

## **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 April 11, 2019.

### **Roll Call**

The roll was called with the following Councillors in attendance:

Mayor Christine Blair	
Councillor Eric Boutilier	District 1
Councillor Bill Masters	District 2
Deputy Mayor Geoff Stewart, Chair	District 3
Councillor Mike Cooper	District 4
Councillor Lloyd Gibbs	District 5
Councillor Karen MacKenzie	District 6
Councillor Michael Gregory	District 7
Councillor Bob Pash	District 9
Councillor Tom Taggart	District 10

### **Regrets**

Councillor Ron Cavanaugh	District 8
Councillor Wade Parker	District 11

### **Others Present**

Mr. Rob Simonds, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)  
 Crawford Macpherson, Director of Community Development  
 Michelle Newell, Director of Public Works  
 Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services  
 Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor  
 Tracey Veno, Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary  
 Craig Burgess, Recreation Manager  
 Devin Trefry, Research, Policy and Community Engagement Officer

### **Approval of Agenda**

Moved by Councillor Gibbs  
 Seconded by Councillor Gregory

“That the agenda be approved with the following additions:

- Item 11b, Shoulder of the Road Pilot Project;
- Item 11c, Council Proceedings Policy;
- Item 11d, Fire Departments Capital;
- Item 11e, Volunteer Proclamation.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Masters  
 Seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the minutes of meeting held on March 14, 2019 be approved as presented.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

### **Business Arising from Minutes**

There was no business arising from the minutes of the meeting held on March 14, 2019.

**ACTION ITEMS****Municipal Physical Activity Leadership Program Agreement**

Craig Burgess, Recreation Manager, advised that this item relates to a renewal of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Province for the Municipal Physical Activity Leadership (MPAL) Program. The Province provides \$25,000 annually to local municipalities to promote physical activity and for Colchester, this covers a portion of the Active Communities Coordinator position. The initial agreement was for five years and since 2018, changed to annual agreements requiring the signature of the Mayor.

At it's meeting on March 28<sup>th</sup>, Council granted authority to April Committee to approve this item.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier  
Seconded by Councillor Masters

"That Council Committee authorizes the Mayor to execute the Municipal Physical Activity Leadership Program Agreement for 2019, and this agreement come back to Council annually for approval."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Archaeology Program for 2019**

Crawford Macpherson, Director of Community Development, provided a recap of the 2018 Debert archaeology workplan which included areas completed, results of the archaeological digs and status of reports, both pending and completed. Once completed, all reports require the approval of the Provincial Review Committee. Mr. Macpherson also provided the recommended priority for the upcoming 2019 season, the completion of testing at the proposed roundabout location.

Discussion was held on status of the reports by Kelman Heritage and Council expressed concern with the timeliness of completion of these reports.

Moved by Mayor Blair  
Seconded by Councillor Gregory

"That Council Committee recommends to Council that the archaeological program for 2019 concentrate on testing for the MacElmon roundabout, the gunite water tower lot and any work required by Public Works as part of the decommissioning of STP 2 be approved."

Motion Carried. *(opposed by Councillor Taggart)*

Moved by Councillor Taggart  
Seconded by Councillor Masters

"That Council Committee recommends to Council that the Municipal Solicitor write a letter to Kelman Heritage if no progress is made regarding finalizing necessary reports within 30 days."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Colchester Highland Games Grant Request**

Mr. Burgess indicated that the Colchester Highland Games Society is requesting funding for the 2019 Colchester Highland Games, being held in Bible Hill on September 7<sup>th</sup>. The request is for \$7,000 and if approved this will be third year funding will be received under the Community Events Grants. Since the budget will be discussed on April 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, Council can defer this request to budget deliberations.

Moved by Councillor Masters  
Seconded by Councillor Gibbs

“That the grant request from the Colchester Highland Games Society be deferred to budget deliberations.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Community Engagement Strategy**

Devin Trefry, Research, Policy and Community Engagement Officer, gave a brief presentation on the proposed Community Engagement Strategy which included the foundation of the strategy, various levels of engagement, the importance of the Municipality's brand, channels of engagement and how to promote those channels, communication guidelines and procedures and budget implications. Also, for Council information, Mr. Trefry played a short video to be used at the upcoming Saltscapes Expo.

Moved by Councillor Masters  
Seconded by Councillor Boutilier

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the Community Engagement Strategy be adopted as presented.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Mowing of Ditch – Hwy 289, Brookfield**

Ms. Newell, Director of Public Works, indicated that staff committed to mowing ditches along the sidewalk on Highway 289 in Brookfield with work being carried out two times per year. The mowing of this area is very labour intensive, requiring a flail mower, safety watch and manual whipper snipping. Residents expressed displeasure with the level of maintenance in 2018 and staff is seeking guidance on continued maintenance of this area. Information on manhours and estimated costs of carrying out this work was provided.

Concern was expressed with this being a provincial right-of-way and this being another example of downloading by the province. Further discussion was held on maintaining the current level of maintenance, the possibility of increasing the mowing to three times per year and, sub-contracting the work if mowed more frequently than twice per year.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier  
Seconded by Councillor Gregory

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that staff continue trimming the grassed ditches along the sidewalk on Highway 289 in Brookfield twice per year.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

It was noted that it be made known that the Municipality is carrying out this work as a courtesy and if residents want it mowed more frequently, the provincial MLA should be contacted.

**Tatamagouche Source  
Water Protection  
Advisory Committee –  
Letter to Energy and  
Mines**

Ms. Newell advised Council that the Tatamagouche Source Water Protection Advisory Committee recommended that a letter be written to the Minister of Energy and Mines stressing the Committee's disappointment with the lack of communication on an uncapped exploration drill hole located in the French River Watershed Area. A draft copy of the proposed letter was attached for Council review and consideration.

Brief discussion was held on the site of the uncapped drill hole, arsenic levels and that the letter should be copied to the MLA for Colchester North and the Minister of Lands and Forestry.

Moved by Councillor Gregory  
Seconded by Mayor Blair

"That Council Committee supports the recommendation of the Tatamagouche Source Water Protection Advisory Committee, and that a letter be forwarded to the Minister of Nova Scotia Energy and Mines regarding the discovery of the uncapped exploration drill hole in the French River Watershed; and,

That the letter be copied to the MLA for Colchester North and the Minister of Lands and Forestry."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Council Remuneration**

Mayor Blair advised that previously staff were directed to bring back information relative to compensation due to the loss of the one third portion of Council remuneration, specifically utilizing marginal tax rates ranging from 35 to 50 percent, to bring net remuneration back to the level prior to the removal of the one third exemption. This information was distributed to Council prior to tonight's meeting. The Executive Committee met earlier this evening for review of the same information, which resulted in a recommendation that staff undertake further analysis, bringing back information with dollar values, rather than a percentage marginal gross up. Staff were directed to bring back the dollar value for each position which would provide the same net pay amount prior to the federal tax change, only for the Council remuneration portion of income. Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services advised that the numbers would be run through the payroll system to achieve maintaining the net level of compensation.

Council debated the issue with some members indicating that the numbers as presented are no different than those presented by the Consultant and this report would not be supported. Parity with Kings County was also mentioned. Clarification was sought on whether the numbers were supposed to be representative of Council members gross T4 information or just for the Council remuneration. Mr. Fraser indicated it was only the Council remuneration portion of income.

Further discussion was held on what other municipalities have done; past motions and directives of Council relative to the remuneration; and dealing with this as two separate issues - compensation for the federal tax implications and overall review of Council remuneration. It was suggested that parity with Kings County would cover both.

Moved by Councillor Taggart  
Seconded by Councillor Gregory

"That the matter of Council remuneration be dealt with as two separate issues."

Motion Carried. *(opposed by Councillors Boutilier, Masters, Gibbs and Cooper)*

Moved by Councillor Taggart  
Seconded by Councillor Pash

"That Councillors Boutilier, Cooper and the Director of Corporate Services review the top up issue to address the federal tax implications and once this is done, review the overall remuneration."

Motion DEFEATED *(Mayor Blair, Deputy Mayor Stewart, Councillors Boutilier, Masters, Cooper, MacKenzie, Gregory, Pash, and Taggart opposed)*

Moved by Councillor Gregory  
Seconded by Councillor MacKenzie

"That staff undertake further analysis, bringing back information with dollar values rather than a percentage marginal gross up, to make Council net pay equivalent to prior to the federal tax changes, as per the recommendation of the Executive Committee."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

### **Shoulder of the Road Pilot Project**

Councillor Taggart advised Council of correspondence received from the Colchester Five Islands ATV Club regarding a provincial Shoulder of the Road Pilot Project. The Club has identified a trail that fits the criteria of the project that would be beneficial to the community and is seeking support to have more sites added to the Pilot Project.

Moved by Councillor Taggart  
Seconded by Councillor Boutilier

"That Council approves that the Mayor write a letter in support of the Colchester Five Island ATV Club's request to have a section of the highway in Five Islands included in the three year Off-Highway Vehicle Pilot Project."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

### **Council Proceedings Policy**

Councillor Cooper advised that recently Council agreed to a change in the Council Proceedings Policy relating to term of appointment to various Committees of Council. At the time of approval, there was no provision as to the implementation and he would like to see this referred to the Nominating Committee.

Discussion was held on this being implemented at the next term of Council; however, it was noted that the change was mentioned at the beginning of this term to enable better succession planning and there may be a missed opportunity if the change isn't implemented now. On the request for advice from the Municipal Solicitor, Dennis James indicated that it was a policy change with no effective date. The implementation date of the changes is Council's discretion. However, Mr. James advised that the election of Alternate Chair was done prior to the change in the Council Proceedings Policy, so whatever Council's decision, the election of Alternate Chair must come back to Council in October.

Moved by Councillor Cooper  
Seconded by Councillor Gibbs

"That the implementation date for the recent changes to the Council Proceedings Policy be referred to the Nominating Committee to bring a recommendation to Council on how to proceed."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

It was noted that should Council implement the changes to the Policy, it does not restrict any Council member from reoffering to serve on Committees.

#### **Fire Departments - Capital**

Councillor Cooper advised that during debate on base level of service for Fire Departments, there was discussion about a base rate for capital funding but it never proceeded beyond initial discussion. He indicated Fire Departments can't keep themselves going through fundraising alone and would like to see this referred to staff for review.

Brief discussion was held on overall support for Fire Departments and operating versus capital support.

Moved by Councillor Cooper  
Seconded by Councillor Taggart

"That the matter be referred to staff for review and brought back to Council for further discussion."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

#### **Volunteer Proclamation**

Moved by Mayor Blair  
Seconded by Councillor Cooper

"That Council proclaims the week of April 7<sup>th</sup> to April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019 as Provincial Volunteer Week."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

#### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

**Cobequid Wildlife  
Rehabilitation Centre  
Tax Exemption Request**

A request for a tax exemption was received from the Cobequid Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre (CWRC) in Hilden. Upon review of the request, in consultation with the Municipal Solicitor, staff determined that the CWRC does not meet the criteria for tax exemption as it does not own the property, therefore is not eligible for exemption.

**Director's Report**

A Report from the Director of Corporate Services was circulated in the package for this evening's meeting.

**CLOSED SESSION**

Moved by Councillor Gregory  
Seconded by Councillor Gibbs

"That the meeting go into closed session at 10:33 pm."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Gregory  
Seconded by Councillor Gibbs

"That the meeting reconvene in open session at 11:15 pm."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Councillor Gregory  
Seconded by Councillor Gibbs

"That the meeting adjourn at 11:16 pm."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Tracey Veno  
Recording Secretary