



## MEDIA RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MR# 2022xxx**

**DATE: 23 November 2022**

**RE: Amherst committee of the whole 21 Nov. 22 highlights**

**AMHERST, Nova Scotia** – Amherst town council's committee of the whole, at its Nov. 21, 2022, meeting, recommended an amendment to the town's proclamations and flag raising policy be referred to the town's Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee.

Normally, organizations wishing a flag raising or proclamation, must apply at least one week ahead of the event. The proposed amendment would see the Acadian flag automatically raised on National Acadian Day, which is held annually on Aug. 15. Similarly, on Indigenous Peoples Day, which is held on June 21 each year, the Every Child Matters flag would automatically be flown.

The committee felt the proposed amendment should be vetted by the Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee in case there were additional days where other flags marking important events should automatically be flown.

### **Street Banner Policy**

Amherst town council's committee of the whole, at its Nov. 21, 2022, meeting, directed staff to consult with the local Royal Canadian Legion branch as it develops a new street banner policy.

The town has displayed decorative street banners for several years. As a result, staff recommended the creation of a street banner policy to govern the hanging of street banners so that organizations understand the parameters of the program.

The committee noted they wanted input from the Legion as the banners hung by that organization in early November before Remembrance Day are among the most important banners that are hung during the year.





## **Meeting dates**

Amherst town council's committee of the whole, at its Nov. 21, 2022, meeting, recommended the council change the meeting dates for its December committee of the whole meeting when the Amherst town council meetings on Nov. 28, 2022.

Normally, the meetings are held on the third and fourth Mondays of the month. However, those dates would interfere with the holiday season. As a result, the committee is recommending the December committee of the whole and council meetings be held on Dec. 19, with the committee of the whole beginning at 3 p.m. and the council session at 6 p.m.

## **Territorial acknowledgement**

Amherst town council's committee of the whole, at its Nov. 21, 2022, meeting, recommended the council approve change its territorial acknowledgement when the council meets on Nov. 28, 2022.

The committee indicated the recommended change is an effort to improve inclusion, diversity and equity in all the town's functions and operations.

Currently, the territorial agreement is: "We [I] would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the traditional unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw Peoples."

If approved by council, the new territorial agreement would be: "I would like to acknowledge that our gathering today is taking place in Mi'gma'gi (MEEG-MA-GEE), the traditional, unceded and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaw people. I would also like to acknowledge that Nova Scotia has another unique people. These are the Indigenous Blacks of Nova Scotia whose legacy and contributions date back over 400 + years, predating confederation of this land. We are all treaty people."

## **Hotel Levy**

Amherst town council's committee of the whole received an update on the Nova Scotia government's change to the Municipal Government Act that would allow municipal units to charge a marketing levy to local commercial accommodation providers such as hotels, motels and bed and breakfast establishments.





There are currently three or four municipal units in the province that charge a marketing levy, which is collected by those in the accommodation business and then turned over to the municipal unit, who must use the funds to promote tourism.

The committee directed staff to consult with the local accommodation businesses in order to get their feedback on such a levy. They also directed staff to check with other municipalities in the Cumberland region to see if they might be planning to implement a marketing levy.

Staff are to report their findings back to the committee in the near future.

### **Development Officer appointed**

Amherst town council's committee of the whole, at its Nov. 21, 2022, meeting, recommended that Abiola Fayale be appointed as a development officer for the Town of Amherst when the town council meets on Nov. 28, 2022.

The appointment of Fayale, fulfills a requirement of the Municipal Government Act says council must appoint a development officer who administers a town's land-use bylaw and subdivision bylaw. The appointment also gives Fayale the authority to sign development permits on behalf of the town.

### **Gritty to Pretty**

Amherst town council's committee of the whole, at its Nov. 21, 2022, meeting, recommended the town council approve a memorandum of understanding between the town and the Amherst & Area Chamber of Commerce when it meets on Nov. 28, 2022.

The memorandum would facilitate the continued administration of the Gritty-to-Pretty program, which has been a partnership between the town and chamber for several years.

The program, which is totally funded by the provinces, provides up to 50 per cent of the funds commercial business can use for exterior façade, sign or lighting improvements. The program also provides up to 50 per cent of the cost of street furniture, such as benches, which helps support community vibrancy by making public spaces more functional and inviting.

### **Edible Trees Grant**

Amherst town council's committee of the whole, at its Nov. 21, 2022, meeting was informed the town has received a \$3,500 grant from Tree Canada. The grant will be used to plant about 30 fruit-bearing trees.





While all trees are beneficial to the environment, the goal of this project is food security and poverty reduction. The trees selected for planting will provide a free, healthy, food source within our community.

A selection of apple, pear, cherry, plum, peaches and berries will be planted in Curry Park and Northern Telecom Park in the late spring of 2023. When they are planted, the town will host a planting event that recognizes Tree Canada and The Brick, the program's sponsor.

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