

MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

The Inaugural Session of the Municipal Council of the Municipality of the County of Colchester was conducted in-person and virtually combined, on Wednesday, October 30, 2024, at 6:00 pm.

CAO Dan Troke began with a Declaration of the 2024 Municipal Election, declaring elected the following persons to Colchester Council for the 2024-2028 term:

Mayor Christine Blair	
Councillor Paul Weatherby	District 1
Councillor 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
 Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services
 Phil Redden, Director of Solid Waste
 Anna-Marie Manley, Municipal Solicitor
 Paul Smith, Director of Community Development
 Tracey Veno, Recording Secretary
 Devin Trefry, Research Policy, and Community Engagement Officer
 Jenn Mantin, Economic Development Officer
 Jeanette Himmelman, Systems Analyst
 Craig Burgess, Recreation Manager

The CAO welcomed everyone to the Inaugural Session of Council and thanked Justice Jeffrey R. Hunt who was in attendance to perform the swearing in of the Council members.

Prior to commencement of the meeting, Mayor Blair provided opening remarks to the newly elected Council members.

Election of Deputy Mayor

Mayor Blair called for nominations for the position of Deputy Mayor. Councillor Patton moved and Councillor Benoit seconded the nomination of Councillor Sandeson. Councillor Leggett moved and Councillor Weatherby seconded the nomination of Councillor Johnson. Both Councillors Sandeson and Johnson accepted the nomination. Mayor Blair called three times for further nominations and, on hearing none, nominations ceased.

Councillors Sandeson and Johnson were provided the opportunity to address Council on serving as Deputy Mayor, if elected.

To verify the vote, Councillor Cooper moved and Councillor Kennedy seconded the following motion:

“That the Municipal Solicitor, Anna-Marie Manley, be appointed as scrutineer for the counting of ballots for the election of Deputy Mayor and Alternate Chair.” Carried unanimously.

The counting of the ballots resulted in two tie votes for the position of Deputy Mayor. The CAO indicated that as per policy, candidates can opt to withdraw and if no candidate withdraws, the position will be determined by draw. Both candidates indicated they would like their name to stand for the position.

Councillor Sandeson’s name was drawn by the Municipal Solicitor and was declared Deputy Mayor for a two-year term.

Election of Alternate Chair

Mayor Blair called for nominations for the position of Alternate Chair. Councillor Cooper moved and Councillor Kennedy seconded the nomination of Councillor Martell, who accepted the nomination. Mayor Blair called three times for further nominations and, on hearing none, the nominations ceased. By acclamation, Councillor Martell was declared Alternate Council Committee Chair for a two-year term.

Moved by Councillor Weatherby, seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That the ballots for the position of Deputy Mayor be destroyed.” Carried unanimously.

Mayor Blair, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm and acknowledged that in peace and in friendship, and in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, the Municipality of Colchester is in Mi’kma’ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi’kmaq.

At this point, Mayor Blair presented Councillor Cooper with a certificate from the NSFM, in recognition of 20 years of service.

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Benoit, seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That the agenda be approved with the following additions:

- Item 11b, Livestreaming of Council meetings;
- Item 12b, NSFM Fall Conference; and
- Item 12c, Council Orientation.” Carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Clarification was sought on the motions concerning J Class Roads on pages 39 and 41. The CAO advised that in order to meet the deadline to submit a list to the province, it was a two-step process – first to waive the usual petition process and second was the approval of list of submitted roads. It was noted that there is no guarantee that these roads would get paved but have been submitted for consideration.

Moved by Councillor Cooper, seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the minutes of the meeting held on September 25, 2024, be approved with one correction on page 41, the spelling of Eagle Beach.” Carried unanimously.

Business Arising from Minutes None.

Standing Committee Reports and Recommendations

Audit Committee Minutes and Presentation of Consolidated Statements

Moved by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on October 8, 2024, be received.” Carried unanimously.

Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services, presented the consolidated financial statements for the year ending March 31, 2024, noting the objective of the Audit is to enhance credibility, detect fraud, and ensure adequate controls are in place and that statutory requirements are being met. Highlights of the presentation included the role of Municipal Council; legislated requirements; and, components of the report such as the independent Auditors Report, consolidated statement of operations and surplus, financial position, changes in net assets, statement of cash flow and notes to financial statements. A high-level overview was provided on the various statements. In the opinion of the Auditor, the statements fairly represented the financial position of the Municipality based in accordance with Canadian Generally Accepted Auditing Standards. It is also the opinion that the Municipality has a clean audit report.

Councillor Leggett indicated that he has no opinion on the presented consolidated financial statements and as such would not be voting on the motion. Mayor Blair advised that abstaining from voting is recorded as voting in the negative.

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That Council accepts and adopts the 2023/24 Consolidated Financial Statements as prepared by Grant Thornton; and

That the Mayor and CAO be authorized to sign the necessary documentation relative to the 2023-24 Consolidated Financial Statements.” Motion carried (*Councillor Leggett opposed (by abstention)*).

Debert Business Park Advisory Committee – Minutes of meeting held on October 8, 2024

Councillor Johnson noted that he was not in attendance at the October 8th meeting and therefore did not adjourn the meeting.

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That the minutes of the Debert Business Park Advisory Committee meeting held on October 8, 2024, be received with the above noted amendment.” Carried unanimously.

Debert Business Park Advisory Committee –Report and recommendation from meeting held on October 8, 2024

Moved by Councillor Benoit, Seconded by Councillor Patton

“That Council directs staff to prepare a letter to Nova Scotia Public Works regarding the road shoulder issues causing concern along Plains Road and provide a recommendation for a long-term solution for fixing the road shoulders.” Carried unanimously.

Flood Advisory Committee – Minutes of meeting held on September 11, 2024

Moved by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Martell

“That the minutes of the Flood Advisory Committee meeting held on September 11, 2024, be received.” Carried unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

Appointment of Nominating Committee

As per Policy, the Nominating Committee is appointed by Council at the Inaugural meeting following a general election and is comprised of the Mayor and three other members of Council. Mayor Blair called for volunteers to serve on the Nominating Committee.

Councillors Cooper, Johnson, Leggett and Patton volunteered for the positions. With only three members being required, Councillor Leggett withdrew his name.

Moved by Councillor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Martell

“That in addition to the standing appointment of Mayor Blair, Council appoints Councillors Cooper, Johnson, and Patton to serve on the Nominating Committee.” Carried unanimously.

2024 Art Selection Committee Representatives

The Recreation Manager indicated that two members of Council are required to serve on the Art Selection Committee for the Municipality’s Annual Art Show being held on November 12th.

Councillor Martell was nominated by Councillor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Patton. Councillor Richardson was nominated by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Benoit. Both nominees accepted.

Moved by Councillor Kennedy, seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That Councillors Richardson and Martell serve on the Art Selection Committee for the Municipality of Colchester’s Art Purchase Program for 2024.” Carried unanimously.

Correspondence – ACTION

None.

Correspondence - INFORMATION

- Development Officer** A copy of the Development Activity Report received from the Development Officer for September 2024.
- Building Inspector** A copy of Building Permit Statistics received from the Building Inspector for September 2024.
- Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Leggett
- “That the reports from the Development Officer and Building Inspector be received.” Carried unanimously.
- Elizabeth Murphy, CEO, SPCA** Email to Mayor Blair dated October 23, 2024, regarding a tour of the SPCA facility.
- Interest was expressed by a number of Council members and Mayor Blair indicated that staff would look into possible dates.
- Moved by Councillor Benoit, seconded by Councillor Martell
- “That the correspondence from the SPCA be received.” Carried unanimously.
- Livestreaming Council Meetings** Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Leggett
- “That staff be directed to investigate live broadcasting of Council meetings.” Carried unanimously.
- Referring to live broadcasting of meetings, concern was expressed around not all options being available to everyone in the County and it is important to ensure that it would be accessible for all.

INFORMATION ITEMS

- Community Park Funding Program – Fall 2024 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. One application was received under the Community Park Funding Program for the September 2024 deadline: the Tatamagouche Pickleball Club requested \$40,000, 22% of the estimated project cost, for the construction of four pickleball courts on the North Shore Recreation Centre property. Staff has approved the grant in the requested amount pending confirmation of landowner permission and other funding sources.

CLOSED SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Councillor Patton moved that the meeting adjourn at 8:05 pm.

Tracey Veno
Recording Secretary