

**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 February 12, 2026 beginning at 6:00 pm.

In peace and friendship, and in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, it was acknowledged that the Municipality of Colchester is in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq.

**Roll**

Mayor Christine Blair	
Cllr. Paul Weatherby	District 1
Deputy Mayor Laurie Sandeson, Chair	District 2
Cllr. Sheldon Richardson	District 3 <i>(virtual)</i>
Cllr. Mike Cooper	District 4
Cllr. Tim Johnson	District 5
Cllr. Nigel Leggett	District 6
Cllr. Sherry Martell	District 7 <i>(virtual)</i>
Cllr. Lisa Patton	District 8 <i>(regrets)</i>
Cllr. Marie Benoit	District 9
Cllr. Charlene Fletcher	District 10
Cllr. Allan Kennedy	District 11

**Staff Present**

Dan Troke, Chief Administrative Officer  
 Phil Redden, Director of Solid Waste  
 Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services  
 Michelle Boudreau, Director of Public Works  
 Paul Smith, Director of Community Development  
 Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor  
 Tracey Veno, Recording Secretary  
 Jenn Mantin, Economic Development Officer  
 Mollie MacBurnie-Haas, IT Support  
 Kelly MacIsaac, HR Specialist *(for items 5&6)*  
 Craig Burgess, Recreation Manager *(for item 7)*  
 Kaela MacLellan, Project Engineer *(for item 10)*

**Approval of Agenda**

Moved by Councillor Cooper, seconded by Councillor Weatherby

“That the agenda be approved with the following amendments:

- Add Item 9b, Bussing;
- Add Item 15, Personnel Matter in closed session;
- Move Information Item 10 up on the agenda to precede Item 5.” Carried unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Benoit, seconded by Councillor Kennedy

“That the minutes of the meetings held on January 6 and 15, be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

**Business Arising from Minutes**

None.

**Active Transportation Network Strategy Draft Network Presentation**

Owen Sieffert and Jamie Hillan, Urban Systems, consultants for the Active Transportation Strategy, appeared before Council to present an update on the Active Transportation (AT) Strategy. Highlights of the presentation included information on the AT Network, facility types such as paved shoulders, sidewalks, bike lanes, multi-use pathways and trails, and local traffic calming;

various types of networks; proposed AT Networks for communities; vision statement and guiding principles; and next steps in the process.

Brief discussion was held on networks being connected to existing trails and schools. Mr. Sieffert confirmed that the trails would be connected as this was one of the key objectives. Also, responding to a query on timelines for next round of engagement, Mr. Hillan advised that tentative dates are the week of March 23<sup>rd</sup>, however, this would be confirmed once finalized.

## ACTION ITEMS

### **Amendments to Personnel Policy 5.04 Performance Review**

Amendments to Personnel Policy 5.04 Performance Review were before Council to reflect current processes, up-to-date Human Resources (HR) best practices and recent change from paper based to online review process. Kelly MacIsaac, HR Specialist, provided an overview of the key proposed changes including specific time around probationary reviews for new hires; the addition of a coaching section; process for Performance Improvements Plans; addition of reviews for term and student employees; inclusion of changing from paper to online reviews; and review of meeting timelines.

Concerns of timing around performance issues and processes for improvement were raised. Ms. MacIsaac provided information on Performance Improvement Plans as part of HR involvement in the process.

Moved by Mayor Blair, seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the updated Performance Review Personnel Policy be approved as presented.” Motion carried (*Councillor Kennedy opposed*).

### **Amendments to Personnel Policy 3.01 Salary Administration**

The HR Specialist presented amendments to the Salary Administration Policy which are intended to update current processes as well as updates according to HR best practices. Amendments include guidelines concerning job descriptions; expansion of job evaluation categories; identifies HR role for job evaluations; changes concerning review schedules; criteria around job description comparisons; clarification on starting salaries; and position title changes.

Brief discussion took place on approval for salary reviews. The HR Specialist and Corporate Services would be the lead on the process in collaboration with Directors. Once the information is compiled, it would go to the CAO for review then to Council for final approval, the same as past practice.

Moved by Councillor Benoit, seconded by Councillor Kennedy

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the updated Salary Administration Personnel Policy be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

### **Community Event Grant Request – Coldest Night of the Year**

Craig Burgess, Recreation Manager, reported on the request from Truro Homeless Outreach Society (THOS) for the Coldest Night of the Year event being held February 28, 2026. Requests of this nature can be considered by Council under the criteria of the Community Event Grant Policy. THOS is requesting \$5,000.

Concerns raised during discussion were funds not staying in Colchester, as well as salary increases as noted in the financial statements.

*It was noted that at their meeting on January 29<sup>th</sup>, Council granted authority to February Committee to make a decision on this grant request.*

Moved by Councillor Weatherby, seconded by Councillor Kennedy

“That Council Committee approves a grant in the amount of \$2,000 for the Truro Homeless Outreach Society’s Coldest Night of the Year event with a stipulation that the funds remain in Colchester County.” Carried unanimously.

#### **Council Correspondence Policy**

At the January 15<sup>th</sup> Council Committee meeting, staff were directed to prepare a Council Communication Policy with input from Council. Staff reviewed the concerns as outlined at that meeting and developed the proposed Council Correspondence Policy for input and consideration. Devin Trefry, Research, Policy and Community Engagement Officer, provided an overview of the draft Policy which included the purpose of the Policy; definitions; distribution processes for general and time-sensitive correspondence and public communications; and, clarification on operational versus governance related correspondence.

Moved by Councillor Martell, seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the Council Correspondence Policy be adopted as presented.” Carried unanimously.

#### **Low Income Municipal Tax Assistance Policy**

Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services, advised that the Low-Income Municipal Tax Assistance Program is brought to Council annually in February to update the income thresholds and rebate amounts. These amounts are adjusted by the CPI rate as used by Property Valuation Services Corporation. This year the rate adjustment is 2.6%. Staff are recommending that the increase be approved as outlined.

Moved by Councillor Cooper, seconded by Mayor Blair

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that amendments to the Low-Income Municipal Tax Assistance Program Policy be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

#### **Bussing**

Councillor Fletcher requested that a letter be sent to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development with copies to MLAs, addressing the ongoing bussing issue, which has worsened due to driver retirements and no replacement plans. This has led to added stress on parents/guardians due to costs of inflation and last-minute transportation arrangements for their children. Despite a previous letter from the Council regarding this matter, no improvements have been made. Deducting bussing costs from the budget for days buses do not run was suggested for inclusion in the letter.

Moved by Councillor Fletcher, seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council Committee recommend to Council that a letter be written to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, copied to MLAs, regarding the bussing issue and asking that it be addressed.” Carried unanimously.

**Tumbler Ridge**

Mayor Blair noted the tragic mass shooting on February 10, 2026, in Tumbler Ridge, British Columbia. Letters have been sent on behalf of the Municipality expressing condolences and offering our support. There is no timeline for grief, and our hearts go out to all those affected by this tragic event. Flags have been lowered to half-mast at all our facilities and will remain as such for seven days, similar to the federal government.

**INFORMATION ITEMS****Project Management Services Award, Fundy Discovery Site Pedestrian Bridge**

This item provided Council with an update on the award for third party project management services involving construction of the Fundy Discovery Site pedestrian bridge. The report, as submitted by the Director of Community Development, included an overview of the Request for Proposals (RFP), submissions received, award of the contract, and budgetary information.

**Director's Report**

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

Responding to a query regarding exit interviews, the Director of Corporate Services indicated that both online and in-person interviews can be offered.

**CLOSED SESSION**

Moved by Councillor Kennedy, seconded by Councillor Benoit

"That the meeting go into closed session at 7:12pm." Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Weatherby, seconded by Councillor Fletcher

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

**Property Matter – Lot 2 MacElmon Road**

*It was noted that as per Policy, Council Committee has authority to make decisions on property sales in the Debert Business Park.*

Moved by Councillor Weatherby, seconded by Councillor Benoit

"That Council approves entering into an Agreement of Purchase for the sale of Lot 2 on MacElmon Road in the Debert Business Park, as presented in closed session: and,

That the Mayor and CAO be authorized to execute the Purchase Sale and Agreement." Carried unanimously.

**Property Matter – Lot 3 MacElmon Road**

Moved by Councillor Benoit, seconded by Councillor Weatherby

"That Council approves entering into an Agreement of Purchase for the sale of Lot 3 on MacElmon Road in the Debert Business Park, as presented in closed session; and,

That the Mayor and CAO be authorized to execute the Purchase Sale and Agreement." Carried unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Councillor Fletcher, the meeting adjourned at 7:36pm.

Tracey Veno

Recording Secretary