



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MR# 2018083

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RE: Council approves second reading of PACE Bylaw

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – Council approved second reading of the PACE Bylaw during its Oct. 22 meeting.

The move will allow the town to offer financing to homeowners for energy efficiency retrofits that are paid back via their tax bill over a period of up to 10 years.

All costs related to the PACE program are paid for by the participants and there are no costs to property owners who do not participate.

The PACE program has become common in many Nova Scotia municipalities as it offers residents a relatively low-cost way to finance energy efficiency retrofits.

Town staff will now work out the implementation details in co-operation with the Cumberland Energy Authority and others, and will provide program details and dates in the near future.

Deputy-Mayor election

Sheila Christie was voted into her third term as the town's deputy-mayor. She defeated Coun. Terry Rhindress in a secret ballot.

Development agreement discharged

Council agreed to discharge a development agreement after receiving a request to do so by the new owners of a vacant property located at the corner of Dickey and Rupert Streets.

The development agreement, which would have allowed a 30-unit townhouse development on



the property, was negotiated with the previous owners in 2007.

The current owners have no plans to proceed with the project as detailed in the development agreement.

Discharging the development agreement means the property is now subject to the regular requirements of the town's Land-Use and Subdivision bylaws.

Gritty to Pretty

Council approved a plan to provide grants that would assist local businesses upgrade the appearance of their properties.

A joint effort between the town and the Amherst & Area Chamber of Commerce, the Gritty to Pretty Beautification Plan received a \$25,000 grant from the Municipal Affairs Department. This enables the partnership to offer commercial and streetscaping grants, to a maximum of \$5,000, to local businesses.

The Chamber of Commerce will administer the program.

Amherst Youth Town Council

Council approved the appointment of returning Amherst Youth Town Council member Jenna Clark, a Grade 10 student and county resident, to a two-year term. It also approved the appointment of new member Samantha DiMichele, a Grade 9 student and town resident, to a two-year term.

The appointments bring the number of members on the youth council to 12, the maximum allowed under the bylaw that established the youth council. The other 10 were appointed in September.

Garden Suite

Council approved second reading of a development agreement with the owners of 99 West Victoria Street that will permit the construction of a garden suite (a.k.a. in-law suite) on the property.

The move came after the town's Planning Advisory Committee recommended the development agreement's approval and the holding of a public hearing that didn't attract any people speaking for or against the project.



Rezoning 283 and 295 Church St.

Council approved the rezoning of 283 and 295 Church Street to Highway Commercial from Industrial. This will allow a portion of the building on the property to be used for residential purposes.

The move came after the town's Planning Advisory Committee recommended the rezoning of the property and the holding of a public hearing that didn't attract any people speaking for or against the rezoning.

No chickens

Council accepted a recommendation from the Planning Advisory Committee and will not change its Agriculture Animal Bylaw. As a result, raising chickens within town boundaries will not be allowed.

Councillor acts to clear air on his residency

Council directed its CAO to seek a legal opinion and provide a report on whether Coun. Jason Blanch continues to be a "ordinarily resident" in the Town of Amherst.

The report is to include what options exist for Coun. Blanch and council should it be determined that he is not deemed to be "ordinarily resident" of the town.

In making the motion to seek the legal opinion and provide a report, Coun. Blanch said he'd been made aware that some members of council have been fielding questions about his residency and whether he continues to be qualified to serve as a member of council. Blanch said he continues to reside in the town and believes he is still qualified to be a councillor, but would like to clear the air on this issue.

Council members appointed to committees

Amherst town council appointed various councillors to different committees during its Oct. 22 council session.

Mayor David Kogon was appointed to the audit and regional emergency management committees.

Deputy-Mayor Sheila Christie was appointed to the audit, planning advisory and Susan Taylor Theatre committees as well as the YMCA board of directors.

Coun. Jason Blanch was appointed to the planning advisory, North Tyndal wellfield, tree advisory and audit committees and to the Municipal Alcohol Project and the Amherst Board of Police Commissioners.



Coun. Vince Byrne was appointed to the audit and regional emergency management committees, the Amherst Board of Police Commissioners and the Cumberland Joint Services Management Authority.

Coun. Darrell Jones was appointed to the audit, senior safety advisory and North Tyndal wellfield advisory committees and the Amherst Board of Police Commissioners.

Coun. Wayne MacKenzie was appointed to the audit committee, the Cumberland Public Libraries Board and the L.A. Animal Shelter board.

Coun. Terry Rhindress was appointed to the audit, northern region solid waste and planning advisory committee as well as the Cumberland Joint Services Management Authority.

All members of council were also appointed to Amherst town council's committee of the whole.

The appointments are one-year terms and end on Oct. 31, 2019.

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Direct Inquiries to:
Tom McCoag
Corporate Communications Officer
902-694-6265
tmccoag@amherst.ca
Amherst.ca

