



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MR# 2026016

DATE: October 27, 2026

RE: Amherst Town Council Highlights – October 26, 2026

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – Town Council held its regular October meeting on Monday night to address items including:

Election of New Deputy Mayor

The term for Amherst's Deputy Mayor expires annually on October 31. Kathy Wells was elected as Amherst's new Deputy Mayor – effective November 1, 2026 to October 31, 2027.

Council Committee Appointments

Council approved the following committee appointments effective November 1, 2026 to October 31, 2027:

- Mayor Small has been re-appointed to the North Tyndal Wellfield Advisory Committee;
- Councillor Chambers has been re-appointed to the Planning Advisory Committee, and will continue to sit on the Amherst Board of Police Commissioners through October 31, 2027;
- Councillor Davidson has been re-appointed to the Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee, and re-appointed to the Amherst Board of Police Commissioners for a term ending on October 31, 2028;
- Councillor Furlong has been re-appointed to the Northern Region Solid Waste Committee and Regional Emergency Management, and will continue to sit on the Amherst Board of Police Commissioners through October 31, 2027;
- Councillor McManaman has been re-appointed to the Planning Advisory Committee, and the North Tyndal Wellfield Advisory Committee;
- Councillor Ripley has been appointed to Regional Emergency Management, and re-appointed to the Planning Advisory Committee, the Intermunicipal Tourism Committee, the GFL Community Liaison Committee; and,
- Councillor Wells has been re-appointed to the Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee, will continue to sit on the YMCA Board of Directors, and will join the Cumberland Public Libraries Board.

Town of Amherst Audit Committee

Jim Prince was re-appointed for a two-year term expiring on October 31, 2028. And, the after repealing the previous Audit Committee Terms of Reference, new Terms of Reference were approved that simplifies committee requirements by referring to provincial legislation.

Additional Policy Review

Council approved the Overtime Policy for Non-Union Employees as reviewed with no amendments; the North Tyndal Wellfield Advisory Committee Policy was approved with no amendments; and, Council repealed the Adopt-A-Garden Policy and adopted the new Community Green Space Partnership Policy, to help increase flexibility and so that responsibilities of the Town and participating groups are clearly understood.





Decisions on Bylaws

With the aim of encouraging tourism by bringing visitors into our community to support local businesses, the Road Trails Designation Bylaw was adopted after second reading. And, second reading was also given to the Regional Emergency Management Organization (REMO) Bylaw, formalizing a number of required frameworks, duties, relationships and responsibilities to govern operations during an emergency.

Land Use Bylaw and Municipal Planning Strategy

Council gave first reading to proposed amendments to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw concerning emergency shelters, wet sites and supervised consumption sites, which are not currently defined or explicitly regulated in the Town's planning documents. The proposed amendments would establish definitions for these uses, introduce a 150-day moratorium to allow further study of appropriate regulations, and the CAO was directed to seek clarification from the province regarding potential zoning impacts. A public hearing has been scheduled for March 8, 2027, at 5 p.m. in Council Chambers.

Community Financial Support

- After the Amherst Events Committee of the Amherst Downtown Business Association (ADBA) received a \$20,000 Community Support Grant from the Town, they hosted a successful concert this past August and a small profit of \$4,700 was achieved. Council voted to allow the ADBA and the Amherst Events Committee to keep those funds, for use towards planning for next year.
- After eight years of helping residents of the town of Amherst pursue post-secondary education through the Nova Scotia Community College Community Award, Council approved a new three-year term for the Nova Scotia Community College Bursary agreement, with an annual commitment of \$15,000.
- The Amherst Indian Association is planning a Diwali event on November 14, 2026, and Council approved the group's request for a \$2,500 Community Support Grant.

The Stormwater Transformation Optimization and Resilience for Municipalities (STORM) Program Funding Application

This is a one-time funding initiative recently announced by the province, designed to help municipalities improve stormwater management and climate resilience. Council approved the submission of an application to the STORM Program, for 50% funding to develop of a town-wide Stormwater Management Plan.

Stadium Ice Plant

Council awarded a contract to Black & McDonald for \$1,533,625 plus applicable taxes to replace the Amherst Stadium refrigeration plant. The new equipment will be housed in a separate, purpose-built building to improve safety and minimize disruptions to the Stadium's ice season during the transition. Council also approved increasing the project's capital budget by \$350,000 to \$1.85 million. A grant application has been submitted that could help offset the additional costs.





Town-Owned Lands at 4 Ratchford Street

With the aim of facilitating downtown development by private interests, approximately 680 square metres of green space located at 4 Ratchford Street was declared surplus Town property, and staff were directed to sell the land by auction at market value.

Emergency Shelter

Council directed Mayor Small to formally request that the Province of Nova Scotia immediately provide operational oversight with the existing emergency shelter and to consider the shelter location is in a site consistent with the outcome of the ongoing MPS/LUB review. And also establish a supportive housing and recovery facility offering on-site healthcare, mental health, addictions and other support services.

Council also requested the establishment of a joint working group to explore potential costs and timelines. In addition, Council called on the Province to consider directly operating emergency shelters or strengthening provincial oversight through consistent operating standards, inspections and community accountability measures.

[Find the full October 26, 2026 agenda package here.](#)

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