

MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

The Regular Session of the Municipal Council of the Municipality of the County of Colchester was conducted virtually via Zoom Webinars, on Thursday, May 27, 2021, at 6:00 pm.

Roll Call

The roll was called with the following Council members 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 Karen MacKenzie	District 6 (arrived late)
Councillor Michael Gregory	District 7 (arrived late)
Councillor Lisa Patton	District 8
Councillor Marie Benoit	District 9
Councillor Tom Taggart	District 10
Councillor Wade Parker	District 11

Staff Present

Rob Simonds, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
 Michelle Boudreau, Director of Public Works
 Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services/Acting Director of Solid Waste
 Paul Smith, Acting Director of Community Development
 Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor
 Tracey Venno, Recording Secretary
 Devin Trefry, Research, Policy, and Community Engagement Officer
 Tim Smith, IT Manager
 Mike MacKinnon, Manager of Building Inspections

Due to a directive by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing pursuant to the provincial State of Emergency related to COVID-19, all Colchester Council meetings must be held remotely by teleconference or on a virtual platform. In order to ensure transparency and honour the commitment for Colchester Council to conduct its business in public, these draft minutes are being posted within twenty-four hours of the meeting. They will not be reviewed and approved until the next regularly scheduled meeting of Colchester Council on June 24, 2021. Until these minutes are formally approved by Colchester Council, they cannot be relied on as an official record of the May 27, 2021, meeting.

Appointment of Solicitor

Moved by Councillor Cooper
 Seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council waives policy and appoints Patterson Law as the Municipality’s Solicitor for fiscal year 2021-22.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Boutilier
Seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That the agenda be approved with the following additions:

- Item 9b, Highway Interchanges;
- Item 12b, Cumberland County Policing Review;
- Item 12c, Housing; and
- Item 16, Public Safety in Closed Session.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Councillor Benoit
Seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the minutes of the meeting held on April 29, 2021, be approved as presented.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

At this point, Councillor Gregory joined the meeting.

Business Arising from Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes of the meeting held on April 29, 2021.

Standing Committee Reports and Recommendations

Deputy Mayor Stewart, Chair of Council Committee, presented the report from the meeting held on May 13, 2021:

Regional Accessibility Committee

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart
Seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the Terms of Reference for the Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee and the appointment of Committee members, as presented at the May 13th Council Committee meeting, not be approved.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

At this point, Deputy Mayor Stewart declared a conflict of interest and Councillor Cooper, Alternate Chair of Council Committee, presented the following motion. Mayor Blair also declared a conflict of interest on this matter.

FCM

Moved by Councillor Cooper
Seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That Council endorses Deputy Mayor Stewart’s candidacy for 3rd Vice President of FCM and that the following resolution be approved:

**2021 FEDERATION OF CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES
ELECTION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

WHEREAS the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) represents the interests of member municipalities on policy and program matters that fall within federal jurisdiction;

WHEREAS FCM's Board of Directors is comprised of elected municipal officials from all regions and sizes of communities to form a broad base of support and provide FCM with the united voice required to carry the municipal message to the federal government; and

WHEREAS FCM's virtual Annual Conference and Trade Show will be held May 31 to June 4, 2021, during which time the Annual General Meeting will be held and followed by the election of FCM's Board of Directors;

BE IT RESOLVED that Council of the Municipality of the County of Colchester endorses DEPUTY MAYOR GEOFF STEWART to stand for election as 3rd Vice President on FCM's Board of Directors for the period starting in June 2021 and ending June 2026; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Council assumes all costs associated with DEPUTY MAYOR GEOFF STEWART attending FCM's Board of Directors meetings."

AND

"That Council endorses Mayor Blair's candidacy for the FCM Board of Directors as a representative of Nova Scotia and approves the following resolution:

**2021 FEDERATION OF CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES
ELECTION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

WHEREAS the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) represents the interests of member municipalities on policy and program matters that fall within federal jurisdiction;

WHEREAS FCM's Board of Directors is comprised of elected municipal officials from all regions and sizes of communities to form a broad base of support and provide FCM with the united voice required to carry the municipal message to the federal government; and

WHEREAS FCM's virtual Annual Conference and Trade Show will be held May 31 to June 4, 2021, during which time the Annual General Meeting will be held and followed by the election of FCM's Board of Directors;

BE IT RESOLVED that Council of the Municipality of the County of Colchester endorse MAYOR CHRISTINE BLAIR to stand for election on FCM's Board of Directors for the period starting in June 2021 and ending June 2022; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Council assumes all costs associated with MAYOR CHRISTINE BLAIR attending FCM's Board of Directors meetings."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Following the vote on the FCM resolution, the Deputy Mayor resumed presenting the remainder of the report from the May Council Committee meeting.

Salmon River School Property

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart
Seconded by Councillor Parker

"That Council approves that staff address the following issues at the former Salmon River School property:

- Gravel or crusher dust required at certain locations along trails that are very wet;
- Muddy areas where playground equipment was removed requires soil and seed;
- Ruts in front of the hill from when playground equipment was removed requires fill and seed;
- General clean-up of debris and blowdowns blocking areas along the trails; and,
- Mowing."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Lease Agreement for 1 Church Street

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart
Seconded by Councillor Gregory

"That Council authorizes the CAO to enter into the proposed renewed lease agreement for 1 Church Street, with the Province."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Flood Advisory Committee – Minutes of Meeting Held on March 23, 2021

Moved by Councillor Johnson
Seconded by Councillor Benoit

"That the minutes of the March 23, 2021 Flood Advisory Committee meeting be received."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

At this point, Deputy Mayor Stewart assumed the role of Chair to allow Mayor Blair to present the report from the Nominating Committee.

Nominating Committee – Report from Meeting Held on May 20, 2021

Moved by Mayor Blair
Seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That Council appoint Deputy Mayor Stewart, Councillors Boutilier, Patton and Cooper to the Grants to Non-profit Review Adhoc Committee; and,

That Council appoint Councillors Taggart, Benoit, and Patton to participate in the Affordable Housing Stakeholder Session; and,

That Council appoint Councillor Sandeson and Councillor Taggart to the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee, and;

That Council appoint Mayor Blair to the Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Mayor Blair resumed the role of Chair upon completion of the Nominating Committee report.

ACTION ITEMS

Area Rates and Budgets 2021-22

Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services, provided a brief overview of this item noting that annually, Council reviews and approves area rates for the upcoming fiscal year. Changes to the 2021/22 area rates include a four-cent increase to the Debert Fire Brigade area rate, which is set through the brigade. The rate for the Residential Garbage Collection remains at \$110 per household, however, staff are recommending a change in the allocation of rates for garbage disposal and compost.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart
Seconded by Councillor Boutilier

“That Council approves the 2021-22 Area Rate Budgets, as presented.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Revised Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee - Membership and Terms of Reference

Paul Smith, Acting Director of Community Development, indicated that this item is in response to issues addressed with the initial Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee as presented at the May 13th Council Committee meeting. The key issues as discussed at that meeting were clarity around the number of community appointments, method by which Committee decisions are made, and cost sharing arrangements between participating municipalities/towns/villages, all of which have been addressed in the attached revised TOR. Also, although not part of the initial

discussions, two definitions under section 2, have been removed as the definitions have no relevance within the TOR.

Moved by Councillor Cooper
Seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council approves that Tracy McLellan, Jessica Briand, Leah Poirier, Shauna Power, Sarah Fleming, Mike Shaw, and Holly Grue, be appointed as community members; and,

That Council adopt the Terms of Reference for the Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee, as presented.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Village of Bible Hill Gas Tax

Councillor MacKenzie joined the meeting during the discussion on this matter.

Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services, advised that this item relates to a request from the Village of Bible Hill for the Municipality to consider a Gas Tax funding model with the Village similar to arrangements that Kings County has with some of their Villages. The funding model used by Kings County is based on infrastructure assets. A similar model with the Village of Bible Hill would work out to a contribution in the amount of approximately \$135,000. There is no obligation to do this, however, it is required that consideration be given to qualifying projects put forward by the Village. Council’s current practice is to give consideration on a case-by-case basis. This is a policy decision of Council and should the Municipality proceed with a funding model, staff is recommending a formal agreement would be in order. Qualifying projects for use of Gas Tax funding include wastewater, drinking water, solid waste, roads and sidewalks, airports, and broadband.

Discussion included how providing funding through a funding model would benefit the Village; clarification on projects listed in the request from the Village; past requests for Gas Tax funding, both approved and denied; other communities being treated similarly; and, whether there would be additional funding requests over and above the annual allotted amount.

Responding to a query on the possibility of a similar funding model for the Village of Tatamagouche, Mr. Fraser advised that this funding model is based on infrastructure assets owned by the Village. Funding would not likely be adequate for Tatamagouche using this model. It would be more beneficial for them to submit requests on a case-by-case basis.

Moved by Councillor Parker
Seconded by Councillor Boutilier

“That Council direct staff to proceed with negotiations and drafting a Gas Tax funding agreement with the Village of Bible Hill, based on the Kings County funding model.”

Motion Carried. *(Deputy Mayor Stewart, Councillors Cooper, Gregory, Benoit, and Taggart opposed)*

Highway Interchanges

Councillor Taggart advised that he attended Northern Region and Regional Chairs Solid Waste meetings recently where litter at interchanges was discussed. There is a tremendous amount of people who walk and collect garbage every day, helping to keep communities beautiful. These people are being recognized for their contribution and it is catching on.

The Council in East Hants made a decision to have interchanges/entrances to the communities off Highway 102 be litter free. A program was developed where the Municipality facilitates/organizes the clean-up, but community groups carry out the work and the Municipality gives the group a \$500 contribution. The program involves some administrative work by the Municipality, but it has been very successful and there is a waiting list of organizations wanting to participate. Usually, it is the Department of Transportation that picks up the garbage, however, the Municipality of East Hants is looking after this and it is being brought in, weighed and promoted. Councillor Taggart indicated that he would like to have staff investigate the Municipality of East Hants' program with a report coming back to Council. Following the report, he would like to challenge our Municipality to do something similar in an effort to raise the profile on litter and publicly promoting how many tonnes of litter is collected.

Moved by Councillor Taggart
Seconded by Councillor Boutilier

"That staff review the East Hants program for litter free interchanges and bring back a report to Council."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Lengthy debate took place on the topic of litter with a number of points being raised including the merits of such a program; concern relative to paying for clean-ups and potential liabilities; litter being a problem beyond interchanges and interest in taking a broader approach rather than only interchanges. importance of volunteers and promoting litter clean-up/ continuing to incent citizens and organizations to keep communities clean; issuing a Mayor's Challenge; Summary Offence Tickets and issues around enforcement and burden of proof; increasing amount of litter from fast food restaurants; and identifying sources of litter as an approach to address the problem. Council also discussed certain types of litter being collected by groups and the health and safety concerns relative to this, with a suggestion of reaching out to local trucking companies to help raise awareness. Acknowledging the importance of education, engagement, awareness, and environmental concerns regarding litter, the CAO advised that addressing the litter issue in Debert is currently being looked into and outreach with some of the anchor institutions is underway.

Correspondence - ACTION

Mayor Bill Mills, Town of Truro A letter received May 4, 2021, requesting a contribution for the Victoria Park Pool.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier
Seconded by Councillor Gregory

“That the letter from Mayor Mills requesting a contribution for the Victoria Park Pool be received for information purposes.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Pam Macintosh, Planner Memo dated May 12, 2021, concerning a development agreement application by Ramar Construction Ltd.

Brief discussion was held on buffer zones. Mr. Smith advised that this would be part of the review of the Planning Advisory Committee.

Moved by Councillor Taggart
Seconded by Councillor MacKenzie

“That the development agreement application by Ramar Construction Ltd. be referred to the Planning Advisory Committee.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Mayor Sandra Snow, Town of Kentville An email to Mayors and Wardens dated May 21, 2021 seeking support for small businesses.

Moved by Councillor Taggart
Seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That a letter be written to the Premier and the Minister of Business requesting that amendments to the article update of April 29, 2021 to the Health Protection Act be considered.”

Motion Carried Unanimously. (*Councillor Benoit was not available for this vote*)

Correspondence - INFORMATION

Development Officer A copy of the Development Activity Report received from the Development Officer for the month of April 2021. Council agreed to receive the report for information purposes.

Building Inspector A copy of Building Permit Statistics received from the Building Inspector for the month of April 2021. Council agreed to receive the report for information purposes.

INFORMATION ITEMS

**Chronological Timeline –
Regional Accessibility Advisory
Committee**

At the request of Council at the May Council Committee meeting, this report provides a chronological timeline with regards to the establishment and meetings of the Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Covid-19 Update

As per the request of Council at the March 26, 2020 meeting, this item serves to provide Council with ongoing operational and administrative updates and implications relative to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

**Cumberland County Policing
Review**

The CAO advised that as an update to Council on Cumberland County's correspondence of March 2020 asking to be included in our Policing Review, Mayor Scott recently contacted Mayor Blair to advise that they recognize this would be a substantial undertaking and are no longer interested in pursuing the joint review.

Housing

Councillor Cooper informed Council of a public document from the Canadian Centre of Policy Alternatives entitled Keys To A Housing Secure Future for All Nova Scotians that just came out and might be of interest to Council. This report can be found at:

<https://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/keys-housing-secure-future-all-nova-scotians>.

The following was also noted that might be of interest to Council members:

- an article on the front page of today's Chronicle Herald; and
- an email received from Esther Bejarano regarding an upcoming presentation/session on affordable housing needs.

**Reports from Councillors
Appointed to Outside Boards and
Agencies**

Copies of reports from the Mayor and Councillors were circulated in the package and/or as a separate attachment prior to this evening's meeting.

CLOSED SESSION

Moved by Councillor Benoit
Seconded by Councillor Cooper

"That the meeting go into closed session at 7:56 pm."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Gregory
Seconded by Councillor Benoit

"That the meeting reconvene in open session at 9:11 pm."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Temporary Appointment and
Signing Authority for a
Residential Building Inspector**

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart
Seconded by Councillor Parker

"That Council approves the appointment of Dave Henderson as a Building Official for a period of six months effective immediately, and the salary adjustment be approved by the CAO."

Motion Carried. *(Councillor MacKenzie opposed)*

**Non-Union Employee Annual
Salary Increase**

Moved by Councillor Gregory
Seconded by Councillor Taggart

“That Council approves the non-union salary increase for 2021-22 at 2.25%.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Gregory
Seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That the meeting adjourn at 9:14 pm.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Tracey Veno
Recording Secretary