



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RE: Council approves terms of reference of Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – The terms of reference for the Town of Amherst's Advisory Committee on the Reduction of Poverty were approved by Amherst town council during its Dec. 16, 2019, council session.

The terms of reference outline the membership of the committee and identifies the chair, goals and anticipated outcomes for the group.

First Reading

The council gave first reading to amendments to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land-Use Bylaw that would change the zoning of 13 West Pleasant St. to Downtown Commercial from Industrial.

The owner of the former Scotsburn Dairy property requested the change because he would like the option of locating commercial businesses on the property, which the rezoning would allow him to do.

Prior to the zoning change being formally approved, a public hearing on the matter must be held. This has been scheduled for Jan. 20, 2020, in the council chambers at town hall, 98 Victoria St. E.

Council must also give a second reading of the amendments before the changes become effective.

Supporting After the School Bell Food Program

Council approved a \$2,000 community support grant for the After the School Bell Food Program. The grant will help the program provide two local schools with a total of 42 food bags



per week. The food is distributed to students who need assistance in getting nourishment.

Possible 'A' Fresh Start Initiative grant changes

Earlier in the day, the Town of Amherst's committee of the whole directed staff to make recommendations to the 'A' Fresh Start Initiative Grant that would allow community groups adequate time to plan and execute their event after receiving notification of their successful application.

The committee suggested giving groups 12 months after approval to execute their event, or to have applications for the 'A' Fresh Start available in January instead of the spring in order to give applicants a greater period in which to plan and execute their event. They also asked staff to see if there were other options that would provide successful organizations adequate time to plan and execute their event.

Capital Budget

The committee of the whole recommended that a list of capital projects be referred to a special council session in January 2020 for approval.

The list includes several water capital projects, two solar for community projects, one large multi-category project that requires both water and general capital expenditures to complete, several paving projects, two storm/sanitary sewer projects, two gravel trail projects and one sidewalk project that are part of the town's Active Transportation Plan and two sidewalk upgrades.

Funding for many of the projects will come from the federal gas tax. The town will borrow money for the two solar projects, but it anticipates the projects will result in a positive cash flow for the town over the life of the two projects.

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