

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 27, 2025, 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

Mayor Christine Blair, Chair	
Councillor Paul Weatherby	District 1
Deputy Mayor Laurie Sandeson	District 2
Councillor Sheldon Richardson	District 3
Councillor Mike Cooper	District 4
Councillor Tim Johnson	District 5
Councillor Nigel Leggett	District 6
Councillor Sherry Martell	District 7
Councillor Lisa Patton	District 8
Councillor Marie Benoit	District 9
Councillor Charlene Fletcher	District 10
Councillor Allan Kennedy	District 11

Staff Present

Dan Troke, Chief Administrative Officer
 Michelle Boudreau, Director of Public Works
 Phil Redden, Director of Solid Waste
 Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor
 Tracey Veno, Recording Secretary
 Jenn Martin, Economic Development Officer
 Jeanette Himmelman, Systems Analyst
 Pam Macintosh, Manager of Planning Services

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Martell, seconded by Councillor Kennedy

“That the agenda be approved with the following amendment:

- Add Item 10b, RECC Update.” Carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Councillor Cooper, seconded by Councillor Martell

“That the minutes of the meeting held on January 30, 2025, be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

Business Arising from Minutes

None.

Standing Committee Reports and Recommendations

Deputy Mayor Sandeson, Chair of Council Committee, presented the report from the meeting held on January 16, 2025.

Community Event Grant Request – North Shore Recreation Centre Grand Re-opening

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Weatherby

“That Council approves funding in the amount of \$5,000 for the Grand Re-opening event at the North Shore Recreation Centre.” Carried unanimously.

Live Streaming of Council Meetings

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Patton

“That live streaming of meetings via YouTube Live be approved.” Carried unanimously.

Budget Meeting Dates

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Weatherby

“That April 8th and 15th be set for the Maintenance and Additions & Deletions Budget meetings respectively; and,

That April 22nd be set as a second night for Additions & Deletions if needed; and,

The start time for these meetings be 5:00 pm.” Carried unanimously.

Low Income Municipal Tax Assistance Program

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Cooper

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

Mi’kmawey Debert Cultural Centre, Ancestral Sites Land Transfer

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council approves the transfer of ownership of ancestral sites BiCu-23, BiCu-24, BiCu-25 to Mi’kmawey Debert Cultural Centre.” Carried unanimously.

Colchester Ground Search and Rescue Loan Guarantee

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Leggett

“That Council approves the loan guarantee and Borrowing Resolution for Colchester Ground Search and Rescue as presented.” Carried unanimously.

Tatamagouche Water Utility Grant

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Martell

“That Council approves a grant be provided to the Tatamagouche Water Utility from the Municipality equal to the accumulated deficit for the fiscal year ending 2025, and that the source of funds be the Special Operating Reserve.” Carried unanimously.

Property Valuation Services Corporation Board

Councillor Weatherby declared a conflict of interest and recused himself from this discussion.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Fletcher

“That Council endorses Councillor Weatherby to make application to the PVSC Board and if successful, to serve on the Board as an elected official.” Carried unanimously.

Request for Special Council Meeting

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council approves a Special Council meeting be held on Thursday, March 20, 2025, for the purpose of conducting two Public Hearings/Second Readings.” Carried unanimously.

Planning Advisory Committee – report from meetings held on February 10 and 18, 2025.

Moved by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the Planning Advisory Committee reports from the meetings on February 10 and 18, 2025, be accepted.” Carried unanimously.

Nominating Committee – report and recommendations of meeting held on February 25, 2025.

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Deputy Mayor Sandeson

“That Council appoints Samantha Leeming and Allyson Hingley as citizen representatives on the Citizen Monitoring Committee for the Kemptown Host Community; and,

That Joe Ebbett be appointed as a citizen representative on the Tatamagouche Water Utility Committee; and,

That Courtney Nicholson-Patriquin be appointed to Tatamagouche Planning Advisory Committee, and

That Greg Carver be appointed as a citizen representative to the Police Advisory Board.” Carried unanimously.

It was noted that two applications were received for the Police Advisory Board but only one Colchester-appointed position was remaining on the Committee. Where a vacancy still remains for a provincial appointee, the Committee recommended that the second applicant be advised of the position for consideration.

ACTION ITEMS

First Reading – Rezoning Application at 149-151 Pictou Road, Bible Hill, NS

Pam Macintosh, Manager of Planning Services, advised that this First Reading is to advance a rezoning amendment request to the Central Colchester Land Use By-law. The request involves reverting the former St. David Church which was rezoned for use as an apartment building back to a place of worship. The Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) held a public

meeting on February 10, 2025, and have recommended the rezoning request be approved. If approved this evening, the Public Hearing and Second Reading will take place at the Special Council Session on March 20th.

Moved by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council approves at First Reading, the application for proposed amendments to the Central Colchester Land Use By-law (rezoning), as presented, for purposes of forwarding this document to a Public Hearing, reserving consideration of the proposed amendments to the Land Use By-law until Second Reading following the Public Hearing.” Carried unanimously.

First Reading – Amendments to Existing Development Agreement Application, Ainslie Land, Valley, NS

Similar to the previous item, this item is to consider First Reading to advance a request for amendments to an existing Development Agreement to permit the development of eight (8) accessory buildings/storage sheds, located on Ainslie Lane in Valley. The PAC held a public meeting to consider this application on February 10, 2025, and are recommending the proposed amendment be approved. If First Reading is approved, the Public Hearing and Second Reading will take place at the Special Council Session on March 20th.

Moved by Councillor Leggett, seconded by Councillor Weatherby

“That Council approves by way of First Reading, the application for proposed amendments to the existing development agreement, as presented, for purposes of forwarding this document to a Public Hearing reserving consideration of the proposed amendments to the development agreement until Second Reading following the Public Hearing.” Carried unanimously.

First Reading – Plan It Colchester, Adoption of Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law

This item is to consider First Reading for the adoption of a new County-wide Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law, which was mandated by the province, with a deadline of March 31, 2025. Ms. Macintosh advised that Mr. Ian Watson of Upland Consulting is online to answer any questions of Council. Throughout the review since the Fall of 2023, the extensive community engagement process was foundational in the preparing of the draft documents. The PAC met on February 18, 2025, and are recommending approval of the documents with a few amendments which have been identified. A Public Hearing is scheduled for March 27, 2025, where a detailed presentation will be made and opportunity to receive input from the public before Second Reading is considered by Council.

Moved by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Weatherby

“That Council approves by way of First Reading the draft county-wide planning documents, as presented, for purposes of forwarding the proposed planning documents to a Public Hearing reserving consideration of the documents until Second Reading following the Public Hearing.”

AND

“That Council approves by way of First Reading the amendments to the Commercial Dog Kennel Facility By-law Chapter 36; Land Lease Development By-law Chapter 28; and Wind Turbine Development By-law Chapter 56 as presented, for purposes of forwarding the proposed amendments to a Public

Hearing reserving consideration of the documents until Second Reading following the Public Hearing.” Carried unanimously.

Mayor Blair noted that the Public Hearing/Second Reading for the County-wide Planning, followed by the Regular Session of Municipal Council, will be held at the Inn on Prince.

Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor, also noted that for Council members to participate (and vote) in the Public Hearing/Second Reading, they must be in attendance for the entire Hearing.

Correspondence – ACTION

The Honourable John Lohr, Minister of Municipal Affairs

A letter dated February 11, 2025, regarding support for a reduction in inter-provincial trade barriers and for resource development within our province.

The Mayor and CAO advised of a recent meeting held through NSFM with Mayors, Wardens, and CAOs regarding a considerable amount of proposed legislation. The outcome of this meeting was to have the NSFM be the voice of 49 municipalities within Nova Scotia to the provincial government. If there are particular items Councils feel strongly about, these should be expressed in a letter to NSFM to bring forward to the province.

Some of the proposed legislation includes: reducing barriers for dismissal of employees; streamlining access to private lands; lifting bans on resources/extraction; obligation for municipalities to comply with sect. 518 of the MGA; compensation/communications in Nova Scotia through the Executive Council office; repeals on set election dates; reduction in FOIPOP responsibilities; revisions in salaries for MLAs; amendments to Private Ways Act regarding mines, quarries, forest products; changes to Bill #6, an act respecting agriculture, energy and natural resources; resolution reforming the Law Amendment Committee to a Public Bills Committee; and, changes to ministerial power concerning orders to municipalities.

Takeaways from this meeting included the increased reduction on the municipal economy and ability to plan; decreased grounds for notice of engagement; and, concerns with reduction in municipal authorities.

During Council discussion, one of the key concerns expressed was around lifting bans on resources, specifically on fracking. It was noted that water is one of our greatest resources and it is at risk with fracking. Discussion was also held regarding NSFM being the voice for municipalities with no opposition from Council on this. The CAO noted that a draft letter to NSFM would be created and circulated to Council.

David K Parker, Chief Judge, Science Fair Committee

A letter received on February 14, 2025, from David K Parker, Chief Judge, Science Fair Committee, soliciting support to assist with sending a student to Science Fair Nationals.

Points raised during discussion included this being a project for schools and the Municipality supporting schools through the annual mandatory funding; no expectations for government support in the past for these types of projects; and this being about the children and providing opportunity for them to grow.

Moved by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Deputy Mayor Sandeson

“That the letter from David K Parker, Chief Judge, Science Fair Committee, soliciting support to assist with sending a student to Science Fair Nationals be received for information.” Motion carried (*Councillor Benoit opposed*).

Jill McGillicuddy, Senior Planner

An application for a development agreement at Lot 11 – RWR1, Hilden, NS, to permit six 12 multi-unit residential buildings for a total of 72 units.

Moved by Councillor Weatherby, seconded by Councillor Kennedy

“That the application for a development agreement at Lot 11 – RWR1, Hilden, NS, to permit six 12 multi-unit residential buildings for a total of 72 units be referred to the Planning Advisory Committee.” Carried unanimously.

Correspondence - INFORMATION

Development Officer

A copy of Development Activity Report for January 2025.

Building Inspector

A copy of Building Permit Statistics for January 2025.

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Johnson

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

Jan Simpson, National President, CUPW

A letter received January 31, 2025, regarding an Industrial Inquiry Commission reviewing Canada Post.

Moved by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the letter from Jan Simpson, Nations President, CUPW, regarding an Industrial Inquiry Commission reviewing Canada Post be received for information purposes.” Carried unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Reports from Council Members

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

RECC Update

Dan Troke, CAO, provided a brief update on the status of a Joint Council Session for the purpose of receiving the annual RECC update. Proposed dates are March 6th or 11th and Council suggested March 6th would work best. Staff will reach out to the Town of Truro with the new proposed date.

CLOSED SESSION

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the meeting go into closed session at 7:10 pm.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Cooper, seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the meeting reconvene in open session at 8:21 pm.” Carried unanimously.

Contract Negotiations – Lower Truro Spring

Moved by Councillor Leggett, seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That Council not extend the lease for the Lower Truro Spring/Fill Station and proceed with decommissioning the site.” Carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Councillor Martell, the meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm.

Tracey Veno
Recording Secretary