

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, February 29, 2024, 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	(virtual)
Councillor Eric Boutilier	District 1 (<i>regrets</i>)
Councillor Laurie Sandeson	District 2
Deputy Mayor Geoff Stewart	District 3
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
 Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor
 Michelle Boudreau, Director of Public Works
 Paul Smith, Director of Community Development
 Phillip Redden, Director of Solid Waste
 Tracey Venno, Recording Secretary
 Jenn Mantin, Economic Development Officer
 Jeanette Himmelman, Systems Analyst

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Gregory, seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the agenda be approved with the following amendments:

- Remove Item #9, MPS/LUB Secondary Suites and add new Item #9, Congratulatory Letter – Wayne Edgar; and
- Remove Item #11, Canada Community Build Fund and add new Item 11, Tatamagouche Community Field.” Carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That the minutes of the meeting held on January 25, 2024, be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

Business Arising from Minutes

None

Standing Committee Reports and Recommendations

Deputy Mayor Stewart, Chair of Council Committee, presented the reports from the meeting held on February 15, 2024.

Council Voting Solution

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart, seconded by Councillor Gregory

“That Council approves that staff move forward with the purchase and implementation of EZ-Vote Solution.” Carried unanimously.

Basic Income Guarantee

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart, seconded by Councillor Patton

“That Council approves:

1. Moving forward with a resolution relative to a Basic Income Guarantee in Nova Scotia; and,
2. That the Mayor write letters to the Prime Minister and Premier and their respective Ministers asking for federal and provincial/territorial governments work together to create a national liveable basic income guarantee; and,
3. That the Mayor write a letter to the Premier and all MLAs, with copies to the Prime Minister and Nova Scotia MPs requesting the province establish an all-party committee of the legislature to research and design a livable basic income guarantee for Nova Scotians; and,
4. That the Municipality of Colchester encourage other municipalities to pass resolutions in support of a liveable basic income guarantee at both the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.” Motion carried (*Councillors Johnson and Gregory opposed*).

Low Income Municipal Tax Assistance Program Policy Amendment

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart, seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That Council approves the amended Low Income Municipal Tax Assistance Program Policy as presented.” Carried unanimously.

Purchase of Used Vacuum Truck

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart, seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That Council approves staff proceed with the purchase of a used vacuum truck, should a unit become available, and provided that the purchase price does not exceed Council’s approved budget.” Carried unanimously.

April 8th Maintenance Budget Meeting Date

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart, seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That Council approves the Maintenance Budget meeting date be changed from Monday, April 8th to Tuesday, April 9th.” Carried unanimously.

Negotiations – Lower Truro Spring, Expiry of Land Lease

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart, seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That Council approves a one-year extension to the leases with the current landowners, giving time for all parties to further assess liabilities and options.” Carried unanimously.

It was noted that as much notice as possible to the public should be given about any changes with regards to the Lower Truro Spring.

Negotiations – MOU, Miller Waste

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart, seconded by Councillor Patton

“That Council approves entering into the MOU with Miller Waste, as discussed in Closed Session.” Carried unanimously.

Flood Advisory Committee – minutes and report and recommendation of meeting held on January 8, 2024.

Moved by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the minutes of the Flood Advisory Committee meeting held on January 8, 2024, be received.” Carried unanimously.

Debert Business Park Advisory Committee – minutes and report and recommendation of meeting held on February 13, 2024.

Moved by Councillor Benoit, seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That Council direct staff to investigate the option to purchase 6 Ventura Drive, the property at the entrance of Ventura Drive facing Plains Road.” Motion carried (*Deputy Mayor Stewart and Councillor Patton opposed*).

It was noted that supplemental information on the above item would be provided in closed session.

Moved by Councillor Benoit, seconded by Councillor Patton

“That Council send a letter to the Province and the local MLA, explaining the need for a roundabout or other access options to accommodate long combination vehicles at Exit 13 on the 104 Highway.” Carried unanimously.

Minutes of the Debert Business Park Advisory Committee February 13, 2024 meeting were included in the package for this evening’s meeting.

Planning Advisory Committee – report from meeting held on February 21, 2024

Moved by Councillor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That the report from the Planning Advisory Committee meeting held on February 21, 2024, be received.” Carried unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

First Reading – Amendments to the Land Lease Development By-law for the Municipality of the County of Colchester

Paul Smith, Director of Community Development, advised that amendments are being proposed to the Land Lease Development By-law to allow for a communal sewer system outside the municipal sewer district. First Reading is essentially to announce Council's intent to consider adopting amendments to the By-law. A Public Hearing and Second Reading of proposed amendments to the By-law will take place at the March 27, 2024, Council meeting where there will be opportunity to debate the merits of the amendments and hear any concerns from the public.

In response to a question raised, Mr. Smith indicated that this is in no way similar to the previous Granville Drive sewer project.

Moved by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Cooper

"That Council approves at First Reading, the amended Land Lease Development By-law, as presented, for purposes of forwarding this document to a Public Hearing reserving consideration of the amendments until Second Reading following the Public Hearing." Carried unanimously.

Referring to the Planning Advisory Committee report specific to the Heritage Designation of the Willow Church Cemetery, clarification was provided on the process for such designations noting that a Public Hearing is required for this and it would be coming back to Council at the end of March.

First Reading – Amendments to the Central Colchester Municipal Planning Strategy

The Director of Community Development indicated that this item is to consider First Reading of proposed amendments to the Central Colchester Municipal Planning Strategy which would remove the requirement of providing at least .4 hectares (1 acre) of land to build more than one apartment building on a property. A Public Hearing and Second Reading of proposed amendments to the By-law would take place at the March 27, 2024, Council meeting where there will be opportunity to debate the merits of the amendments and hear any concerns from the public.

Moved by Councillor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Johnson

"That Council approves at First Reading the amendments, as presented, for purposes of forwarding this document to a Public Hearing reserving consideration of the amendment until Second Reading following the Public Hearing." Carried unanimously.

First Reading – Amendments to the Dogs By-law

The Director of Community Development advised that this item is to consider First Reading of amendments to the Dogs By-law. The proposed amendments relate to the process for dog registration requirements, changing from annual to lifetime registrations. Second Reading would take place at the March Council meeting where Council can debate the merits of the amendments and hear any public concerns.

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Benoit

"That Council approves, by way of First Reading, amendments to the Dogs By-law as presented, and directs staff to proceed to Second Reading at the regularly scheduled Council meeting on March 27, 2024."

Congratulatory Letter, Wayne Edgar

Councillor Gregory advised of a constituent, Mr. Wayne Edgar, who is a recipient of the Gerrit Loo Memorial Award. This is awarded to an outstanding organic advocate and/or farmer who has contributed to the organic community in Atlantic Canada. Mr. Edgar and his partner, Pamela Swainson, operate North of Nuttby Farm in West Earltown.

Moved by Councillor Gregory, seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That Council send a congratulatory letter be sent to Wayne Edgar, recipient of the Gerrit Loo Memorial Achievement Award.” Carried unanimously.

Correspondence – ACTION

Alison Grant, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Communications, Town of Truro

Email dated February 15, 2024, requesting a letter of support from the County for the Town’s funding application to the Connect2 Program.

Moved by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council approves a letter of support from the Municipality for the Town’s funding application to the Connect2 Program.” Carried unanimously.

Correspondence - INFORMATION

Development Officer

A copy of the Development Activity Report received from the Development Officer for January 2024.

Building Inspector

A copy of Building Permit Statistics received from the Building Inspector for January 2024.

Moved by Councillor Gregory, seconded by Councillor Patton

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

INFORMATION ITEMS

Tatamagouche Community Field

Councillor Gregory raised an issue concerning school properties formerly under municipal ownership but transferred to the Province years ago when the Province took over education. As part of the agreement with the transfer of school properties, municipalities would have first right of redemption should these properties be declared surplus for school purposes. Colchester long awaited notification regarding the Tatamagouche Community Field property however, recently learned that a portion of this property is being considered for housing for health care workers and the Province will retain a portion of the land. Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor, confirmed that the Education Act was amended in 2018 removing the requirement for surplus school properties being offered back to municipalities. Councillor Gregory expressed concern and frustration with the lack of consultation by the Province relative to these amendments.

Additionally, Councillor Gregory advised Council of an upcoming meeting on March 13th that he will be attending along with County staff, officials from

Housing Trust NS, the Willow Lodge, and the Lillian Fraser Memorial Hospital. The meeting will be for discussion on the Tatamagouche Community Field and housing for health care workers.

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, seconded by Councillor Lomond

"That the meeting go into closed session at 6:49 pm." Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Gregory, seconded by Councillor Lomond

"That the meeting reconvene in open session at 7:46 pm." Carried unanimously.

Property Matter – 6 Ventura Drive

Moved by Councillor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Benoit

"That Council approves a motion to reconsider the previous motion on the Debert Business Park Advisory Committee matter concerning 6 Ventura Drive." Carried unanimously.

*The motion to reconsider having carried, the original motion "That Council direct staff to investigate the option to purchase 6 Ventura Drive, the property at the entrance of Ventura Drive facing Plains Road." was voted on and **DEFEATED** (all opposed).*

Moment of Silence

Council observed a moment of silence for the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, former Prime Minister, who passed away earlier today.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Lomond, seconded by Councillor Gregory

"That the meeting adjourn at 7:52 pm." Carried unanimously.

Tracey Veno
Recording Secretary