

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

Date: February 20, 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
Aaron Bourgeois, Director, Operations
Andrew Fisher, Director, Planning & Strategic Initiatives
Dwayne Pike, Chief, Police Services
Greg Jones, Director, Fire Services
Kim Jones, Director, Corporate Communications
Krista Crossman, Director, HR & Customer Services
Sarah Wilson, Director, Finance
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.

Closed Session

Moved by Councillor Emery

Seconded by Councillor Landry

To go into Closed Session.

MOTION CARRIED

1.2 Approval of Agenda

Moved By Councillor Emery

Seconded By Councillor Chambers

That the agenda be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

1.3 Approval of the Consent Agenda

Moved By Deputy Mayor Fawthrop

Seconded By Councillor Landry

To approve the consent agenda.

MOTION CARRIED

1.4 Acceptance of Minutes

1.4.1 January 15, 2024

Mayor Kogon called for any errors or omissions in the minutes. There being none, the minutes of the January 15, 2024 meeting of the Committee of the Whole were accepted as included in the agenda package.

2. Council Direction Requests

2.1 Municipal Election 2024

Moved By Councillor Davidson

Seconded By Councillor Landry

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.**

MOTION CARRIED

2.2 Dr. & Mrs. H.E. Christie Community Foundation Donation

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

Moved By Deputy Mayor Fawthrop

Seconded By Councillor Landry

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.**

MOTION CARRIED

2.3 Employment Equity Policy

Moved By Councillor Davidson

Seconded By Councillor Chambers

That Council forward the Employment Equity Policy to the February 26, 2024 Council meeting for approval, with the caveat that "members of Council" will be removed from the Employee Development & Training section and that staff will review the Council Conference Attendance and Professional Development Policy and add this section for members of Council to that policy.

MOTION CARRIED

- 2.4 **Tree Advisory Committee Policy Repeal**
Moved By Deputy Mayor Fawthrop
Seconded By Councillor Landry
That Council forward the Tree Advisory Committee Policy (64000-03) to the February 26, 2024 regular meeting of Council to be repealed.

MOTION CARRIED

3. Information / Discussion Items

- 3.1 **Accessible Playground Memo**
Moved By Councillor Landry
Seconded By Councillor Chambers
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.

MOTION CARRIED

- 3.2 **Appointment of Members of Council to External Boards, Committees and Commissions Policy**
Moved By Councillor Davidson
Seconded By Councillor Chambers
That staff review the Appointment of Members of Council to External Boards, Committees and Commissions Policy and any related policies taking into consideration the discussion held at this meeting for this item and bring recommended amendments back to Committee of the Whole in April 2024.

MOTION CARRIED

- 3.3 **Appointments of Citizens to Boards, Committees and Commissions Policy**
Moved By Councillor Landry
Seconded By Councillor Davidson
That the Appointments of Citizens to Boards, Committees and Commissions Policy be forwarded to Council for repeal.

MOTION CARRIED

- 3.4 **Living Wage Report**
Information item only.

- 3.5 **Citizen Appointment to Committees Memo**
Information item only, approved as part of the consent agenda.

- 3.6 **Solid Waste Contract Memo**
Information item only, approved as part of the consent agenda.

- 3.7 **IT Update**
Information item only, approved as part of the consent agenda.

- 3.8 **By-law and Policy Review Update**
Information item only, approved as part of the consent agenda.

- 3.9 **Strategic Priorities Update**
Information item only, approved as part of the consent agenda.

3.10 CAO Task Report

Information item only, approved as part of the consent agenda.

3.11 Chair Review of Committee Meeting Agendas

Councillor Landry expressed his concern with Committee Chairs not being part of the agenda approval process for meetings which they are the Chair of. The CAO explained the process of agenda development which includes a Chair review of the topics to be included on a meeting agenda, adding that a Committee Chair does not review or approve a final agenda package.

3.12 Staff Support for Council Speaking Engagements

Councillor Landry was seeking procedural guidance as to when Chairs are asked to speak publicly as Chair of Committees are they able to request information from staff and if so, what is the scope of the request. The CAO replied that information can be requested from staff based on information they have, but that staff would generally not write reports or develop presentations.

4. Monthly Reports

The following monthly reports were approved as part of the consent agenda; no direction given or action required:

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

5. Closed Session

**Moved By Councillor Chambers
Seconded By Councillor Emery
To go into closed session.**

6. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor Kogon adjourned the meeting.

Natalie LeBlanc
Municipal Clerk

David Kogon, MD
Mayor

