

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 10, 2026, beginning at 6:00pm.

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
Cllr. Mike Cooper	District 4
Cllr. Tim Johnson	District 5
Cllr. Nigel Leggett	District 6 (regrets)
Cllr. Sherry Martell	District 7 (virtual)
Cllr. Lisa Patton	District 8
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
 Reid Shepherd – Director of Community Development
 Dennis James - Municipal Solicitor
 Tracey Veno - Recording Secretary
 Jenn Mantin - Economic Development Officer
 Mollie MacBurnie-Haas - IT Support
 Craig Burgess, Recreation Manager
 Sarah Pearson - Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Coordinator

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Weatherby, seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That the agenda be approved with the following addition:

- item 11b - Brookfield Athletic Association, Request for Letter of Support;
- item 12b – Green Municipal Fund, Funding Agreement Issue.” Carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Councillor Cooper, seconded by Councillor Richardson

“That the minutes of the meetings held on August 4 and 13, 2026, be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

Business Arising from Minutes

None.

ACTION ITEMS**Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Strategy**

Sarah Pearson, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) Coordinator, presented the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) Strategy. The Strategy is the result of extensive work by the EDIA Committee, supported by consulting firms, Crayon Strategies and MC Advisory, to provide expertise and help guide the process.

The three-year Strategy is intended to support Colchester's ongoing EDIA commitments; it identifies goals and initiatives; ensures continued EDIA learning, engagement, organizational change and relationship building with historically marginalized groups; and it also complements existing regional plans. Ms. Pearson acknowledged the input of many partners who aided in the development of the Strategy.

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Kennedy

"That Council Committee recommends to Council that the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Strategy be adopted as presented." Carried unanimously.

**Colchester Transportation
Cooperative Limited Funding
Request**

Craig Burgess, Recreation Manager, presented an overview of the request from Colchester Transportation Cooperative Limited (CTCL). The organization is requesting increased funding from \$10,000 to \$20,000 annually.

Brief discussion was held on the decrease in funding from the Town of Truro as well as whether the organization plans to apply for charitable status. The Recreation Manager indicated that he would make the inquiry with CTCL.

Moved by Councillor Benoit, seconded by Councillor Patton

"That Council Committee recommends to Council that an increase in annual funding from \$10,000 to \$20,000 for Colchester Transportation Cooperative Limited, beginning in 2027/28 fiscal year, be approved." Carried unanimously.

**Tax Exemption Request,
Wemjkwom Housing
Commission Society**

Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services, reported on the request for a tax exemption from the Wemjkwom Housing Commission Society (WHCS). The report included background information on WHCS and their mission to provide off-reserve families with adequate house to assist in addressing housing needs, criteria for exemption under the Municipal Government Act, properties being requested for exemption, and assessment and tax revenue information.

Discussion points included support for the exemption if housing was being made available to all residents in Colchester County, and whether the homes would be for sale or be rental properties. The Director of Corporate Service indicated that they would be rentals and the savings from the tax exemption would be passed on to make the rentals more affordable.

During discussion, Councillor Patton noted that an exemption in area rates, specifically the fire service rate, would have a negative effect on the local fire department.

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Richardson

"That Council Committee recommends to Council approval of a partial tax exemption for the residential general rate for AAN #'s 11147951, 11147941, 11147933, 11147917, 11147909, 11147895, 11147887, 11147879, 11147860, 11147852, 11147844, 02215373, and 11147836, and that area rate taxes not be included as part of the exemption." Motion carried (*Councillors Cooper and Fletcher opposed*).

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

The Director of Corporate Services presented an overview of the Tatamagouche Water Utility (TWU) Three-Year Operating Budget noting that

three-year budgets are a requirement of the Nova Scotia Energy & Regulatory Board (NSERB). The report included a detailed review of the budget including revenues and expenditures; projected accumulated surplus/deficits; capital projects and associated costs; and depreciation information. The draft budget was reviewed by the TWU Committee at their meeting on August 26, 2026, and a recommendation was made that Council approve the three-year budget as presented. It was noted that due to the decrease in anticipated revenue, increasing costs and the deficit being predicted in each of the three years, another rate study would be expected within the next three years.

Discussion held included capacity issues, opportunity for development, and designs upgrades for sewer and water.

Moved by Councillor Martell, seconded by Councillor Richardson

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the three-year Tatamagouche Water Utility operating budget, 2026/27, 2027/28, and 2028/29, be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

Debert Water Utility Three-Year Operating Budget

The Director of Corporate Services presented an overview of the Debert Water Utility (DWU) Three-Year Operating Budget noting that three-year budgets are a requirement of the Nova Scotia Energy & Regulatory Board (NSERB). Similar to the Tatamagouche report, information included a review of revenues and expenditures; projected accumulated surplus/deficits; capital projects and associated costs; and depreciation information. The draft budget was reviewed by the DWU Committee at their meeting on August 25, 2026, and a recommendation was made that Council approve the three-year budget as presented. With the deficit being predicted in year three, another rate study would be expected within the next three years.

Moved by Councillor Benoit, seconded by Councillor Patton

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the three-year Debert Water Utility operating budget, 2026/27, 2027/28, and 2028/29, be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

Five-Year Capital Budget Approval

The Director of Corporate Services presented the Five-Year Capital Budget for Council consideration. Included was the difference between capital and operating budgets; an overview of schedules A (infrastructure projects) and B (equipment); funding resources such as reserves, grant funding, area rates and debt (borrowing); projected debt ratio increases over the five-year budget; and projections for both reserves and area rates. Five-Year Capital Budgets are a provincial requirement. They are used for planning of major projects and equipment, are a living document that is intended to be flexible and can be modified as issues arise and/or priorities change. The Five-Year Capital budget is directly linked to Council’s Strategic Priorities.

By Policy, projects approved in the capital budget only need to come back to Council for approval if over budget unless Council stipulates further direction is required. However, an exception would be with the Debert Airport where funds have been built into this budget but items concerning the Airport would require further direction and approval of Council.

Discussion took place on courthouse renovations; active transportation and projects and traffic calming; timelines for the proposed MacElmon Road

roundabout; funding sources and debt management for larger projects; Debert airport upgrades; and external funding sources available.

Moved by Mayor Blair, seconded by Councillor Weatherby

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the five-year capital budget be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

**Council Proceedings and
Committees Policy
Amendments**

Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor, introduced the proposed amendments to section 30a. of the Council Proceedings and Committees Policy. The change would be to remove the Executive Committee’s role in enforcing provincial regulatory matters that the Municipality is responsible for. Enforcement of regulations and by-laws is an administrative role rather than the role of the Executive Committee. Additionally, vetting through Executive can be an impediment to timely enforcement matters. The proposed changes were vetted through the Executive Committee and members supported advancing to Council for consideration.

Some concern was expressed with removing the Executive Committee from having oversight on enforcement/legal matters and the extra time to arrange an Executive Committee would be insignificant.

Moved by Mayor Blair, seconded by Councillor Weatherby

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the amendment to s. 30(a) of the Council Proceedings and Committees Policy, as presented.” Motion carried (*Councillor Cooper opposed*).

**Brookfield Athletic Association,
Request for Letter of Support**

Councillor Richardson advised that the Brookfield Athletic Association is seeking a letter of support from the Municipality for their bid to host the Under 20 Men’s National Championship in 2027.

Moved by Councillor Richardson, seconded by Mayor Blair

“That Council Committee write a letter of support for the Brookfield Athletic Association’s bid to host the Under 20 Men’s National Championship in 2027.” Carried unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

**Planning Applications – Council
Notifications**

Following concerns expressed at a recent Council meeting on notification to Council members, this report provided the notification process to members of Council for planning related applications. Included in the report was a notification process table showing various applications and timelines throughout the process.

**Green Municipal Fund, Funding
Agreement Issue**

Reid Shepherd, Director of Community Development, provided an update on an issue concerning the Municipality’s agreement with the Green Municipal Fund (GMF) for Solar/Cozy Colchester Programs.

A miscommunication regarding the structure of the GMF loan has resulted in the Municipality having access to a lesser loan amount than originally thought was available. As such, staff have temporarily paused approvals for new projects at a critical juncture in the programs. This delay have been communicated to participants and contractors. Staff are currently working with

GMF to determine whether the funding agreement can be amended to address the shortfall, and more information will be provided as available.

Brief discussion was held on the number of participants affected by the delay. Mr. Shepherd confirmed that 31 applications have been paused.

Director's Report

A report from the Director of Community Development was circulated in the meeting package.

Discussion points on the Director's Report included work of the Waste Compliance Officer for Dangerous or Unsightly complaints being appreciated as it has alleviated the work of Building Inspectors; an inquiry about multiple complaints for Animal Control issues; and, enforcement for Animal Control requires people to be involved which is a deterrent for some. Also, responding to a query regarding the pedestrian bridge at the Fundy Discovery Site, Mr. Shepherd advised that an information update is expected to be before Council later this month.

In-Camera/Closed Session

Moved by Councillor Benoit, seconded by Councillor Kennedy

"That the meeting go into closed session at 7:44pm." Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Richardson, seconded by Councillor Fletcher

"That the meeting reconvene in open session at 8:31pm." Carried unanimously.

Personnel – Reclassification, Municipal Clerk Position

Moved by Mayor Blair, seconded by Councillor Cooper

"That Council Committee recommends to Council that the Municipal Clerk position be created to replace the Deputy Clerk/Executive Assistant position, with a salary reclassification to range 7 on the salary scale." Carried unanimously.

Personnel – Reclassification, Manager of Emergency Management

Moved by Mayor Blair, seconded by Councillor Patton

"That Council Committee recommends to Council that the Manager of Emergency Management position be created to replace the Emergency Management/Protective Services Coordinator position, with a salary reclassification to range 8 on the salary scale." Carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Councillor Richardson, the meeting adjourned at 8:34pm.

Tracey Veno
Recording Secretary