

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, April 24, 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	
Councillor Paul Weatherby	District 1
Dep. Mayor Laurie Sandeson, Chair	District 2
Councillor Sheldon Richardson	District 3
Councillor Mike Cooper	District 4
Councillor Tim Johnson	District 5 (<i>regrets</i>)
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
 Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services
 Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor
 Tracey Veno, Recording Secretary
 Jenn Martin, Economic Development Officer
 Jeanette Himmelman, Systems Analyst
 Pam Macintosh, Manager of Planning Services
 Craig Burgess, Recreation Manager

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Cooper, seconded by Councillor Martell

“That the agenda be approved with the following amendments:

- add Item #14, Legal Matter in Closed Session; and,
- add Item #14b, Legal Advice in Closed Session.” Carried unanimously.

It was noted that revisions to Item #7 Budget and Tax Rate Approval and Item #12 Community Park Funding Program have been distributed on table.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Councillor Kennedy, seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the minutes of the meetings held on March 20 and 27, 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 April 10, 2025.

Additional Funding for Solar PV Projects

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Martell

“That Council approves an additional \$148,836 in the 2025/26 capital budget for the Solar Energy for Municipal Buildings project” Carried unanimously.

PCAP Funding Application – Tatamagouche Water Supply, Hydrogeologic Study

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council authorizes staff to make an application to the Provincial Capital Assistance Program for the completion of hydrogeological study for Tatamagouche, with a total anticipated project cost of \$100,000.” Carried unanimously.

Request for Waiving of Tip Fees for the Meadow Drive Encampment Clean-up

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Patton

“That Council approves that \$58/tonne of the \$113/tonne tip fee be waived for the Meadow Drive encampment clean-up to ensure compensation for landfill cell space costs of \$55/tonne, resulting in a credit of \$4,615.06 to the NSPW account.” Carried unanimously.

J Class Roads – Approval of 2025 Candidates

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Weatherby

“That Council approves the repaving of Hillvale Drive and MacCallum Drive under the J Class Road Paving Program, for a total Municipal commitment of \$215,000, with source of funds being the Street Paving Reserve.” Carried unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

Second Reading – Amendments to the Commercial Dog Care and Kennel Facility By-law, Land Lease Development By-law, and Wind Turbine Development By-law

The Manager of Planning Services advised that this item is to consider Second Reading of Chapter 36 Commercial Dog Care and Kennel Facility By-law, Chapter 28 Land Lease Development By-law, Chapter 56 Wind Turbine Development By-law. First Reading of the By-laws took place at the February Council meeting. The proposed amendment to each By-law has the same wording and is required to preserve enforcement mechanisms for existing permits or licenses.

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Fletcher

“That Council approves, by way of Second Reading, amendments to the Chapter 36 Commercial Dog Care and Chapter 28 Kennel Facility By-law; Land Lease Development By-law; and Chapter 56 Wind Turbine Development By-law, as presented.” Carried unanimously.

2025-26 Budget and Tax Rate Approval

The Director of Corporate Services advised the Council held its budget meetings on April 8th and 15th and all recommendations from the Additions and Deletions meeting resulted in a balanced budget for 2025/26 with no changes to tax rates. The residential rate would be held at \$.885 and commercial rate at \$2.28 per \$100 of assessment. Council was reminded of the revised summary of recommendations from Additions and Deletions that was included on table this evening.

Discussion took place on an amendment to the recommendations from the Additions and Deletions meeting to provide additional funding to Colchester Ground Search and Rescue (CGSAR) to accommodate their request for an increase to their annual operating grant to

\$120,000. This funding would enable them to complete their building including adding washrooms and enlarge the kitchen for use as a comfort centre. Discussion included support for CGSAR and the work the organization does; unknowns around provincial funding that may be available with the upcoming changes with emergency management; Colchester's request support via a loan guarantee; and proceeding with the original recommendation and possible additional funding at a later date if required.

Moved by Councillor Benoit, seconded by Councillor Patton

"That the 2025-26 Operating Budget be approved with an amendment to move \$40,000 from the Special Operating Reserve to the Colchester Ground Search and Rescue annual operating grant." Motion DEFEATED (*Mayor Blair, Deputy Mayor Sandeson, Councillor Weatherby, Richardson, Leggett, Martell, Fletcher and Kennedy opposed*).

Moved by Councillor Weatherby, seconded by Deputy Mayor Sandeson

"That the 2025-26 Operating Budget be approved with the additions and deletions as set out at the Council Committee meetings held on April 15, 2025, with the residential tax rate being held at \$0.885, and the commercial tax rate being held at \$2.28; and,

That the following Tax Resolution be approved, as presented:

TAX RATE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS the Municipal Council of the Municipality of Colchester is required to levy rates which it deems sufficient to raise the sum required to defray the expenditure of the Municipality of the County of Colchester for the current twelve-month fiscal period;

RESOLVED that pursuant to **Section 72 of the Municipal Government Act**, the Municipal Council of the Municipality of the County of Colchester estimates that sums amounting to **\$35,800,314** are required for the lawful purpose of the Municipality for the year ending **March 31, 2026**, after crediting the probable revenue from all sources other than rates for the abatement and losses which occur in the collection of the taxes for the said year which may not be collected or collectible;

FURTHER RESOLVED that the said Council authorize the levying and collection of a rate of **eighty-eight and one half cents (\$0.885)** on each \$100.00 of the assessed value of the residential and resource property assessed in the **2025** Assessment Roll;

FURTHER RESOLVED that the said Council authorize the levying and collection of a rate of **two dollars twenty-eight cents (\$2.28)** on each \$100.00 on the assessed value of Commercial Property assessed in the **2025** Assessment Roll;

FURTHER RESOLVED that pursuant to **Section 78 of the Municipal Government Act** in lieu of all rates and taxes of the Municipality, an owner of forest property to which the said section applies shall pay tax equal to twenty-five (25) cents per acre on holdings of 50,000 or less and forty (40) cents per acre on holdings greater than 50,000 acres and where an area, village or commission rate is levied for fire protection, the owner shall pay an additional tax of one (1) cent per acre;

FURTHER RESOLVED that the said Council hereby requires payment of said rates to be made to the Tax Collector or Treasurer of the said Municipality on or before the 31st day of August, **2025**;

FURTHER RESOLVED that said Council hereby imposes an additional percentage charge of 12% per annum on all rates and taxes remaining unpaid after the 31st day of August, 2025.” Carried unanimously.

**Municipal Innovation
Program Funding
Application**

The Director of Solid Waste advised that the Municipal Innovation Program (MIP) supports regional governance, economic development and planning. The MIP provides funding for up to a maximum of 75% of eligible project costs. With changes in requirements for new Construction and Demolition (C&D) cell construction to include a leachate collection system, a new C&D design and costing will need to be completed. Costs are estimated at \$30,000 and these funds will be included in the five-year capital budget. Staff is seeking support for a MIP application as is required as part of the application process.

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Kennedy

“That Council supports the Municipal Innovation Program funding application.” Carried unanimously.

**Tatamagouche Sewer
Replacement Tender –
Authority to Award**

Moved by Councillor Martell, seconded by Councillor Weatherby

“That Council authorizes May Council Committee to award the tender for the replacement of 450m of sanitary sewer in Tatamagouche, between Creamery Road and the Tatamagouche Legion, should the tenders exceed the approved amount in the Five-year Capital Budget.” Carried unanimously.

**Tourism Society
Memorandum of
Understanding –
Authority to Approve**

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Richardson

“That Council could grant authority to May Council Committee to approve a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) related to the formation of a regional Tourism Society.” Carried unanimously.

**Correspondence –
ACTION**

**Donna Lugar, VP, NS
Lyme & Tick Borne
Diseases Association**

Email dated April 1, 2025, regarding a proclamation for Lyme Disease Awareness Month.

Moved by Councillor Cooper, seconded by Deputy Mayor Sandeson

“That May 2025 be Lyme Disease Awareness Month.” Carried unanimously.

**Aleyda & Greg Knight,
Four Seasons Retreat**

Email correspondence with concerns relating to the Marketing Levy By-law.

Moved by Councillor Fletcher, seconded by Councillor Martell

“That the email from Aleyda & Greg Knight, Four Seasons Retreat, be referred to staff to bring back further information to Council.” Carried unanimously.

**Mayor Cathy Hinton,
Town of Truro**

Letter to Mayor and Council dated April 15, 2025, requesting Regional Recreation Funding.

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Deputy Mayor Sandeson

“That the letter from Mayor Hinton requesting regional recreation funding be received for information and that a written response to Town Council through the Mayor be provided.” Carried unanimously.

**Mila Simon, Senior
Project Coordinator,
SolarBank**

Letter to Mayor and Council requesting a letter of support regarding a proposed Community Solar Project.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Kennedy

“That the SolarBank letter requesting a letter of support regarding a proposed community solar project be referred to staff.” Carried unanimously.

**Correspondence -
INFORMATION**

Development Officer

A copy of Development Activity Report for March 2025.

Building Inspector

A copy of Building Permit Statistics for March 2025.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Cooper

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

**The Honourable John
Lohr, Minister of
Municipal Affairs**

A letter dated April 14, 2025, to Mayor Pam Mood, President NSFM, concerning “12 Months Notice to Municipalities.

The CAO advised that although the letter does not provide much information, it meets the minimum requirement to give notice municipalities.

Moved by Councillor Benoit, seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the letter from Minister Lohr concerning “12 Months Notice to Municipalities” be received.” Carried unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

**Community Park
Funding Program –
Winter 2025
Applications**

The Community Park Funding Program provides support to community organizations making capital improvements to public outdoor recreation facilities by providing grants of up to 50% of total project costs. It was noted that a revised copy of the Information Item was placed on table this evening.

Three applications were received under the Community Park Funding Program for the February 2025 deadline: Economy Fire Brigade requested \$36,065, 31% of the estimated project cost, for construction of an asphalt court, playground, picnic shelter and memorial garden; North Shore Recreation Centre requested \$4,612.50, 50% of estimated project cost, for sports field upgrades; and, the Truro Tennis Club requested \$5,000, #% of estimated project cost, to resurface courts. Staff have approved grants in the requested amounts totaling \$45,677.50 pending approval of the 2025-26 budget.

**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

CLOSED SESSION

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Fletcher

“That the meeting go into closed session at 7:01 pm.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Martell

“That the meeting reconvene in open session at 8:20 pm.” Carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Councillor Martell, the meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Tracey Veno
Recording Secretary