

MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

The Regular Session of the Municipal Council of the Municipality of the County of Colchester was conducted in-person and virtually combined, on Thursday, September 28, 2023, at 6:00 pm.

In peace and in 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 Call

The roll was called with the following Council members in attendance:

Mayor Christine Blair, Chair	
Councillor Eric Boutilier	District 1
Councillor Laurie Sandeson	District 2
Deputy Mayor Geoff Stewart	District 3 (<i>regrets</i>)
Councillor Mike Cooper	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

Staff Present

Dan Troke, Chief Administrative Officer
 Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services
 Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor
 Michelle Boudreau, Director of Public Works
 Paul Smith, Director of Community Development
 Phillip Redden, Director of Solid Waste
 Tracey Veno, Recording Secretary
 Jenn Mantin, Economic Development Officer
 Mollie MacBurnie-Haas, IT Support

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the agenda be approved with the following deletion:

- Item #9, Five Ton Truck – Award of Tender.” Carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Councillor Johnson and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That the minutes of the meetings held on August 31 and September 14, 2023, be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

Business Arising from Minutes

None

Standing Committee Reports and Recommendations

Audit Committee – minutes of meeting held on September 19, 2023, and Presentation of Financial Statements

The Audit Committee met on September 14th reviewing in detail the 2022-23 Consolidated Financial Statements. Allison Butcher, Principal with Grant Thornton LLP, was in attendance to provide a high-level overview of the statements and information on the new accounting standard requirement, Asset Retirement Obligation, and impact of such on the financial statements. As outlined in the Audit Report, in the opinion of the Auditor, it is a clean audit report, and the statements present fairly in all material respects, the financial position of the Municipality of Colchester as of March 31, 2023.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the 2022-23 Consolidated Financial Statements as presented by Grant Thornton be received and approved.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Sandeson and seconded by Councillor Patton

That the Mayor and CAO be authorized to sign the necessary documentation relative to the 2022-23 Consolidated Financial Statements.” Carried unanimously.

Councillor Cooper, Alternate Chair of Council Committee, presented the report from the meeting held on September 14, 2023:

Public Presentations to Council Policy

Moved by Councillor Cooper and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That Council approves amendments to the Public Presentations to Council Policy as presented.” Carried unanimously.

Tatamagouche Water Utility – Three Year Operating Budget

Moved by Councillor Cooper and seconded by Councillor Gregory

“That Council approves the three-year Tatamagouche Water Utility Operating Budget (2023/24, 2024/25, 2025/26) as presented.” Carried unanimously.

Debert Water Utility – Three Year Operating Budget

Moved by Councillor Cooper and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council approves the three-year Debert Water Utility Operating Budget (2023/24, 2024/25, 2025/26) as presented.” Carried unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

Second Reading – Wind Turbine Development By-law Amendments

Paul Smith, Director of Community Development, provided a brief overview of this item noting that the proposed amendments to Wind Turbine Development By-law if approved via Second Reading, will enable flexibility to make alternate Council appointments to the Citizens Monitoring Committee (CMC) should a Council member decline to serve either as Chair or as the second member of a CMC, or where a Councillor is in a conflict of interest.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That Council approves Second Reading of amendments to the Wind Turbine Development By-law, as presented.” Carried unanimously.

Regional Accessibility Committee Recommendations

Phil Redden, Director of Solid Waste, indicated that this item provides and update on the status of the Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee (RAAC) and seek appointments to the Committee. The Committee has not met in some time due to problems getting a quorum. At the last meeting, which was held as an information meeting due to lack of quorum, it was agreed that each public sector body would advertise for volunteers for the Committee. The Village of Bible Hill received three responses to the advertisement. Approval of all public sector bodies are required for appointments to the RAAC. Additionally, the Committee is seeking an extension of Colchester’s elected official, Mayor Blair, to the Committee for the balance of this term of Council. The Director of Solid Waste also noted that moving forward the RAAC may put recommendations forward for consideration around quorum and approval requirements for RAAC appointments.

Moved by Councillor Patton and seconded by Councillor Lomond

“That Council approves the appointments of Ashleigh Bonnell, Donna Lawrence and Wanda MacDonald and the appointment extension of Mayor Blair until October 2024, to the Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee.” Carried unanimously.

Residential Curbside Collection – Authority to Approve October Committee

The Director of Solid Waste advised that the purpose of this Action Item is to seek authority for October Council Committee to award the residential solid waste recycling and organics curbside collection contract for the Municipality of Colchester.

Moved by Councillor Sandeson and seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That Council authorizes October Council Committee to award the residential solid waste recycling and organics curbside collection contract.” Carried unanimously.

African Nova Scotian Justice Strategy

Mayor Blair indicated that support is being sought from the Municipality for a two-year pilot project namely the Colchester African Nova Scotian Justice Strategy (CANS-JS). The CANS-JS is a two-phase initiative with a four-part framework consisting of a Justice Navigator, Response Team, Executive Council and Bail Supervision. The request from the Municipality is for support

of the two-year pilot project and the provision of office space for two years. The Mayor indicated that during the meeting where this was discussed, they were clearly advised that there is no office space available in the Municipal Building. There is no financial support being requested.

Council expressed interest in extending an invitation to receive a presentation on the two-year CAN-JS pilot project.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That a letter of support be provided for the Colchester African Nova Scotian Justice Strategy two-year pilot project.” Carried unanimously.

Mini Green Bins

Responding to a concern raised by Councillor Parker relative to the smaller green compost bins being sold by the Municipality but not being collected when placed curbside along with the regular sized bin, the Director of Solid Waste explained that there are certain provisions in the collection contract, one of those provisions allows for the collection of only one bin. Collection of more than one bin per cycle would significantly increase costs.

Discussion took place on the smaller bins being made available as an alternative to the large composter for those not wanting or needing the full-sized bin. Councillor Parker suggested that if the Municipality is selling the bins as an alternative, the option to have them picked up should also be available. No directive or decisions were made relative to changes to the collection contract to accommodate for this.

Housing for Healthcare

Councillor Boutilier informed Council of a recent meeting put on by the Department of Health on housing in health care, dealing with recruitment of health care workers but the lack of housing available. Emphasis was placed on the expediency of addressing this matter and that Council needs to be a leader and be progressive. Truro & Colchester Partnership for Economic Prosperity (TCPEP) was in attendance and plan to host a symposium on this. All Council members are encouraged to attend the symposium.

Discussion was held on past practice of doctors' residences in areas, similar to that of former RCMP housing; housing needs for everyone, not just healthcare workers; staff forming a committee to come up with options to expedite housing opportunities; and, processes and problems with current funding applications to the federal government.

Correspondence - ACTION

Aaron Niles, Captain, RCAF

An email to Mayor Blair dated August 30, 2023, requesting that the Municipal Building and Fundy Discovery Site be illuminated in blue on April 1, 2024, in celebration of the official Centennial of the Royal Canadian Air Force.

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the Municipal Building and Fundy Discovery Site be illuminated in blue on April 1, 2024, in celebration of the official Centennial of the Royal Canadian Air Force.” Carried unanimously.

Greg Muise, Chief, Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade

Letter to County Council requesting that tipping fees be waived for two dumpsters in support of their Annual Harvest Sale and Auction scheduled for September 30, 2023.

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Lomond

“That tipping fees be waived for the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade for two dumpsters in support of their 2023 Annual Harvest Sale and Auction.” Carried unanimously.

Jennifer Enright, Volunteer, Canadian Amyloidosis Support Network

Email to Mayor Blair dated September 7, 2023, requesting a proclamation for March 2024 as Amyloidosis Awareness Month.

Moved by Councillor Cooper and seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That March 2024 be proclaimed Amyloidosis Awareness Month.” Carried unanimously.

Mitchell Bell, Clerk and Treasurer, Village of Bible Hill

Email to Scott Fraser dated September 22, 2023, requesting a joint letter to the Premier, Minister of Agriculture, and Minister of Public Works concerning the Truro Raceway and Bible Hill Exhibition Grounds.

Mayor Blair advised that racing has been postponed for five weeks at the Truro Raceway causing huge impacts on the community and industry.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the Mayor write a joint letter with the Village of Bible Hill to the Premier, Minister of Agriculture, and Minister of Public Works regarding assistance to the harness racing industry relative to funding.” Carried unanimously.

Laura Cunningham, Capital Program Administration Officer, NSPW

Letter dated September 1, 2023, concerning submission of roads under the Cost Share Agreement 2023-007 on the Paving of Subdivision (J Class) Streets.

Moved by Councillor Cooper and seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That the letter from Laura Cunningham, Capital Program Administration Officer, NSPW, concerning submission of roads under the Cost Share Agreement 2023-007 on the Paving of Subdivision (J Class) Streets be received for information.” Carried unanimously.

Correspondence - INFORMATION

Development Officer

A copy of the Development Activity Report received from the Development Officer for August 2023.

Building Inspector

A copy of Building Permit Statistics received from the Building Inspector for August 2023.

Moved by Councillor Johnson and seconded by Councillor Gregory

“That the reports from the Development Officer and Building Inspector be received.” Carried unanimously.

A request was made to have columns added/aligned to have names on reports clearly shown.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Rural Broadband Internet Project Update

This report provided an update to Council on the Cumberland-Colchester broadband initiative. Included was information on the scope of the agreement; expected number of serviced addresses at project completion; overall funding contributions and payments to date; maps detailing current build status and scope of work; factors contributing to project delays; and expected project completion date.

Traffic Management – Update

This item afforded Council with an update on the traffic management pilot project involving digital speed sensor signs including RCMP feedback; Municipal responsibilities on sign locations, approvals from NSPW, installation, collection and sharing of data; factors affecting data collection; the possibility of the Police Advisory Board playing a role in the pilot; staff resource requirements; and suggestions around scheduled district rotations. Any Council members interested in having the digital speed sensor signs in specific areas were directed to advise staff through the Research, Policy, and Community Engagement Officer or the Administration Office.

ICLEI Agents of Change Funding & Volunteer Program

The Municipality previously secured funding and support from the ICLEI Agents of Change Program to develop a volunteer engagement program that supported the implementation of a Carbon-Free Colchester Community Energy & Emissions Plan. Included in the package for this evening’s meeting was an update on Colchester’s Climate Crew 2023 Program that captures the successes of the program to date and future recommendations.

Reports from Councillors

Copies of reports from the Mayor and Councillors were circulated in the package and ‘On Table’ for this evening’s meeting.

CLOSED SESSION

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the meeting go into closed session at 8:10 pm.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Lomond

“That the meeting reconvene in open session at 9:33 pm.” Carried unanimously.

**Property Matter – Sale of Lots
20, 21 & 219 Lancaster
Crescent**

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That staff and Legal Counsel be directed to proceed with drafting a Letter of Intent as discussed in Closed Session.” Carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Lomond seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the meeting adjourn at 9:34 pm.” Carried unanimously.

Tracey Veno
Recording Secretary