

## MEDIA RELEASE

### No Tax Rate Increase as Municipality of Colchester Approves 2020-21 Budget

May 15, 2020

After much scrutiny and thoughtful deliberation, the Municipality of Colchester approved its 2020-21 Operating Budget at a meeting of Council on May 14th.

The budgeting process was especially challenging this year. Council faced many uncertainties relating to COVID-19 and had to meet through ZOOM virtual meetings rather than in person. Despite the unusual circumstances, they were pleased to successfully achieve a balanced budget without increasing tax rates.

“We recognize that many of our residents and businesses may be struggling right now. We worked hard to find ways to reduce spending without impacting our high standard of service, to ensure that we could keep our tax rates the same.” said Colchester County Mayor, Christine Blair.

“We are proud to have one of the lowest tax rates in rural Nova Scotia. We have continued to invest in our reserve funds in preparation for emergency spending if needed and we have continued to invest in capital projects that will help stimulate our struggling economy while improving local infrastructure. I believe we are well positioned to work through these trying times.” said Mayor Blair.

The Operating Budget is set in a context of competing needs, requests, opportunities, and anticipated revenues. Some costs and revenue streams are not within the Municipality’s control. Taxes collected and required to be transferred to the Provincial Government for services such as schools, housing, libraries, and assessment services, and to the Federal Government for policing, increased \$389,081 (2.8%) this year to a total of \$14,463,224. It is a notable achievement that Council accommodated this increase in the budget without raising tax rates.

“I’m very proud that in this budget we continue to financially support hard-working community organizations throughout Colchester County,” remarked Mayor Blair. The Municipality provides extensive funding for facilities, programs, events, and many not-for-profit community groups in the County. “It is the vital work that these organizations do that makes our communities wonderful and caring places to live in.”