

**COUNCIL COMMITTEE**

The Regular Session of the Council Committee of the Municipality of the County of Colchester was conducted virtually, via Zoom Webinars and in-person on March 12, 2026, beginning at 6:00 pm.

In peace and friendship, and in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, it was acknowledged that the Municipality of Colchester is in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq.

<b>Roll</b>	Mayor Christine Blair	
	Cllr. Paul Weatherby	District 1
	Deputy Mayor Laurie Sandeson, Chair	District 2
	Cllr. Sheldon Richardson	District 3
	Cllr. Mike Cooper	District 4
	Cllr. Tim Johnson	District 5
	Cllr. Nigel Leggett	District 6
	Cllr. Sherry Martell	District 7
	Cllr. Lisa Patton	District 8 <i>(virtual)</i>
	Cllr. Marie Benoit	District 9
	Cllr. Charlene Fletcher	District 10
	Cllr. Allan Kennedy	District 11

**Staff Present**

Dan Troke, Chief Administrative Officer  
 Phil Redden, Director of Solid Waste  
 Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services  
 Michelle Boudreau, Director of Public Works  
 Paul Smith, Director of Community Development  
 Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor  
 Tracey Veno, Recording Secretary  
 Jenn Mantin, Economic Development Officer  
 Mollie MacBurnie-Haas, IT Support  
 Kelly MacIsaac, HR Specialist *(for items 5)*  
 Dave Westlake, Emergency Management/Protective Services Coordinator  
 Craig Burgess, Recreation Manager *(for item 7&8)*

<b>Approval of Agenda</b>	Moved by Councillor Kennedy, seconded by Councillor Cooper  “That the agenda be approved with the addition of 17b, Contract Matter in closed session.” Carried unanimously.
<b>Approval of Minutes</b>	Moved by Councillor Weatherby, seconded by Councillor Benoit  “That the minutes of the meetings held on February 3 and 12, be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.
<b>Business Arising from Minutes</b>	None.

**ACTION ITEMS**

<b>Personnel Policy Amendments - 5.11 Exit Interviews</b>	The Human Resources Specialist presented proposed amendments to Personnel Policy 5.11 Exit Interviews. Last updated in 2014, the amendments reflect current operations processes, up-to-date Human Resource practices and the addition of an option for online exit interview. Proposed changes include the addition of employee departure information letter; clarification around confidentiality; purpose of data collection; ensures proper
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documentation is being provided to employees; and HR being the designate for in-person interviews.

Discussion was held on ensuring that employees being terminated are aware of doing exit interviews if requested. The Municipal Solicitor cautioned that legal implications may be a factor in conducting exit interviews following termination and these could not be conducted until all matters are concluded.

Moved by Councillor Leggett, seconded by Councillor Kennedy

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the updated Exit Interviews Personnel Policy be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously

**Merging of the Municipality of East Hants into Colchester Regional Emergency Management Organization**

The Emergency Management/Protective Services Coordinator provided an overview on a request from the Municipality of East Hants to join the Colchester Regional Emergency Management Organization (REMO). The report included some background information on the REMO, benefits of a merger, and if approved, work involved following the merger. The Town of Truro has approved the potential merger, and consideration is being given by the Town of Stewiacke.

Responding to a query on declaring a local emergency, the Emergency Management/Protective Services Coordinator indicated that the group would act as one entity so any of the Mayors or Councils can declare for the region. Brief discussion was also held on associated costs of a merger. It was indicated that there would be no additional resources other than staff time and legal to draft new by-laws and inter-municipal agreements and establishing a new Regional Emergency Advisory Committee.

Moved by Mayor Blair, seconded by Councillor Richardson

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the Municipality permit the Municipality of East Hants to join our Colchester Regional Emergency Management Organization.” Carried unanimously.

**Community Event Grants Policy Amendments**

The Recreation Manager presented proposed amendments to the Community Event Grants (CEG) Policy. With the implementation of the Central Nova Scotia Tourism Development Society (CNSTDS), updates are required to the Policy to better align with CSNTDS’s policies and practices. Key changes include providing clarity around types of eligible events under this Policy as well as the CNSTDS Policy; stipulation to prevent duplication of receiving funding under both policies; and maximum grant allowance amount.

Moved by Councillor Benoit, seconded by Councillor Weatherby

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the amendments to the Community Event Grants Policy be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

**Community Event Grant Request – Atlantic Members Conference 2026, 4-H Nova Scotia**

The Recreation Manager reported on a request from 4H Nova Scotia for their 2026 Atlantic Members Conference taking place March 27-29, 2026. Requests of this nature can be considered by Council under the criteria of the Community Event Grant Policy. The amount being requested is \$5,000. Staff recommend supporting the request in the amount of \$3,000.

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Richardson

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that funding in the amount of \$5,000 be approved for 4H Nova Scotia’s Atlantic Members Conference 2026.” Motion carried (*Councillor Weatherby opposed*).

#### **Annual Account Write-Offs**

The Director of Corporate Services advised that account write-offs are brought to Council annually for approval and provided a summary of the collection process. This year’s request consists of four mobile homes - one removed from a property, two that were demolished, and one destroyed by fire, as well as one under the water utility. In all cases, the collection agency is unable to locate the owner. The total write-off request for 2025/26 is \$8,575.46.

Moved by Mayor Blair, seconded by Councillor Richardson

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the 2025/26 property taxes, water utility receivables and interest totalling \$8,575.46 be written off.” Carried unanimously.

#### **Three-Year Cost Sharing Agreement, J Class Roads**

The Director of Public Works advised that this item relates to the Three-Year Cost Sharing Agreement for paving of J-Class Roads and provided background information as well as Colchester’s history/experiences with the program. The agreement provides for 50% funding from the Province and the other 50% borne by the Municipality, whether through the residents or tax rate. Entering into the agreement does not bind the Municipality to any financial or paving commitment, rather it enables the submission of roads to the Province for possible cost-shared paving.

Clarification was sought on ownership of roads after paving. The Director of Public Works indicated that ownership remains with the Province.

Moved by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Mayor Blair

“That Council Committee recommends to Council to enter into the Three-Year (2027-28, 2028-29, 2029-30) Cost Sharing Agreement No. 2026-007 for J Class Roads with the Province; and,

That the Mayor and CAO be authorized to sign Cost Share Agreement No. 2026-007.” Carried unanimously.

#### **Municipal Fees Policy Revisions**

The Director of Public Works presented on the Municipal Fees Policy revisions. Proposed amendments involve water, sewer, and electric vehicle charging station fees.

Brief discussion was held on costs of sewer lateral installs as compared to other municipalities. The Director indicated that Colchester would fall mid-range, however, noted that charges are based on cost recovery. Responding to a query on charges for combined trench for sewer and water, the Director indicated that for the majority of sewer installs done, water service is not available and as such, this is not something that we would run into very often.

Moved by Councillor Weatherby, seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the proposed changes to the Municipal Fees Policy be accepted as presented.” Carried unanimously.

**Tax Exemption Request – Truro Housing Outreach Society**

The Director of Corporate Services advised that a request has been received from Truro Housing Outreach Society (THOS) for a tax exemption for their property located at 22 Tidal Bore Road, Central Onslow. Included in the report was property assessment and taxation information. THOS is a registered charitable organization and non-profit society in Nova Scotia. Under Section 71 (1)(a) of the Municipal Government Act, a registered charitable organization may be exempted from taxes if the property is used directly and solely for charitable purposes. This property is 100% dedicated to supportive housing with no other use reported. Staff recommend supporting the request from THOS.

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Richardson

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the request for a tax exemption from Truro Housing Outreach Society for property AAN #'s 00104949, be approved, effective 2026-27.” Carried unanimously.

**INFORMATION ITEMS****Tourism Marketing Levy: Fines and Audit – Non-Compliant Operators**

This report provided information regarding the commencement of enforcing compliance provisions of the Tourism Marketing Levy By-law, including the potential imposing of fines and conducting audits/inspections of tourist accommodation operators who remain non-compliant.

**Flashing Crosswalk Signals, Salmon River Road at Eagle Drive**

This Information Item informed Council of a request received by Councillor Leggett for flashing crosswalk signals at an existing crosswalk on Salmon River Road at Eagle Drive. As this is a provincial road, the request was forwarded to the local MLA, but no response has been received. A similar request was received in 2021 with a response from Nova Scotia Public Works in 2023 indicating that the flashing signals were not warranted at this location. To date, staff have not received directive to advance the matter further.

Discussion took place on concerns expressed by residents during the recent community walks for Active Transportation, and standards for the crosswalks being based on an Ontario study.

Moved by Mayor Blair, seconded by Councillor Leggett

“That staff be directed to follow up on the request for flashing crosswalk signals at the existing crosswalk on Salmon River Road at Eagle Drive and report back to Council.” Carried unanimously.

The issue of speed signs recently placed in various communities in the County was raised. Points of discussion included brightness of signs, battery life, solar panels for the units not being installed yet, programming of units in school zones and the need to purchase additional units as two is not sufficient.

Concern was also expressed about the length of time it is taking to get responses from the Province on crosswalk request. A suggestion about possibly using flags at crosswalk locations similar to the Town of Truro was made. Staff indicated that this could be investigated with information being brought back to Council.

**Main Street Bridge Update**

This Information Item provided an update on the Main Street Bridge over the Salmon River, as well as the Edmund Lynds Bridge on Route 311 in North

River. Details included type of work on the structures, anticipated timelines, and budgetary information.

**Director's Report**

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

**CLOSED SESSION**

Moved by Councillor Benoit, seconded by Councillor Kennedy

"That the meeting go into closed session at 7:00pm." Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Richardson, seconded by Councillor Benoit

"That the meeting reconvene in open session at 8:43pm." Carried unanimously.

**Contract Negotiations – Debert  
Airport Operator Agreement**

Moved by Councillor Benoit, seconded by Councillor Kennedy

"That Council Committee recommends to Council entering into an extension of the Airport Operator Agreement with the Truro Flying Club under the terms as outlined in closed session." Carried unanimously.

**Personnel Matter – Non-union  
Salary Increases**

Moved by Councillor Leggett, seconded by Councillor Kennedy

"That Council Committee recommends to Council that the non-union staff salary adjustments be approved for the next three years as presented in closed session." Carried unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Councillor Martell, the meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.

Tracey Veno  
Recording Secretary