

COUNCIL COMMITTEE

The Regular Session of the Council Committee of the Municipality of the County of Colchester was conducted virtually, via Zoom Webinars on Thursday, October 14, 2021, beginning at 6:00 pm.

Roll Call

The roll was called with the following Councillors in attendance:

Mayor Christine Blair	
Councillor Eric Boutilier	District 1
Councillor Laurie Sandeson	District 2
Deputy Mayor Geoff Stewart, Chair	District 3
Councillor Mike Cooper	District 4
Councillor Tim Johnson	District 5
Councillor Michael Gregory	District 7
Councillor Lisa Patton	District 8
Councillor Marie Benoit	District 9
VACANT	District 10
Councillor Wade Parker	District 11

Regrets

Councillor Karen MacKenzie	District 6
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Staff Present

Rob Simonds, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
 Scott Fraser, Director of Corp. Services/Acting Director of Solid Waste
 Michelle Boudreau, Director of Public Works
 Paul Smith, Acting Director of Community Development
 Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor
 Tracey Veno, Recording Secretary
 Devin Trefry, Research, Policy and Community Engagement Officer
 Craig Burgess, Recreation Manager (for Item 7)
 Jenn Martin, Acting Economic Development Officer
 Dave Westlake, Emergency Management/Protective Services Coordinator
 Mollie MacBurnie-Haas, IT Support Technician

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Johnson and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the agenda be approved with the following amendments:

- Remove Item #6, Colchester Clean, and defer to November Council Committee;
- Add Item #11b, Stewiacke Library;
- Add Item# 18, Negotiations in Closed Session.” Carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That the minutes of the meetings held on June 1, August 3, September 7, and September 16, 2021, be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

Business Arising from Minutes

None

ACTION ITEMS**Award of RFP – Fire Dispatch Services**

Dave Westlake, Emergency Management/Protective Services Coordinator, advised that this item deals with awarding the Request for Proposals (RFP) for

Fire Dispatch Services. A brief overview was provided including background information, timelines of and submission received in response to the RFP issued, past experiences with Valley Communications Inc., and the Town of Stewiacke's funding contribution.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Cooper

"That Council Committee recommends to Council that the proposal for Fire Dispatch Services be awarded to Valley Communications Incorporated for a total proposal price of \$407,678.58, excluding HST." Carried unanimously.

Art Purchase Program

Craig Burgess, Recreation Manager, advised that similar to last year, there are challenges with hosting the annual Art Acquisition Program this Fall due to Covid-19. The venue where it is typically held, NSCC McCarthy Hall, is not permitting outside organizations to utilize their facility until sometime in the new year (2022). Staff presented options for consideration and is seeking Council directive on how to proceed with the 2021 Art Purchase Program.

Brief discussion was held on the possibility of hosting the event at the RECC. It is a higher traffic area with opportunity for more people to view the displayed artwork. Mr. Burgess indicated that he would look into this, however, noted that security would likely be needed.

Moved by Councillor Johnson and seconded by Mayor Blair

"That Council Committee recommends to Council that the 2021 Art Purchase Program be postponed until Winter 2022; and

That staff investigate the logistics of hosting the event at the RECC." Carried unanimously.

Briefing Memo re Disposal of Hazardous Substances

Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor, provided an overview of the briefing memo and attachments regarding the Disposal of Hazardous Substances, as circulated in the Council package for this evening's meeting. The review included background information leading to the creation of the Disposal of Hazardous Substances By-law and Policy; the application made by Colchester Containers for a permit to operate a site in Middle Stewiacke and Council's decision to refuse the application; outcome of legal action taken by Colchester Containers to strike down the By-law and Policy; amendments made to the Solid Waste By-law to address disposal of asbestos as a result of the court decision to strike down the By-law and Policy; and, the Municipality's successful appeal of the decision to strike down. The issue now is that there are two different documents, the Solid Waste By-law, and the Disposal of Hazardous Substances By-law, that are not consistent as it relates to asbestos disposal. Additionally, as of December 2019, the Municipal Government Act mandates a municipal planning strategy (MPS) for all lands in the municipality. It is possible that the regulations of the disposal of hazardous substances can be addressed through the MPS and LUB.

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Patton

"That the disposal of hazardous substances be referred to Solid Waste and Planning staff, as well as the Municipal Solicitor, for further advice as to recommended policy direction." Carried unanimously.

Mi'kmaw Land Acknowledgment

At the September Council meeting, staff were directed to look into developing a land acknowledgement statement to open all Council, Council Committee, and Presentation meetings. A sample statement was provided for consideration noting that the statement could be modified/shortened as applicable to other uses.

Brief discussion was held on shortening the statement. Responding to a query on whether the statement had been vetted through legal, Mr. James advised it was not, however, he felt there were no legal implications with the way the statement was written.

Moved by Councillor Johnson and seconded by Councillor Gregory

"That Council Committee recommends to Council that the following land acknowledgement statement for opening all Council, Council Committee and Presentation meetings be approved:

In peace and friendship, and in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, I would like to begin by acknowledging that the Municipality of Colchester is in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq." Carried Unanimously.

Virtual Voting Policy

Following brief discussion at the September Council meeting regarding voting procedures for virtual meetings, the Municipal Solicitor advised that a policy would be required to change voting procedures. The draft Voting Procedure for Virtual Meetings Policy would allow for the Chair to ask for members of Council opposed to a motion to signify by raising their hand electronically with the Chair confirming each negative vote verbally. Those not indicating opposition by a show of hands would be deemed to have voted in favour of the motion.

Concern was expressed with changing the process and the process for voting at virtual meetings should remain status quo, with each member verbally indicating whether they are in favour or opposed to the motion on the floor.

Moved by Councillor Sandeson and seconded by Councillor Benoit

"That Council Committee recommends to Council that the Voting Procedure for Virtual Meetings Policy be adopted on a trial basis." Motion Carried (Councillor Cooper opposed).

**Municipal Building
Redevelopment Initiative**

Paul Smith, A/Director of Community Development, indicated that the purpose of this item is to receive direction from Council on the long-term planning of municipal office space. Included in the report was information on improvements urgently needed to address functional spacing deficits, building neglect, public safety, and accessibility issues. Municipal offices were discussed during the Strategic Priorities session and although it was not a top priority, it did raise awareness on the issue.

Detailed discussion was held on the various options as presented by staff. Points of discussion included focusing on a new building; continuing maintenance in existing building; energy efficiencies; security concerns; locations for a new building; costs of renovating old buildings; preserving the

history and heritage status of existing municipal building; no room for expansion; uncertainties with NS Department of Justice occupancy; immediate need to address safety issues of current building; parking considerations; and, vision and planning for the future. Referring to the maintenance of existing building, the CAO advised that we have a responsibility to address the safety concerns and to bring stabilization to the building and any necessary maintenance will be carried out.

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council Committee recommend Council approve undertaking an updated functional Study and feasibility analysis for the Municipal Building and a detailed design process for accessible washrooms and elevator, as well as procurement process for window/ door replacement, and masonry restoration, which shall be funded through the Municipal Building Capital Reserve; and,

That a space programming process for a new Municipal Building also be explored.” Motion **DEFEATED**. (*Councillors Boutilier, Sandeson, Cooper, Johnson, Patton, and Parker opposed*)

Moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That Council Committee recommend Council approve undertaking a space programming process for a new Municipal Building.” Carried unanimously.

Stewiacke Library

The CAO advised that this item was referred to this evening’s Council Committee meeting following the October 5th presentation received by Tiffany Bartlett, CEO of the Colchester-East Hants Public Library, and Dale Bogle, CAO for the Town of Stewiacke. Deputy Mayor Stewart indicated that next steps would be to proceed with drafting a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Municipality and the Town for the Stewiacke Library.

Brief discussion was held on the previous agreement for the Stewiacke Library including the County’s contribution being based on percentage usage by the County, up to a maximum amount; and previous plans being for a combined library/civic building. Referring to MOU with the Town of Truro for their library, the Municipal Solicitor suggested incorporating similar principles into the MOU with the Town of Stewiacke.

Moved by Mayor Blair and seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that staff begin drafting a Memorandum of Understanding between the Municipality and Town of Stewiacke for the Stewiacke Library, subject to further review by Council.” Carried unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Brookfield & RECC Solar Installations – Performance Update

This item provided a brief performance update on the Brookfield and RECC Solar panel installations. The Brookfield installation was commissioned in June of 2020 and has exceeded projections by nearly 9000 watts, producing approximately \$21,000 in annual income. The RECC installation was

commissioned in September 2020 and has also performed much better than anticipated, producing approximately \$35,000 in annual income.

Seasonal Disinfection

This item provided Council with information regarding a pilot program to turn off UV disinfection for treated wastewater during winter months. This approach has been approved in other municipalities such as Halifax and CBRM. This pilot program will help to reduce capital and operating costs for the UV system.

Nova Scotia Environment has approved a one-year pilot, with requirements for daily and weekly testing of effluent, as well as bi-weekly testing of the river water. It also requires the Municipality to undertake a public education program to explain the purpose of the pilot, and the reasons and science behind seasonal disinfection.

Michelle Boudreau, Director of Public Works, indicated that this is being brought to the attention of Council as sometimes when changes are made with treatment of wastewater, it can create public conversation and encouraged Council members to contact her if there are any concerns relative to the public information that will be released.

Review of Debert Airport Reports and Studies

A detailed report entitled Review of Debert Airport Reports and Studies was included in the package for this evening's meeting. The report included information such as an overview of the Debert Airport; current limitations; operations and infrastructure; business development opportunities; strategic planning and timelines; and funding opportunities.

Director's Report

A report from the Acting Director of Solid Waste was circulated in the package for tonight's meeting.

CLOSED SESSION

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Patton

"That the meeting go into closed session at 8:25 pm." Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Patton

"That the meeting reconvene in open session at 9:40 pm." Carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Gregory

"That the meeting adjourn at 9:40 pm." Carried unanimously.

Tracey Veno
Recording Secretary