



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MR# 2019027

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RE: Town to seek public's input on water fluoridation

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – The Town of Amherst's committee of the whole directed town staff at its April 23 meeting to continue working on a process that would ensure public participation in any discussion about putting fluoride in the town's water supply.

The committee also stressed that neither it, nor town staff, have taken a position on the subject, but are merely investigating a request by the SOAR community health board to add fluoride to town water as a way to improve dental health, especially in children.

The committee's direction came after staff recommended the matter be the subject of a public information session that would be held early in October 2019. This was to be followed by a public feedback period ending in December. Information collected from the public information session and feedback period be then be presented to the committee in January.

Staff also recommended a plebiscite on the matter should be held during the 2020 municipal election.

Rubberized walking surface

A request seeking the installation of a rubberized walking surface at one of the town's outdoor walking tracks was received by the committee.

In making the request, Vanessa Jones, a physiotherapy assistant with the Nova Scotia Health Authority, indicated a shock-absorbing, low-impact, rubberized track with a non-slip surface would provide seniors and those with mobility issues a safe, less-fatiguing place to walk.

The committee directed the Recreation Department to prepare a report on the need and cost estimates of installing a rubberized outdoor walking surface, which is to be presented to the committee in June.



Substance abuse policy

The committee accepted a staff recommendation to send an updated substance abuse policy to the April 29 council session for approval.

The work to update the policy began with the legalization of cannabis and medical cannabis. It addresses the medical and non-medical use of substances that have the potential to impair employees in the workplace. It also addresses the actions the town will take should an employee need assistance with a substance problem.

In addition, the policy outlines the responsibilities each employee has if they have reasonable grounds to suspect a substance abuse problem is occurring in the workplace.

Staff noted in its recommendation that this type of police is common among most work places today and clearly identifies the expectations of the employer to ensure a safe workplace for its employees and the general public.

Solar for Community Buildings program

The committee directed staff to apply to be involved the 2019 Solar Community Buildings program, which, if accepted, would allow the town to invest in clean technology that lowers our community's emissions while lowering energy costs.

Cenotaph request

The committee directed staff to continue investigating a request to have the dates of the Korean and Afghan wars and the names of the fallen from those conflicts placed on the town's cenotaph.

The decision followed the reception of a staff report that indicated staff had consulted with the local legion, the Nova Scotia Highlanders Regimental Museum and Veterans Affairs Canada on the matter. The consultations led staff to indicate there are no established protocols for making changes to cenotaphs and it might not be appropriate to add anything to the existing cenotaph.

However, during the consultations, staff learned that should the town proceed with changes to the cenotaph or decides to build a new monument to recognize the Korean and Afghan wars, there is a federal program that provides funds to assist in such projects.

Speed limit on Robert Angus Drive

The committee received a study from the town's Traffic Authority that concluded the current speed limit of 70 km/h on Robert Angus Drive should be maintained. The study was sparked by a request from the committee to review the speed limit on the street.



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