



Town of Amherst
Committee of the Whole

Date: **Tuesday, February 20, 2024**
Time: **4:00 pm**
Location: **Council Chambers, Town Hall**

	Pages
1. Call to Order	
1.1 Territorial Acknowledgement	
“I would like to acknowledge that our gathering today is taking place in (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.”	
1.2 Approval of Agenda	
1.3 Approval of the Consent Agenda	1 - 1
1.4 Acceptance of Minutes	
1.4.1 January 15, 2024	2 - 4
2. Council Direction Requests	
2.1 Municipal Election 2024 - Jones	5 - 6
2.2 Dr. & Mrs. H.E. Christie Community Foundation Donation - Wilson	7 - 9
2.3 Employment Equity Policy - Crossman	10 - 16
2.4 Tree Advisory Committee Policy Repeal- Bourgeois	17 - 20
3. Information / Discussion Items	
3.1 Accessible Playground Memo - MacDonald	21 - 22
3.2 Appointment of Members of Council to External Boards, Committees and Commissions Policy - Davidson	23 - 23
3.3 Appointments of Citizens to Boards, Committees and Commissions Policy - LeBlanc	24 - 31

3.4	Living Wage Report - Crossman	32 - 35
3.5	Citizen Appointment to Committees Memo - LeBlanc	36 - 36
3.6	Solid Waste Contract Memo - Bourgeois	37 - 37
3.7	IT Update - Jones	38 - 39
3.8	By-law and Policy Review Update - Jones	40 - 47
3.9	Strategic Priorities Update - Fisher	48 - 51
3.10	CAO Task Report - MacDonald	52 - 52
3.11	Chair Review of Committee Meeting Agendas - Landry	
3.12	Staff Support for Council Speaking Engagements - Landry	
4.	Monthly Reports	
4.1	Business Development	53 - 54
4.2	Community Living	55 - 62
4.3	Corporate Communications and IT	63 - 64
4.4	Cumberland Business Connector	65 - 65
4.5	Financial Services	66 - 66
4.6	Fire Services	67 - 67
4.7	HR and Customer Service	68 - 69
4.8	Operations	70 - 71
4.9	Planning & Strategic Initiatives	72 - 73
4.10	Police Services	74 - 77
4.11	Solid Waste Education and Enforcement	78 - 79
5.	Closed Session	
5.1	Approval of Closed Session Agenda	
5.2	Acceptance of Closed Session Minutes	

5.2.1 January 18, 2024

5.2.2 January 22, 2024

5.3 MGA 22(2)(a) - acquisition, sale, lease and security of municipal property

5.4 MGA 22(2)(c) - personnel matters

5.5 MGA 22(2)(a) - acquisition, sale, lease and security of municipal property

5.6 MGA 22(2)(e) - contract negotiations

5.7 MGA 22(2)(e) - contract negotiations

6. Adjournment



Town of Amherst
Committee of the Whole
Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Consent Agenda

MOTION:

That Council approve the following items as part of the consent agenda:

- 1.4 Acceptance of Minutes**
- 2.2 Dr. & Mrs. H.E. Christie Community Foundation Donation**
- 3.5 Citizen Appointments to Committees Memo**
- 3.6 Solid Waste Contract Memo**
- 3.7 IT Update**
- 3.8 By-law and Policy Review Update**
- 3.9 Strategic Priorities Update**
- 3.10 CAO Task Report**
- 4.1 Business Development Monthly Report**
- 4.2 Community Living Monthly Report**
- 4.3 Corporate Communications and IT Monthly Report**
- 4.4 Cumberland Business Connector Monthly Report**
- 4.5 Fire Services Monthly Report**
- 4.6 HR and Customer Service Report**
- 4.7 Operations Monthly Report**
- 4.8 Planning and Strategic Initiatives Monthly Report**
- 4.9 Police Services Monthly Report**
- 4.10 Solid Waste Education and Enforcement Monthly Report**

**Amherst Town Council
Committee of the Whole
Minutes**

Date: January 15, 2024
Time: 4:00 pm
Location: Council Chambers, Town Hall

Members Present Mayor David Kogon
Deputy Mayor Dale Fawthrop
Councillor Charlie Chambers
Councillor George Baker
Councillor Hal Davidson
Councillor Leon Landry
Councillor Lisa Emery

Staff Present Jason MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer
Dwayne Pike, Chief, Police Services
Greg Jones, Director, Fire Services
Aaron Bourgeois, Director, Operations
Andrew Fisher, Director, Planning & Strategic Initiatives
Kim Jones, Director, Corporate Communications
Krista Crossman, Director, HR & Customer Services
Sharon Bristol, Director, Community Living
Sean Payne, Corporate Communications Officer
Natalie LeBlanc, Municipal Clerk
Cindy Brown, Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order

Mayor Kogon called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

1.1 Territorial Acknowledgement

Mayor Kogon gave the Territorial Acknowledgement.

1.2 Approval of Agenda

Moved By Councillor Baker

Seconded By Councillor Emery

That the agenda be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

1.3 Approval of the Consent Agenda

Moved By Deputy Mayor Fawthrop

Seconded By Councillor Davidson

To approve the consent agenda with the removal of items 3.1 Anson Avenue CN Crossing and 4.1 Business Development Monthly Report.

MOTION CARRIED

1.4 Acceptance of Minutes

1.4.1 December 18, 2023

The minutes of the December 18, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting were accepted as part of the consent agenda.

2. Council Direction Requests

2.1 User Fee Policy Amendments

Moved By Councillor Landry

Seconded By Councillor Chambers

That Council forward to the January 22, 2024 regular meeting approval of the amendments to the User Fee Policy.

MOTION CARRIED

2.2 Strategic Priorities

Moved By Councillor Davidson

Seconded By Deputy Mayor Fawthrop

That Council forward to the January 22, 2024 regular meeting adoption of the proposed 2024 Strategic Priorities with an amendment to the project completion date for the Community Centre to be Spring of 2026.

MOTION CARRIED

2.3 Public Transportation

Information only at this time.

2.4 Library Funding

The following item was approved as part of the consent agenda:

Moved By Deputy Mayor Fawthrop

Seconded By Councillor Davidson

That Council forward to the January 22, 2024 regular meeting approval of the request of the Cumberland Public Library for bridge funding in the amount of \$6,000.

MOTION CARRIED

2.5 Noise By-law

Moved By Councillor Davidson

Seconded By Councillor Emery

That no further action be taken with this item.

MOTION CARRIED

3. Information Items

3.1 Anson Avenue CN Crossing

The CAO was directed to get more information regarding the inspection done by CN, their warranty and their service standards.

3.2 IT Update

Moved By Councillor Davidson

Seconded By Deputy Mayor Fawthrop

That the website reconstruction be made a priority and further that an update on the progress be provided monthly at Committee of the Whole.

MOTION CARRIED

3.3 Electronics Recycling

Information item only approved as part of the consent agenda.

- 3.4 **Policy and Bylaw Review Update**
Information item only approved as part of the consent agenda.
- 3.5 **Bylaw to Amend the Local Improvement Bylaw Second Reading**
Information item only approved as part of the consent agenda.
- 3.6 **CAO Task Report**
Information item only approved as part of the consent agenda.
- 3.7 **15 & 31 East Victoria Street Development Agreement First Reading**
Information item only approved as part of the consent agenda.

4. **Monthly Reports**

The following monthly reports were approved as part of the consent agenda, there was no monthly report for Financial Services.

- 4.2 **Community Living**
- 4.3 **Corporate Communications and IT**
- 4.4 **Cumberland Business Connector**
- 4.6 **Fire Services**
- 4.7 **HR and Customer Service**
- 4.8 **Operations**
- 4.9 **Planning and Strategic Initiatives**
- 4.10 **Police Services**
- 4.11 **Solid Waste Education and Enforcement**

4.1 Business Development Monthly Report was pulled from the consent agenda at the request of Councillor Davidson. Discussion ensued around the process of presenting New Business Certificates, the CAO will have draft a procedure.

- 5. **Closed Session**
Moved By Councillor Landry
Seconded By Councillor Chambers
That the Committee move to a Closed Session.

MOTION CARRIED

Natalie LeBlanc
Municipal Clerk

David Kogon, MD
Mayor

TO: Mayor Kogon and Members of Council

SUBMITTED BY: Kimberlee Jones, Returning Officer

DATE: February 20, 2024

SUBJECT: 2024 Municipal Election

ORIGIN: Municipal Election October 2024

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY: *Municipal Elections Act*. R.S., c. 300, s. 1. **Sec 146A (1)** A council may by by-law authorize voters to vote by mail, electronically or by another voting method.

Alternative Voting Bylaw A-7

RECOMMENDATION: That Council forward to the February 26, 2024 regular meeting of Council the recommendations for the 2024 Municipal Election:

- That Council authorize expenditures for the October 2024 Municipal Election
- That Council gives authority to the CAO to determine the Tariff of Fees and Expenses for the 2024 Municipal Election
- That Council appoint Kimberlee Jones as the Returning Officer for the 2024 Municipal Election and also appoint Natalie LeBlanc as the Assistant Returning Officer
- That Council agree to a full electronic/alternative voting method (internet and telephone) from Intelivote Systems Inc for the 2024 Municipal Election
- That Council set the dates for the advance polling period from Thursday October 10, 2024 to the close of voting on regular election poll day October 19, 2024
- That Council authorizes the use of the Nova Scotia permanent registry of voters provided by Elections Nova Scotia as the preliminary list of electors

BACKGROUND: The Alternative Voting Bylaw was approved in 2018. In 2020, with the COVID situation and multiple lockdowns and restrictions, Council authorized a fully alternative voting election process. This saw voting done exclusively by telephone or internet with no paper ballots, through Intelivote Systems Inc. We also used Intelivote's services to conduct a special election in early 2023. There were no issues with the functioning of the 2020 or the 2023 election process.

DISCUSSION: Nova Scotia municipalities have embraced alternative voting. Since 2016 the number of units choosing this form of election management has exponentially increased. While planning is still underway, we understand the majority of units are recommending a fully electronic/alternative voting process.





COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CDR# 2024016

Date: February 20, 2024

Electronic voting reduces barriers and allows voters the ability to vote by phone or online from anywhere with an internet/phone connection. In the 2020 election, voter participation was 52.4% with voting via an internet enabled device was 80%, and telephone voting was 20%. We provide voter assistance during business hours at town hall. The use of this service dramatically dropped in 2023 from 2020 and indicated people found the Intelivote System easy to use and were comfortable with it.

With two successful electronic elections (2020 and 2023) and the accessibility of electronic voting it is recommended that the 2024 election be conducted fully electronic (telephone and internet) through the service provider Intelivote Systems Inc.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: A budget of \$35,750 has been developed.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS: Online and telephone voting is more accessible to the general public than physically travelling to the polls. It is also more likely to better engage younger and marginalized voters who traditionally have lower voter turnout.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS: An all electronic election will benefit the environment. No paper ballots, disposable ballot boxes, less emissions as people are not driving to the polls.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: In the summer details of the election process will be heavily promoted.

ALTERNATIVES: 1) Do not use alternative voting. Using a hybrid or traditional paper election will increase the cost significantly. And concerns about staffing a traditional election are extremely challenging.

Council may choose to go to an RFP for electronic voting services in lieu of sole sourcing to Intelivote. This would add complexity to the project timeline but is within Council's discretion.

ATTACHMENTS:

Report prepared by:

Report and Financial approved by:





COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CDR# 2024012

Date: February 20, 2024

TO: Mayor Kogon and Members of Amherst Town Council

SUBMITTED BY: Sarah Wilson, Director of Finance

DATE: February 20, 2024

SUBJECT: Donation Requests from the Dr. & Mrs. H.E. Christie Community Foundation

ORIGIN:

Correspondence from the Dr. & Mrs. H.E. Christie Community Foundation that they will donate \$35,250 to the Town provided that the Town, in turn, provides the following grants; \$18,000 to the Amherst Little League, \$2,000 to the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 10 Amherst, \$2,500 to the Amherst Pre-School Association and \$12,750 to the Cumberland County Minor Hockey Association.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY:

Income Tax Act – Canada Revenue Agency Charity Guideline
Registered municipalities are considered qualified donees by the Canada Revenue Agency and therefore can issue official donation receipts and are eligible to receive gifts from registered charities.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council forward to the February 26, 2024 regular meeting, the request to receive a donation of \$35,250 from the Dr. & Mrs. H.E. Christie Community Foundation to fund the grants listed below:

- \$18,000 to the Amherst Little League;
- \$2,000 to the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 10 Amherst;
- \$2,500 to the Amherst Pre-School Association; and
- \$12,750 to the Cumberland County Minor Hockey Association

BACKGROUND:

The Town of Amherst has accepted donations of this nature in the past and provided a donation acknowledgement letter to the donor and disbursed funds to the requested recipient. The key is that the disbursement is approved by Council and is for an expenditure which the municipality has the authority to spend.

DISCUSSION:

The Town received correspondence from the Dr. & Mrs. H.E. Christie Community Foundation advising that their board approved conditional grants, pending approval from the Town of Amherst totaling \$35,250 to the following:



- Amherst Little League - \$18,000 toward the cost of sounds systems or scoreboards at their two main fields;
- Royal Canadian Legion Branch 10 Amherst - \$2,000 toward signage commemorating the Cumberland portion of the route of the battalion march of the North Novies from Amherst in World War II;
- Amherst Pre-School Association - \$2,500 to assist with their annual rent so they can maintain the affordability of their program; and
- Cumberland County Minor Hockey Association - \$12,750 toward the cost of development camps.

The Foundation is asking if Council will accept this donation from them in the above amount, issue a donation acknowledgement letter and provide grants as listed above.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There would be no financial implications for the Town in this transaction as the grant would be fully offset by the donation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

No community engagement is contemplated in carrying out this request. The community engagement occurred between the organizations and the Dr. & Mrs. H.E. Christie Community Foundation.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS:

No environmental implications are anticipated with this business process.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Refer the matter to the February 26, 2024 regular Council meeting for Council's consideration of accepting donation the from the Dr. & Mrs. H.E. Christie Community Foundation and providing grants;
2. Decline this request.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Letter from Dr. & Mrs. H.E. Christie Community Foundation re: conditional grants.

Report prepared by: Sarah Wilson, Director of Finance

Report and Financial approved by:



Christie - Smith Community Fund

consisting of

The Hugh E. Christie Fund and the Michael D. Smith Fund
administered by



The Dr. & Mrs. H.E. Christie Community Foundation

Christie Fund

P.O Box 986, Amherst, Nova Scotia B4H 4E1
Phone: (902) 667-3209 E-mail: TCCF@eastlink.ca

Smith Fund

Trustees:

8 January 2024

David H. Christie
Morris J. Haugg
Jennifer Brennan
Barry MacLeod
Donna Fitzpatrick
Mark Carter
Linda Macleod

Town of Amherst
Attn: Sarah Wilson
98 Victoria St. East
Amherst, NS
B4H 1X6

Re: Conditional Grants

Dear Sarah,

At their December meeting, the Board of Trustees of the Christie Community Foundation approved the following conditional grants, pending approval from the Town of Amherst to facilitate these grants, as follows:

- 1) Amherst Little League - \$18,000 toward the cost of sound systems or scoreboards at their two main fields.
- 2) Royal Canadian Legion Branch 10 Amherst – North Novies Recognition Committee - \$2,000 toward signage commemorating the Cumberland County portion of the route of the battalion march of the North Novies from Amherst in World War II.
- 3) Amherst Pre-School Association - \$2,500 to assist with their annual rent so they can maintain the affordability of their program.
- 4) Cumberland County Minor Hockey Association - \$12,750 toward the cost of development camps.

Once these requests have been considered, please advise me of the decision of Council. Then I will proceed on payment of the grant funds to the Town.

Thank you again for your assistance!

Yours truly,

John Matthews
Administrator

PS – Sarah, on a personal note, you have our condolences on the passing of your father.

TO: Mayor Kogon and Members of Council

SUBMITTED BY: Krista Crossman, Director of HR and Customer Services

DATE: February 20, 2024

SUBJECT: Employment Equity Policy

ORIGIN: A complete policy and bylaw review as one of Council’s strategic priorities.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY: MGA sections 47 and 48 authorize council to make, amend and repeal bylaws and policies.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council forward the Employment Equity Policy to the February 26, 2024 Council meeting for approval.

BACKGROUND: Staff introduced the newly created Employment Equity policy at the October 23, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting.

DISCUSSION: At the October 23, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting, Council made a motion to refer the Employment Equity policy to the Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (IDE) Committee for a review and recommendation back to Committee of the Whole. The IDE committee reviewed the policy at their January 17, 2024 meeting.

During the IDE committee meeting, committee members discussed their desire to redefine the definition of the “Equal Opportunity Employer” guiding principle, specifically as it related to the use of the word “ability”. The committee members asked for additional time to review the policy and were asked to return recommendations by February 8, 2024.

No formal recommendations have been received; however, HR staff have revised the guiding principle definition for “Equal Opportunity Employer” for Council’s consideration. The initial guiding principle reads as:

“We are dedicated to achieving equity in the workplace so that no person will be denied employment or promotional opportunities for reasons unrelated to ability.” This original definition is a modified excerpt from the Government of Canada’s Employment Equity Act.

Based on the discussion amongst IDE committee members when reviewing the policy, we are recommending the guiding principle be revised to:



“We are dedicated to achieving equity in the workplace. All individuals have the right of equal opportunity to employment and promotion without regard to race, nationality or ethnic origin, color, religion, age, gender, gender identity or expression, marital or family status, or ability.”

Using this language is more consistent with the language used in the Town’s hiring practices and on all job postings. This amendment is highlighted in yellow on the attached policy.

Lastly, under the Employee Development & Training focus area, Councillor Davidson recommended that “members of Council” be added to section B., which mandates inclusion, diversity and equity training for all hiring managers and human resources staff. Members of Council have been added on the attached amended policy and highlighted in yellow.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: Approving the proposed policy will have no financial implication. There may be future financial implications as focus areas are implemented (such as staff training). These will be reviewed by senior management and incorporated into operational budgets as required.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: No external community engagement was completed. Internally, the draft Employment Equity Policy was created by HR staff who are trained in workplace diversity and culture strategies as well as researching best practices. The policy was then reviewed collaboratively with all Directors for input and reviewed by the Town’s Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS: There are no environmental implications.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS: The implementation of this policy supports and reinforces the Town of Amherst’s commitment to being a more welcoming and inclusive community and workplace.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Accept recommendation
2. Direct staff to develop alternative recommendation.

ATTACHMENTS:

Employment Equity Policy

Report prepared by: Krista Crossman, Dir. HR + Customer Services

TITLE: EMPLOYMENT EQUITY POLICY
SECTION: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
POLICY NO: 4050-01

APPROVAL DATE: _____

CAO Signature: _____

POLICY STATEMENT

The Town of Amherst is committed to diversity and inclusion as it enriches and cultivates a culture of excellence. Attracting and leveraging a diverse workforce, and creating an environment that embraces inclusivity, ignites innovation and excellence in service delivery, engagement, and performance. Our commitment extends to achieving and sustaining a climate of Employment Equity throughout our organization, with the goal of guaranteeing that every employee enjoys a fair and equitable opportunity to engage in, and benefit from, all aspects of their employment experience.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to:

1. Promote a culturally competent and inclusive workforce that values diversity by establishing working conditions that are free from barriers;
2. Define the guiding principles that foster employment equity, diversity and a culturally proficient workplace that strives for inclusion;
3. Assist with the identification and removal of barriers to employment and advancement.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all prospective and current employees of the Town, regardless of employment status, and shall be in compliance with the *Nova Scotia Human Rights Act*, *Employment Equity Act* and the *Dismantling Racism and Hate Act*.

DEFINITIONS

Accessibility: the quality of an environment that enables a person to access it with ease.

Cultural Competence: Attitudes, behaviors and policies which enable employees and organizations to work effectively and develop meaningful relationships with people of various cultural backgrounds.

Disability: a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, sensory, learning or communication impairment, or a functional limitation, whether apparent or not, and permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, that hinders a person's full and equal participation in society when they face a barrier.

Diversity: the variety of identities found within an organization, group or society. Diversity is expressed through factors such as culture, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, age, language, education, ability, family status or socioeconomic status.

Employment Equity: encourages the establishment of working conditions that are free from barriers and seeks to correct conditions of disadvantage in employment.

TITLE: EMPLOYMENT EQUITY POLICY
SECTION: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
POLICY NO: 4050-01

Equity: the principle of considering people’s unique experiences and differing situations, and ensuring they have access to the resources and opportunities that are necessary for them to attain just outcomes.

Fairness: an accessible, consistent and transparent process that is impartial, based upon the principles of merit and equity.

Inclusion: the practice of using proactive measures to create an environment where people feel welcomed, respected and valued, and to foster a sense of belonging and engagement.

Merit: hiring and promoting individuals based on their ability to perform a job.

Reasonable Accommodation: Human rights legislation requires that employers have a duty to accommodate by providing reasonable accommodations to support the special needs of all employees, for example, improving accessibility to the workplace, religious observances, and alternative work arrangements. “Reasonable” imparts a duty to accommodate unless it would impose undue hardship on the employer.

Systemic barrier: a barrier that results from seemingly neutral systems, practices, policies, traditions or cultures, and that disadvantages certain individuals or groups of people.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Fair Treatment

We are committed to ensuring fair treatment for all employees, acknowledging, respecting, and accommodating different needs when reasonably possible.

Inclusive Workplace

We are committed to building an inclusive workplace by drawing on the ideas and talents of all employees.

Diverse Workforce

We recognize and embrace the unique perspectives and abilities of a qualified and diverse workforce, while valuing and appreciating the skills, creativity and innovation that diversity contributes to our team.

Barrier-Free Organization

We are committed to ensuring our systems, policies, practices and work environment are barrier-free and accessible.

Integrated Approach

We are committed to building diversity and inclusion into organizational plans, policies, practices and programs.

Equal Opportunity Employer

We are dedicated to achieving equity in the workplace. so that no person will be denied employment or promotional opportunities for reasons unrelated to ability. All individuals have the right of equal opportunity to employment and promotion without regard to race, nationality or ethnic origin, color, religion, age, gender, gender identity or expression, marital or family status, or disability.

TITLE: EMPLOYMENT EQUITY POLICY
SECTION: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
POLICY NO: 4050-01

FOCUS: RECRUITMENT, SELECTION & HIRING

- A. Eliminate biased language from job advertisements;
- B. Offer flexible working arrangements by default in job ads;
- C. Make job requirements clear, specific, and behavior-based;
- D. Use structured interviews and develop scoring systems and hiring criteria in advance.

FOCUS: EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING

- A. Advancing employment equity concepts in the workplace through education efforts;
- B. Including inclusion, diversity and equity training as a compulsory component of new employee orientation as well as for all hiring managers, human resources staff and **members of Council**;
- C. Ensure inclusion and diversity training is integrated into all learning and development programs;
- D. Committing to the development of on-going, long term training strategies.

FOCUS: PROMOTION & RETENTION

- A. Ensuring transparency of promotion, pay and reward processes;
- B. Developing and implementing formal grievance procedures, offering employees alternative measures to address issues and offering resources for support networks;
- C. Performance assessments: using 360-degree evaluations to collect diverse performance information.

FOCUS: WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY & ACCESSIBILITY

- A. Enhance workplace flexibility for all employees, allowing them to align professional responsibilities with other aspects of their lives.
- B. Make workplace or role accommodations available when reasonable and operationally viable.
- C. Improve support and flexibility in the workplace by ensuring that staff and Town Council members with disabilities have access to adaptive technologies, possible accommodations in the workplace, appropriate and supportive leave practices and return to work plans.

TITLE: EMPLOYMENT EQUITY POLICY
SECTION: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
POLICY NO: 4050-01

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Title/Role	Responsibilities
Chief Administrative Officer	The Chief Administrative Officer will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Provide leadership in promoting the principles of employment equity throughout the organization; Assist in setting goals and objectives for achieving a diverse and inclusive workforce and incorporate these goals into the municipality's broader strategic plans.
Director, HR	The Director of HR will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Be responsible for the effective implementation of the policy and the integration of the policy objectives into the organization's HR processes and practices; Provide support for training and education programs related to employment equity; Monitor the effectiveness of the policy and related initiatives.
Directors and Managers	Directors and Managers will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure a welcoming and respectful environment for all employees; Encourage and participate in the training and development of staff; Translate the principles of employment equity into tangible actions within their teams.
Employees	Employees will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure a welcoming and respectful environment for all employees; Attend and participate in diversity, employment equity and/or inclusion training as required; Participate in the accommodation process when accommodations are necessary.

For Administrative Use Only:

VERSION LOG

Amendment Description	Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
New Policy	Director, HR and Customer Services	Council	

MINUTES REFERENCE DATE

TITLE: EMPLOYMENT EQUITY POLICY
SECTION: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
POLICY NO: 4050-01

RESOURCES

- How to improve workplace equity: Evidence-based actions for employers, *Government of Canada* : <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/portfolio/labour/programs/employment-equity/reports/employers-improve-workplace.html>
- Employment Equity Act, *Government of Canada*: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/e-5.401/>
- Guide on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Terminology, *Government of Canada*: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/maple-leaf/defence/2022/05/guide-equity-diversity-inclusion-terminology.html>
- Employment Equity Policy, *Government of Nova Scotia*: <https://novascotia.ca/treasuryboard/manuals/PDF/500/50203.pdf>
- Nova Scotia Human Rights Act: <https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/human%20rights.pdf>
- Nova Scotia Dismantling Racism and Hate Act: <https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/dismantling%20racism%20and%20hate.pdf>
- Anti-Bias and Inclusion, and Diversity and Culture: Strategies for Working with Differences, *Achieve Centre for Leadership*

TO: Mayor Kogon and Members of Council

SUBMITTED BY: Aaron Bourgeois, Director of Operations

DATE: February 20, 2024

SUBJECT: Tree Advisory Committee Policy Review

ORIGIN: A complete policy and bylaw review is a one of Council's strategic priorities.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY: MGA section 47(1) The council shall make decisions in the exercise of its powers and duties by resolution, by policy or by by-law and MGA section 48(1) Before a policy is passed, amended or repealed the council shall give at least seven days notice to all council members.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council forward the Tree Advisory Committee Policy (64000-03) to the February 26, 2024 regular meeting of Council to be repealed.

BACKGROUND: This policy was originally approved by Council in 2009 and the purpose of the policy was to establish the governance of the Amherst Tree Advisory Committee.

The policy provides Council and staff with direction related to dealing with Dutch Elm Diseased (DED) trees within the Town of Amherst and for other issues related to trees within the community.

When this policy was created Dutch Elm Disease was a significant concern to the Town. From 2005 to 2013 the Town proactively inspected and removed hundreds of DED trees from both public and private property, spending approximately \$260,000 on the DED program.

The last committee meeting was held in January 2012.

DISCUSSION: The majority of the DED trees in our community have been removed and this committee has not been active for the past 12 years. As such, staff believe the existing policy is no longer needed and should be repealed.

For the last number of years staff have dealt with all dead or diseased trees on a case-by-case basis with the assessments being completed by staff or having the assessment completed by a professional arborist, when needed. We are typically removing 3-4 large trees annually.





COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CDR# 2024013

Date: February 20, 2024

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: There are no financial implications.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS: There are no social justice implications.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS: There are no environmental implications.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: There is no community engagement required.

ALTERNATIVES: Do not repeal the policy and direct staff to maintain the current policy as is, or direct staff to make revisions to the existing policy.

ATTACHMENTS: Tree Advisory Committee Policy 64000-03

Report prepared by: Aaron Bourgeois, Director of Operations
Report and Financial approved by:



TITLE: TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes reference date: 23 February 2009

PURPOSE

To establish a policy for the governance of the Amherst Tree Advisory Committee.

BASIS

To provide Council and staff direction related to Dutch Elm diseased trees within the Town of Amherst and to other issues related to trees within the community which are not the direct responsibility of the Town Engineer under the *Municipal Government Act*. Dutch Elm Disease continues to be a significant concern to all municipalities in Nova Scotia including the Town of Amherst. To ensure community involvement, the Town requires the assistance from concerned community members to provide their expertise and direction so that the spread of Dutch Elm disease can be curtailed.

ROLE OF COMMITTEE

The role of a Tree Advisory Committee is to:

1. Advise Council as required from time to time with data related to Dutch Elm diseased trees in Amherst and the spread of this disease.
2. The Committee will work with staff in determining appropriate strategies and actions for the treatment and/or removal diseased trees.
3. The Committee will provide advice regarding the species of trees that the Town should plant in place of the trees that have been removed.
4. The Committee will work with staff and consider any training opportunities or resources that the Town should be accessing in addressing Dutch Elm Disease Trees in Amherst.
5. The Committee will provide advice and direction on matters related to Trees within the Town of Amherst that Council may request from time to time.

MEMBERSHIP:

1. The Council shall appoint members of the Tree Advisory Committee by resolution.
2. All members shall be residents of the Town and shall include two members of Town Council and three citizen appointees.
3. The term for citizen appointees shall be three years, and members may be re-appointed to the Committee without limitations. Citizen appointee terms shall be by fiscal year.

TITLE: TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes reference date: 23 February 2009

4. In September of the last year of the term, an advertisement for citizen appointees shall be placed in the local newspaper. Council will appoint members for the new term prior to the end of that year.

MEETINGS:

1. Meetings will be scheduled by the Chairperson in consultation with staff. Generally meetings will commence at 12:00 noon.
2. The committee will meet at least three times annually. All meetings are open to the public.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Amherst Town Council
From: Jason MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer
Date: February 20, 2024
Subject: **Accessible Playground**

BACKGROUND

At the October meeting of Council, the following motion was passed:

That Council direct staff to draft a terms of reference for an external Accessible Playground Committee which would work towards the development of a fully accessible playground including playground design and fundraising for such a facility, and to bring the draft terms of reference to the Accessibility Advisory Committee for a recommendation to Council.

DISCUSSION

Staff have recently met and would like to suggest an alternative course of action that will streamline the process of constructing an accessible playground in our community. As proposed, the yet to be developed Accessible Playground Committee would report to the Accessibility Committee, which would make a recommendation to Council. This has a number of drawbacks:

1. It will take time to find members willing to work on the committee;
2. There is always a learning curve for new committee members;
3. Managing another committee puts an additional strain on the Clerk's office;
4. There is an added layer of 'committee' that would need to review, understand, agree and recommend a course of action on the playground.

A more straightforward approach, some of which can be undertaken concurrently, would be as follows:

1. Include an amount for an accessible playground in the capital budget, including funding from the Town and potential 'grant' money from senior levels of government or other sources.
2. Direct staff to provide a high-level design of a new accessible playground that can be built for the budgeted amount.
3. The Accessibility Advisory Committee can provide a recommendation on the location and design to Council for approval.
4. Staff prepare and submit applications for funding.
5. Staff prepare a basic 'corporate' fundraising plan for the playground.
6. Procurement and construction commence when funding is secured.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Staff are currently preparing the 2024/25 capital budget for presentation to Council. It is likely that an accessible playground can be constructed for \$600,000. A Town contribution of approximately \$200,000 can be considered during budget deliberations.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Town not proceed with the establishment of an Accessible Playground Committee and that staff be directed to include an accessible playground in the 2024/25 draft capital budget for deliberation.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Kogon and Members of Council
FROM: Councillor Hal Davidson
DATE: February 20, 2024
SUBJECT: Appointment of Members of Council to External Boards, Committees & Commissions Policy

As part of the by-law and policy review, the attached Appointment of Members of Council to External Boards, Committees & Commissions is not due for review until October 2026.

I'm of the opinion that Sections 8, 9 and 10 need to be reviewed immediately and the relating Appendix A and Appendix B updated. They are currently contradictory to the manner in which we make appointments. Further to this, we are not updating the policy when we make appointments to organizations not listed in policy. Finally, I would like to propose this policy also be amended to include what information should be provided to Council in the External Committee reports, particularly around governance, finance and budgeting, and quality of service by these organizations to which Council members are appointed.

Therefore, I would like to make a motion that staff review this policy taking into consideration the aforementioned and bring amendments back to Council in March 2024 for review.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Kogon and Members of Council
FROM: Natalie LeBlanc, Municipal Clerk
DATE: February 20, 2024
SUBJECT: Appointments of Citizens to Boards, Committees & Commissions Policy

As part of the by-law and policy review, the Appointments of Citizens to Boards, Committees & Commissions Policy is due for review this month.

While reviewing this policy, it became clear to staff that most sections in this policy are now covered in the new Council Committees Policy, therefore making this policy practically redundant.

Staff have noted on the attached Appointments of Citizens to Boards, Committees & Commissions Policy where each section can be found in the Council Committees Policy, with a couple of exceptions as noted below.

The first sentence in Section 6 states "Town employees or their family members shall not be eligible to sit as a member of any board, committee or commission." This statement is not reflected in the Council Committees Policy. Staff feel this statement should be omitted.

Section 7 states "A citizen shall be eligible to serve on not more than two boards, committees or commissions at any time." This statement is not reflected in the Council Committees Policy. Staff feel this section should also be omitted.

At this time, staff are of the opinion that the Appointments of Citizens to Boards, Committees & Commissions can be repealed, and that the Council Committees Policy could be amended to include any sections that are not already included should Council so desire.

Staff will prepare the appropriate amendments and bring them to the March Committee of the Whole for discussion.

DEPARTMENT: COUNCIL

TITLE: APPOINTMENTS OF CITIZENS TO BOARDS, COMMITTEES & COMMISSIONS

Minutes reference date: 8 September 1992 28 November 2011

POLICY STATEMENT

1. All appointments to boards, committees and commissions shall be ratified by Town Council at a duly constituted meeting of Council. (Section 8)
2. All appointments shall be for a specific period of time and may be terminated by Council at any time. (Section 8 vi and Section 10)
3. Term and expiry of appointments shall be in accordance with the applicable committee terms of reference. (Section 8(vi))
4. Only residents of Amherst shall be appointed to boards, committees and commissions unless the terms of reference provide for appointments of non-residents. (Section 6)
5. Solicitation for prospective appointees for boards, committees and commissions shall be obtained by advertising in the local media and on the Town's website. (Section 8(a))
6. Town employees or their family members shall not be eligible to sit as a member of any board, committee or commission. Employees shall act as resource persons only. (Section 12 covers the last sentence of this section, is it Council's desire to not appoint Town employees or their family members?)
7. A citizen shall be eligible to serve on not more than two boards, committees or commissions at any one time. (Is it Council's desire to keep this clause in policy?)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the appointment of members to boards, committees and commissions.

DEFINITIONS

"Boards, committees and commissions" are those agencies, either operational or advisory, created by Council, the members of which are appointed to fulfill a specific mandate. (add this definition to the Committees of Council Policy)

"Family members" shall include persons of an employee's immediate family. (add this definition to the Committees of Council Policy if it's Council desire to keep this part of Section 6 above)

TITLE: Council Committees Policy
SECTION: Executive Operations
POLICY NO: 10350-32

APPROVAL DATE: April 24, 2023

CAO Signature: 

1. This policy is entitled the *Council Committees Policy*.
2. This policy is made pursuant to section 24 of the MGA, which empowers Council to establish committees, and section 23(1)(c) of the MGA, which empowers Council to make policies providing for committees and conferring powers and duties upon them.
3. Where the terms of this Policy are inconsistent with the Terms of Reference for a committee, another Council policy or bylaw, or statute or agreement, the provisions of the Terms of Reference, other policy or bylaw, or statute or agreement shall prevail over the terms of this Policy.

Definitions

4. In this Policy:

- (a) "CAO" means the Chief Administrative Officer for the Town;
- (b) "MGA" means the *Municipal Government Act* (Nova Scotia);
- (c) "Special Committee" means a short-term committee established by Council to inquire into or deal with a specific issue;
- (d) "Standing Committee" means a committee of indefinite duration established by Council;
- (e) "Statutory Committee" means a board, commission, or committee established pursuant to a specific enabling statute or agreement.
- (f) "Town" means Town of Amherst.

Membership

5. Membership of committees:

- (a) will be inclusive and diverse, and broadly reflective of the community.
- (b) will also reflect desired experience, knowledge, expertise, and geographic representation in the community.

TITLE: Council Committees Policy
SECTION: Executive Operations
POLICY NO: 10350-32

6. Qualifications

In order to be eligible for membership of a committee, an individual must be a member of Council, or a citizen appointed by Council who resides in the Town of Amherst (unless otherwise indicated in Terms of Reference for the Committee) and not be in arrears in payment of any property taxes to the Town.

7. Appointments of Council Members of Committees

- (a) Council members will be appointed to Committees annually in October unless the terms of the appointment are for more than one year.
- (b) Any member of Council not appointed to a committee may attend committee meetings as an observer but is not entitled to participate in committee discussions or to vote.
- (c) The CAO is a non-voting member of every Standing and Special Committee, but is not obligated to attend meetings and is not counted in determining if a quorum is present.

8. Appointments of Citizen Members to Committees

- (a) As and when required, the opportunities to serve as committee members will be widely advertised in a local paper and on Town of Amherst social media so that interested citizens can apply.
- (b) Council will meet *in camera* to review the applications and consider the applicants for committees.
- (c) Following the *in camera* meeting, Council will appoint citizen members to committees at their next regular Council meeting.
- (d) In considering appointments of citizens to committees Council will consider the following:
 - i) Lived and professional experience and background of the applicants in a field related to the work of the committee;
 - ii) Applicants' education in a field related to the work of the committee;

TITLE: Council Committees Policy
SECTION: Executive Operations
POLICY NO: 10350-32

- iii) Experience of the applicants in serving on committees and boards;
 - iv) Ensuring that committee membership is inclusive and diverse and representative of the community;
 - v) Recommendations made by the applicable committee, if applicable;
 - vi) The Terms of Reference for each individual committee will specify the number of members to be appointed to the committee, and the term of the appointments.
- (e) Committee members will be volunteers, with no financial incentives.
- (f) Committee stability and membership continuity will be taken into consideration when considering re-appointments for a consecutive term.

9. Attendance of Members at Meetings

Any member who is absent from three consecutive committee meetings without leave of absence by resolution from the committee will cease to be a member of the committee, and the CAO shall advise Council of the vacancy.

10. Removal of Member from Committee

At the request of the committee or on its own initiative, Council may remove or request the resignation of any of its committee appointees, whether a citizen member or Council member, for malfeasance or any other good and sufficient cause.

11. Resignation of Member

- (a) Any citizen member of a committee wishing to resign from the committee is requested to provide the resignation in writing to the committee Chair with a copy to the CAO, who will inform Council of the vacancy.
- (b) A Council member of a committee may ask to leave a committee prior to the expiration of their term, and Council may grant such request if the Mayor believes it would not unduly impact the work of the committee.

TITLE: Council Committees Policy
SECTION: Executive Operations
POLICY NO: 10350-32

12. Staff Support

Staff will be appointed to committees by the CAO. The staff is not a member of the committee and therefore is not entitled to vote. The responsibilities of the staff include:

- (i) Providing information and professional advice;
- (ii) Supporting the Chair in developing agendas, arranging meetings, and promoting effective committee functioning;
- (iii) Ensuring the preparation of draft minutes; and approval of such at the next meeting;
- (iv) Preparing presentations for the committee;
- (v) Providing an orientation to the work of the committee when required;
- (vi) Any other projects or tasks approved by the CAO.

13. Meeting Schedules

Committee meeting schedules will be established by the Terms of Reference of the Committee.

14. Quorum

- (a) A majority of the members constitutes a quorum, provided that at least one Council member is in attendance.
- (b) In the event of no quorum after 20 minutes past the scheduled start time, or if quorum is lost during a meeting, the committee's official business will cease, the names of those present will be recorded, members will be permitted to leave, and staff will excuse themselves from the meeting.

15. Chair and Vice-Chair

- (a) Each committee will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair as per the Terms of Reference or enabling statute, bylaw or policy.
- (b) The role of the Chair is to carry out the following duties:

TITLE: Council Committees Policy
SECTION: Executive Operations
POLICY NO: 10350-32

- (i) Set the agenda, which will include the territorial acknowledgement;
- (ii) Ensure the committee follows the agenda;
- (iii) Prevent new issues from side-tracking the agenda;
- (iv) Limit additions to the agenda;
- (v) Establish and maintain order and decorum;
- (vi) Respect members' views and be open-minded;
- (vii) Ensure all members have the opportunity to participate by encouraging those who hold back and preventing others from dominating the discussion;
- (viii) Seek agreement and build consensus;
- (ix) Close debate and guide the group to resolution in a timely manner;
- (x) Assist members to word motions clearly and succinctly;
- (xi) Participate in discussion but focus on presiding over the meeting.

(c) The role of the Vice-Chair is to chair meetings as required in the absence of the Chair.

16. **Agendas**

The Chair, in consultation with staff, sets the committee agendas, which are prepared and distributed to committee members by 4:30 p.m. at least two business days prior to the meeting.

17. **Rules of Procedure**

Committees shall follow the meeting procedures set out in the Town of Amherst Proceedings of Council Policy #10350-25.

18. **New Committees**

In considering the formation of a new committee, Council will request staff to prepare a report to Council that includes a Terms of Reference for consideration by Council prior to establishing the committee.

19. **Meetings Open to Public**

- (a) All meetings of committees are open to the public and no person shall be excluded except in cases of improper conduct, or where the committee is considering an item where, in accordance with section 22 of the MGA, the committee is permitted or required to meet *in camera*.

TITLE: Council Committees Policy
SECTION: Executive Operations
POLICY NO: 10350-32

- (b) Statutory Committee meetings will be recorded and livestreamed. Should technical difficulties arise, and livestream not be enabled or if livestreaming is not possible, the meeting will continue as scheduled. If a recording of the meeting is available it will be posted to the Town of Amherst website the day following the meeting.

- (c) Special Committee and Standing Committee meetings will be recorded and livestreamed as required when decisions or motions to recommend items to Council are included on the agenda. Should technical difficulties arise, and livestream not be enabled or if livestreaming is not possible, the meeting will continue as scheduled. If a recording of the meeting is available it will be posted to the Town of Amherst website the day following the meeting.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Title/Role	Responsibilities
Mayor/Council/Committee Members	Adhere to this policy, as well as the Proceedings of Council Policy.
Municipal Clerk	Review the policy as necessary to ensure content is relevant and accurate.

For Administrative Use Only:

VERSION LOG

Amendment Description	Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
New Policy	Clerk, LeBlanc	Council	April 24, 2023

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Kogon and Members of Council
FROM: Krista Crossman, Director of HR & Customer Services
DATE: February 20, 2024
SUBJECT: Living Wage Report

Origin

At the September 18, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting, staff were directed to consider wage amendments for the upcoming fiscal year with the following parameters:

Moved By Deputy Mayor Landry

Seconded By Councillor Emery

That Council forward the amended Salary Administration Policy to the September 25, 2023 regular meeting of Council for approval, and further that staff be directed to consider amendments for the next fiscal year factoring in a living wage for hourly rate employees, taking into consideration the average surplus on salaries over the last five years.

MOTION CARRIED

Background

The following report aims to provide information regarding how our current compensation structure for all Town of Amherst employees compares to the latest living wage published by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (NS Office), in response to the motion concerning living wage.

Discussion

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) releases an annual report on Nova Scotia's living wages each year. The living wage is calculated as the hourly rate at which a household can meet its basic needs once government transfers have been added to the family's income (such as the Universal Childcare Benefit) and deductions have been subtracted (such as income tax, CPP and EI premiums).

The framework calculation is based on the needs of two-parent families working full-time with two young children. Typically, the living wage can be achieved through either wages, or a combination of wages and benefits.

The regional living hourly wage rates for 2023 are:

Annapolis Valley:	\$25.40 per hour
Cape Breton:	\$22.85 per hour
Halifax:	\$26.50 per hour
Northern:	\$24.30 per hour
Southern:	\$25.05 per hour

Following an analysis of our compensation models, including hourly rates of pay, our eight (8) non-union pay scales, current union collective agreements, and our 130+ individual salaries, we observed the following:

- All full-time non-union employees are paid above the living wage.
- All unionized employees, including full-time, part-time, and casual positions, are paid above the living wage.
- These two groups represent 73% of all TOA employees, therefore 73% of all employees are paid above the living wage.
- The remaining 27% of employees are paid below the living wage rate. All of the positions identified as being paid below the living wage are employed on a casual, temporary, part-time, seasonal or student basis. These positions are:
 - Casual Firefighter
 - Casual Jail Guard
 - Canine Control Officer (not staffed)
 - School Crossing Guards (seasonal part-time)
 - Ice Marshall (not staffed)
 - Summer students
 - Multisport Leaders (student term positions)
 - Criminal Records Check (part-time)
 - Dispatcher (part-time/casual only – FT Dispatchers are paid above living wage)
-

Employee Work Status	Below LW: Percent of total employee population	Above LW: Percent of total employee population
FT Permanent Non-Union	-	36%
FT Permanent Union	-	32%
Casual/temp/PT Union	-	5%
Casual/temp/PT Non-Union	15%	-
Seasonal Students	12%	-
Total	27%	73%

Surplus Wages

A review of the last five (5) fiscal years provides the following summary of salary surplus and/or deficit:

Year	Budget	Actual	Surplus/(Deficit)
2022/23	8,046,400	7,945,215	101,185
2021/22	7,607,700	7,685,067	(77,367)
2020/21	7,251,100	6,838,322	412,778
2019/20	7,077,500	7,262,925	(185,425)
2018/19	6,874,000	6,968,425	(94,425)

As evidenced in the table above, we've only experienced a surplus in wages in two (2) of the last five (5) years. Of these two years with surpluses, the largest was in fiscal year 2020/21, in which wage expense was heavily influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic and corresponding lockdowns and restrictions, resulting in an atypical surplus.

It should be noted that the Town budgets for every position being staffed for the full year, whether the position is filled or not. Otherwise once every position is filled, we would need to find money in a future budget year. Therefore, prior year wage savings should be used as an indicator of how much we could have put towards future wage increases.

Financial Implications

To calculate the estimated cost of bringing the employees who are currently paid below the living wage up to the living wage effective April 1, 2024, it was necessary to estimate the number of hours to be worked in fiscal year 2024/25. The annual hours are estimated based on the hours worked in last year's budget for these positions.

The estimated cost to bring these employees to the living wage rate is approximately **\$115,000**. Most significantly, just over \$80,000 of this increase can be attributed to the significant wage increase to our seasonal summer student positions should their hourly rates of pay be increased to the living wage.

It should be noted that the level of responsibility in each position currently paid less than the living wage rate is not the same, therefore increasing the rate of pay to a living wage for each position may not align with the responsibility level of each position.

Conclusion

In conclusion, after thoroughly examining our wage structure and the parameters surrounding the living wage calculation, we have determined that all full-time employees are currently compensated above the established living wage threshold. However, extending this living wage rate to casual workers would fall outside the CCPA framework, as it is primarily defined for full-time workers only.

Therefore, it is not recommended to increase the casual worker rate of pay to match the living wage rate. Instead, we are committed to ensuring that all workers, regardless of their employment status, are fairly compensated for the work they do based on the responsibility level and qualifications required of the position. This approach ensures equitable treatment for all members of our workforce while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

Attachments/Resources:

1. CCPA Report: Living Wages in Nova Scotia 2023 Update:
<https://policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/living-wages-nova-scotia-2023-update>
2. TOA Wage Data Analysis

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Kogon and Members of Council
FROM: Natalie LeBlanc, Municipal Clerk
DATE: February 20, 2024
SUBJECT: Committees of Council Citizen Appointments

This memo is to advise Council that we have citizen appointments to Committees expiring at the end of March. These include all three members on the Amherst Board of Police Commissioners, one member on the Accessibility Advisory Committee, one member on the Planning Advisory Committee, one member on the North Tyndal Wellfield Advisory Committee and both members on the Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee.

These members have or will be notified and encouraged to reapply.

A notice has been prepared to appear in our local newspaper on February 28th and March 6th seeking expressions of interest to fill these vacancies. Notice will also be placed on Town of Amherst social media.

MEMO

To: Mayor Kogon and Members of Council

From: Brenda Rioux, Solid Waste Educator and Contract Coordinator

Date: February 20, 2024

Re: Collection Contract

Background

On January 23, 2023, The Town of Amherst approved a 5-year collection contract with Miller Waste Systems to provide three stream collection services to the Town. As outlined in their proposal, during the second year of the contract (April 2024) changes would take place that would see garbage, dual stream recyclables, and organics collected on the same day, once every two weeks.

Staff have recently been in contact with Jeff Traver of Miller Waste, and he has indicated that due to equipment delays the anticipated start date of April 1, 2024 has been postponed. Miller Waste is anticipating that the equipment will arrive in June, however, to allow ample time for registration, plating, PDIs, and any additional equipment delays, staff and Miller Waste have agreed to implement the changes on November 4th. Staff and Miller both feel confident that everything will be in place to allow us to have a successful roll out in November.

Points of Interest

- The current collection schedule expires on March 31, 2024.
- A 7-month schedule will be mailed to residents in March which will cover April 1 – November 1, 2024. This schedule will inform residents about the upcoming changes scheduled for November 4, 2024.
- A 5-month schedule will be mailed to residents in October which will cover November 4, 2024 – March 31, 2025. Where this is an additional schedule that was not anticipated, Miller Waste has agreed to cover the cost of printing and delivery.
- Staff will begin educating Town residents in the 2 months prior to the change. This will include information on the water bills, Recollect, collection schedules, social media, etc.

MEMO

TO: Mayor Kogon and members of Council
FROM: Kim Jones, Director Comms & IT
DATE: February 20, 2024
RE: **Update on IT issues**

The Public Notification System “Voyent Alert” is basically ready to go. We plan to do a soft launch with limited users initially to ensure we can work out any bugs before we do a larger promotion to recruit users. Selected staff admins have been trained and guidelines for use developed.

The new line ordered for the Stadium has just been installed. Staff have advised that they will work with the operations staff to schedule time to reconfigure the system to minimize disruption over the next few weeks.

Regarding the website project, we are now in the process of product development. We have had two development meetings re design and format. We are planning on meeting every 2 weeks over the next couple of months as we revamp and create content for the individual pages within the site. The primary goal is to make the site not only more visually appealing but also more user friendly for citizens to find and access information.

The town took ownership of the downtown public wifi system in 2012. The focus of that project was to enhance connectivity in our public spaces. There are currently 4 access points in the downtown core. We accessed data from January and shows that the usage

Usage stats

Total Data Transferred
132.32 GB
Total Data Downloaded
115.55 GB
Total Data Uploaded
16.76 GB

Client stats

TOTAL UNIQUE CLIENTS

2231

AVERAGE # OF CLIENTS PER DAY

321

AVERAGE USAGE PER CLIENT

60.7

MB

Clients per day



Speed tests were conducted on February 13, 2024 at approximately 2:45pm

- In front of the Dominion Public Building
 - o 36.8 mbs downloads 10 mbs uploads
- Across the street from Dayles
 - o 51 mbs downloads 9.79 mbs uploads
- By the Clock Tower Building
 - o 35.4 mbs downloads 3 mbs uploads



**TOWN OF AMHERST
BYLAW LISTING**

DEADLINE	BYLAW/POLICY NO.	BYLAW / POLICY	ASSIGNED TO	NOTES
Jan-23				
	03400-01	SIGNING AUTHORITY POLICY (210-12)	FINANCE	updated january council
	03400-02	BANKING (211-2)	FINANCE	updated january council
	C 02	DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS BYLAW	POLICE	Reviewed at January COW - No changes
	D 01	SNOW REMOVAL BYLAW	OPERATIONS	Reviewed at January COW - No changes
Feb-23				
	03800-05	COVID-19 PROPERTY TAX FINANCING PROGRAM POLICY	FINANCE	repealed Feb 2023
	10350-23	DOWNTOWN BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE	PLANNING	repealed feb 2023
	10350-22	COMMUNITY ARTS COUNCIL COMMITTEE	COMMUNITY LIVING	repealed Feb 2023
	72000-08	COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANTS	COMMUNITY LIVING	updated Feb 2023
Mar-23				
	D 02	LOCAL IMPROVEMENT BYLAW	OPERATIONS	Former repealed, new version given 1st reading March 2023
	D 03	WASTEWATER DISCHARGE BYLAW CONSOLIDATION	OPERATIONS	First reading March 2023
	P 09	COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT BYLAW	PLANNING	reviewed, no change recommended March COW 2023
	C 10	MOBILE VENDORS ON STREETS AND SIDEWALKS	POLICE	First reading March 2023
	04000-05	OVERTIME - NON-UNION EMPLOYEES (211-21)	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	updated March 2023
	10350-14	REQUESTS FOR FLAG RAISINGS & PROCLAMATIONS (210-24)	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	updated March 2023
	10350-24	PROCEEDINGS OF COUNCIL	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	referred to April 2023
	317400-05	NORTH TYNDAL WELLFIELD ADVISORY COMMITTEE POLICY	PLANNING	updated March 2023
	03700-01	PROCUREMENT POLICY	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	updated March 2023
	66000-01	PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE (210-23)	PLANNING	updated March 2023
	04530-01	SALARY ADMINISTRATION (211-27)	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	updated March 2023
	3000-10	Inventory of Non Capital Equipment Policy - (New)	Finance	approved March 2023
Apr-23				
	01130-01	TOWN CREST (210)02)	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	amended April 2023
	01130-02	PURCHASE AND USE OF BOTTLED WATER	CLERK	amended April 2023
	03800-02	TAX REDUCTION POLICY (110-02)	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	updated to Customer Service/HR from Finance. Policy was included in the Operating Budget presentation, no changes recommended.
	03800-04	TAX EXEMPTION POLICY	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	updated to Customer Service/HR from Finance
	D 21	MAINTENANCE OF GRASS	OPERATIONS	
	72300-01	BALLFIELD USER POLICY (270-01)	OPERATIONS	deferred to May 2023
	03470-03	USER FEES	FINANCE	updated to Finance from Customer Service/HR
May-23				
	C 09	C TAXI BYLAW	POLICE	given 1st reading at May 2023
	C07	FIRES AND BURNING OF MATERIALS BYLAW	FIRE	given 1st reading at May 2023
	C08	REGIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT BYLAW	FIRE	postponed to a later date pending consultation
	03000-07	EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY	FINANCE	amended at May 2023 Council
	72300-01	BALLFIELD USER POLICY (270-01)	OPERATIONS	repealed May 2023 Council



**TOWN OF AMHERST
BYLAW LISTING**

DEADLINE	BYLAW/POLICY NO.	BYLAW / POLICY	ASSIGNED TO	NOTES
		Territorial Acknowledgement Policy (NEW)	CLERK	approved May 2023 Council
	10350-26	COUNCIL CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	CLERK	amended at May 2023 Council
	D 21	Maintenance of Grass Bylaw	Operations	Given 2nd reading at May 2023 Council
Jun-23				
	P 04	MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL OCCUPANCIES	PLANNING	memo presented to COW, bring back in Fall for revisions
	31600-01	CULVERT POLICY (230-02)	OPERATIONS	No changes recommended
	31600-08	STREET BREAKING POLICY (230-10)	OPERATIONS	Amended June 2023
		Street Banner Policy	COMMUNITY LIVING	amended June 2023
Sep-23				
	10350-21	AMHERST YOUTH TOWN COUNCIL	COMMUNITY LIVING	Amended Sept 2023
	C 10	MOBILE VENDORS ON STREETS AND SIDEWALKS	POLICE	memo presented to COW from Andrew Fisher
	04530-01	SALARY ADMINISTRATION (211-27)	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	Amended Sept 2023
Oct-23				
	72000-08	COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANTS	COMMUNITY LIVING	Amended Oct 2023
	31800-01	SOLID WASTE SPECIAL CONDITIONS	OPERATIONS	repealed October 2023
	C 04	COMPANION ANIMAL BYLAW	POLICE	received first reading in October 2023
Nov-23				
	10350-31	INCLUSION, DIVERSITY AND EQUITY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE POLICY	COMMUNITY LIVING	amended Nov 2023
	10350-21	AMHERST YOUTH TOWN COUNCIL	COMMUNITY LIVING	amendments approved Nov 2023
	C 04	COMPANION ANIMAL BYLAW	POLICE	received 2nd reading in Nov 2023
Dec-23				
	66000-04	PROPERTY ASSESSED CLEAN ENERGY (PACE) PROGRAM POLICY	PLANNING	recommended no change
	10350-29	POVERTY ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE POLICY	COMMUNITY LIVING	Amended
	04500-06	SUBSTANCE USE POLICY	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	forwarded to January
	P 06	TRANSIENT AUTOMOBILE VENDORS	PLANNING	recommended no change
Jan-24				
		Noise bylaw	POLICE	recommend to not proceed



**TOWN OF AMHERST
BYLAW LISTING**

DEADLINE	BYLAW/POLICY NO.	BYLAW / POLICY	ASSIGNED TO	NOTES
		USER FEE POLICY	CLERK	amended
Feb-24	64000-03	TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE	OPERATIONS	
	10350-08	APPOINTMENTS OF CITIZENS TO BOARDS (210-11)	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	
	NEW	EMPLOYMENT EQUITY POLICY	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
Mar-24	64000-01	TREE PLANTING ON TOWN OWNED LANDS (270-02)	OPERATIONS	
	P 05	VACANT BUILDING BY LAW	PLANNING	
	31600-10	STREET INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE (230-13)	OPERATIONS	
	31600-11	SIDEWALK INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE (230-14)	OPERATIONS	
	04500-01	Safety Policy (211-25)	FIRE	
	01700-01	REPORTING ACCIDENTS (211-03)	FIRE	
	03000-05	AUDIT COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE POLICY	FINANCE	
	31600-18	SIDEWALK / CURB CONSTRUCTION POLICY	OPERATIONS	
	03000-08	HOSPITALITY EXPENSE POLICY	FINANCE	
Apr-24	72300-09	ICE ALLOCATION POLICY	OPERATIONS	
	31700-04	NORTH TYNDAL LAND ACQUISITION (241-06)	PLANNING	
	02000-01	USE OF FACILITIES - DOMINION PUBLIC BUILDING	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	
	04500-02	VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE POLICY	FIRE	
	66000-02	POLICY FOR MPS, LUB, SUBDIVISION BYLAW AND DA AGREEMENT ADOPTION AND ADMENDMENT	PLANNING	
	31600-09	PAVING NEW RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION STREETS (230-11)	OPERATIONS	
May-24	C 12	SMOKE FREE RECREATIONAL PLACES BYLAW	OPERATIONS	
	72300-10	ICE HELMET POLICY	OPERATIONS	
	03000-04	ROUNDING OF CASH TRANSACTIONS	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
	04500-03	SCENT REDUCTION POLICY	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
	03800-01	TAX COLLECTION POLICY (110-01)	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
	04000-03	STAFF TRAINING (211-06)	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
	04000-04	INQUIRIES REGARDING EMPLOYEES (211-16)	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
	04000-07	HIRING POLICY (211-23)	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
Jun-24	66000-03	POLICY FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND NOTIFICATION	PLANNING	
	C 03	LOITERING BYLAW	POLICE	
	02000-03	NAMING PUBLIC LANDS AND TOWN OWNED FACILITIES	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	
	01000-01	MEDIA POLICY (210-19)	COMMUNICATIONS	



**TOWN OF AMHERST
BYLAW LISTING**

DEADLINE	BYLAW/POLICY NO.	BYLAW / POLICY	ASSIGNED TO	NOTES
	10350-30	ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE POLICY	COMMUNITY LIVING	
Sep-24				
	D 22	ENCROACHMENT ON PUBLIC STREETS	OPERATIONS	
	04530-02	EMPLOYEE COMPUTER PURCHASED POLICY (211-29)	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
Oct 2024 -NONE				
Nov-24		new council orientation		
Dec-24				
	04000-09	EMPLOYEE/FAMILY ASSISTANCE (211-30)	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
	31600-12	SEWER INSTALLATION (240-02)	OPERATIONS	
	31600-24	STREET RATING SYSTEM	OPERATIONS	
	10350-27	JOINT COUNCILS TERMS OF REFERENCE POLICY	OPERATIONS	
Jan-25				
	04000-01	RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEES (210-15)	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
	04000-02	SUGGESTION AWARDS (211-16)	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
	10350-01	RECOGNITION OF SERVICE OF BOARDS (210-01)	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	
	66400-01	HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE	PLANNING	per policy, the January following an election
	03000-07	EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY	FINANCE	
Feb-25				
	02300-03	SALE/DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS EQUIPMENT (211-19)	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
	D 06	BUILDING BY LAW	PLANNING	
	04000-10	VACATION/HOLIDAY - NON-UNION EMPLOYEES (211-31)	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
	10350-05	INQUIRIES FROM COUNCIL (210-07)	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	
Mar-25				
	31600-15	SANITARY SEWER SERVICE TO COUNTY RESIDENTS (240-05)	OPERATIONS	
	31600-16	BUILDING SERVICE CONNECTIONS (240-06)	OPERATIONS	
	03000-03`	FUND RAISING	FINANCE	
	10350-10	RECOGNITION OF RETIRING MEMBERS OF COUNCIL (210-14)	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	
Apr-25				
	72300-08	SIGN RENTAL - STADIUM (273-07)	OPERATIONS	



**TOWN OF AMHERST
BYLAW LISTING**

DEADLINE	BYLAW/POLICY NO.	BYLAW / POLICY	ASSIGNED TO	NOTES
			CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	
	64000-02	GRASS MAINTENANCE POLICY (NEW)		
May-25				
	72300-04	DISCIPLINARY ACTION - RECREATION FACILITIES (271-06)	OPERATIONS	
	68300-02	NEW FIRE STATION, ALBION STREET (221-02)	FIRE	
	10350-20	CODE OF CONDUCT OF ELECTED MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	
	04000-12	PERSONNEL POLICY & CODE OF ETHICS	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
Jun-25				
	05000-02	INFORMATION/COMMUNICATION/TECHNOLOGY USAGE POLICY	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	
	04500-04	SMOKE FREE WORKPLACE POLICY	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
	10350-25	ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW - CAO	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
Sep-25				
	10350-16	OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR (210-26)	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	
	66150-01	DANGEROUS OR UNSIGHTLY PREMISES POLICY (210-21)	PLANNING	
	04000-14	PERSONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
Oct-25				
	31600-17	SURPLUS FILL	OPERATIONS	
	72000-04	ARTS & CULTURE POLICY (211-38)	COMMUNITY LIVING	
	A 07	ALTERNATIVE VOTING BYLAW 2018	CLERK	
	04000-08	ATTENDANCE ADMINISTRATION (211-24)	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
Nov-25				
	64000-04	ADOPT-A-GARDEN	OPERATIONS	
	10350-15	WRITTEN SUBMISSION TO COUNCIL (210-25)	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	
	66580-01	NEW SUBDIVISION STREETS - FINAL SUBDIVISION APPROVAL PRIOR TO STREET PAVING	PLANNING	
Dec-25				
	03450-03	DEBT MANAGEMENT POLICY (211-37)	FINANCE	
	P 08	LEASED LAND COMMUNITY BYLAW	PLANNING	
	B 02-1	DEED TRANSFER TAX BYLAW	FINANCE	
	04000-06	RENUMERATION FOR ACTING POSITIONS (211-22)	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	



**TOWN OF AMHERST
BYLAW LISTING**

DEADLINE	BYLAW/POLICY NO.	BYLAW / POLICY	ASSIGNED TO	NOTES
Jan-26	31000-01	STANDARD SPECIFICATIONS FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES (230-01)	OPERATIONS	
	10350-17	MEMBERSHIP ON NATIONAL BOARDS AND COMMITTEES (211-32)	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	
	10350-18	MEMBERSHIP IN CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND ASSOCIATIONS (211-33)	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	
	P 07	SUBDIVISION BYLAW	PLANNING	
Feb-26	04000-11	MATERNITY, PATERNAL AND ADOPTION LEAVE POLICY (20071126)	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
	P 03	CIVIC ADDRESS BY LAW	PLANNING	
	31600-02	STREET LIGHT POLICY (230-04)	OPERATIONS	
	72000-01	RECOGNITION OF ATHLETIC ACHIEVERS (210-22)	COMMUNITY LIVING	
Mar-26	72300-05	SALE OF BEER/LIQUOR - ROBB PARK (272-01)	OPERATIONS	
	72300-07	BEER GARDEN POLICY - STADIUM (273-05)	OPERATIONS	
		PACE BYLAW	FINANCE	
	66150-02	ENFORCEMENT POLICY AND SUMMARY OFFENCE TICKETS (211-28)	POLICE	
Apr-26	31400-01	VEHICULAR IDLING CONTROL POLICY (211-35)	OPERATIONS	
	10350-04	REPORTS TO COUNCIL (210-06)	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	
	68300-03	JUNIOR FIREFIGHTER PROGRAM	FIRE	
	A 05	HERITAGE PROPERTIES	PLANNING	
	D 19	SANITARY SEWER RATES	FINANCE	
May-26	C 01	BY LAW RESPECTING THE AMHERST BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS	POLICE	
	05000-01	RECORDS MANAGEMENT (211-26)	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	
	10350-19	SCHOLARSHIP AND BUSARY POLICY (NEW)	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	
	02300-01	SALE OF USABLE TOWN OWNED LAND (211-07)	PLANNING	
	02300-02	SALE OF NON-USABLE TOWN OWNED LAND (211-08)	PLANNING	
	68500-01	FEMALE POLICE CONSTABLE AND EXPENSE (220-01)	POLICE	
Jun-26	68300-01	PERMANENT FIREFIGHTERS (221-01)	FIRE	



**TOWN OF AMHERST
BYLAW LISTING**

DEADLINE	BYLAW/POLICY NO.	BYLAW / POLICY	ASSIGNED TO	NOTES
	68300-05	RESPECTING THE MANAGEMENT OF THE VOLUNTEER COMPONENT OF THE AMHERST FIRE DEPARTMENT	FIRE	
	03600-01	INVESTMENT POLICY	FINANCE	
	31700-03	COMMERCIAL WATER SERVICE (241-05)	OPERATIONS	
	10350-11	GIFTS, CARDS, FLOWERS	CLERK/COMM	
				Year 4
Sep-26	C 11	ALARM BYLAW INTRUSION ROBBERY AND FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS	POLICE	
	31600-14	COMMERCIAL SEWER SERVICE (240-04)	OPERATIONS	
	05000-04	ROUTINE ACCESS POLICY	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS	
	03800-03	INSTALLMENT BILLING POLICY (110-03)	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR	
	72200-01	R. H. SMITH BEQUEST LIBRARY (274-01)	COMMUNITY LIVING	
Oct-26				
	31600-25	SNOW AND ICE MANAGEMENT	OPERATIONS	
	D 20	SOLID WASTE BYLAW	OPERATIONS	
	03450-01	CAPITAL BUDGETING (211-14)	FINANCE	
	10350-28	APPOINTMENTS OF MEMBERS OF COUNCIL TO EXTERNAL BOARDS, COMMITTEES & COMMISSIONS		
Nov-26				
	31600-13	CATCH BASINS AND LATERALS (240-03)	OPERATIONS	
	03450-02	CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN (CIP) FRAMEWORK/BUDGET POLICY (211-	FINANCE	
	03450-04	BUDGET MANAGEMENT POLICY	FINANCE	
Dec-26				
	68300-04	FIRE INSPECTION POLICY	FIRE	
	31600-23	STREET NAMING POLICY	PLANNING	
	68000-03	TRAFFIC AUTHORITY	POLICE	
	31600-26	STREET RENAMING COPP LANE TO ERNIE LANE POLICY	PLANNING	
Remain as is				
	D 10	CLOSING PUBLIC STREET BY LAW	PLANNING	
	D 11	CLOSING OF PORTION OF SENATOR AVENUE BY LAW	PLANNING	
	D 12	CLOSING OF PORTION OF PENDER STREET BY LAW	PLANNING	
	D 13	CLOSING OF PORTION OF CORDOVA STREET BY LAW	PLANNING	
	D 14	CLOSING OF PORTION OF CORDOVA STREET BY LAW	PLANNING	
	D 15	CLOSING OF PORTION OF PENDER STREET BY LAW	PLANNING	
	D 16	RECORDED RESOLUTION UNSIGHTLY PREMISES ADMINISTRATOR	PLANNING	
	D 17	RECORDED RESOLUTION UNSIGHTLY PREMISES COMMITTEE	PLANNING	



**TOWN OF AMHERST
BYLAW LISTING**

DEADLINE	BYLAW/POLICY NO.	BYLAW / POLICY	ASSIGNED TO	NOTES
	D 18	RECORDED RESOLUTION INTEREST RATE ON UNSIGHTLY PREMISES CLEAN UP ACCOUNTS	PLANNING	
	P 01	MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY CONSOLIDATED WITH AMENDMENTS TO 202003	PLANNING	
	P 02	LAND USE BYLAW CONSOLIDATION MARCH 2020 B	PLANNING	
	31600-19	FRANKLYN STREET EXTENSION - STREET CLOSURE POLICY	OPERATIONS	
	31600-20	GOULD STREET - STREET CLOSURE POLICY	OPERATIONS	
	31600-21	PORTION OF CORNWALL AVENUE CLOSURE	OPERATIONS	
	31600-22	BOYLSTON AVENUE EXTENSION CLOSURE	OPERATIONS	
	B 01	BYLAW TO REPEAL THE TOWN OF AMHERST TAX EXEMPTION BYLAW	FINANCE	

MEMO

TO: Mayor Kogon and Members of Council

FROM: Andrew Fisher, Director of Planning & Strategic Initiatives

DATE: February 20, 2024

RE: **Strategic Priorities Update**

The following provides an update on the 2024 Project-based Strategic Priorities listed below that were adopted by Council in January. Updates to Ongoing Core Priorities are provided to the Committee within other reports.

Project-based Priorities	
Community Centre	Municipal Planning Strategy Renewal
Mobility Strategy	Supply of Suitable Affordable Housing
Ongoing Core Priorities	
Community Vibrancy	Drugs and Addiction
Social Needs	Community Collaboration
Economic Development	

2024 Strategic Priority

Title: **Community Centre Feasibility Study**

Project Goal: Construction and operation of a financially feasible modern multi-purpose complex that includes an environmentally friendly, safe and inclusive facility that meets the needs of our citizens and partners by promoting community pride, healthy active lifestyles, and vibrancy that reflects community values and heritage.

Responsible Department: Planning and Strategic Initiatives

Current Status: The final report was presented to In-Camera Council in October. Council gave direction to meet with potential partners and land owners of the favoured location. These discussions are ongoing.

1. Staff have since met with the owner of the preferred site. They are interested in selling us the property. They are currently preparing non-disclosure agreements as well as a pro forma for the property.
2. Staff have met with representatives from Ingenious and Northern Affairs. We asked for advice on how to ensure that the local Mi'kmaq culture is represented and included in the facility. We also spoke about potential partnerships including the Assembly of Atlantic Mi'kmaq Chiefs. They were very appreciative and receptive and agreed to put us in contact with relevant officials.

Future Actions:

1. Meet with potential stakeholders particularly the YMCA and Cumberland County (March)
2. Meet with additional equity deserving users / stakeholders (March and April)
3. Develop a high-level funding needs / costs impact document (April)
4. Determine uses / users included (May)
5. Decision on 'moving forward' (June)
6. Develop plan for implementation (September)

2024 Strategic Priority

Title: **Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) Review**

Project Goal: A new MPS that provides a policy framework to guide future decisions on the physical, environmental, economic, social, and cultural development of the town.

Responsible Department: Planning and Strategic Initiatives

Current Status: Drafts of the MPS & LUB have been reviewed by the PAC. Staff are working on revisions to the drafts that will be provided to the consultant.

Future Actions:

1. Revised draft documents provided to consultant
Due Date: March
2. Revised draft to PAC.
Due Date: April
3. Draft documents to COW for Review and Comment
Due Date: April
4. Community Consultations
Due Date: May
5. Final Revisions
Due Date: June
6. PAC Review
Due Date: July
7. Formal adoption process
Due Date: September

2024 Strategic Priority

Title: **Mobility Strategy**

Project Goal: Establishment of a mobility strategy for the town including: Active Transportation improvements; Transit Study; Physical Activity opportunities.

Responsible Departments: Planning and Strategic Initiatives, Community Wellbeing, Operations

Current Status: A suite of Active Transportation and physical activity infrastructure upgrades were presented to Council as part of the strategic priority process. A discussion paper that outlined considerations for a transit system was presented to Council in January.

Discussion:

Future Actions:

1. A suite of AT and physical activity infrastructure improvements were included in the Capital Budget.

Due Date: 2024/25 projects to be determined with approval of the Capital Budget.

2. Development of a strategy

Due Date: June 2025

- a. Project work plan April 2024

CAO Task Report

February 2024

Task Updates:

Task: Northern Region Report - GFL request to present

This will be scheduled for a Joint Councils meeting, in the process of scheduling a meeting.

Status: Ongoing

Task: MAP Request to Present

This will be scheduled for a Joint Councils meeting, in the process of scheduling a meeting.

Status: Ongoing

Task: Ottawa Avenue Petition

Letter has been delivered

Status: Ongoing

Task: Anson Avenue CN Crossing

The CAO was directed to get more information regarding the inspection done by CN, their warranty and their service standards. Waiting for a response from CN.

Status: Ongoing

Task: New Business Certificates Procedure

CAO in the process of drafting a procedure.

Status: Ongoing

Monthly Report

Business Development

February 2024

New Business Recognition certificates were presented to 4 new businesses. In Good Hands Contracting, Cumberland Laundry, Cheesecake Garage, and Colson Overhead Doors. They received certificates from members of Council and their businesses were promoted on the Town's social media pages.

Staff met with the Municipality of Cumberland to discuss the Highway 2 Gateway Park Signage and upgrades along the Laplanche Street entrance to Amherst. The County has hired a new Economic Development Officer who will lead this effort of signage and visual improvement along the corridor. Staff have agreed to collaborate when possible on these improvements.

The results are still pending on the application to the NS Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund for an LED Streetlighting pilot project with the inclusion of an Adaptive Controls network and additional camera and radar components.

Tourism NS's Emerging Destinations Program work is in process with the final deliverables scheduled to be completed by March 31st, 2024. The development of new tourism stories and a revamp of the Town of Amherst Landing page on novascotia.com are among the deliverables. The application for the TNS Digital Content Marketing Program is still in process and staff are awaiting a decision in the coming weeks. This in-kind funding program will run during the 2024-2025 fiscal year. Staff continues to work with various organizations in Amherst such as the ADBA and the Cumberland Museum to develop marketing materials and events with a focus on Tourist attraction. The Town has become a member of the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia as another means of being active in the Tourism Industry. Charlie Rhindress, head of the Great Amherst Mystery Society, has applied for funding to grow Esther Fest through the Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism & Heritage, Festival, and Community Event Development Program. The focus is to continue to build on the interest and success of last year's event and become an annual must-attend festival in Amherst for both visitors and residents.

Tourism Nova Scotia is gauging municipalities across Nova Scotia on their status and readiness to implement a Marketing Levy in their Municipality or Region. At this time, the capacity to manage the levy is the common barrier. Municipalities vary at all stages of preparedness from haven't started to fully implemented. The feasibility study through ACOA's Destination Market Readiness Program, which the Town has applied for, will determine the Cumberland Region's pathway for implementation.

The five-year, Nature 1 Challenge Funding Program is coming to a close on March 31, 2024. Staff will be submitting a final report summarizing the activities and land acquisition occurring during the program. The NS Department of Environment and Climate Change and other program partners are negotiating with the Federal government for the release of a second Challenge Fund Program. The second fund is expected to again be a multi-year contract with partners.

Two vacant camps located on the recently purchased PID25098898 property in the North Tyndal Wellfield will be removed in the month of February. These buildings are being removed to deter trespass and travel on the property.

Local companies continue to receive support through the Commercial Development Support Program incentivizing their growth and supporting their business development. Atlantic Windows is a recent program participant.

The letter of request to transfer land ownership from InvestNS to the Town of Amherst has been submitted to the Minister of Economic Development. The request is for five properties located in the Amherst Industrial Park.

The 2023-2024 Gritty to Pretty Program is coming to a close. The Town was able to capitalize on the funding with the purchase of waste receptacles and decorative lighting however, participation of businesses was low with two businesses applying to the program. The continued lack of access to contractors and long lead times on materials impacted businesses willing to tackle a project. The Chamber of Commerce underwent a restructuring and transitioned to a new executive director during the program. Completion of this reorganization will benefit next year's program promotion.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada / Government of Canada is planning an Immigrant Information Session in April. The Town has been asked to support the event with the lending of the CCUBIC conference room. The event is planned to be a morning session with an expected attendance of 50-75 persons. The event will teach businesses how to leverage the immigration system as an option to addressing their labour needs by bringing together the key organizations involved in hiring and retaining foreign nationals

NS Works has announced the date of Thursday, May 16th for the 2024 Job Fair at the Amherst Stadium. The Job Fair will continue benefiting residents with the opportunity to engage local businesses and organizations directly, at one time, under one roof. The Town of Amherst continues to be a sponsor and participant of this event.

Members of Team Cumberland, along with the NS Department of Labour Skills and Immigration have partnered to organize a project team who will deliver a Workplace Education Initiative (WEI) starting in the Fall of 2024. The WEI provides business skills training to owners and their employees. These funded education sessions can range from 8-10 weeks depending on the curriculum. The project team will lead the promotion and organization of these events across Cumberland County.

The Amherst Downtown Business Association will be holding their 2024 kick-off meeting on Tuesday, February 13th at the CCUBIC Boardroom. The executive of the association held a separate by-election to replace the outgoing Chairman, Dwayne Ripley. Thomas McCrossin was selected as the new Chairman and will be actively working to build the membership of the association.

The first workshop in the Team Cumberland series of "2024 Wednesday Workshops" was held on January 31st, at the CCUBIC conference room. The day-long event presented by Melissa Landry, Executive and Management Coach from In Charge Coaching focused on how a business can recognize within its staff future leaders and how to promote and grow their potential. 10 employers from Amherst and area committed to the day and commented how they felt it was a very good time investment. The next scheduled workshop is a lunch and learn on February 21st, at the CCUBIC conference room. This workshop will focus on sales and marketing techniques.

The 2024 Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge has seen a huge increase in interest with 60 entrepreneurs 18 years and younger signing up for the challenge. These youth will participate in free training sessions to develop a business plan for the opportunity to win up to \$3000 in cash prizes. The participants will be narrowed down to a small number of finalists who will compete in a pitch night in April to determine the winners. This event is organized and supported by the CBDC, Cumberland Business Connector, NS Works, the Municipality of Cumberland, and the Town of Amherst.

Monthly Report

Community Living

February 2024

Manager Community Well Being

Webinars (Attended)

Advancements on Basic Income in Canada: 2023 and Beyond
Indigenous Partnerships for the SDG's
Tech Roles in Volunteerism

Partner Meetings (Attended)

Cumberland Partners
CEP Peer Conversations
Learn 2 Lead
Youth Game Jam with Ignite Nova Scotia
Cumberland Youth Development Centre (Policy Meeting)
Community of Practice for Municipal Accessibility Lead

TOA Meetings

Safety Meeting
Community Living Meetings
TOA and RVF Meeting
Directors and Managers Meeting

Events:

Winter Carnival Planning
Food Summit
African Heritage Month Launch Event (and poster distribution)

Committee Meetings

Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee Meeting

Grants

Canadian Race Relation Foundation Grant for potential Newcomer Summit
Accessibility Grant for accessible upgrades at Town Hall

Food Summit

The Amherst Food Summit held on January 26 2024 was the second summit of its kind in Cumberland County. Organized by the Community Food Network Coordinators, Town of Oxford, Town of Amherst, Municipality of Cumberland, NS Health, Northern Zone community health boards, nova scotia department of community services, The 'Cultivating Food Security Summits in Cumberland County' will take place in 5 locations (Pugwash, Amherst, Oxford, Parrsboro and Springhill). Each of these neighborhood roundtable discussions aim to connect 30-40 community food security stakeholders. The sessions encourage local knowledge mobilization through the exploration of existing assets and gaps to increase community-specific food security.

The goal of the Cumberland Food Summits is to create a communication network for community stakeholders who are helping to strengthen our local food security. Cumberland County has financial support from the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services to increase our food security through the implementation of an ongoing 'Collaborative Community Food Network (C2FN)' pilot program.

Conversations with the Amherst Food Assistance Network showed a want/need for a site visit to their location by council and committee members and this is currently being coordinated with the network's volunteers and town staff.

With interest from many of the community groups in attendance a Community Food Network is being coordinated with the following organizations and individuals: In the Works, Cumberland Homelessness and Housing Association, MLA Elizabeth McCrossin', Councilor Landry, Town of Amherst and the Community Food Assistance Network. This group would continue to discuss the barriers we face and how we can support one another in the work we do.

Culture Events and Marketing

Preparation and coordination of the upcoming Winter Carnival
Booked Catering, Booked Entertainment, Logistics, Site Plan, etc
Working with Community Groups, organizing schedule of events

Hosted African Heritage Month Reception
Grant completed, catering, logistics, approximately 70 in attendance

Voyent Alert Training

Initial Canada Day Planning started
Grant completed, inflatables orders- Getting quotes

Updating Community Calendar, distribution of the What's Up Amherst and Community posts on social media maintained.

Culture, Events & Marketing Coordinator

Winter Carnival preparations – graphics created including tri-fold brochure, one-page schedule of events, announcement Instagram post, graphic for water bills, Facebook event, and Facebook event cover.

Event Planning Toolkit – created a file that includes contacts for event planning, liquor license info and application, lottery license info and application, facility rentals info/applications, community support grant application form, APD special event application (road closure), temporary event food permit info and also the events guide from Events Nova Scotia. This is also being compiled into a pdf format to also be placed on the website, available for download with printed copies available at Town Hall.

Strategic Plan Presentation/Graphics – created a presentation with appealing graphics to showcase our Strategic Plan & Ongoing projects for 2024. Also created one that will be on a poster size to be displayed to the public, with a more creative feel.

French Toast Fest preparations- free community supper has agreed to do a French Toast Fest themed supper on March 22. Schools are on board to supply the students with French Toast lunches with our assistance. Date has been planned for March 19-24, more info to be announced soon.

Community Support Grants – social media blast calling for applications for 2024-2025. We've received a total of 6 so far for this round.

Community Navigator

See year end report

Active Living Coordinator

Upcoming Professional Development - (Out Of Office)

- March 22nd FERPA – Truro

Upcoming:

Afterschool Skate Program - February - April 2024

- Received \$7500.00 from the Healthy Schools Promoter – Supports equipment purchases, healthy snacks and leadership at Stadium during the afterschool skates.
- Tegan Tran hired to lead.

Physical Activity Strategy - Goal - to Council by April 2024

- Active Communities Fund Grant Application Approved approximately \$15,000.00
- Consultant has been assigned – Stephanie Heath
- Communities on the move Physical Activity Survey **95/100** completed.
- Strategy in development

Learn to Lead - February - Ongoing through the year

- TOA supporting Home Alone Course to be delivered at Stadium in March
- YMCA to provide subsidized Babysitting courses in Amherst and throughout Cumb Co. over the next 4 months.

- JC' s Taekwondo to deliver subsidized self defense courses throughout Cumb Co. over the next 4 months.

- Jordi Hepburn at NSCC to provide subsidized Inclusion training for Summer Staff students. Will be delivered in May in Amherst and Springhill campuses

- Working on partnership with Community Garden to offer subsidized gardening sessions

Winter Carnival - Feb 2024

- Flag ceremony Spring Street Academy Students to sing anthem English and French / ARHS storyboards to be presented - recipients also invited

- Athletic Achievers - 154 total to be recognized

- My Biggest Fan Jamboree - Social Media Blitz

- Sunday - Family Fun Day

Wheelchair Basketball - March 2024

- Application has been submitted

- Jared Gogan to lead at Spring Street Academy week of March 16th

Summer Students - May 2024

- Orientation Meeting - TBD

Heartland Tour Dates

- Heartland Tour - Date set for **Wed July 10th**

- Met with APD - have application to submit

- RCMP have approved the request

Next Steps:

- Set meeting with committee

Ongoing:

Multisport

- Current Session: Racquet Sports

- Completed: Skating, Basketball, Curling, Athletics, Run Jump Throw, Bowling, Swimming

Equipment Lending

**Still exploring options to have Bicycles as part of the lending program

Friday Night Fun Numbers:

TOA / NS Walks

- Have 12 members in the walking group Tuesdays from Amherst Stadium. Ages range 55-76

- Hoping to pull a new leader from the group to take training and they can function with the

Towns Support

Adult Rec Volleyball

- Will be running until June 2024

- Exploring of having one of the participants take First Aid Course and be a TOA volunteer

to have

TOA / NS Walks

- Have 12 members in the walking group Tuesdays from Amherst Stadium. Ages range 55-76

● Hoping to pull a new leader from the group to take training and they can function with the

Towns Support

Adult Rec Volleyball

● Will be running until June 2024

● Exploring of having one of the participants take First Aid Course and be a TOA volunteer

to have the ability to supervise sessions

Director report

- Application for funding for the 2nd Construction Battalion monument submitted
- Meetings with Active Living Coordinator, Consultant Stephanie Heath and NS department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage re: active living strategy
- Internal meetings re: COW in camera, team meetings, one to one check ins
- Preparation and grant proposal for African Heritage Month
- Planning meetings re: AH Month

Council Report

Community Navigator

Yearly Report: February 2023 – January 2024

Recruitment

In April, Dr. Brian MacFarlane attended the Rural and Remote Medicine Course on behalf of Amherst and Cumberland County with logistical support and assistance provided by the community navigator.

Dr. Gradstein and Allison Watson visited the Dalhousie Family Medicine Resident Education Weekend in September. Through the Office of Healthcare Professionals Recruitment (OHPR) Community Fund, Amherst and Cumberland County were able to support the residents as the platinum sponsors. This provided more face to face time with the family medicine residents of the Maritimes. There was time to give a talk to the residents at two separate dinners, the opportunity to give away a lot of branded swag and awarded one resident a special get-away weekend for the area.

Four recruitment dinners and education sessions took place in November and early December. They took place in Fredericton, St. John, Moncton. Each dinner was for either Dalhousie or Sherbrooke medical students and residents. The attending physician(s) gave a talk on a subject matter of interest to the residents and the community navigator did a quick presentation on Amherst and Cumberland County. Each learner took home a small swag bag filled with local products. Each of these dinners provided valuable learning opportunities for the students and one-on-one time to talk about opportunities in Amherst and Cumberland County.

Site Visits

From March 2023 to February 2024, there were 18 planned site visits in Cumberland County. Three of those visits were cancelled or rescheduled at the last minute. Two of the visits were done virtually with a group of potential physicians wanting to learn more about working and living in Amherst and Cumberland County. One visit was exclusive to the Pugwash/Wentworth area, three included Amherst, Pugwash or Parrsboro, and the rest of the visits were specific for the Town of Amherst.

Each visit includes providing a welcome bag or basket with branded swag and local products. They are also tailored to the individual physician's interests and needs. Visits have included school tours, YMCA tours, golf, dinners, hikes, and meeting many members of the community.

From January 1 to December 31, 2023, there were 4 family physicians who started practicing in Cumberland County and 5 specialists.

Branding and Resources

The Explore Cumberland Guide was developed with Nova Social Media & Marketing. Using the Explore Cumberland branding that the Municipality of Cumberland had developed, it highlights the communities within Cumberland County and showcases everything this county has to offer. Physical copies have been provided to new staff, visitors, and to the Municipality of Cumberland for distribution. Digital copies have been beneficial for giving an overview of the area to anyone considering relocating.

Cumberland County postcards were created and printed. They have been included in recruitment bags, welcome baskets, and used as thank you notes. A new foldable map of Cumberland County highlighting some day trips and the towns within the county was developed.

A new website for Cumberland Healthcare Recruitment has been developed with Nova Social Media & Marketing. It has been soft launched and will be soon used in and on promotional materials.

Bulk orders from local vendors for soaps, lip balms, chocolates, tea and coffee were made throughout the year to ease repeat purchases while creating recruitment, welcome, and appreciation baskets.

Bags, pens, and tumblers were purchased with the Cumberland branding to be used in recruitment bags, baskets, and appreciation efforts.

Cumberland County branded backdrops were designed and purchased for trade shows and recruitment events.

Retention and Appreciation

Staff recognition days took place throughout the year where the Bee Kind Committee, with the support of the community navigator and the OHPR funding, created thank you baskets for various departments at the hospitals around Cumberland County. The Physician Appreciation Committee delivered baskets for Doctors Day.

Over the summer, free BBQs were held at each of the hospitals in Cumberland County for all staff. These were run with the help of volunteers, students, committee members, and the community navigator.

The social committee at CRHCC has been reformed and has hosted many staff events both inside and outside the hospital. A majority of these events have been supported or fully funded by the OHPR grant. Some examples of events that have taken place are paint nights, holiday dance party, a family skating party, bowling party, pool night, and a family pool party.

The physicians held their own get-togethers over the past year supported by the OHPR funding. There was a pizza party in the late spring and another get-together in September.

Over 100 welcome bags/baskets were provided to new nursing staff at CRHCC by the Bee Kind Committee. The cost of these baskets is supported by the OHPR funding. The Physician retention and

appreciation committee has provided approximately 30 baskets for new doctors and as a pick-me-up to support other physicians over the past year. The cost of the baskets was covered by the OHPR funding.

Holiday parties and paint nights were hosted at each of the Cumberland County hospitals as well.

Over the past year, there were 11 equipment upgrades to departments at CRHCC with the OHPR funding. This included microwaves, coffee machines, and a new chair.

There has also been a focus on the residents and medical students who visit our area. All of the North Nova Residents visited several times in the past year. One of these visits included a round of golf and a dinner with local physicians. Many of the students have been treated to lunches and welcome bags.

Settlement Assistance

Over the past year, there were 18 requests to help find housing in Amherst and Cumberland County. Everyone who relocated to the area were able to find housing to meet their needs.

One family required extensive relocation assistance and work occurred with the YREACH coordinators to best support the family.

Work occurred with an Internationally Educated Nurses working group about helping to settle nurses from India to Nova Scotia.

There were three requests to help with immigration. These requests were passed onto the appropriate department at NS Health with appropriate follow up to the individuals.

There were several requests for assistance with locating childcare. The resources in the area were provided to the families.

Monthly Report

Communications and I.T.

February 2024

IT Services:

Bell will be installing a second phone line in Dispatch that can be used if a 2nd Dispatcher is required to help out or if the main line in Dispatch goes down again.

Completed server updates.

Moved the OSL application to a new server at APD (time tracking software used only at APD).

Moved Directory's from old Windows File Server to New File Server. Reconfigured backup system to prepare shutting down old File Server.

Setup/configured and installed a new switch at Town Hall.

Created 24 new email accounts for Town employees who didn't already have emails for the new payroll system and assigned them Microsoft licenses.

The security system was repaired at the Fire Hall.

Started setup on 3 computers to replace the Liberty Interview Room recording computers at APD.

Day to Day IT issues.

Procurement:

ID	Type	Project	Process Type	Budget Type	Released	Closed	App'd	App'd By
RFP	23-42	Power Extrication Tools	Reg	C			X	CAO
RFQ	23-22	Ammunition	Reg	C			X	CAO
RFP	23-43	Breathing Air Refilling Stations	Reg	C			X	CAO
RFP	24-02	Bedding Plants	Reg	O	X			
RFP	24-05	Stadium Canteen Concessions	Reg	O	X			

Task Updates:

Task: Town of Amherst Website

Update: Held our first development meeting last week. A 2nd meeting is scheduled for next week. We will be having these meetings every 2 weeks from that point on as new material is developed and collected.

Status: In progress

Task: Customer Notification System Software

Update: Staff have received basic training on the system. Procedure/guidelines for usage has been developed. We are a little behind the original target but hope to do a soft launch within the next couple of weeks to a limited audience. This will allow us to fine tune things before we begin a larger public recruitment for subscribers.

Status: In progress

Task: Public wifi

Update: The new line has been installed at the Stadium. Staff will now have to reconfigure equipment from 1 line to 2. They will consult with stadium operations schedules to minimize any disruptions during the work

Status: In progress

Task:

Update:

Status:

Monthly Report

Cumberland Business Connector

February 2024

Support Businesses (primarily 0-50 employees)

- The Cumberland Business Accelerator Program continues to support businesses with high growth potential.

Accelerator businesses that have been worked with, have been supported in the following ways:

- Identifying tasks that can be delegated to apprentices. Paperwork gets completed faster with less errors, Red Seal tradespeople use their time more efficiently
- A startup with extremely high-growth potential needed specialized expertise that was not in-house. We connected him to one of our counterparts at the Cape Breton Partnership and he has provided timely feedback and has made introductions that will open further doors for him.
- Continued advice on business takeover and expansion.
- The Business Spotlight program continues to highlight small businesses on Social Media. One business per week is featured. These Business Spotlights are the most popular and most viewed category of posts.
- Business Retention and Expansion visits are going well. A number of businesses that were visited attended the “Building Your Future Leaders” all-day workshop on January 31st.
- Planning is underway for four more business workshops. The next one will be a short lunch-and-learn workshop on February 28th and will be focused on Sales.

New Businesses

- The Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge is underway in partnership with the CBDC and Nova Scotia Works’ School Liaison staff. There was an extraordinary response to this opportunity, with approximately 80 youth signed up for the 2024 Challenge. They will all be provided with training on how to develop a business plan. The students with the best business ideas will pitch their business plans to a panel of judges. The business plan and the pitch will determine who wins the cash prizes.

Workforce

- Planning is underway for the High School Career Fairs in River Hebert and Parrsboro in April and May.
- The Cumberland Business Connector and the YREACH program partnered to put on an information session on taxes as this was an area of interest for newcomers. Over 30 immigrants attended the information session. Another workshop for newcomers is being planned. This will deal with “Navigating the Canadian Real Estate Market.”

Monthly Report

Finance

February 2024

The third quarter financial review is complete and the Third Quarter Financial Report will be presented to the Audit Committee in the near future. The financial results continue to be favourable.

The capital budget for 2024/25 is in its final stages as staff are finalizing the capital projects and funding. A capital budget meeting is anticipated in late February or early March to present the 2024/25 capital budget (year 1) as well as years two through five.

Work on the operating budget for 2024/25 is ongoing. Departments have updated their respective budgets as required. Staff are reviewing the operating budget in its entirety for required updates and completeness. It is anticipated that the operating budget will be presented in March.

Task Updates:

Task: Library Funding

Motion: That Council approve of the request from the Cumberland Public Library for bridge funding in the amount of \$6,000.

Update: Received invoice from library and cheque was prepared January 31 and sent.

Status: Complete

Monthly Departmental Report

Fire Department

February 2024

RESPONSES (January)

Town of Amherst – 17 events

- 7 Monitored alarm activations
- 1 Smell of propane / natural gas
- 1 Assist EHS
- 1 Smell of smoke
- 1 Garage can fire
- 2 Motor vehicle accidents
- 2 Wood burning appliances

Contract area (District 2) – 5 events

- 1 Flue fire
- 3 Motor vehicle accidents
- 1 Power lines on fire/Arcing

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Weekly training

During the month of January, the fire department focused it's training on ladder operations, air supply and declaring a mayday.

Recruit fire fighter training

The new recruit fire fighters continue their in-person training. During the month of January, their training focused on ground ladders, communication, fire hose, hose operations and hose streams and fire suppression.

Junior firefighter program

The junior firefighters continue their training. The junior firefighters attend weekly training and attend weekend training once a month. During the last weekend training session, the junior firefighters received structural firefighting equipment and education on the proper use and maintenance of this equipment. Hands on training will continue over the coming months.

RECRUITMENT

The fire department continues to look for new members to join our team. For more information on becoming a member of the Amherst fire department, please go to:

<https://www.amherst.ca/volunteer-firefighter.html>

TASK UPDATES

Task: **No open tasks at this time**

Monthly Report

HR and Customer Services

February 2024

PAYROLL

Payroll and WCB remittances are up to date.

Payroll remittances are remitted to CRA bi-weekly by the payroll company.

WCB is remitted automatically via our payroll provider.

CUSTOMER SERVICES

Tax/Accounts Receivable/Collections:

2023 Assessment Appeals – the Town received the appeal inventory from PVSC. There was a total of 98 appeals of which 80 appeals are complete, four (4) are outstanding, and 14 withdrawn. NS Assessment Appeal Tribunal status: 15 total; six (6) complete and 9 (nine) outstanding.

Tax Certificates – there were 14 tax certificate requests in January.

	# Of Accounts Appealing	Total Assessment Value Being Appealed	Appeal Completed as of Feb 1/24	Pending as of Feb 1/24	Withdrawn as of Feb 1/24	Outstanding Appeals as of Feb 1/24	Appeals Successful as of Feb 1/24	Loss of Assessment Value	Amount of Revenue Reduction	Nova Scotia Assessment Appeal Tribunal Status
Residential /Resource	66	\$24,219,300	52	0	11	2	12	(\$388,000)	(\$ 6,480)	4
Commercial	32	\$29,556,800	28	0	3	2	10	(\$1,290,200)	(\$ 57,672)	5
TOTAL	98	\$53,776,100	80	0	14	4	22	(\$ 1,678,200)	(\$ 64,152)	9

Preliminary tax sale notices: 14 notices were sent out to property owners with two (2) years taxes outstanding and no firm payment arrangements in place. The next tax sale will be tentatively scheduled for May 2024.

Water/Sewer Billing:

3rd quarter water / sewer billing was completed, and bills were mailed out on January 30. Some water meter repairs are required, so staff are working on making appointments for those repairs throughout the month.

Customer Service Tracking – E11:

There was a total of 60 opened cases in January. Action was taken on 614 cases in an effort to “clean up cases” in the system, with 61 of these cases being closed. The category with the most opened/closed cases in January were compost bin replacement/repairs, with 16 cases.

Human Resources

HR staff continues to work on the review of all HR policies.

Implementation of our payroll upgrade to Workforce Now (WFN) is complete. HR has now processed three (3) payroll cycles in the new system. We continue to onboard CUPE staff with the installation of the new biometric time clocks.

Michelle Terfry's last day with the Town of Amherst was January 19, 2024. Best of luck Michelle!

Marie MacDonald accepted a term position as Customer Service/Cashier effective January 22, 2024. Welcome back Marie!

Monthly Report

Operations

February 2024

In addition to their routine maintenance work Operational Services staff worked on and will be working on:

RECREATION & HORTICULTURE

- Dickey Park washroom is open daily 8:00am to 5:00pm.
- The walking track at the stadium is generally available for use daily from 7:00am to 9:00pm.
- Dickey Park walking track has been plowed and staff have noticed it is being well used.
- Eastlink broadcasted the Ramblers game from the stadium on February 10.
- We have been waiting on Hansen signs to repair the sign at front of the facility. Staff requested an update on the status of the work on February 7th and were told they were waiting to coordinate this work when they had other work to do in Amherst. Staff advised them that repairing the sign is a high priority and we cannot wait.
- The rotary playground equipment installation has been delayed as 2 of the posts for the structure were manufactured incorrectly and have to be replaced.
- NSP has installed one new LED light at the Amherst stadium. A request for an update on the status of the others was they are “on schedule”.
- We are having Nichent Energy install new flood lights on the front of the stadium to improve visibility in the parking lot at night.
- Planning for 2024 flower bed designs is ongoing and the bedding plant RFP closed on February 2nd.
- The CBC news article on the outdoor rink was released on January 29th and seems to have gotten good traction on social media.
- Several dog waste stations have been repaired or replaced in the last month.
- Woodchips have been stockpiled at dog park and will be spread when staffing and weather conditions permit.
- Staff met with the Rotary Park committee to discuss the future vision for this green space.

PUBLIC WORKS

- There were 4 snow events in the last month that required plowing of streets, and 6 events that required the plowing of sidewalks.
- Sidewalk salting took place on 10 occasions and the salt truck was dispatched 10 times due to icy conditions.
- There was 1 broken water main repaired on Harding Avenue and staff repaired 2 broken curb stops.
- Staff patched potholes with recycled asphalt on 12 days in January and used approximately 36 tonnes of recycled asphalt.

- Staff attended to calls for 2 plugged sewers; 85 Havelock St. and 197 East Victoria St. In both cases the issue was found to be in the private portion of the lateral.
- Staff completed sanitary sewer lateral videos for 3 residents that were experiencing issues with their sewer line.
- Staff completed 9 water and sewer locates for Nova Scotia Power in January.
- Weather permitting public works staff completed daily ice maintenance on outdoor rink.

UPCOMING

- Snow and de-icing operations of streets, sidewalks and VIA rail platform as needed.
- Patching of potholes with recycled asphalt is ongoing.
- Amherst stadium will be hosting the following events;
 - Nova Scotia Figure Skating provincials March 1, 2, and 3
 - Amherst Figure Skating Club Skatefest March 6
 - Bates / Merrill Friendship Hockey Tournament March 8, 9, and 10
- Organizations and user groups are booking time at the stadium for May, and June.

Task Updates:

Task: 20231218 - Water Utility Dump Truck Purchase

Update: A purchase order has been given to Nova Truck Centres and the truck has been ordered. Delivery of the new truck is expected in December 2024.

Status: In Progress

Task: WWTP Grey Water Energy Extraction Report

Update: Jay Crossman has prepared a draft report with respect to grey water energy extraction. I will review and finalize the report and present the findings to council at a future COW meeting.

Status: In Progress

Monthly Report

Planning & Strategic Initiatives

February 2024

The attached report shows development activity in December as well as a year-over-year comparison as of January 31st. Staff anticipate strong unit additions in 2024. Up to four large-scale residential developments are poised to commence construction in the spring.

Survey and legal documents continue to be prepared to execute the development agreement for 105 South Albion Street (former Blaine Street property) that would allow ten townhouse units and 176 units within two apartment buildings. Under the terms of the Agreement of Purchase and Sale, the developer has 12 months to start construction, although they have indicated that they plan start second quarter of 2024.

The appeal of Council's refusal to enter into a development agreement for an apartment building at 155 East Victoria Street took place in early January. Written closing arguments by the appellant and the town were submitted last week. The Board is supposed to render their decision within 60 days.

A Public Hearing was held February 8th for a development agreement for 15 & 31 East Victoria Street to allow construction of a 6-storey mixed-use building in addition to the already approved 3-storey apartment building on the same land. Council will be asked to consider second reading at the regular meeting of Council in February.

Planning continues to provide planning and development services for the Town of Oxford.

A report on Business Development Activities is provided in the package as a separate report.

Task Updates:

Task: Blaine Street and Ottawa Avenue Acquisitions
Update: The development agreement was approved and the appeal periods has lapsed. Survey and legal work is taking place. The development agreement is with the proponent for signature.
Task: Hotel Levy
Update: The application for the ACOA Destination Market Readiness Program is still in process and staff are expecting to receive notice from ACOA to commence the program in February. ACOA has notified the Town that a project lead has been assigned to the application and will be in contact. The Town of Amherst is the lead proponent on the application with the Municipality of Cumberland acting as a secondary contact.
Task: LED Roadway Lighting Proposal
Update: An application was submitted in December to the NS Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund for a pilot project that would include replacement of almost all of the town's streetlights to more efficient lights, while testing LEDs radar and camera technologies. Status: Ongoing

Permits to February 1, 2024

PERMIT APPLICATIONS							For the Month of January	
Number	PID	Civc Address	New Units	Work Type	Bldg Type	Proposed Use	Permit Fee	Value
C2024-001	25462060	1 Pinehurst St	1	Construction	Single Detached Dwelling	Moble/Mini Homes	179.00	100,000.00
C2024-002	25517244	4 Brown St	1	Construction	Single Detached Dwelling	Single Detached Dwelling	0.00	375,000.00
D2024-003	25034414	195 Victoria St	0	Construction	Swimming Pool	Accessory Uses - Swimming	50.00	70,000.00
B2024-004	25018011	35 Donald Ave	0	Renovate	Single Detached Dwelling	Accessory Uses - Other	112.00	24,960.00
C2024-005	25000837	8 Kent Dr	1	Construction	Single Detached Dwelling	Moble/Mini Homes	172.00	250,000.00
C2024-006	25000837	47 Kent Dr	1	Construction	Single Detached Dwelling	Moble/Mini Homes	172.00	250,000.00
C2024-007	25013590	25 Church St	0	Renovate	Commercial	Restaurants	73.00	9,500.00
Total	7		4				758.00	1,079,460.00

2023-2024 Comparison

ACTIVITY REPORT							For Month of January 2024-01-31		
Type	Jan 2023			Jan 2024					
	Permits	Units	Value of Construction	Permits	Units	Value of Construction			
Single Family	0	0	0	5	4	999,960			
Duplex/Semi	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Apartments	1	6	700,000	0	0	0			
Other Residential	0	0	0	1	0	70,000			
Commercial	2	0	8,461	1	0	9,500			
Industrial	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Inst & Gov	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Agriculture	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Total	3	6	708,461	7	4	1,079,460			
Year To Date	3	6	708,461	7	4	1,079,460			

Monthly Report

Police Services

February 2024

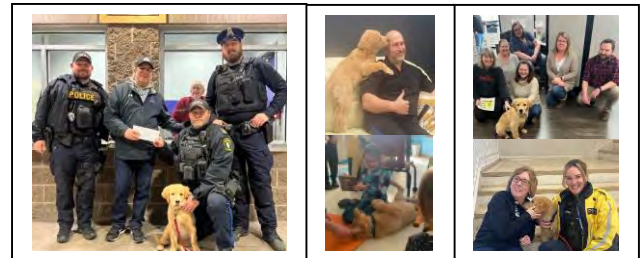
TRAINING

Military Veterans Wellness Program: All members have been signed up for this online course that was developed in partnership with the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), Toronto Police Military Veterans Association (TPMVA), Royal Canadian Legion (RCL), Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC), and the Canadian Armed Forces. The MVWP was established to equip frontline officers with raised awareness and training to enhance the recognition and understanding of military Veterans' issues, build rapport, and provide a formal mechanism to connect military Veterans with essential social services delivered through the RCL, VAC, and OSISS. There are many factors that contribute to a military Veteran being in need of assistance, however, the three most common factors are: financial instability, lack of social support, and health concerns. There are approximately 3000 - 5000 unhoused Veterans across Canada and Veterans die by suicide at approximately twice the rate of the general public.

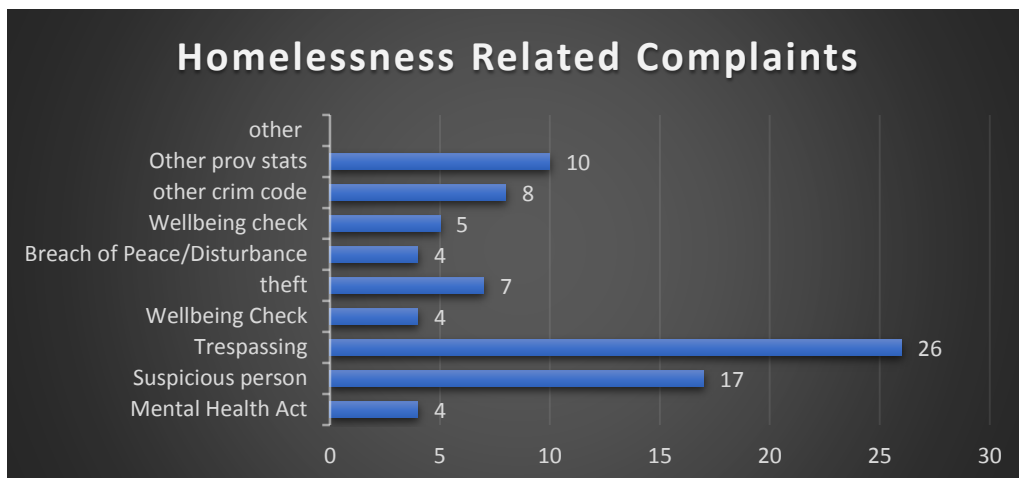


GENERAL OPERATIONAL UPDATES:

Rocky K9: Rocky had a very busy month in January, visiting schools, Cumberland Mental Health & Addictions, and other places and organizations, including spending time with kids learning and reading meeting new friends. Regardless of where Rocky goes, he's always a big hit with everyone.



Homelessness: As with the trend in December 2023, January 2024 saw a sharp increase with 85 complaints related to homelessness. In December, we had 33 such occurrences as compared to 6 in November. Many of these complaints were involving the same person multiple times. We have also been dealing with some people that we are unfamiliar with and are not from this area. The majority of complaints were cleared without laying charges. To date, February 2024 stats have seen an increased number as well. These stats are still much lower than in August 2022 when we logged 140 complaints.



Shoplifting Complaints: January saw a slight increase (14) in shoplifting complaints as opposed to December (12) and in November with 7 complaints. We had 5 such occurrences in October, down from 12 complaints of shoplifting in September. In August, we logged 19 complaints.

Changes in Occurrences/Charges: Our criminal charge stats once again saw a slight increase in January 2024 (83) as compared to the Criminal Charges for December 2023 (50). This is down from November with 87 criminal charges but higher than observed in January 2023 when had 59 charges. As noted in previous reports, the 2023 calendar year being one of the busiest in the last decade with a total of 1,116 charges laid compared to 976 charges being laid in 2022. Our January 2024 occurrences numbered 481, slightly increasing from 444 in December 2023, and higher than in January 2023 (443).

Safe, Approach and Rescue Vehicle: On January 25th, 2024, Chief Pike, D/Chief Hunter, Sgt Aaron Graham and John Michaels (TOA Public Works Mechanic) attended the GardaWorld Compound in Moncton met with Darrell Coffin (Vice President) and viewed the SARV. Overall, it appeared to be in good shape with some minor bodywork issues. It is a large 10-wheeled vehicle with a two-seat cab with two more seats positioned behind the cab. The rear of the truck is fairly large, but has a low ceiling, and benches and storage units for equipment and other necessities can easily be installed. For specs, it is a 2004 International MF305, the armour levels are L3A Body, Cab and rear cargo, Glass is L4. It has a rear double axle, (10 wheels). Aside from a couple of minor issues that Darrell is going to address, including cleaning, we expect that we will be taking delivery sometime in the next few weeks. Our first order of business will be to remove the GardaWorld decals as per the proposed MOU. After that we are looking at options for lighting, paint, decaling and other upgrades, many of which may come via sponsorships, donations or volunteered time. I expect that we will continuously add to it over time and is a pretty exciting project. Sergeant Graham has also put together a draft Standing Order in relation to its use which we will continue to develop and finalize over time. Our expectation is that this vehicle will provide additional support for the MOUs we have with other municipal Police departments, and will be available to assist the RCMP or any other first responder agency if required.



OPERATIONAL

Impaired Driving/Drug Charges – January 27th, 2024: A 33-year-old male Amherst male has been arrested, charged and remanded into custody as a result of a traffic stop on Hickman Street during the afternoon of January 27th, 2024. Cody Ryan Cottenden, aged 33 of Amherst, Nova Scotia, has been charged with one (1) count of driving while impaired, two (2) counts of possession of a weapon for a dangerous purpose, two (2) counts of possession of a concealed weapon and applicable charges under the Drugs and Substances Act. He is also facing charges under the Motor Vehicle Act for driving without a license. At approximately 3:00pm on Saturday January 27th, 2024, a member of the Amherst Police Department observed the accused, who does not possess a drivers' license, driving in the area of Cornwall Avenue. A vehicle stop was conducted on Hickman Street and the attending officer observed drug paraphernalia inside the vehicle and recognized signs of impairment. The accused was arrested as grounds were formed to believe that he was driving while impaired. Police also located weapons and drugs during the arrest. The accused was remanded into custody and made a brief court appearance this morning. He has since been released by the courts on conditions and returns to court at a later date.

Suspicious Person Complaint/Multiple Charges – January 25th, 2024: A 31-year-old male has been arrested and charged in relation to an incident that resulted in a lockdown at a local school and hold and secure at other Amherst Schools. Shortly before 1:00pm on January 26th, 2024, Police received a call that a person wearing dark clothing and a balaclava was on Mission Street and appeared to be carrying a rifle.

Members of the Amherst Police, which included the patrol section and Major Crime Unit members, immediately responded to the area, including West Highlands School which was placed on lockdown as a precaution. Police spoke to witnesses to get more details on what was observed while other schools were notified and information was posted to social media. Shortly afterwards, police were advised that the person may be in a residential area nearby as a person was spotted behind a row of houses. Police located a person that matched the description provided by witnesses. The male was carrying what appeared to police to be a firearm. The male was swiftly taken into custody by Amherst uniformed patrol members. An airsoft rifle and an airsoft pistol were in his possession. Both items very closely resembled authentic firearms. Cory LeBlanc, aged 31 of Amherst Nova Scotia, has been charged with two (2) counts of breach of probation, two (2) counts of possession of a weapon for a purpose dangerous to the public peace, one (1) count of mischief, one (1) count of breach of a weapons prohibition, and one (1) count of carrying a concealed weapon and a charge of resisting arrest. Once the lockdown was lifted, Cst Harrison and K9 Rocky spent additional time speaking with both students and staff of West Highlands School. The accused was held in custody overnight, made a brief court appearance on January 26th, 2024 and returned on February 15th 2024 for a bail hearing

Crystal Methamphetamine/Cocaine Seizure – January 8th, 2024: Two Amherst men are facing drug trafficking charges following a vehicle stop during the early morning hours of January 8th, 2024. Shortly after 1:30am on January 8th, 2024, Police conducted a traffic stop on Havelock Street in Amherst, NS. As a result of that traffic stop, 2 persons were arrested and a substantial amount of Crystal Methamphetamine, Cocaine and Canadian currency was located inside the vehicle. Police also located drug paraphernalia, which included electronic scales. Both men have been arrested and since released by the courts on conditions. Nicholas Ivan Davis, aged 34 of Amherst, Nova Scotia has been charged with Possession of Methamphetamine for the Purpose of Trafficking, Possession of Cocaine for the Purpose of Trafficking, driving while Prohibited, Breach of Undertaking, Identity Fraud, and Obstructing a peace officer. Corey Gallagher, aged 43 of Amherst, Nova Scotia has been charged with Possession of Methamphetamine for the Purpose of Trafficking and Possession of Cocaine for the Purpose of Trafficking. Both men are due back in court on March 4th, 2024.

PERSONNEL:



Special Olympics Nova Scotia Provincial Award: Once again, Cst Michelle Harrison has been recognized for her dedication and work in relation to the Nova Scotia Special Olympics and has been selected as the 2023 recipient for the Law Enforcement Torch Run Award. This year, the 30th Inspired Gala and Auction, which is a fundraiser for the Special Olympics Nova Scotia will be held on February 21st, 2024 at the Nova Centre. As expected, we are ecstatic that Michelle has once again been recognized for her community spirit and dedication!

OPERATIONAL STATS – DECEMBER 2023

Occurrences:	481	Criminal Code Charges:	83
Impaired by Alcohol:	1	CDSA:	5
Impaired by Drug:	3	CBCA:	1
Traffic Tickets:	29	PPA:	0
Traffic Written Warnings:	15	Vehicle Checks	136
LCA:	1	Foot Patrol Hours:	25hrs, 43 min
Bike Patrol Hours:	0	Parking Tickets:	4
Parking Warnings:	9		

TASK UPDATES

Task: Safe Approach and Rescue Vehicle: Council approved of entering into an MOU with GardaWorld for the purchase of a decommissioned Armoured Cash Vehicle for the price of \$2.00 + applicable taxes

Update Status: In progress. On January 25th we visited the Garda compound and viewed the vehicle and spoke with Darrell Coffin, GardaWorld Vice President. John Michaels, TOA mechanic also attended with us. Visit was cut short due to an operational issue that required our swift return to town. MOU has been signed by TOA CAO and is in Darrell's hands to be signed.

Task: Marsh Trail ATV Issues: That staff be directed to install signs, barriers and cameras along the centennial walking trail, and further that Council approves funding for such.

Update Status: In Progress. 2024-02-13: Email sent to Director of Operations Aaron Bourgeois to see about meeting to discuss.

Task: Taxi By-Law

Update Status: 2024-02-13: About half of APD staff have attended the Taxi Bylaw presentation. Still need to meet with the other groups and we are starting to look at the schedule for taxi companies/drivers and ramping up for the next year for Taxis.

Monthly Report

Solid Waste Education and Enforcement

February 2024

Education & Enforcement

Recycling Right/Dual Stream Recycling Education Campaign

- Staff continue to promote the *Recycling Right/Dual Stream Recycling Campaign*.
- Staff launched the “Remarkable Recycler” contest where residents were asked to send in a photo of their properly sorted materials for a chance to win a \$25 gift card. The contest closed on February 5th.
- Staff recently met with GFL who reported that they’ve noticed improvements with the incoming residential recyclables. Staff will continue education with the residential sector and will also focus on the commercial sector in the upcoming months.

Below are examples of our most recent FB posts related to the campaign.



Electronics Depot


- Dowe's Concrete, 13 Tupper Blvd. is now accepting select electronics in Amherst. They are open Monday – Friday from 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Social Media

- Our main focus has been the recycling campaign however, we are also posting our "What Goes Where" posts and Littering posts.

Cumberland Region Solid Waste Services
January 24 at 3:57 PM · 🌐

This week, our "What Goes Where" feature is cereal/cracker boxes.



Cereal & Cracker Boxes

- Empty cereal & cracker boxes can be placed in your recycling bag with other paper products (remove the liner and place in garbage).
- Did you know these boxes can also be used to put food waste in before placing it in your green cart?!


Wondering "What Goes Where?" Download our free mobile app [Cumberland County Solid Waste](#)

📣 Boost this post to reach up to 5696 more people daily if you spend CA\$56. [Boost post](#)

👍👍 14 19 comments 16 shares

Cumberland Region Solid Waste Services
January 16 at 12:07 PM · 🌐

Let's do better hockey fans!
Hockey season is in full swing. When you're watching your favourite team on game night, help keep our rinks looking their best by putting waste in its place.
If you leave it, you're littering.... [See more](#)



Still littering?

📣 Boost this post to reach up to 8150 more people daily if you spend CA\$84. [Boost post](#)

👍👍👍 Andrea Brown-Trask, Tonya Wood and 33 others 6 comments 45 shares

Enforcement

- Miller Waste reported 328 rejections in the Town of Amherst during the month of January (approximately 2.5% rejection rate). Recycling rejections accounted for 87% of the rejections, with Garbage & Organics accounting for 13%.