously.

Property Matter – 102 Ventura Drive

Moved by Councillor Benoit, seconded by Councillor Patton

“That Council Committee approves the sale of Lot 102 Ventura Drive as outlined in Closed Session; and,

That Council Committee authorizes the Mayor and CAO to execute the purchase and sale agreement prepared by Legal Counsel for this transaction.” Carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Gregory

“That the meeting adjourn at 7:35 pm.” Carried unanimously.

Tracey Veno
Recording Secretary