



Town of Oxford
Committee of the Whole
Council Chambers and Zoom
Wednesday, October 9, 2024
6:00 pm

AGENDA

1. Call to Order – Welcome

2. Approval of Agenda
Pages 1 - 2

3. Presentation – Walk and Wheel Oxford – Video and Report– *presented by Linda Cloney*

4. Approval of the Minutes – September 11, 2024
Pages 3 - 8

5. Town Departments Reports
 - 5.1 Public Works Department – presented by Nick Purdy, Public Works Supervisor
Pages 9 - 10

 - 5.2 Fire Department – presented by Bruce Rushton, Fire Chief and Kyle Purdy, Deputy Fire Chief
Pages 11 - 12

 - 5.3 Administration Reports – presented by Linda Cloney
Pages 13 - 14 – Admin Assistant Report
Pages 15 - 16 – Manager of Finance Report

 - 5.4 Recreation Commission Report – presented by Councillor McNutt
Page 17

6. Council Committees and Boards Reports – presented by Linda Cloney

6.1 Cumberland Public Library Committee Report

Page 18

7. Items of discussion and correspondence – presented by Linda Cloney

NIL

8. Adjournment



Minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting

Place: Council Chambers, Zoom, streamed live to Facebook
Date: Wednesday, September 11, 2024
Presiding Officer: Deputy Mayor Arnold MacDonald
Councillors Present: Mayor Greg Henley, Carla Black, Olivia Canning-Sweet, Brenton Colborne, Chrystal McNutt, and Paul Jones
Councillor Regrets: Nil

A quorum was present throughout the meeting.

Staff in attendance: Linda Cloney - CAO, Stan McDougall - Admin Assistant (recording secretary), Ruthann Brookins - Manager of Finance, Nick Purdy – Public Works Supervisor (via Zoom), Mitch Hannigan – MPAL (Interim), Bruce Rushton – Fire Chief (Via Zoom, and Kyle Purdy – Deputy Fire Chief

Presenters in attendance: Nil

Media and Gallery in attendance: Mark Rushton and Gary MacDonald

Kyle Purdy left the meeting at 6:07 PM.

Mitch Hannigan left the meeting at 6:16 PM.

1. **Call to Order – Welcome**

At 6:00 PM Deputy Mayor Arnold MacDonald called the meeting to order and welcomed all in the Gallery including Mark Rushton and Gary MacDonald.

It was announced that immediately following the Committee of the Whole meeting there would be a Regular Council meeting in place of the regularly scheduled meeting that would have been held on September 25, 2024.

Further, it was announced that there will be an official Municipal Election this year and the official Notice of Pole has been issued and will be shared on our social media sites and in our local paper, *The Casket*. All who decided to run for the Town of Oxford Council offices this year were thanked.

Lastly, it was announced that there would be a Candidates Forum for the community to get to know the candidates. This was held at the Oxford Capitol Theatre on October 8, 2024, at 6:00 PM.

2. Approval of Agenda, Pages 1 – 2

Moved by Mayor Henley and seconded by Councillor Jones that the agenda of the Committee of the Whole Meeting for Wednesday, September 11, 2024, be approved, as presented.

Motion Carried

3. Approval of the Minutes – June 12, 2024, Pages 3 – 7

Approved by

Deputy Mayor Arnold MacDonald, Chair, on September 11, 2024

4. Town Departments Reports

4.1 Public Works Department – presented by Nick Purdy, Public Works Supervisor *via Zoom, Pages 8 - 10*

4.2 Fire Department – presented by Bruce Rushton, Fire Chief, *via zoom*, and Kyle Purdy, Deputy Fire Chief, *Pages 11 - 12*

4.3 Administration Reports – presented by Linda Cloney, *Pages 13 - 15 – Admin Assistant Report, and Page 16 – CAO Report*

4.4 MPAL Report – presented by Mitch Hannigan, Interim MPAL *Verbal Report, Submitted separately*

Mitch Hannigan presented the highlights from the MPAL office over the summer. In June, the MPAL office:

- Assisted the CAO in the interview process and onboarding of the summer students
- Completed soccer registration, which had over 130 participants

In July:

- Assisted summer students on daily projects including maintaining and watering community gardens with the summer horticulturist student.
- Pride Day colouring event
- Assisted in Canada Day activities at the Oxford ball fields.
- Directed summer rec student in implementing programming including nature walks, rock painting events, movies, snacks, games and activity stations.

In August:

- Blueberry harvest events
- Organization of the Terry Fox Run held on September 15, 2024.
- Christmas parade planning
- Truth and Reconciliation Day event planning.

Deputy Mayor MacDonald thanked the Town Staff for their respective reports.

5. Council Committees and Boards Reports – presented by Linda Cloney
5.1 Cumberland Public Library Committee Report, Pages 17 – 30 – Annual Report – 2023/2024

The Cumberland Public Library 2023/2024 Annual Report was reviewed with the Council, which was included in the package.

- Councillor McNutt added that in the past year, 67,000 visitors attended the Cumberland County Libraries.

- Councillor Black added that the library in Amherst, NS is offering a program for grants and provides streamlined access grants, their applications, closing dates and how to apply for them.

5.2 Northern Region Waste-Resource Committee Report,

Pages 31 – 34 – April 12, 2024, approved minutes

Pages 35 – 36 – Divert NS Letter re: Readiness Report Feedback – June 24, 2024

Deputy Mayor Arnold MacDonald thanked all Council Committees and Boards for their respective reports.

6. Items of discussion and correspondence – presented by Linda Cloney

6.1 Municipal Affairs and Housing Letter – Canada Community-Building Fund – July 18, 2024, Page 37

Linda Cloney, CAO reviewed the letter from Municipal Affairs and Housing regarding the Canada Community-Building Fund with the Council. The letter outlined that the province has signed a new 10-year agreement with the Federal Government under the Canada Community Building Fund. This agreement will provide 318 million in the first 5 years to the 49 municipalities of Nova Scotia offering up front and predictable long-term funding to help address local infrastructure priorities.

6.2 Municipal Affairs and Housing Letter – Municipal and Village Codes of Conduct – August 9, 2024, Page 38 – 39

Linda Cloney, CAO reviewed the letter from Municipal Affairs and Housing to all elected officials and to the CAOs to provide an update on the Municipal and Village Codes of Conduct. The Code of Conduct working group provided 25 recommendations to be considered by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and all 25 recommendations were accepted. The Code of Conduct framework will come into effect following the October 2024 Municipal Election. The Code of Conduct framework has been handed out to all of the candidates that are taking part in the 2024 Municipal Election. The Minister of Municipal

Affairs and Housing has prescribed that all municipalities and villages of Nova Scotia must adopt and implement the Code of Conduct framework within 6 days following the 2024 Municipal Election and provide confirmation of the notice of adoption. Failure to provide confirmation may result in being withdrawn from receiving any grant funding in the future.

The Code of Conduct framework will be added into the October 2024 Council agenda to review the implementation of this mandated process following the Municipal Election.

6.3 Environment and Climate Change Canada – response to Mayor’s letter regarding volunteer emergency service – November 27, 2023, *Page 40*

Linda Cloney, CAO reviewed the response letter to Mayor Henley from Environment and Climate Change Canada that the Oxford Town Council had directed Mayor Henley to write. The letter was regarding the use of fossil fuels and their use and effect on the climate. Oxford Town Council directed the letter addressing concern for the extra financial burden on the volunteer emergency service providers considering their limited fixed budget to protect the Town of Oxford.

The letter, written in November of 2023, requested the removal of the Carbon Tax on the volunteer emergency service providers' fossil fuel usage be removed.

The letter responded in understanding of the Town of Oxford’s position regarding the volunteer emergency service providers' grant of an exemption of the fuel charge rates under the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing act. However, the matter raised falls under the prevue of the Department of Finance Canada and therefore a copy of the letter will be forwarded to the office of the Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Minister of Canada

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:26 PM.

Deputy Mayor, Arnold MacDonald, Chair

Stan McDougall, Admin Assistant

Date Approved

DRAFT

Public Works Report September 2024

Weekly Water samples.

Monthly Lagoon samples.

Weekly water checks.

Weekly mowing and whipper snipping.

Repaired broken water meters.

Installed new water meters.

Repaired water break on New Hansford Road.

Repaired water break on Waverly Street.

Repaired water break on Thompson Road.

Installed 100' of water line on Little River Road.

Weekly garbage collection.

Cleaned lift station floats.

Repaired deck at the town hall.

Installed new storm drain at town shop.

Repaired basement step at theatre.

Installed new fault lights on lift stations.

Removed graduation banners from poles.

Installed two new water services on Foundry Street.

Replaced storm drain cover on Water Street.

Cleaned all four well chambers.

Electrical repair at well #4

Hot asphalt on Crescent Avenue

Installed new fittings on hydrant by the Irving.

Started winter prep on machines and salt spreaders.

Touched up cross walks before school starts.

Repaired damaged signs on Foundry Street.

Cleaned up large amount of glass on Birchwood Road.

Filled potholes on Birchwood Road.

Repaired a shut off at a residence on Little River Road.

Ditching on Sunset Avenue

Completed items for fire inspection at the theatre.

Sidewalk patching.

****Special Note****

During the installation of the new water line on Little River Road traffic control reported sixteen vehicles not obeying traffic signs or stop lights, Traffic control is in place to protect the public works team while they complete these tasks and return home to their families.

Nick Purdy

Public Works Supervisor

902-397-3002

Since our last report the fire department has responded to 9 emergency calls.

- 2 Medical calls
- 3 Motor Vehicle Collisions
- 2 Structure Fires
- 2 Stand-by at another station

- 0 Calls in Town
- 4 Calls in our coverage area
- 5 calls assisting other departments.

Our Current membership is at 26.

Training:

We recently hosted NS. Power for a training/information session on electrical safety during emergencies. This was also attended by members from 5 of our neighboring fire departments.

Several members spent their Saturday completing some hose testing where we found several lengths of hose that did not pass.

Five members attended a training session in Amherst on the new TMR radio system that is coming online in November. More members will be attending this training next week in Wentworth. Several members have attended tours of a few housing facilities in town and our area.

Next Thursday night is our training night so you can expect to see our members and trucks out around town.

Trucks:

Truck 2 has a leaking foam tank and we have reached out to the manufacturer for repairs. I have been able to confirm that this should be under warranty. They plan to be at our station the week of October 14th.

Truck 5, our 1989, is coming up for the motor vehicle inspection. We will have an inspection completed in the next week to see where we are at with this truck.

Information has been updated and sent to the Fire Underwriters. This includes the trucks that are currently in-service, including water and pump capacity, our membership, trained members, etc.

The Amherst Firefighters Association will be holding their Annual Memorial Parade for First Responders on Sunday, October 27th at 1 PM.

Several members helped out the recent open house at the school by helping with bbq'ing along with having one of our trucks and equipment on display.

We had a very successful meeting with EHS regarding the medical calls. We discussed call response, communications, equipment, and of course, some of our concerns.

Reminder that Fire Prevention week is next week, October 6 – 12th.

We will be providing tours of the fire station and fire prevention items for the children at the school next week.

Reminder to everyone that has a wood burning appliance in your home. You should have your stove or furnace, pipes and chimney inspected and cleaned by now or have this done very soon.

Finally, we, the members of the Oxford Fire Department are very excited and looking forward to the delivery of our brand new Rescue Pumper. This apparatus should be arriving before the end of the month. Once it arrives there will be lots of work and training to do to prepare the truck for service. This truck will serve the town and surrounding areas well and for several years.

I am very pleased to share that through our fund-raising efforts and the support through the online NS Firefighters 50/50, our Oxford Firefighters Association is able to support this purchase with a contribution of \$ 100,000.00. We want to thank everyone for their ongoing support! We would also like to thank the Mayor, Council and the Town staff for supporting us. Without your support, this would not have happened...Thank you all!

Respectfully submitted,

Fire Chief, Bruce Rushton

Deputy Chief, Kyle Purdy



September 2024

- Water Billing:
 - o Updated water meter read master sheet for repaired and/or replaced meters as per Public Works Supervisor.
 - o Updated and printed water meter read sheets for public works to commence water meter reads just after September 30, 2024. PW supervisor tentatively scheduled for October 1, 2024.
- Home Heating Rebate application information that starts October 1, 2024, shared to FB pages for applications by residents.
- Shared/Reshared Seniors/Long-Term Care Community grant that started September 17, 2024, to FB pages and website for applications by residents.
- Taxes: Assist clerk in checking for tax payments coming in via Scotia Bank.
- Worked with clerk and TownSuite support person to troubleshoot a display error on tax bills brought to our attention by a resident. The tax bill displayed “sewer principle” on a property that didn’t have sewer. TS Support discovered that a tax code was set to display only as sewer/water but was supposed to be displayed as taxes. The issue was corrected, and the clerk will issue a new receipt.
- Assist PW Supervisor with posting various public works activities throughout the month.
- Assist CAO with posting various posts to FB and the website.
- Assist the mayor with two proclamations for the month of September – editing, setting up to record via Zoom, uploading, and posting to our FB pages and website.
- Credit to an account in TownSuite to credit a water account due to the house being vacant as per the Manager of Finance.
- Coordinated a credit return from Bell Aliant for an account overpaid in error. Credit return cheque received and deposited by the clerk.
- Payroll:
 - o Coordinate with Payroll services to generate ROE’s for the summer students and the temporary MPAL.
 - o Assist the CAO to analyze and send reports and PDF’s of the paystubs for the students for reporting purposes.
- Assist Public Works with typing up Requests for Quotations for the Public Works pole barn project for Electrical supply and installation, building assembly, and building materials quotes. Printed out copies for distribution.
- Assist Manager of Finance with bill review for Foundry Street project.
- Assist CAO and Returning Officer with work on the Election and other Election-related work including sharing posts on social media and our website and posts to the website calendar, etc.

- Assist Manager of Finance to prepare a letterhead/form for Election Clearances for Taxes (Form 3) for prospective Councillors.
- Repaired Manager of Finance laptop issues with Excel macros and corrected corrupted sound card driver.
- Repaired clerk's laptop issue with Windows and Bitlocker encryption on the hard drive.
- Assist fill-in clerk while the clerk was on holiday.
- Council and Mayor expense reporting updated.
- Interest posting completed for August.

General Operating Fund	Approved Budget for 2024/25 year	As of Sept 30th, 2nd quarter end, 50% of the year	Percentage Invoiced
REVENUES			
Tax Revenue (<i>residential, commercial, sewer, deed transfer tax</i>)	2,611,150	2,701,518	
Grants in Lieu for Federal and Prov properties	66,330	-	
Services to Other Governments (<i>Cumberland County - Fire Protection</i>)	69,089	-	
Own Source Revenue (<i>Program Registrations, Rent (Office, Theatre), Building Permits, Dog Licence, Heritage Gas Revenue, Sales of Materials, Tax Certificates</i>)	101,927	32,296	
Unconditional Transfers (<i>Municipal, Financail Capacity Grant, Farm Acreage, HST offset</i>)	216,454	99,131	
Other Transfers (<i>Funding for MPAL and Summer students, GFL Other Misc Grants</i>)	55,506	14,095	
Total General Operating Revenues	3,120,457	2,847,040	91%
<i>Percentage of Budget</i>		91%	
Expenditures			
General Administration (<i>Mayor, Council and Admin Staff wages & Benefits, office supplies, town hall expenses, audit, busaries, PVSC charge, Bank service fees, valuation for receivables</i>)	507,279	229,587	45%
Protective Services - Police, Crosswalk Guard & Corrections	607,305	301,585	50%
Protective Services - Fire Department	314,489	133,973	43%
Protective Services-Emergency Management	9,263	4,577	49%
Other Protective Services (<i>Building Inspector & Animal Control</i>)	8,050	3,913	49%
Transportation Services (<i>Public Works wages, benefits, small equipment, fuel, tools, garage expenses (lights, heat), health & safety courses & equipment,salt, street & Sidewalk maintenance</i>)	566,900	285,367	50%
Environmental Health Services (<i>Sewer wages, maintenance & power, transfer station, tip fees</i>)	271,897	110,664	41%
Public Health & Environmental Development (<i>Medical Centre, Town planning, tree removal, Walk & Wheel program</i>)	61,064	31,934	52%
Arena Expenses	63,614	19,652	31%
Fields and Library (<i>festive décor, trails, tennis courts, ball & Soccer fields, Skateboard Park, Library</i>)	39,271	17,812	45%
Theatre Expenses	16,674	8,499	51%
Recreation (<i>MPAL wages & Benefits, summer students, program expenses, community garden project</i>)	71,589	13,825	19%
Fiscal Services (<i>Debebture principal payments, transfer to reserves, district School Board Payment</i>)	583,063	308,210	53%
Total Expenditures for General Operations	3,120,456	1,469,599	47%
Adjustments for 2nd Quarter End			
<i>Prorate Insurance (subtract Oct-March)</i>		-38,658	
<i>Add Wages & Benefits for last 2 weeks September</i>		15,363	
Adjusted Expenditures for 2nd Quarter Total		1,446,303	
<i>Percentage of Budget</i>		46%	

Water Operating Fund	Approved Budget for 2024/25 year	As of Sept 30th, 2nd quarter end, 50% of the year	Percentage Invoiced
REVENUES			
Metered Sales	534,933	87,033	16%
Other Sales	174,936	88,138	50%
Total Revenues for Water Operating	709,869	175,171	25%
EXPENDITURES			
Source, Power and Pumping Total	103,487	45,905	44%
Treatment Total	74,635	26,397	35%
Transmission and Distribution Total	114,690	61,464	54%
Administration Total	154,525	56,859	37%
Other (Depreciation, Taxes, Fiscal, Reserve)	265,870	132,935	50%
Total Expenditures for Water Operating	713,207	323,558	45%

Recreation Commission Report

To celebrate the fall season the Oxford Recreation Commission is inviting the local businesses and residents to participate in a Scarecrow display contest. We would love to see your scarecrows outside or inside your business. The best scarecrows will be recognized.

Once your scarecrow is displayed be sure to share a picture using #OxfordNSscarecrows, email cmcnutt@oxfordns.ca, or send a message to Millisa Ellis

Displays must be up by Friday, October 25th to be recognized.

Halloween Costume Swap - drop off gently used costumes to Town Hall. We need lots of costumes to make this event a success!

Come to the firehall on Wed, Oct. 16th from 6:00 - 7:00 to pick out your free Halloween costume

We will be holding 2 adult crafts nights in November. On Wed, Nov 6th @ 6:00 @ the firehall we will be making fancy wooden charcuterie boards with Vicki Gillis & Michael Waram, the cost is \$70. On Tue, Nov 19th @ 6:00 @ the firehall we will be having an old fashion Paint Night with Ashley Hudson, the cost is \$35. You will need to pre-register with me by emailing (cmcnutt@oxfordns.ca) or through Messenger.

Christmas Parade planning has started. As always, it will be the last Friday in November – Nov 29th at 6:30. This year's theme will be Favorite Christmas Songs. Watch the Recreation Facebook page for updates.

**Cumberland Public Libraries
Brief Report- Oxford
September, 2024**

Summer Reading Club (SRC) 2024

SRC is over for another year! We were very excited to be back to a full load of programs this year in all our locations. We received grants from Cumberland Child and Youth Foundation, and the Community Health Boards to help with program supplies and prizes. Programs included Weird science, LEGO, Family fun night, What Goes up? (a program with flying experiments) and Amazing Astronomy for teens.

Prizes included a \$100 and 2x \$25 gift cards at each location for kids, and for teens a set of Air Pods, and an Oodie.

Overall 280 kids register for SRC and they submitted a total of 5253 ballots. At 15 minutes per ballot that is over 1300 hours read. 346 hours in Oxford alone! 1800 kids participated in our SRC programs from June-August.

Teens submitted over 1800 ballots and adults entered over 900 ballots to win prizes.

Period Underwear Giveaway

Cumberland Public Libraries will be giving away a free pair of reusable period underwear to patrons this fall. We will be touring around Cumberland County starting October 3rd in Parrsboro. The Oxford program will take place in November. Funding for this initiative is part of the Government of Nova Scotia's support to increase access to menstrual supplies for all Nova Scotians and was provided by Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage.

Statistics

In the month of July, Cumberland Public Libraries signed out over 15,000 items, 1,000 items in Oxford alone. This includes books, movies, TV shows, magazines, ebooks and more.

Also, in July Oxford held 4 in-person programs with 37 people in attendance. The Oxford Library had 418 in person visits.

Provincial Funding review update

The Library Funding Review Committee (LFRC) met in person on August 29th, at this meeting working groups presented options that prioritize higher wages for library staff, increased investment in library collections and technology, and new investment in cybersecurity. The options are supported by the research and allow for greater sustainability and growth for libraries into the future.

Municipal representatives on the LFRC clearly expressed concerns in terms of the impacts of a new library funding model on municipalities, and the LFRC has taken that feedback into consideration.

Moving forward, the library funding review process will shift from the LFRC to government, where department staff will build on the work done by the LFRC and develop library funding recommendations for government consideration.

Next Board meeting November 19, 2024.

- Note added by Linda Cloney – October 6, 2024 – note the Oxford Library may have a few dates that it will be closed due to staff shortages – advised on October 4, 2024