



Town of Oxford  
**Committee of the Whole**  
Council Chambers and Zoom  
Wednesday, January 8, 2025  
6:00 pm

## **AGENDA**

1. Call to Order – Welcome

2. Approval of Agenda

*Pages 2*

3. Presentation

3.1 Property Valuation Services Corporation – Paul Beazley, Municipal Account Manager and Ken McKinnon, Assistant Director presenting.

*Pages 16 – 27 (a copy of the presentation)*

4. Approval of the Minutes – December 11, 2024

*Pages 3 - 6*

5. Town Departments Reports

5.1 Public Works Department – presented by Nick Purdy, Public Works Supervisor

*Pages 13 - 14*

5.2 Fire Department – presented by Bruce Rushton, Fire Chief and Kyle Purdy, Deputy Fire Chief

*Page 15*

5.3 Administration Reports – presented by Linda Cloney

*Admin Assistant Report, Page 7*

*Manager of Finance Report, Page 8*

*Revenue Officer/Reception Clerk, Page 9*

## 6. Council Committees and Boards Reports

6.1 Recreation Commission Report – presented by Councillor McNutt

*Verbal report*

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

7.1 Email from Jo Franklin – ban the use of Non-Disclosure Agreements

*Pages 10 - 11*

7.2 Email from Ronald Furlong – Cumberland Forestry Advisory Committee  
request to make a presentation to Council

*Page 12*

## 8. Adjournment



## Minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting

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

***A quorum was present throughout the meeting.***

**Staff in attendance:** Linda Cloney - CAO, Stan McDougall – Admin Assistant / Recording Secretary, Bruce Rushton – Fire Chief, and Nick Purdy – Public Works Supervisor (via Zoom)

**Presenters in attendance:** Nil

**Media and Gallery in attendance:** Mark Rushton - Hello Oxford / Radio for Hope Centre.

Bruce Rushton left the meeting at 6:07 PM.

1. **Call to Order – Welcome**

At 6:00 PM, Deputy Mayor Black called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance in the Gallery.

2. **Approval of Agenda**

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

**Motion Carried**

### 3. Approval of the Minutes – November 13, 2024

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**Deputy Mayor Black, Chair**, on December 11, 2024

#### 4. Town Departments Reports

**4.1 Public Works Department** – presented by Nick Purdy, Public Works Supervisor - report filed with Council Package

**4.2 Fire Department** – presented by Bruce Rushton, Fire Chief – report filed with Council Package

**4.3 Administration Reports** – presented by Linda Cloney

4.3.1 Admin Assistant Report – filed with Council Package

4.3.2 Manager of Finance Report - filed with Council Package

4.3.3 Revenue Officer/Reception Clerk - filed with Council Package

Linda reported that the Town of Oxford has three vacancies for positions within departments including a Crossing Guard, MPAL (Municipal Physical Activity Leader), and a licensed plumber experienced in backflow prevention.

Deputy Mayor Carla Black thanked all Town Departments for their respective reports.

#### 5. Council Committees and Boards Reports

**5.1 Recreation Commission Report** – presented by Councillor McNutt  
Verbal report

Councillor McNutt reported that a paint night was held and there were 17 people in attendance. This was the second workshop for the month of November 2024. It is expected that it would continue in the new year with additional nights scheduled monthly. All interested should contact Councillor McNutt.

Town of Oxford tree lighting ceremony was held with over 100 in attendance with singing and hot chocolate served. Councillor McNutt thanked the Oxford Fire Department and Public Works for securing the portion of the street necessary for the ceremony making it safe for all.

Oxford Christmas Parade had over 40 entries, which was the largest parade to date.

Councillor McNutt also thanked Melissa Ellis, with the help of her daughters, painted the windows of the Town Hall. Melissa also championed the Oxford tree lighting this year.

A Semi-Formal Christmas Dance is scheduled at the Oxford Fire Hall on December 20, 2024, for Grades P-3 at 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM and Grades 4-6 at 7:30 PM – 8:30 PM

## **5.2 Accessibility Advisory Board**

Linda Cloney reported that the Accessibility Advisory Committee met on November 25, 2024. There was discussion of combining the Accessibility and Equity and Antiracism Plans, but it was decided to keep the plans separate.

The Antiracism and Equity Committee is requesting new members to join to help create the Antiracism and Equity plan, which the Town of Oxford requires to be completed by March 31, 2025. There is currently quite a bit of work done already toward the completion of this plan.

The Town of Oxford Accessibility Plan is also being updated to include a lens towards clear language and a lens of Antiracism, Equity and Diversity. Goals are also being reviewed and the Accessibility Report Card is being worked on to be presented to Council by March 31, 2025.

The Town of Oxford Snow and Ice Management Policy is also being updated with recommendations from the Oxford Walk and Wheel-ability report.

Transportation was also a topic of discussion and concern for the Accessibility Advisory Committee with only a few of the available vehicles in Cumberland County being fully accessible.

**5.3 Library Report** – a copy of the report has been filed with the Council Package

It was noted that the current Canada Postal Strike is negatively influencing library borrowing where resources are required to move between libraries within the province.

Deputy Mayor Carla Black thanked all Council Committees and Boards for their respective reports.

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

**7. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 6:20 PM.

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**Deputy Mayor, Carla Black, Chair**

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**Stan McDougall, Admin Assistant**

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**Date Approved**



## Dec 2024

- Interest Posting for November completed.
- Mid-month reporting for November completed.
- **Due to the Canada Post Strike** - Coordinated with CAO and WSIB to download the WSIB statements for the Municipal Operators and Fire Fighter's directly.
- Assist Public Works Supervisor with the ordering of Starlink Satellite services Dec 3, 2024, for the wellfield. The unit arrived December 10, 2024.
- Assist CAO with investigation on travel and expense policy comparison with other municipalities.
- Worked with Manager of Finance and TownSuite Support to set up a 4" and 6" Oxford Frozen Foods water billing code and completed setup of Plant 1, 2, and the Onion Plant in TownSuite. Added the last three readings to prepare to use the new accounts going forward for the next water bill.
- Worked with CAO on EDI committee and EDI plan discussion.
- Worked with the CAO to list the surplus fire truck on FB Marketplace and created Ads for the office. Also listed the surplus firetruck on Heavy Trader (free listing).
- Worked with CAO and Supervisor of public works on the Circular Materials EPR – EPP proposal and discussion of the new upcoming program Statement of Work and Master Services Agreement.
- **Website updates:**
  - o revised Boards and Committees page to clean up information/wording, add new Councillor and remove references to past MPAL.
  - o Scanned and uploaded Tax and Water Bill Policy as updated and approved by Council to the website, filing system and binder.
  - o Council Expenses updated to the first of December.
  - o Upload the full resolution of the Council to adopt the Code of Conduct to the website.
- Posted Holiday hours website, website calendar (for days closed) and posters for the windows.
- Assist CAO and public works supervisor by placing phone calls regarding heat issues for the Town boiler unit and new furnace at the Theatre.
- Organized/cleaned up office supplies area and ordered additional supplies as needed.
- Posted Transfer Station hours for the holidays on website, website calendar (for day closed) and made posters for the windows.
- Assisted Manager of Finance with CIP spreadsheet technical access.
- Assist Fire Chief by sending over OFD hydro bills for a rate study he is working on.
- Worked with Connie's Financial staff to have all payroll for staff submitted and completed.
- Assisted the CAO in researching options for Rentals for "your speed signs".

## **Report from Ruthann Brookins Manager of Finance from Dec 6- Jan 6**

Reconciliations of 5 funds and 5 visa accounts

Checked deposits, posted journal entries, balanced interfund for water operating.

Further discussion with consultant for rate study concerning future water capital projects.

Request made to auditors for clarification of Financials as per consultants of water rate study

Completed financial information required for MPAL reports for 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Completed Preconstruction report for projects using Canadian Community Building fund for 2024/25.

Completed Capital Investment Plan (CIP), required by province. This is a five-year plan for capital projects for the next five years including the approved budget for 2024/25.

Reviewed Fire agreement with county for future negotiations.

Decided to leave notes for water arrears till the New Year due to the postal strike.

Ruthanne Brookins

Manager of Finance

Town of Oxford

902-447-3194

## **Office Report December 2024 Revenue Officer/ Reception Clerk – Catherine Smith**

Daily duties include:

Mail from post office, opened, distributed to different departments, invoices stamped and in department heads folders for signatures.

Opening office procedures

Bank Audits printed off from banks for the day and processed, applied on accounts in Town Suite.

Print off invoices and statements, distribute to proper department heads folders to process.

Entered any monies and bank audits into deposit for the day. Ran off days report off Town Suite to balance monies for the day. Closing procedures. Post office mail outs for day.

Distribute calls to various departments.

Complete deposits and deliver to the bank. Daily.

### **Other work completed or being worked on:**

4 Property Owner Changes from Property Valuation Services Corporation

Replied to emails concerning water bills sent out

12 water & property tax payment walk-ins

Property owner came in concerned about profanity graffiti sprayed on diabetes clothing bins.

Call about how to get home heating rebate.

Called companies about invoices not received that needed to be processed.

Many walk ins to pick up cheques due to Canada Post strike

Prepared Fire Department Honorariums for 2024

7 House Closings

Working on water meter sheets.

Contacted lawyers concerning property sale. It was delayed to later date.

Call from property owners needing the last 2 years of property tax bills and receipts for accountants emailed to property owner.

Assisted the Fire Chief with invoices

Emailed out property tax bills requested by banking institution.

Shredding Day

2 Senior tax rebate form processed for property owner.

Picked up manuals at the arena to be photocopied

From: Jo Franklin

Sent: November 30, 2024 12:28 PM

To: all Municipal Offices

Subject: A Request for Change

Good Afternoon,

You are probably wondering why I'm emailing the Mayors of every Municipality in Nova Scotia, and you are right to wonder. Please allow me a few moments to explain.

I, along with other advocates for victims of sexual violence in Nova Scotia have been trying to convince our Provincial Government/Premier, to ban the use of Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) in cases related to Sexual Violence. Groups like "Can't Buy My Silence", have presented detailed reports, case studies and statistics, to show how harmful NDAs can be to victims. Our Premier believes that banning the use of NDAs might also be harmful to those victims who may want to sign an NDA. Mr. Houston claims to have spoken with experts and believes his position is the right course of action.

Prince Edward Island has banned the use of NDAs, with a caveat that allows for those who want to sign an NDA (I have included the link to PEI's NDA Act at the end of the email). It is legislation that Nova Scotia could easily adopt, which would satisfy all sides, but our Premier is standing firm.

While I do have personal opinions on Mr. Houston and his stance on NDAs, I will not stoop to name calling rhetoric. What I am choosing to do instead is rise to the challenge. I have been watching how Mayors are working with the Federal Government to gain Affordable Housing Funding, when their respective Premiers are unwilling. It is amazing to witness. It is the true spirit of political bipartisanship, and I am hoping that you all think so too.

My request, and my hope, is that you all will consider and then implement something on the Municipal level. My idea is that each Municipality (city, town, village, county) will ban the use of NDAs, related to sexual violence

cases, for every business, institution or organization that receives Municipal funding or recognition.

I don't know if what I'm asking is possible, but hopefully, some version of my request will at least open the discussions to addressing this epidemic. Big changes can start with small steps, and I truly believe Nova Scotians can make this happen.

I thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Joanne Franklin

(RCN Veteran, Survivor of Military Sexual Assault, Advocate for all Victims)

902-223-6258

**From:** [Ronald Furlong](#)  
**To:** [lcloney](#)  
**Subject:** CFAC requesting to make a presentation to Council  
**Date:** December 30, 2024 1:11:09 PM

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Good afternoon Linda,

A number of years ago our members made a presentation to the Municipal County of Cumberland County Council. At the time it was well received and Councilors indicated that they appreciated the information on the extent of how the forest industry in Cumberland contributes to the County's economy.

With the recent municipal elections and the changes in Councilors, the CFAC (Cumberland Forestry Advisory Committee) is interested in getting on the agenda to provide a current overview of the Forest Industry in Cumberland County.

If this is something the Town of Oxford Council is interested in please let me know when, and the time available and we will tailor our presentation to fit.

Regards,

Ron Furlong

Secretary / Treasurer CFAC  
902-664-7372

## **Public Works Report December 2024**

**Weekly Water samples.**

**Monthly Lagoon samples.**

**Weekly water checks.**

**Repaired broken water meters, 39 remaining.**

**Weekly garbage collection.**

**Cleaned lift station floats.**

**Cleared storm drains.**

**Removed decorations from Christmas parade float.**

**Added 4-6" rock to culvert on Foundry Street.**

**New gutters installed at town hall.**

**Added gravel to the end of Foundry Street.**

**Greased and pumped out fire hydrants.**

**Tree removed on Handel and Dufferin Street.**

**Added fire hydrant markers before plowing season.**

**Repairs made to the plumbing at well #4.**

**Water break Pugwash Road.**

**Filled potholes with cold patch.**

**Service work completed on Kubota tractor.**

**Water leak on Waverly Street.**

**Added gravel to the water break patch on Horton Street.**

**Visually inspected sewer mains.**

**Installed new chlorine booster pump.**

**Assisted in 2 plugged sewer laterals.**

**Changed out chlorine cylinder.**

**Plowing and salting as needed.**

**\*\* Public works had 15 water breaks for 2024, Waverly Street and Crescent Ave are the 2 most problematic areas\*\***

**Nick Purdy**

**Public Works Supervisor**

**902-397-3002**

Since our last report the fire department has responded to 16 emergency calls in December.

- 11 Motor Vehicle Collisions
- 1 Medical Call
- 1 checking home for possible Carbon Monoxide
- 1 Chimney fire
- 2 Vehicle fires
  
- 2 Call in Town
- 10 Calls in our coverage area
- 4 calls assisting other departments (mutual aid)

We ended the calendar year with 142 calls.

Trucks:

Truck # 2 recently had to have a new muffler installed along with a new air governor.

Members assisted with the Red Ribbon Campaign with MADD Canada and RCMP on Saturday.

Training:

We have our regular training sessions starting back up for the year starting this Thursday evening.

One member is continuing with the Firefighter Level I course held in Pugwash.

Members will be reviewing fire plans for various businesses throughout our fire coverage areas.

We have a contractor scheduled for Jan. 17<sup>th</sup> to complete the annual service of our SCBA (breathing air) compressor.

We would like to remind residents that if you or your family members have any specific needs or hazards that the fire department should be aware of, please reach out to either myself or Kyle. These could include items such as Oxygen, unusual egress situations, or even mobility concerns.

If you have a fire hydrant near your property, please ensure that it is cleared of snow as soon as possible after a storm. We also ask that you keep your walkways clear of snow for the same reason. This helps you and the fire department in the event there is a fire or other emergency at your home.

Our email address is [firechief@oxfordns.ca](mailto:firechief@oxfordns.ca)

Respectfully submitted,

Fire Chief, Bruce Rushton  
Deputy Chief, Kyle Purdy



# PVSC 2025 ASSESSMENT ROLL

TOWN OF OXFORD





# NOVA SCOTIA'S PROPERTY ASSESSMENT AND TAXATION SYSTEM

# ABOUT PVSC



Created under the Property Valuation Service Corporation Act and responsible for assessing all real property in Nova Scotia as per the Nova Scotia Assessment Act



Municipally funded, not-for-profit



Governed by a Board of Directors



Approximately 130 employees across 62 communities around Nova Scotia

# WHAT WE DO & DON'T DO

## PVSC does:

- Deliver an Assessment Roll to all 49 NS municipalities
- Deliver ~650,000 Assessment Notices to NS property owners
- Administer the Capped Assessment Program (CAP) and Seasonal Tourist Business Designation program on behalf of the NS government

## PVSC does **NOT**:

- Have the authority to:
  - Set tax rates
  - Collect taxes
  - Create tax policy
  - Provide tax relief
  - Determine land ownership

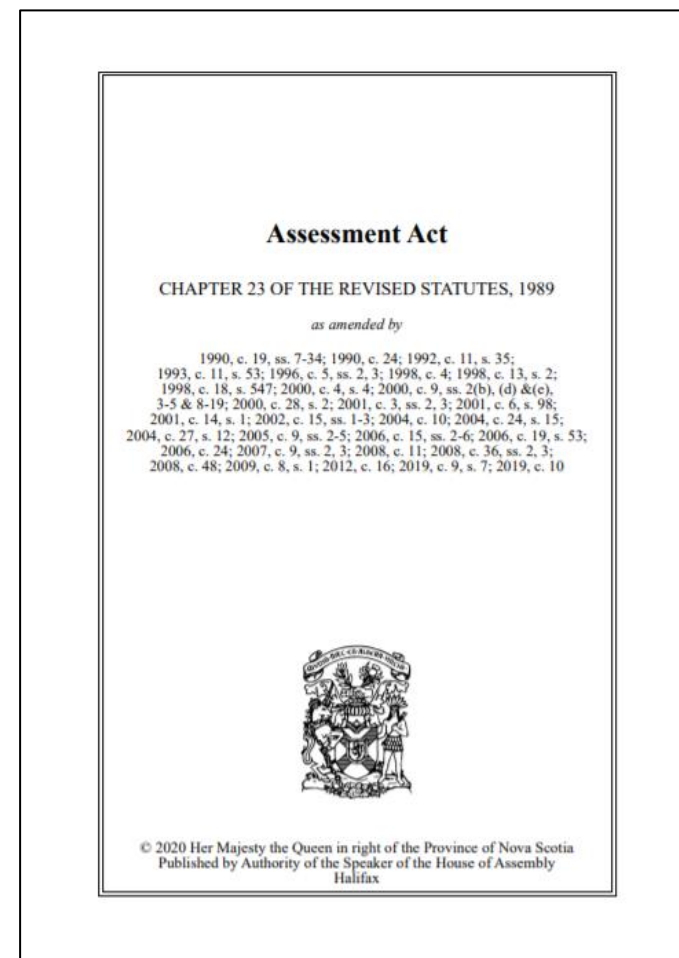
# MARKET VALUE

The *Nova Scotia Assessment Act* requires that we assess property at **market value**:

*“... the amount which in the opinion of the assessor would be paid if it were sold on a date prescribed by the Director in the open market by a willing seller to a willing buyer”*

**AND**

*“The assessment shown on the roll shall be the assessment that reflects the state of the property as it existed on the first day of December immediately preceding the filing of the roll”*



# ROLL QUALITY STANDARDS

- PVSC uses advanced statistical analysis to conduct an in-depth examination of market trends and indicators for every assessment roll
- Assessments are rigorously tested for accuracy and uniformity to ensure compliance with the Nova Scotia Assessment Act and industry standards set by the International Association of Assessing Officers

## QUALITY MEASUREMENTS

- Valuation Approach Selection
- Mass Appraisal Statistics
  - Level of Assessment
  - Fairness of Assessments
  - Equity Between Groupings

# THE CAPPED ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

- PVSC administers the Capped Assessment Program (CAP) on behalf of the Nova Scotia Government
- The program places a 'cap' on the amount that the taxable assessment for eligible residential property can increase year over year based on the Nova Scotia Consumer Price Index (CPI) in November

| 2024 PROPERTY ASSESSMENT |   |   |       |   |
|--------------------------|---|---|-------|---|
| Classification           | Assessed Value  | *Capped Assessment  | Acres | Taxable Assessed Value  |
| RESIDENTIAL TAXABLE      | \$192,600<br><div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 5px auto;">Assessed value reflects the market and state of the property</div> | \$153,000<br><div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 5px auto;">Capped assessment reflects the NS CPI in October</div> |       | \$153,000<br><div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 5px auto;">Taxable assessed value is what is used to determine property taxes</div> |
| <b>2024 TOTAL</b>        | <b>\$192,600</b>  |   |       | <b>\$153,000</b>  |

1.5% CAP  
for 2025

# OXFORD: 2025 ASSESSMENT ROLL

Total 2025 Assessment Roll= **\$144.7M**

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Residential Property Assessment:

**\$95.6M** total assessed value

**727** accounts

Residential assessed value with CAP = **\$69.9M**

Total residential accounts with CAP = **540**

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Commercial Property Assessment:

**\$49.1M** total assessed value

**126** accounts

# OXFORD: 2025 ASSESSMENT ROLL



27

Permits



41

Property  
Transactions



9

Appeals  
in 2024

# THE APPEAL PROCESS

- Each property owner receives a notice of assessment which indicates an assessed value for their property
- Should a property owner disagree with their assessed value they can file an appeal
  - 2025 assessment appeals must be received by February 13, 2025
  - Instructions on how to file an appeal is included on the assessment notice
- There are three levels of appeal:
  - PVSC initial assessor review
  - Nova Scotia Assessment Appeal Tribunal (NSAAT)
  - Utility and Review Board (UARB)

# CONTACT INFORMATION

- Should you get questions from constituents about property assessment, please direct them to our contact centre where they can connect with our knowledgeable and expert staff

Phone: 1-800-380-7775

Email: [inquiry@pvsc.ca](mailto:inquiry@pvsc.ca)

Website: [www.pvsc.ca](http://www.pvsc.ca)



THANK YOU