



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MR# 2023034**

**DATE: 25 April 2023**

**RE: Amherst town council April 24, 2023, meeting highlights**

**AMHERST, Nova Scotia** – The Amherst town council appointed Angela Ryan-Bourgeois to the Amherst Board of Police Commissioners as a citizen representative when it met in regular session on Monday, April 24, 2023.

Ryan-Bourgeois will serve a one-year term on the commission, which expires on March 31, 2024. Her appointment fills a vacant seat on the board and brings it to a full complement of voting members.

Council also appointed Jim Prendergast to its Accessibility Advisory Committee as a citizen representative for a two-year-term that expires on March 31, 2025. The committee's membership now consists of two council representatives and four citizen representatives.

### **Development agreements given second reading**

The council gave second reading to an amendment to its Land-Use Bylaw that results in the properties located at 36 and 38 Beacon St. being rezoned to an open space zone from a residential zone.

Being changed to an open space zone will allow the Amherst Little League to install batting cages and a utility shed on the property and to provide parking space for their complex.

Second reading was also given for a development agreement for 52 Hickman St. that will permit the construction of a garden suite at the rear the property and development agreement for 9 North Adelaide St. that will permit the construction of two additional apartments in the existing six-unit structure.

All three planning documents were the subject of a public participation opportunity and a public hearing at which no significant concerns were raised, were recommended for





approval by the town's Planning Advisory Committee and given first reading earlier this year.

### **Local Improvement Bylaw given second reading**

During the meeting, council approved the repeal of its Local Improvement Bylaw and gave second reading to a new Local Improvement Bylaw.

The old bylaw, which was used to help cover the capital costs of infrastructure improvements deemed to benefit only a specific area or neighbourhood, was approved in 1995 and was out of date as it solely focused on the installation and payment of new infrastructure on existing streets.

The new bylaw will still allow such work to be completed, but will also allow the town to help finance new streets and infrastructure that are needed to promote new development within Amherst's boundaries. More specifically, the bylaw will allow the cost of infrastructure to be financed by the town, with the town holding first lien on the property for the outstanding balance owed.

The lien is treated much like outstanding property taxes and removes much of the risk to the town when financing new infrastructure.

### **Amendments to Mobile Vendors on Streets and Sidewalks Bylaw given second reading**

Council brought its Mobile Vendors on Streets and Sidewalks Bylaw up to date when it gave second reading to the bylaw, which was initially approved in September 1998.

Most of the amendments were housekeeping items, such as updating job titles. However, restrictions were also added to regulate safety in regards to vehicle traffic and parking as well as fire-safety issues. In addition, a section was included that permits the \$200 fee to be waived for vending businesses owned and operated by youth of our community.

Council believes waiving the fee for youth will promote youth entrepreneurship.

### **First reading given to amendments to Maintenance of Grass Bylaw**

Amendments that provide clarity to the interpretation of the town's Maintenance of Grass Bylaw were given first reading during the session. They make it clear property





owners must maintain the grass in front of the properties that is located between the sidewalk and curb.

### **Approve capital budget carry overs**

Council approved the inclusion of carry-over projects in the town's 2023-24 water utility and general capital budgets. These projects were approved in previous year's capital budgets, but the work was not completed before the end of the 2022-23 fiscal year.

By moving them to the current year's capital budgets, council is simply authorizing the spending authority for the projects to be carried over into the current fiscal year.

Some of the carry-over projects include purchasing a new dump truck, installing a video conference system at the Community Credit Union Business Innovation Centre, installing a new industrial park directory sign, repair the roof to town hall and replacing an air compressor unit at the Amherst fire hall.

Council approved a second amendment to the 2023-24 Water Utility Capital Budget to include \$338,470 for the potential purchase of land near the Tyndal Road wellfield. Funding for any purchase of land would come from the provincial Challenge Fund Grant.

In addition, council approved placing \$65,000 into the 2023-24 General Capital budget to cover the cost of replacing the boilers at the Amherst police station. Funding for this project is coming from the town's capital reserve.

### **Capital Paving Tender awarded**

Council awarded its 2023 capital paving program to Costin Paving and Contracting (Dexter Construction), the lowest compliant bidder in the total amount of \$779,850 plus HST.

Costin Paving and Contracting was also the successful bidder for the town's asphalt patching tender. They were lowest compliant bidder in the amount of \$356,725 plus HST.

Council also approved an amendment to the town's 2023-24 water utility capital budget that allocated \$85,000 from the water depreciation fund for the installation of variable frequency drives for the four production wells at the North Tyndal wellfield.





With the installation of the drives, along with the purchase last year of a new towable, diesel-fuelled generator, will enable the water utility to operate three of the four production wells during a prolonged power outage, which would ensure there was no interruption in the delivery of potable water to our residents and ensure an adequate supply of water for fire suppression if needed.

In addition, replacing the existing direct online motor starters with the variable frequency drives will help reduce turbidity in our water distribution system.

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