



Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting

Place: Council Chambers, Zoom, streamed live to Facebook
Date: Monday, October 23, 2023
Presiding Officer: Mayor Greg Henley
Councillors Present: Carla Black, Paul Jones, Deputy Mayor Arnold
MacDonald, and Chrystal McNutt
Councillors Regrets: Brenton Colborne and Olivia Canning

A quorum was present throughout the meeting.

Staff in attendance: Linda Cloney - CAO, Stan McDougall - Admin Assistant (recording secretary).

Announcements Prior to Call to Order

Prior to calling the meeting to order, Mayor Henley made the following announcement:

The Oxford Legion, Branch #36 will be hosting a bingo on Sunday, October 29, 2023. Proceeds would be going towards replacing the Legion floor.

1. Call to Order

At 6:00 PM, Mayor Henley called the meeting to order.

2. Approval of Agenda, Page 1 – 2

Moved by Deputy Mayor MacDonald and seconded by Councillor Jones that the agenda of the Regular Council Meeting for October 23, 2023, be approved, as presented.

Motion Carried

3. Approval of minutes from the previous meetings

3.1 Council Minutes – September 25, 2023, Pages 3 - 10

3.2 Special Council Minutes – October 11, 2023, Pages 11 – 12

Approved by  _____
Mayor Greg Henley, on October 23, 2023

4. Business

4.1 Tax and Water Collection Policy – request to adopt amended changes to policy, Pages 13 – 20

CAO Cloney presented to Council a few policy wording changes to align with the MGA which included a revision to item #12 regarding the review of properties for tax sale after the September 30 tax bill due date. Item #15 to read: *“A Notice of Intent to sell for taxes shall be issued after 60 calendar days from the Preliminary Notice, on each property still in tax sale position except if there have been payment arrangements negotiated.”*

Moved by Councillor Jones and seconded by Councillor McNutt to adopt the amended changes to the Tax and Water Collection Policy as presented.
Motion Carried

4.2 Drug and Alcohol Policy – request to adopt the new policy for Staff, Council, and Volunteers to follow, Pages 21 – 27

CAO Cloney reviewed with the Council the Drug and Alcohol Policy as presented at the previous Committee of the Whole meeting on October 11, 2023. The policy was drafted to enhance what is currently in the Town of Oxford Employee Handbook and the CUPE contract to provide guidance and rules establishing a framework for the responsible use of alcohol, medications, and cannabis. This policy would be applicable to all town staff, council, and volunteers who are part of the council committees.

Moved by Councillor McNutt and seconded by Councillor Black to adopt the Drug and Alcohol Policy as presented.
Motion Carried

4.3 GDPRM Update, Page 28

Mayor Henley reviewed with the Council the requested update on the policing services GDPRM. A letter from the Minister of Justice was received, as included in the package, declining the update to the GDPRM due to a complete policing review in the Province of Nova Scotia that is taking place in the next two years.

4.4 Collective Agreement Ratification, Page 29

CAO Linda Cloney reviewed with the Council that meetings have taken place with CUPE regarding negotiations for the upcoming term, due March 31, 2024, with the goal of ratifying the agreement prior to the March 21, 2024, due date for April 1, 2024.

Councillor Black reviewed the Collective Agreement Contract

Collective Agreement Ratification

1. Changed from all time worked on a Holiday shall be paid at the rate of time and one half (1 and 1/2) to double time (2x) the regular hourly rate.
2. Added every employee who is called out and required to work in an emergency outside of their regular working house on a holiday shall be paid a minimum of three (3) hours at the rate of double time (2x) their regular hourly rate.
3. Negotiated the pension benefits to be changed from 6 % to 7% matched by Employee.
4. Changed the vacations from 12 – 19 years of service to 12 – 17 years of service full time employees shall be granted four weeks' vacation.
5. Changed the vacations from 20 years to 18 years of service full-time employees shall be granted five weeks' vacation.
6. Added a reference for all employees to follow the employer drug and alcohol policy.
7. Added (a) a meal will be provided by the employer to all employees who meet or exceed their scheduled eight-hour shift by two (2) hours or more.

(b) a meal will be provided by the employer to all employees who meet or exceed ten (10) hours into their callout or overtime shift. This applies to holidays as well.

(c) The amount of the meal allowance shall be \$15.00 (fifteen dollars) and will be paid once submitted and approved by the immediate supervisor

8. Change protective clothing allowance to a boot allowance and the amount from \$450.00 to \$500.00.

9. Negotiated a three-year term for wages to be effective April 1, 2024. The first year 6% or CPI, whichever is higher, second year CPI, and third year CPI.

Moved by Councillor Black and seconded by Councillor McNutt that the Collective Agreement Contract, as presented, be approved.

Motion Carried

4.5 Cenotaph Repair, *verbal presentation by Mayor Henley*

Mayor Henley advised Council that the Town of Oxford Cenotaph needs repairs. Oxford Council has discussed an idea to put \$5,000 toward the restoration of the Cenotaph.

Moved by Councillor Jones and seconded by Councillor McNutt to allocate \$5,000 in the budget for 2024-25 to go toward repairs of the Oxford Cenotaph.

Motion Carried

4.6 Extended Producer Responsibility for Printed Paper and Packaging (EPR for PPP), *Pages 30 – 31*

Brenda Rioux, Solid Waste Educator and Contract Coordinator for Cumberland area, submitted a memorandum to the Council regarding Extended Producer Responsibility for Printed Paper and Packaging (EPR for

PPP program) which regulates industry responsibility for both the operational and financial management of select recyclable products.

Municipalities in Nova Scotia have requested the Provincial government to regulate EPR for PPP for several years with a proposal submitted to the provincial government in 2019 and the announcement of regulations for EPR for PPP on August 2, 2023. Therefore, the Town of Oxford is now tasked with making a decision to either opt out of EPR for PPP and continue to service the Blue Bag program at cost or opt into the EPR and cease to provide any services related to the Blue Bag program unless contracted by the Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO) to provide collection, processing and/or education services.

Once a municipality opts into the EPR Program for PPP, discussions will begin with industry representatives on the details of what the program would look like.

The last date for municipalities and producers to register with Divert NS (the administrator) is January 1, 2024, which would require the Council to make a decision by the middle of December 2023.

It is important to note that the specific details of what this program would look like in the Town of Oxford can not be worked out unless the municipality opts into an EPR Program. At this point, the decision to opt in is allowing the municipality to have further discussions with industry to work out the details of the program. Opting out of the program afterward is always an option but the town cannot opt back in once it opts out.

Full EPR for PPP implementation is scheduled for December 1, 2025, which means there will be two full years of discussion should the Town of Oxford decide to opt in.

Moved by Councillor McNutt and seconded by Councillor Jones to opt in the Extended Producer Responsibility for Printed Paper and Packaging (EPR for PPP) program.

Motion Carried

4.7 Alternative Voting Bylaw – first reading, Pages 32 - 39 pages

CAO Cloney discussed that it is now a year out to full Council elections and encouraged those who wish to, to come forward as elections will start in October 2024.

It was recommended to review the Alternative Voting Bylaw prior to the next election and give the first reading to replace and repeal the current Alternative Voting Bylaw. No language will be changed other than the dates. This Alternative Voting Bylaw, through the Municipal Elections Act, allows, voters to vote by mail, electronically, or by another voting method. The bylaw shall provide for the system of voting for any election that occurs after the date stated in the bylaw or the date the bylaw takes effect including the notification of electors, the form of ballot, the swearing-in and voting on election day, the method of counting the ballots or votes, and the rejection of ballots or votes.

Moved by Deputy Mayor MacDonald and seconded by Councillor McNutt to give the first reading to replace and repeal the current Alternative Voting Bylaw.

Motion Carried

4.7 Council Meetings and Proceedings Policy, Page 40 – 50

The CAO and the Administrative Assistant recently attended Robert's Rules of Order seminar for council meeting proceedings. During this seminar, it was learned that 3 business days are required for a full council meeting package to be distributed.

CAO Cloney proposed moving council meetings to Wednesdays from the current Mondays schedule. Since many municipal holidays fall on a Monday this would also eliminate the need to reschedule the meetings if held on a Wednesday. Having the meetings on Wednesdays would offer more time to have a council meeting package out to Council on the Thursday or Friday prior to the meeting which would give the required three business days to review prior to the meeting.

The Council agreed that it would also allow for attendance of functions typically held on a Monday evening as well. It was agreed through consensus to adjust the date of Council meetings on Wednesdays starting in November. Wednesday, November 8, 2023, would then be the date Committee of the Whole meeting and Wednesday, November 22, 2023, would be the date of the next Council Meeting.

CAO Cloney discussed with Council that it was also learned through Robert's Rules of Order seminar that the Committee of the Whole meeting is generally chaired by the Deputy Mayor which allows the mayor to have greater opportunity to participate in the discussion. The Council gave consensus that this could begin for the November 8, 2023, Committee of the Whole meeting.

4.8 Deputy Mayor Elections, Pages 51 – 52

Mayor Henley discussed the policy for the election of Deputy Mayor which states at its first meeting following an election, the Council shall select a Deputy Mayor to hold office from that date to October 31 of the following year. In non-election years, the Council shall select a Deputy Mayor at its October Council meeting to hold office from November 1 of that year until October 31 of the following Calendar year.

Mayor Henley called for nominations. Councillor Jones nominated Councillor MacDonald to continue as Deputy Mayor for the Town of Oxford for the 2023/24 term.

Moved by Councillor Jones and seconded by Councillor Black to elect Councillor MacDonald as Deputy Mayor for the Town of Oxford for 2023/24 term.

Motion Carried

4.9 Boards and Committees of Council 2023 / 2024, Page 53

Councillor McNutt brought forward Hayden Clark to be added to the Recreation Commission.

Moved by Councillor Jones and seconded by Councillor Black to amend the 2023-24 Boards and Committees list presented and to add Hayden Clark as a member of the Recreation Commission.

Motion Carried

5. Consideration of Correspondence

5.1 OREC Remembrance Day Service, Pages 54

Mayor Henley discussed with the Council an email from OREC which stated that on November 9, 2023, from 10:45 AM to 11:25 AM a Remembrance Day service was to be held. OREC has asked Mayor Henley to attend and extended the invitation to any Councillor and or guests to attend as well. Mayor Henley declined due to his work schedule. Deputy Mayor MacDonald would attend as a representative for the Oxford Legion. Councillor Black would also be in attendance. An invitation would be extended to Councillor Colborne and Councillor Canning who sent regrets for this Council meeting.

5.2 Building Permit consideration of charging or waiving fees, Oxford Community Centre, Page 55

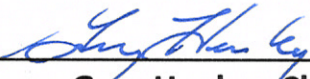
CAO Cloney presented to Council an email from Andrew Fisher, Director, Planning & Strategic Initiatives for the Town of Amherst, who was in receipt of a development permit application for the new Oxford Community Centre to be built. Andrew discussed that municipalities are not exempt from their own planning regulations so a permit will be issued for the community centre. The Development permit is only \$20.00 but the building permit would be in the \$1000's of dollars presumably. The council could either charge or waive the permit fees.

Moved by Councillor Jones and seconded by Councillor McNutt to waive the permit fees regarding the build of the Oxford Community Centre.

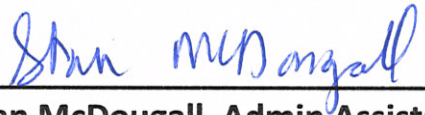
Motion Carried

6. Adjournment

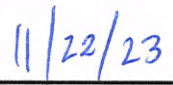
The meeting adjourned at 6:32 PM



Mayor **Greg Henley**, Chair



Stan McDougall, Admin Assistant



Date Approved

