

MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

The Regular Session of the Municipal Council of the Municipality of the County of Colchester was conducted in-person and virtually combined, on Thursday, March 31, 2022, at 6:00 pm.

In peace and friendship, and in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, Mayor Blair began by acknowledging that the Municipality of Colchester is in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq.

Roll Call

The roll was called with the following Council members in attendance:

Mayor Christine Blair, Chair	
Councillor Eric Boutilier	District 1 (virtually)
Councillor Laurie Sandeson	District 2 (virtually)
Deputy Mayor Geoff Stewart	District 3
Councillor Mike Cooper	District 4
Councillor Tim Johnson	District 5
Councillor Michael Gregory	District 7 (virtually)
Councillor Lisa Patton	District 8
Councillor Marie Benoit	District 9
Councillor Victoria Lomond	District 10 (virtually)
Councillor Wade Parker	District 11
<u>Regrets</u>	
Councillor Karen MacKenzie	District 6

Staff Present

Rob Simonds, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
 Michelle Boudreau, Director of Public Works
 Paul Smith, Director of Community Development
 Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Service/Acting Director of Solid Waste
 Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor
 Devin Trefry, Research, Policy, and Community Engagement Officer
 Tracey Veno, Recording Secretary
 Jenn Martin, Economic Development Officer
 Peter McCracken, Manager, Corporate Planning & Strategic Initiatives
 Jeanette Himmelman, Systems Analyst
 Craig Burgess, Recreation Manager
 Terri Robblee, Active Communities Coordinator

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That the agenda be approved with the following additions:

- Item #13b, FCM Board of Directors; and,
- Item #23, Negotiations in Closed Session.” Carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the minutes of the meetings held on February 24 and March 14, 2022, be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

Business Arising from Minutes

None.

**Standing Committee Reports
and Recommendations**

Deputy Mayor Stewart, Chair of Council Committee, presented the report from the meeting held on March 10, 2022:

Award of Tender – Silverwood Drive Paving

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart and seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That Council approves the tender for the paving of Silverwood Drive be awarded to Costin Paving & Contracting for a total contract price of \$114,900 excluding HST; and,

That an internal contingency of \$5,000 be approved, to be spent only on authority of the Director of Public Works.” Carried unanimously.

Negotiations – Truro Flying Club Contract

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council approves the renewal of a one-year contract with the Truro Flying Club as negotiated by the CAO and on the advice of the Municipal Solicitor.” Carried unanimously.

Flood Advisory Committee (FAC) – Report and Minutes of Meeting Held on March 9, 2022

Moved by Councillor Johnson and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That Council approves the Flood Advisory Committee budget remain at \$100,000 for the 2022-23 fiscal year.” Carried unanimously.

Responding to a query on budget spent in the current fiscal year, Councillor Johnson advised that he would verify and confirm the amount. Additionally, on a query about status of Retson Drive referral to the FAC, Councillor Johnson confirmed that this is still being looked at.

Moved by Councillor Johnson and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That the minutes of the meeting held on March 9, 2022, be received.” Carried unanimously.

Nominating Committee – Report from Meeting Held on March 23, 2022

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council appoint Loriann Shearer-Aiken as a citizen representative to the Debert Business Park Advisory Committee.” Carried unanimously.

It was noted that staff would be readvertising for the remaining vacant seats on the DBPAC.

ACTION ITEMS

**Regional Accessibility Plan
Adoption – Authority to Approve**

Paul Smith, Director of Community Development, provided a brief update on the status of the Accessibility Plan indicating that the Regional Accessibility Committee will be meeting in the near future to make a formal recommendation to approve the Plan. Staff is requesting Council grant authority to April Committee to adopt the Plan.

Moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Lomond

“That Council authorizes April Council Committee to consider adoption of the Regional Accessibility Plan.” Carried unanimously.

ICIP Funding

Michelle Boudreau provided a brief overview of this item indicating that staff is seeking Council support for an application to the investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) for the expansion of the Debert Sewage Treatment Plant.

Discussion was held on development plans for Debert and whether the expansion would accommodate the development/growth. Ms. Boudreau indicated that staff feels the expansion could accommodate the next five to ten years of capacity.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council approves the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Municipality of the County of Colchester submit the project titled: Debert Sewage Treatment Plant Expansion for funding through the *Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program Green-Environmental Quality Stream*; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Council supports the project and commits to provide its share (\$1,600,000) toward the \$6,000,000 project cost.” Carried unanimously.

**Second Reading –
Remuneration for Council By-law
Amendments**

Devin Trefry, Research, Policy, and Community Engagement Officer, advised that the amendments as presented were first introduced when a mandatory vaccination policy was being contemplated. The amendments will allow discretion to adjust remuneration if the need were to arise for issue under the Code of Conduct.

During discussion, concern was expressed regarding the amendments as presented as they seem quite broad but details relative to amounts and periods for adjustments are very limited. Mr. Trefry indicated that it was intended to be broad so as to allow each situation to be assessed on its own circumstances, allowing Council the discretion to consider. The Municipal Solicitor reiterated that it was intended to be high level discretion as it would be difficult to envision every possible scenario. There is nothing currently in place allowing Council this discretion. The proposed amendments allow for the discretion to exercise or not exercise its authority.

Clarification was sought on if this would be Council as a whole making decisions on such matters or if Executive could be involved. The Municipal Solicitor advised that as the amendments are proposed, it would be a decision of Council.

Moved by Councillor Sandeson and seconded by Councillor Parker

“That Council approves, by way of Second Reading, amendments to the Remuneration for Council By-law as presented.” Motion carried (*Councillor Cooper opposed*).

Annual Account Write Offs for 2021-22

Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services, provided a summary of the recommended property tax and water utility write-offs for fiscal 2021-22, and processes by which staff attempt collections prior to being brought before Council.

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Benoit.

“That Council approves that the property taxes, water utility and other receivables, and interest totaling \$17,134.57 be written off.” Carried unanimously.

Council Virtual Meetings Policy

Mr. Trefry provided a brief overview of this item noting that Council previously approved a Council Virtual Meetings Policy which would allow virtual meetings to extend beyond the State of Emergency. At the time of discussion, Council expressed concern regarding the number of meetings Council members would be permitted to attend virtually, and how the Policy applies to Committees of Council. Staff is seeking Council direction on these two matters and will draft amendments to the Policy for consideration at an upcoming meeting. The CAO advised that as it may be difficult to determine the right number of meetings, to allow Council to determine what the new reality looks like relative to Covid-19 and what flexibility may be needed, an option could be to extend the ability to attend meetings of Council and Committees of Council to the end of June, with the intent to bring further amendments back to Council prior to June 30th.

During discussion, concern was expressed with members of Council being out of their district for extended periods, with a suggestion that allowance for attending virtually be based on circumstances rather than number of meetings. Further discussion took place on permitting virtual meetings for Committees of Council; still having many unknowns relative to Covid-19; and extending all criteria around number of meetings and Committees of Council to the end of June.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the Virtual Meetings Policy be referred to staff to make amendments that would extend attending meetings of Council and Committees of Council to the end of June.” Carried unanimously.

Congratulatory Letter

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That a congratulatory letter be sent to Meredith Harrison and her team for winning the recent Provincial Ladies Curling Championship and representing Nova Scotia at the upcoming Nationals.” Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Sandeson and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That congratulatory letters also be sent to:

- Christopher McCurdy for their recent U18 Curling Provincial Championship win and representing Nova Scotia at the National Championships next month;
- Dwayne Green’s Team on winning the 2022 Men’s Master Curling Provincial Championship; and
- Tammy Armstrong for winning three gold medals at the 2022 Canadian Masters Athletics Indoor Track & Field Championships.” Carried unanimously.

Dog By-law

Councillor Benoit raised the issue of a long-standing concern on a street in her district regarding three dogs owned by one household. The dogs act as a pack and are very fierce and aggressive with other dogs in the area. There have also been issues and concerns involving children. Area residents are in fear of the dogs and the majority of the 10-15 homes on the street have complained.

The Animal Control Officer (ACO) with the SPCA is very familiar with the issue and has issued two Summary Offence Tickets (SOTs), however, the owners have been non-responsive and there is no recourse as the current By-law lacks enforcement protocols. The ACO attempts to drive through the area, but the dogs are out mostly during the evenings and on weekends. He encourages residents to call and take photos and track dates and times. There is a possibility to do a Long Form Prosecution, which would essentially bring the owners before a judge and if they do not appear, there will be a warrant. The ACO has suggested amending the Dog By-law to better enable the issue to be dealt with. The Municipality of East Hants By-law was referenced as it has sections on dog attacks, impoundment, running at large, dangerous and fierce dogs and dealing with repeat offenders. The Director of Community Development has been kept advised about this situation.

Discussion was held regarding amending the By-law to provide leverage to deal with issues more effectively; dealing with repeat offenders; how matters were dealt with prior to the SPCA; and avenues to deal with SOTs being ignored. The Municipal Solicitor advised that he was not aware of this situation specifically, but prosecutions have been done in past. There are legal authorities under the existing By-law to seize dogs, deal with dogs running a large, impoundment, as well as unpaid SOTs.

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That the Dog By-law be referred to staff and in consultation with the Animal Control Officer/SPCA for the purposes of updating or amending the current

By-law with regards to enforcement for reported repeat offenders.” Carried Unanimously.

FCM Table Officers

Deputy Mayor Stewart declared a conflict of interest and removed himself from the table for this matter.

Rob Simonds, CAO, advised that Deputy Mayor Stewart was alerted to a housekeeping requirement relative to the resolution of last year concerning support for the Deputy Mayor for election of FCM Table Officers. Although Council’s motion included support up to 2026, the wording was specific to 3rd Vice President. FCM’s Chief Elections Officer has suggested a resolution which would include positions of 2nd Vice President, 1st Vice President, President, and Past President.

Moved by Councillor Cooper and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That Council approves the following resolution:

**2022 FEDERATION OF CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES
TABLE OFFICER POSITIONS**

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 hybrid Annual Conference and Trade Show will next be held June 2 to 5, 2022, during which time the Annual General Meeting will be held, including 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 2nd Vice President, and subsequently as 1st Vice President, President and finally as Past President on FCM’s Board of Directors for the period starting in June 2022 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 until June 2026.” Carried unanimously.

At this point, Deputy Mayor Stewart returned to the table and thanked Council for their support.

FCM Board of Directors

Mayor Blair declared a conflict of interest and Deputy Mayor Stewart assumed the role of Chair for discussion on this matter.

The Deputy Mayor advised that Mayor Blair is seeking Council support to let her name stand for position as an FCM Board of Director at the upcoming FCM Conference.

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That Council approves the following resolution:

**2022 FEDERATION OF CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS POSITIONS**

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 hybrid Annual Conference and Trade Show will next be held June 2 to 5, 2022, during which time the Annual General Meeting will be held, including the election of FCM’s Board of Directors;

BE IT RESOLVED that Council of the Municipality of the County of Colchester endorses MAYOR CHRISTINE BLAIR to stand for election on the FCM’s Board of Directors for the period starting in June 2022 and ending June 2023; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Council assumes all costs associated with MAYOR CHRISTINE BLAIR attending FCM’s Board of Directors meetings.” Carried unanimously.

At this point, Mayor Blair resumed the role of Chair and thanked Council for their support.

Correspondence - ACTION

Leslie Dykeman

An email to Mayor and Council dated March 1, 2022, requesting a letter of support re: Protect Wentworth Valley.

Deputy Mayor Stewart indicated that in the midst of a review of the Wind Turbine By-law, he felt it would not be proper for Council to publicly endorse this as a whole.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart and seconded by Councillor Gregory

“That the request for a letter of support to Protect Wentworth Valley be received for information purposes.” Carried unanimously.

J. David Phillips, CEO, Truro and Colchester Partnership for Economic Prosperity

A letter dated March 1, 2022, to Rob Simonds concerning TCPEP funding.

The CAO advised that following Council's endorsement of TCPEP funding, they were notified that the Chamber is not actively soliciting funding from the business community. TCPEP staff will be advancing funding efforts, however a request is going back to each funding partner for \$5,000 in bridge funding until they have opportunity to pursue the business community.

Brief discussion was held on whether the Town of Truro would be providing the additional funding; including a contingency in a motion relative to other funding partners supporting the request; concerns with business community not stepping up with contributions and as such, composition of the board membership; the tax levy currently being on hold; and, challenges due to COVID and the Chambers continued support. As Vice-Chair of the Liaison Oversight Committee, Councillor Parker advised that the business community contributions and structure of the Board, as well as the destination marketing levy, will be brought forward to the Committee.

Moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Johnson

"That Council supports the Truro and Colchester Partnership for Economic Prosperity's request for the additional bridge funding in the amount of \$5,000." Motion carried (*Councillor Boutilier opposed*).

Matt Moore, General Manager, RECC

A letter dated March 2, 2022, to Mayor Blair and Mayor Mills concerning the 2022-23 Capital Investment Request.

Moved by Councillor Cooper and seconded by Councillor Patton

"That the letter from Matt Moore concerning the 2022-23 Capital Investment Request be referred to budget deliberations." Carried unanimously.

Matt Moore, Chair, Events Truro Colchester Advisory Committee

A letter dated March 2, 2022, from Matt Moore, Chair, Events Truro Colchester Advisory Committee concerning a major event investment.

Council briefly discussed the location of events and Jenn Mantin, Economic Development Officer indicated that if successful, the event will be hosted at the RECC with celebrations throughout the area.

Moved by Councillor Patton and seconded by Councillor Boutilier

"That the letter from Matt Moore, Chair, Events Truro Colchester concerning a major event investment be referred to budget deliberations." Carried unanimously.

Susan Taylor, Executive Director, Colchester Transportation Cooperative Ltd. (CTCL)

An email dated March 16, 2022, to Rob Simonds, requesting a letter of support for their funding application to the Rural Transit Solutions Fund (federal gov. application).

Moved by Councillor Cooper and seconded by Deputy Mayor Stewart

“That a letter of support be provided to CTCL for their funding application to the Rural Transit Solutions Fund.” Carried unanimously.

**Zabrina Whitman, Nova Scotia
Native Women’s Association**

An email dated March 22, 2022, requesting a letter of support for the Resiliency Centre.

Mayor Blair advised that Council had previously provided a letter of support for the Resiliency Centre. Due to the change in government last fall, Ms. Whitman is requesting an updated letter to the new Minister.

Moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Sandeson

“That Council approves writing an updated letter of support for the Resiliency Centre.” Carried unanimously.

Correspondence - INFORMATION

Development Officer

A copy of the Development Activity Report received from the Development Officer for the month of February 2022. Council agreed to receive the reports for information purposes.

Building Inspector

A copy of Building Permit Statistics received from the Building Inspector for the month of February 2022. Council agreed to receive the reports for information purposes.

Moved by Councillor Gregory and seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That the report from the Development Officer and Building Inspector be received.” Carried unanimously.

**The Honourable John Lohr,
Minister of Municipal Affairs and
Housing**

An email dated March 22, 2022, to Mayors and Wardens regarding Fire Hall eligibility under the Canada-Community Build fund.

Moved by Councillor Patton and seconded by Deputy Mayor Stewart

“That the letter from the Honourable John Lohr, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing regarding Fire Hall eligibility under the Canada-Community Build fund be received for information.” Carried unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

**Debert Archaeology – Status
Update**

Ms. Boudreau advised that this item is to provide Council with an update on archaeological work in Debert. Included in her overview was a brief background on lands transferred from the province; information on the dedicated archaeological standards for the transfer lands; lands tested to date; costs to date being in the range of \$6.6 million; findings of lands tested; and, lands shovel-ready for development and areas requiring testing prior to development.

Discussion ensued on the archaeological cost vs. the average cost per acre land sales; investment recouped over time with taxes; uses of lands with

archaeological findings; options for return of lands to Indigenous people or possible land trade; the need for development plan for Debert; and approaching the Province for archaeological funding.

Strategic Priorities Update

Peter McCracken, Manager of Corporate Planning and Strategic Priorities, provided a brief presentation on the Quarterly Update for the Strategic Priorities 2020-24 Report. A copy of the Quarterly Update was included in the package for this evening's meeting.

Referring to Strategic Priorities #5 being listed as J Class Road Funding Policy, it was noted that prior to adoption of the 2020-24 Strategic Priorities Report, this priority was changed to J Class Roads and Roads Assessment. This will be updated in the report to reflect that change.

Municipal Physical Activity Strategic Plan Update

Terri Robblee, Active Communities Coordinator, provided an introduction on the Municipal Physical Activity Strategic Plan which included a brief history of the Plan and agreement with the Province for the Municipal Physical Activity Leadership Program; funding received annually; intent of funding and reporting requirements; and, process for development of the current, updated Plan. A copy of the Municipal Physical Activity Strategic Plan 2021-2026 was included in the package for this evening's meeting.

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. With the end of the State of Emergency, this report will conclude the regularly monthly updates and future reports will only be provided on an as needed basis.

Reports from Councillors Appointed to Outside Boards and Agencies

Copies of reports from the Mayor and Councillors were circulated in the package and 'On Table' for this evening's meeting.

Moved by Councillor Johnson and seconded by Councillor Benoit

"That the reports from Councillors be received." Carried unanimously.

CLOSED SESSION

Moved by Councillor Patton and seconded by Councillor Parker

"That the meeting go into closed session at 9:02 pm." Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Patton and seconded by Councillor Cooper

"That the meeting reconvene in open session at 10:31 pm." Carried unanimously.

Property Matter – Colchester Ground Search and Rescue.

Moved by Councillor Boutilier and seconded by Councillor Gregory

"That the Municipality sell the 1.4-acre property as discussed in Closed Session to Colchester Ground Search and Rescue at market value." Motion carried (Mayor Blair, Councillors Johnson, Benoit, and Lomond opposed).

Moved by Councillor Sandeson and seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the CAO be authorized to enter into a short-term lease agreement with Colchester Ground Search and Rescue for the lands adjacent to their existing property, for training purposes, with recommendations from the Municipal Solicitor.” Carried unanimously.

Personnel Matter

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That authority be granted to April Council Committee to deal with the Personnel related matter as discussed in Closed Session.” Carried unanimously.

Referring to discussions earlier this evening on monies spent by the Flood Advisory Committee in fiscal 2021-22, Councillor Johnson advised one major project estimated at \$60,000 did not get completed by March 31, so total expended was \$28,867, leaving a balance of \$71,133 unspent.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Benoit and seconded by Councillor Patton

“That the meeting adjourn at 10:36 pm.” Carried unanimously.

Tracey Veno
Recording Secretary