



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MR# 2018027

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RE: Town of Amherst recreation staff to examine Blair Lake recreation possibilities

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – The Town of Amherst's recreation staff has been instructed to look into the possibility of using Blair Lake for some recreation activities.

The staff was directed by council to conduct the study during Amherst town council's April 23 committee of the whole meeting. It will look into what is needed to use a town-owned lakefront property for activities such as canoeing, kayaking and stand-up paddle boarding.

The study will also ask the Nova Scotia Environment Department what permits may be necessary and an assessment of water quality. In addition, it will be determined if the Municipality of Cumberland would be interested in partnering in the development of the recreation programs.

New helmet policy recommended for approval

A new policy that requires the use of CSA-approved helmets by anyone using the ice surface at the Amherst Stadium has been sent to Amherst town council's April 30 meeting for approval.

The new policy, recommended by the Amherst Recreation Department, was presented to councillors during their April 23 committee of the whole meeting.

The current policy strongly recommends the use of a helmet, but it is not compulsory to wear one.

Staff said the new policy is part of the town's commitment to the safety of all who use the ice surface and studies have proven the use of CSA approved helmets reduce the risks of head injuries for those participating in on-ice activities.

In developing the new policy, staff contacted a number of organizations, individuals, municipalities and sports associations to see what their helmet policies were. In the majority of cases, the use of helmets while on the ice surface was mandatory.



Recognizing that some will not have the ability to get a helmet, the town has already obtained some CSA-approved helmets that will be loaned to people at no charge.

Exceptions to the policy may be requested provided the liability coverage is assumed by the user group(s), which must provide proof of coverage when booking the ice-surface rental.

Should council give its approval at their April 30 meeting, the new policy would go into effect on Aug. 15.

New mobile generator purchase recommended

The committee of the whole is recommending that Amherst town council approve, at its April 30 meeting, the purchase of a new mobile generator as part of the reservoir replacement program.

Cost to purchase and install the generator is \$121,882.75.

Currently, the Operations Department has two mobile generators to use during power outages that work crews have to move to where they are needed when the electricity fails.

Adding a third mobile generator would provide additional security to reservoir operations, as well as the town's six lift stations and wellfield, during power outages.

Funding for the purchase will come from the reservoir replacement project, which is running about \$2.2 million below the budgeted amount of \$7.7 million.

New North Tyndal Wellfield Source Protection Strategy recommended for approval

Amherst town council's committee of the whole has accepted an Operations Department recommendation that a new North Tyndal Wellfield Source Protection Strategy be sent to council's April 30 meeting for consideration and approval.

The new strategy has been under development for the past 24 months.

The existing strategy was put in place in the late 1980s. At the time it was cited as being a model for other jurisdictions. The strategy's age resulted in the provincial Environment Department asking for an updated plan.

The Amherst Water utility engaged consultants CBCL Ltd. to review and update the strategy. The firm confirmed the recharge area was accurate the land-use regulations were satisfactory.

While numerous minor administrative changes to the strategy were recommended by



the consultant, CBCL did not recommend any major changes to the permitted activities allowed in the protected zones.

The most significant changes recommended by the consultant were the requirement for more stringent forestry management plans and increased inspections of the wellfield by the water utility.

The updated strategy includes the recommendations made by the consultant. It was accepted in February by the North Tyndal Wellfield Advisory Committee, which recommended the updated strategy be sent to the Town of Amherst and the Municipality of Cumberland councils for approval.

A public information session on the proposed new strategy was held in April. Those attending the session appeared pleased with the new strategy, the Operations Department report states.

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