

COUNCIL COMMITTEE

The Regular Session of Council Committee of the Municipality of the County of Colchester was held in the Courthouse, Truro, Nova Scotia, on Thursday, June 15, 2017.

Roll Call

The roll was called with the following Councillors in attendance:

Mayor Christine Blair (arrived at 7:07 pm)	
Councillor Eric Boutilier	District 1
Deputy Mayor Bill Masters, Chair	District 2
Councillor Geoff Stewart	District 3
Councillor Mike Cooper	District 4
Councillor Lloyd Gibbs	District 5
Councillor Karen MacKenzie	District 6
Councillor Michael Gregory	District 7
Councillor Ron Cavanaugh	District 8
Councillor Doug MacInnes	District 9
Councillor Tom Taggart	District 10
Councillor Wade Parker	District 11

Others Present

Mr. Rob Simonds, Chief Administrative Officer
 Mr. Crawford Macpherson, Director of Community Development
 Ms. Michelle Newell, Director of Public Works
 Mr. Wayne Wamboldt, Director of Solid Waste
 Mr. Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services
 Mr. Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor
 Mr. Mark Austin, Acting Economic Development Officer
 Mr. Devin Trefry, Acting Research, Policy & Comm. Engagement Officer
 Ms. Tracey Venno, Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Boutilier
 Seconded by Councillor MacInnes

“That the agenda be approved with the following amendments:

- Add Item #12b, Proposed Quarry Expansion - Little Dyke;
- Add Item #12c, Request from Rotary Club;
- Add Item #16b, Graduation Dates;
- Add two Negotiations in Closed Session;
- Add two Legal Matters in Closed Session;
- Add one Property Matter in Closed Session.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Councillor Stewart
 Seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the minutes from the meeting held on May 9, 2017 be approved as presented.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Business Arising from Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes of the meeting held on May 9, 2017.

ACTION ITEMS

First Reading – Amendment to the Central Colchester Land Use By-law

At their meeting on May 25, 2017, Council granted authority to June Council Committee to approve, by way of First Reading, amendments to the Central Colchester Land Use By-law.

Moved by Councillor MacInnes
Seconded by Councillor Gregory

“That Council approves at First Reading, the amended Central Colchester Land Use By-law, as presented, for purposes of forwarding to a Public Hearing reserving consideration of the amendment until Second Reading following the Public Hearing.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Property Tax Exemption Request Forest Glen Bible Camp

Mr. Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services advised that a request was received for property tax exemption status from Forest Glen Bible Camp Society (property # 09866019) under the Municipality’s Tax Exemption By-law. The request for exemption meets requirements under the By-law and is consistent with past practice.

Moved by Councillor Stewart
Seconded by Councillor Boutilier

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the Forest Glen Bible Camp Society, property # 09866019, be added to the Tax Exemption By-law Property List for fiscal year 2017/18 and beyond.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Maintenance Service for Fire Repeater Sites

Mr. Crawford Macpherson, Director of Community Development, advised that this item pertains to sole sourcing a service contract for the maintenance and repair of the Repeaters utilized by the Fire Services in the Municipality.

Nova Communications was the architect of the Municipality’s fire service paging and communication infrastructure and has been providing service repairs since 2003. Additionally, Nova Communications provides the maintenance contract for all of the provincial communication tower sites.

A quote has been received in the amount of \$20,723 including taxes for two year maintenance service. The first year of the Maintenance Service for the fire repeater sites was included in the current budget under Radio/Signaling/Repairs.

Moved by Councillor MacInnes
Seconded by Councillor Stewart

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that Nova Communications be awarded the Maintenance Service for the Fire Repeater Sites at a cost of \$20,723 including taxes, for fiscal 2017/18 and 2018/19.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**United Way of Colchester
County Vital Signs Project –
Request for Funding**

Mr. Mark Austin, Acting Economic Development Officer, provided a summary of this item, indicating that a request for funding has been received from the United Way of Colchester County for the Vital Signs Project.

Vital Signs is a national program of the Communities Foundation of Canada, used by more than 50 communities nationally to report on the state of their communities. The Colchester Vital Signs project seeks to measure the vitality of our community, identify trends and support actions on issues critical to quality of life.

Total costs for the project is \$21,500, with half being contributed by the Community Foundation of Nova Scotia. The amount being requested of the Municipality is \$2,500. As a funding partner, the Municipality will have opportunity to sit on a Steering Committee to help choose the areas of focus for the Vital Signs Report.

Moved by Councillor Taggart
Seconded by Councillor Gregory

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that funding in the amount of \$2,500 be approved for the United Way of Colchester County’s Vital Signs Project, with source of funds being Planning Studies budget; and,

That the Municipality participate in the Steering Committee.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Colchester Internet
Improvement Feasibility
Study and Plan**

Mr. Austin introduced this item advising that as per Council directive, a letter concerning the state of rural internet service and the municipal role in improvements was sent to the FCM President and copied to MP Bill Casey and MLA Karen Casey.

Federal and provincial funding opportunities for rural internet initiatives are currently underway. In preparation of future funding applications, staff are proposing to undertake an Internet Improvement Feasibility Study and Plan, led by staff and external consultant services as required. A brief summary of the Study and Plan as detailed in the action item was provided.

In addition to staff time, estimated costs associated with the Study and Plan would be in the range of \$9,000. External funding would be sought for the Study and Plan. Source of funds for any amounts not funded externally would be from existing Economic Development and Community Development operating budgets.

A report on the Internet Improvement Feasibility Study and Plan would be brought back to Council by November 2017.

Moved by Mayor Blair
Seconded by Councillor Taggart

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that staff undertake the work necessary to produce a *Colchester Internet Improvement Feasibility Study and Plan*; and,

That staff source external funds or allocate funds from the existing Economic Development and Community Development operating budgets to a maximum of \$9,000 to cover the expenses and consultant fees associated with the *Colchester Internet Improvement Feasibility Study and Plan* project; and,

That staff report back to Council to present the draft completed *Colchester Internet Improvement Feasibility Study and Plan* by or before November 2017.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Saltmarsh Restoration,
Onslow North River Marsh
Body NS 067**

Mr. Macpherson provided Council with a brief overview of the Saltmarsh Restoration Project. A decision to proceed with the project requires approval from a majority of the Onslow North River Marsh Body NS 067 membership. As a landowner and member of the Marsh Body, the Municipality has a right to cast a vote on the project. A favourable vote will enable the Department of Agriculture to commence work over the summer. A meeting for this purpose is being arranged for later in June.

Moved by Councillor Cavanaugh
Seconded by Councillor Boutilier

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that support be provided to the Department of Agriculture for the Marsh Restoration Project and authorize staff to represent the Municipality at the Onslow North River Marsh Body NS 067 meeting to cast a vote in favour of the project.

Motion Carried.
(*Councillor MacInnes opposed*)

Capital Budget

Council approved the current five year capital budget in August 2016. At that time, interest was expressed in having a special session to deal with the 2017/18 capital budget. Staff is seeking possible dates to hold a capital budget session.

Moved by Councillor Stewart
Seconded by Councillor Parker

“That August 8, 2017 at 6:00 pm be approved for the capital budget meeting.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Rural Vitality Projects

Mr. Austin provided an overview of this item advising that Colchester County, along with Engage Colchester, made a project application under the Communities Foundation of Canada (CFC) for small project grants around the theme of rural vitality.

The applications were reviewed by CFC and it was suggested there were two viable projects within the application. Two new applications were made separating the activities and budget to help maximize grant eligibility. Both project applications were approved with grant contributions of \$15,000 per project.

Mr. Austin provided a brief presentation on the two projects: ***PlaceSpeak Colchester*** which focuses on the introduction and use of a civic engagement software platform and is designed specifically for municipal use; and, ***Connect Colchester*** which focuses on connecting new entrepreneurs in Colchester with each other.

A summary of staff resources and timeline, along with a breakdown of budget and funding sources for the projects was also outlined in the presentation.

Moved by Councillor Gregory
Seconded by Councillor MacInnes

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that staff embark on the Rural Vitality projects: *PlaceSpeak Colchester* and *Connect Colchester*; and,

That staff allocate funds in the amount \$14,000, sourced from the departmental budgets of Economic Development, Community Development, and Administration as contained in the 2017/18 Municipality of Colchester Operating Budget; and,

That staff accept the grants offered by the Community Foundation of Canada to undertake these projects; and,

That staff inform Council on the activities of the two projects periodically and at their completion.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Corporate Gifts/Hospitality Policy

Deputy Mayor Masters indicated that having a Corporate Gifts/Hospitality Policy would provide staff with clear direction on how to handle situations where corporate gifts are being offered.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier
Seconded by Councillor MacInnes

“That staff research a Corporate Gifts/Hospitality Policy and bring back to Council for consideration.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Proposed Quarry Expansion
- Little Dyke**

Councillor Taggart brought this item forward on behalf of the residents of District 10 expressing concern regarding the proposed quarry expansion in the Glenholme/Little Dyke area. Councillor Taggart suggested that Council write a letter to the Minister of Environment in support of the residents, requesting a full environmental assessment.

Key areas of concerns for the residents are environmental harm and quality of life for residents. Specifically, some of the concerns include:

- Hours of operation;
- Noise levels;
- Proximity of proposed extraction areas to residential, recreation, and green spaces;
- Increased heavy traffic;
- Visual appeal; and,
- Air and water quality.

Concern was expressed about requesting a full environmental assessment. Discussion was held regarding this not being under municipal jurisdiction, however, Council could voice the concerns in support of the residents, requesting that the government be mindful of the quality of life of the residents. Further discussion was held regarding existing regulations that are in place that must be followed.

Council agreed that staff, along with the Municipal Solicitor, investigate this further and report back to Council at the end of the month before a decision is made.

Request from Rotary Club

Mayor Blair declared a conflict of interest and removed herself from the table.

Mr. Rob Simonds, CAO, advised that a request was received regarding participating in the Rotary Club's annual yearbook for 2018. Since there is no policy in place to deal with such requests, staff is seeking directive from Council.

Moved by Councillor Cavanaugh
Seconded by Councillor Gibbs

"That Council Committee recommends to Council that a 1/3 page ad be placed in the Rotary Club's annual yearbook for 2018, at a cost of \$690, tax inclusive; and,

That the existing Council group photo be used for the ad."

Motion Carried.
(Councillor's Cooper and Parker opposed)

At this point, Mayor Blair returned to the table.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Hub Centre Drive Paving – Property Owner Response

Council had previously directed staff to seek feedback from property owners along Hub Centre Drive regarding their willingness to cost share on the paving of the road. Based on the total estimated cost of \$230,000 to pave the road, and with 16 properties fronting on the road, the property owners contribution would be in the range of \$14,375. A letter was sent to all property owners on May 19, 2017 outlining this information with a requested response date of June 9th.

As of June 7, 2017, a total of four responses representing seven property owners, were received with three in favour of the improvement and four against.

Clarification as to whether previous signatures in favour of the improvement received at the time of the initial paving request in December 2016 were included in those in favour. Ms. Michelle Newell, Director of Public Works, advised they were not included as property owners had no costing information at the time of the original request.

Discussion was held on the tax revenue collected from the property owners and that the businesses did not build on a road that was intended to remain a gravel road. Additionally, these properties are in a developing business park, providing economic development and growth.

Concern was raised regarding the possibility of paving Hub Centre Drive when Council has been dealing with issues relating to other roads in the County in need of paving.

At this point, 9:09 pm, Councillor MacInnes left the meeting.

Further discussion was held on other possible funding options. It was agreed that staff look at options and bring back to Council for consideration.

Public Meeting – Paving of Hillridge, Hillvale and McCallum Drives

Dealing with the ongoing issue of the paving of Hillridge, Hillvale and McCallum Drives, Council had previously directed staff to coordinate a public meeting with the residents of Hillridge, Hillvale and McCallum Drives, as well as Runway Court, to gauge interest from the residents of Runway Court on the possibility of contributing to the paving costs, and to inform residents of the frontage cost reductions with the inclusion of the County contribution.

A public meeting was held on June 7, 2017. Ms. Newell provided an overview of the public meeting indicating that there were 25 residents in attendance; most of the attendees expressed serious concerns with the poor condition of the roads and did not feel it was their responsibility to fund the upgrades; and, provided a summary of the comment sheets returned by the residents. Ms. Newell advised that at this point, staff have not re-issued a petition for this paving project.

Discussion was held on the paving of J-Class Roads and concern was expressed with the entire process including public meetings, the provincial 50/50 cost share agreement, and the County's Local Improvement By-law.

Responding to a query on what other municipal units do in relation to the provincial agreement for paving of J-Class roads, Ms. Newell advised that a review was done on this with the following results: a number of municipal units cover the 50%, with funds from capital reserves, operating budget, general tax rate; some units have the residents covering the 50%; some units have cost sharing with the residents where both the municipality and the residents contribute a portion; some units have no J-Class roads; and, some refuse to participate in the program.

It was suggested that staff investigate the Local Improvement By-law and come back with possible options.

At this point, Councillor MacKenzie left the meeting.

**Public Meeting – Paving
Petitions, Burris Drive,
McCabe Street, Vernon
Street, Sillery Drive, Foxhill
Drive**

Ms. Newell advised that a public meeting was held to gauge public interest for the paving of Burris Drive, McCabe Street, Vernon Street, Sillery Drive, and Foxhill Drive under the provincial 50/50 cost share agreement. A total of 26 residents were in attendance with most attendees expressing serious concerns with the poor condition of the roads. Additionally, they did not feel it was their responsibility to fund any upgrades.

Petitions were distributed at the meeting and copies mailed to those residents not in attendance. The deadline for the petition to be returned is June 29, 2017.

It was noted that the residents urged the County to continue pushing NS Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal for better maintenance of these provincially owned streets.

**NS Recreation Facility Grant
Update**

Mr. Macpherson advised that staff had previously made application to the Province of Nova Scotia's Recreation Facility Grant Program to begin improvements to the former Palliser property during the 2017/18 fiscal year. On June 5, 2017, the Municipality received funding approval from the province in the amount of \$75,000. A plan for implementing Phase 1 of the improvements will be coming to Council at the end of the month for consideration.

Graduation Dates

Councillor Cooper advised that the Cobequid Educational Centre and South Colchester Academy's graduations are held the same night as the Council meeting and suggested that in future, consideration be given to changing the date of the Council meeting so that members of Council could attend the graduations to present County scholarships.

Brief discussion was held with members of Council in agreement that it would be nice to be able to present the scholarships, however, it was noted that meetings take precedence.

Director's Report

A report from the Director of Community Development was circulated in the package for this evening's meeting.

CLOSED SESSION

Moved by Councillor Gregory
Seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the meeting go into closed session at 9:20 pm.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Cooper
Seconded by Councillor Gregory

“That the meeting reconvene in open session at 11:33 pm.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Truro/Colchester Regional
Enterprise Network (REN)
Agreements**

Moved by Councillor Cooper
Seconded by Councillor Parker

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the Inter-Municipal Agreement, Participation Agreement, and Contribution Agreement be approved as amended; and

That the Mayor and CAO be authorized to sign the said agreements on behalf of County Council.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**RECC Request – Capital
Reserve**

Moved by Mayor Blair
Seconded by Councillor Gibbs

“That Council Committee recommends to Council allocating the operational surplus of \$132,778, to the RECC Capital Reserve Fund, pending approval of same from the Town of Truro.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Gibbs
Seconded by Councillor Cavanaugh

“That the meeting adjourn at 11:35 pm.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Tracey Veno
Recording Secretary