TOWN OF AMHERST
Regular Council Meeting
Minutes

Date: September 28, 2026
Time: 6:00 pm
Location: Council Chambers, Town Hall

Members Present
Mayor Robert Small
Deputy Mayor Charlie Chambers
Councillor Hal Davidson
Councillor Nic Furlong
Councillor Terry McManaman
Councillor Dwayne Ripley
Councillor Kathy Wells

Staff Present
Jason MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer
Andrew Fisher, Director, Planning & Economic Development
Sarah Wilson, Director, Finance
Sean Payne, Marketing & Communications Officer
Natalie LeBlanc, Municipal Clerk
Cindy Brown, Administrative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER
Mayor Small called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT
Mayor Small gave the Territorial Acknowledgement.

3. HEARINGS/PRESENTATIONS/PETITIONS

3.1 Petition to Relocate the Shelter
Moved By Deputy Mayor Chambers
Seconded By Councillor Ripley
That Council formally accept the Petition to Relocate the Shelter to a More Suitable Location.

Motion Carried

3.2 Petition in Support of the Shelter
Moved By Councillor Davidson
Seconded By Councillor Furlong
That Council formally accept the Petition in Support of the Shelter.

Motion Carried

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA / ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

4.1 Approval of Agenda
Moved By Deputy Mayor Chambers
Seconded By Councillor Wells
To approve the agenda as circulated.

Motion Carried

4.2 Acceptance of Minutes

4.2.1 June 22, 2026, Regular Council
The Mayor called for any errors or omissions in the minutes. There being none, the minutes of the June 22, 2026, regular Council meeting were accepted as included in the agenda package.

4.2.2 June 29, 2026, Special Council
The Mayor called for any errors or omissions in the minutes. There being none, the minutes of the June 29, 2026, special Council meeting were accepted as included in the agenda package.

4.2.3 **July 8, 2026, Public Hearing**
The Mayor called for any errors or omissions in the minutes. There being none, the minutes of the July 8, 2026, Public Hearing were accepted as included in the agenda package.

4.2.4 **July 23, 2026, Special Council**
The Mayor called for any errors or omissions in the minutes. There being none, the minutes of the July 23, 2026, special Council meeting were accepted as included in the agenda package.

4.2.5 **September 17, 2026 Variance Appeal Hearing**
The Mayor called for any errors or omissions in the minutes. There being none, the minutes of the September 17, 2026, Variance Appeal Hearing were accepted as included in the agenda package.

5. REQUESTS FOR DECISION

5.1 Amherst Youth Advisory Committee Appointments
Moved By Councillor Wells
Seconded By Councillor McManaman
That Council appoint the following applicants to the Amherst Youth Advisory Committee:
Emily Stonehouse
Abby Short
Callum Taylor
Lamya Saify
Ava Tooley
Kawthar Alchehade
Avery Hoeg-Burbine
Ava Crocker
Isla Crocker
Allison Jones
Hannah Brunt

Motion Carried

5.2 Stadium Canteen Concession Agreement
Moved By Councillor Davidson
Seconded By Councillor Wells
That Council approve a one-year extension to the existing Stadium Canteen Concession Agreement and direct staff to issue an RFP for Canteen services next fall, to be effective September 1, 2028.

Motion Carried

5.3 Variance Appeal 69 Lower Laplanche Street
Moved By Councillor McManaman
Seconded By Councillor Wells
That the variance granted to reduce the minimum required lot area by 7.5% to permit the construction of a nine-unit apartment building at 69 Lower Laplanche Street be upheld.

Motion Carried

5.4 REMO By-law and Agreement
Moved By Councillor Furlong
Seconded By Councillor McManaman
That Council give First Reading of the Regional Emergency Management Organization (REMO) Bylaw and further approve the accompanying Intermunicipal Service Agreement and authorize the Mayor and CAO to sign on behalf of the Town.

Motion Carried

TITLE: REMO Emergency Management Bylaw
SECTION: Protective Services
BYLAW NO: C-15

APPROVAL DATE: _____ **CAO Signature:** _____

1. This by-law is titled "REMO Emergency Management By-law C-15".

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Part 1 Purpose

The Nova Scotia *Emergency Management Act* requires municipalities to adopt a Municipal Emergency Management By-law with the aim of establishing a municipal emergency management organization and preparing and approving emergency management plans. This by-law will allow for the Town of Amherst to work with neighboring municipal units of the Municipality of the County of Cumberland and the Town of Oxford to develop coordinated plans on a regional level which will better serve residents.

Part 2 Definitions

2.1 **Act** means the *Emergency management Act, S.N.S. 1990, c,8;*

2.2 **Agreement** means the Agreement entered into in accordance with Clause 10(1)(a) of the Act, among the Municipality of the County of Cumberland, the Town of Amherst and the Town of Oxford dated April 1, 2026 attached as Appendix A.

2.3 **Alternate Regional Emergency Management Coordinator (Alternate REMC)** means the person charged to back up or replace the Regional Emergency Management Coordinator during all phases of emergency planning.

2.4 **Council** means the Council of a municipality, town or village.

2.5 **Emergency** means a present or imminent event in respect of which the Minister or a Municipality, as the case may be, believes prompt co-ordination of action or regulation of persons or property must be undertaken to protect property or the health, safety, or welfare of people in the municipality/municipalities.

2.6 **Emergency Management** means the prevention and mitigation of preparedness for, response to and recovery from emergencies.

2.7 **Mayor** means a Mayor of one of the municipal units being a party to the Agreement.

2.8 **Municipalities** means the three municipal units being parties to the Agreement.

2.9 **Regional Emergency Management Advisory Committee** means the Committee, sometimes referred to as the Executive Committee, established pursuant to the Agreement, and as required by Clause 10(1)(d) of the Act.

2.10 **Regional Emergency Management Coordinator (REMC)** means the person appointed by Council, and in accordance with the Agreement, as required by Clause 10(1)(c) of the Act.

2.11 **Regional Emergency Management Organization (REMO)** means the organization established by the Agreement, and as required by Clause 10(1)(b) of the Act.

2.12 **Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee** the Committee established by the Agreement responsible for recommending policy and procedures to the Executive Committee for maintaining a reasonable state of preparedness for emergencies.

2.13 **Regional Emergency Management Plans** means plans, programs or procedures prepared by the Regional emergency Management Organization that are intended to mitigate the effects of an emergency or a disaster and

to provide for the safety, health, or welfare of the civil population and property in the event of such an occurrence, as set out in Clause 2(d) of the Act.

2.14 **State of Local Emergency** means a state of local emergency declared by a Municipality pursuant to the Act and the Regulations made pursuant thereto, and this By-Law.

Part 3 Regional Emergency Management Organization

3.1 Council hereby establishes a Regional Emergency Management Organization (REMO), and shall create an intermunicipal agreement with its partners, specifying funding, governance, and other requirements of Councils.

3.2 The Regional Emergency Management Organization shall consist of the following persons and committees:

3.2.1 The Regional Emergency Management Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee);

3.2.2 The Regional Emergency Management Coordinator (REMC);

3.2.3 The Regional Emergency Planning Committee (Planning Committee)

3.2.4 Alternate Emergency Management Coordinator (Alternate REMC).

Part 4 Regional Emergency Management Advisory Committee

4.1 Councils shall appoint representatives to the Advisory Committee in accordance with the Agreement.

4.2 Council's representatives on the Advisory Committee shall always include the Mayor of the Municipal unit being represented and the number of representatives from each Municipal unit shall be in accordance with the numbers set forth in the Agreement.

4.3 The Advisory Committee shall, on behalf of REMO:

4.3.1 Approve REMO plans and policies;

4.3.2 Recommend the annual budgets to Council:

4.3.3 Provide direction to the REMC and the Planning Committee, as deemed appropriate by the Advisory Committee from time to time;

4.3.4 Brief Council on the development and approval of REMO plans and policies whenever required to do so by Council;

4.3.5 Brief Council on developments during a State of Local Emergency when deemed necessary.

Part 5 Regional Emergency Management Coordinator

5.1 The REMC and Alternate Coordinator shall be appointed in accordance with the Agreement.

5.2 The REMC shall:

5.2.1 Be responsible to appoint a Chair of the Planning Committee;

5.2.2 Coordinate and prepare REMO plans, training, and exercises;

5.2.3 Be responsible for on-going public education programs related to emergency preparedness;

5.2.4 Following the activation of the REMO Plan or a declaration of state of local emergency, coordinate municipal operations with those of the provincial and federal governments during a declared emergency;

5.2.5 Ensure all emergency operations centers and equipment are fully operational;

5.2.6 Advise the Department of Emergency Management of any real or anticipated event or emergency as required by the Act.

5.2.7 Perform such other duties as may be required by the Advisory Committee.

Part 6 Regional Emergency Planning Committee

6.1 The Planning Committee, as per the Agreement, shall be comprised of the REMC, the Alternate REMC and representatives as set forth below.

6.2 The Planning Committee may include, but not limited to, persons responsible during an emergency to provide:

6.2.1 Local Law Enforcement;

6.2.2 Ground Search and Rescue;

6.2.3 Fire Services;

6.2.4 Municipal Public Works representatives;

6.2.5 Provincial OSD and Red Cross;

6.2.6 Provincial Department of Health and Wellness;

6.2.7 Regional Housing Authority;

6.2.8 Emergency Health Services;

6.2.9 Provincial Department of Natural Resources;

6.2.10 Provincial Department of Public Works;

6.2.11 Telecommunications;

6.2.12 Public Information Services;

6.2.13 Department of Emergency Management

6.3 The Planning Committee shall:

6.3.1 Assist the Coordinator in the preparation and coordination of REMO Plans, to maintain a reasonable state of preparedness for emergencies.

6.3.2 Formulate policy and procedure recommendations, planning, training, and exercises.

Part 7 Alternate Regional Emergency Management Coordinators

7.1 The Alternate Regional Emergency Management Coordinators appointed in accordance with the Agreement shall:

7.1.1 Participate in Planning Committee meetings as required by the REMC;

7.1.2 Participate in training, exercises, and responses to emergencies as required by the REMC.

Part 8 Agreements

8.1 Council hereby agrees that the Advisory Committee may enter into agreements with the Government of Canada, the Province of Nova Scotia, a Municipality, or any other person or organization, for the provision of services in the development and implementation of Regional Emergency Management Plans.

Part 9 Budget Considerations

9.1 The Municipalities shall share the normal operational costs of the REMO based on an annual budget divided proportionally based upon a blended formula including uniform assessment, population, and equal shares, in accordance with Clauses 31, 32 and 33 of the Agreement.

Part 10 Declaration of a State of Local Emergency

10.1 Council may, when satisfied that an emergency exists or may exist in all or any area of its own Municipality, declare a State of Local Emergency in respect of their own Municipality or an area thereof.

10.2 If any of the Councils are unable to act promptly under Section 12(2), the Mayor of the Municipality of the County of Cumberland, the Mayor of the Town of Amherst or the Mayor of the Town of Oxford may declare a State of Local Emergency, subject to Section 12(3) of the Act, in respect of their own Municipality or a portion thereof.

If both the Mayors and Councils of the Municipalities are unable to act promptly to declare a State of Local Emergency in their own jurisdiction under Section 15(2) of the Act, any one of the Mayors may, subject to the

provisions of Sections 12(2) and 12(3) of the Act, declare a State of Local Emergency in regards to an emergency that exists or may exist in all or within any area of the Municipalities or portion thereof.

After signing a declaration or termination of a State of Local Emergency or the issuance of an order under Section 14 of the Act, Council shall immediately communicate or publish details on the municipal website or by the means most likely to inform the affected residents.

Part 11 Duties During an Emergency

11.1 Following the activation of any Regional Emergency Plan or a declaration of a state of local emergency:

11.1.1 The Mayor shall immediately forward a copy of the declaration and any renewals thereof to the Minister.

11.1.2 Every Councilor shall advise the Coordinator and Mayor as to their location and how they may be contacted.

11.1.3 Every employee and agent of the Municipality who has a role in such emergencies as assigned in the Regional Emergency Management Plans, shall:

11.1.3.1 Advise the REMC of their location and how they may be contacted; and

11.1.3.2 fulfill such duties described in the emergency operational plan.

Part 12 Repeal

12.1 This by-law repeals and replaces Regional Emergency Management By-Law C-08.

For Administrative Use Only:

REMO Emergency Management Bylaw in the Town of Amherst Adoption	
First reading:	September 28, 2026
Notice of Intent:	
Second Reading:	
Notice of Publication and Effective Date of Bylaw:	
Notice to Service Nova Scotia & Municipal Relations:	

VERSION LOG

Bylaw Owner	Amendment Description	Council Approval Date
CAO	New By-law	

Minutes reference date:

5.5 <u>2025/26 Audited Financial Statements</u>
Moved By Deputy Mayor Chambers
Seconded By Councillor Ripley
That Council accept the recommendation of the Audit Committee and approve the Town of Amherst Consolidated Financial Statements for the year ended March 31, 2026, which have been audited by the firm McIsaac Darragh Inc.

Motion Carried

5.6 <u>Appointment of 2026/27 Auditor</u>
Moved By Councillor Wells
Seconded By Deputy Mayor Chambers
That Council appoint McIsaac Darragh Inc. as the municipal auditor for auditing services for the 2026/27 fiscal year as recommended by the Town of Amherst Audit Committee.

Motion Carried

5.7 Year End Capital Financing Adjustment
Moved By Councillor Ripley
Seconded By Councillor Wells
That Council approve the following changes to the funding for the 2025/26 Water Capital Budget: Approval of the increase of Water Operating capital from revenue from $40,000 to $144,000.

Motion Carried

5.8 Year End Operating Reserve Transfer
Moved By Councillor Davidson
Seconded By Councillor McManaman
That Council approve the following transfer from the Operating Reserve to General Operating: Withdraw from the Operating Reserve – Reserve for Solid Waste of $16,881.14 to fund the Town of Amherst's 38% share of the deficit in the Solid Waste Education department for the 2025/26 fiscal year.

Motion Carried

5.9 Water Capital Budget Amendment JDI Land Trade
Moved By Councillor Furlong
Seconded By Councillor Wells
That Council approve an amendment to the water capital budget for the North Tyndal Wellfield land trade from $35,000 to $65,100 which adds $30,100 for non-recoverable HST on the land trade and that the additional funding come from the Water Depreciation fund.

Motion Carried

5.10 Capital Budget Amendment East Pleasant Street Land Purchase
Moved By Deputy Mayor Chambers
Seconded By Councillor Ripley
That Council approve an amendment to the general capital budget to include $87,000 for the purchase of land at 141/143 East Pleasant Street and that this be funded from the Capital Reserve.

Motion Carried

5.11 Capital Budget Amendment Library Heat Pump
Moved By Councillor McManaman
Seconded By Councillor Wells
That Council approve an amendment to the 2026/27 general capital budget in the amount of $15,000 including applicable taxes for the replacement of the Four Fathers Library geothermal HVAC system supply well pump and motor to be funded from the Operating Reserve.

Motion Carried

5.12 Capital Budget Amendment Fire Truck
Moved By Councillor Furlong
Seconded By Deputy Mayor Chambers
That Council approve an amendment to the 2026/27 capital budget in the amount of $11,000 to bring the total budget to $76,000 for the full repair of fire apparatus Engine 3, to be funded from the operating reserve.

Motion Carried

5.13 Cumberland Museum and Archives Community Support Grant
Moved By Councillor Davidson
Seconded By Councillor Furlong
That Council approve a community support grant under the Community Support Grants Policy for the Cumberland County Museum and Archives in the amount of $3,557.00 with funds to come from Community Support.

Motion Carried

6. INTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

6.1 Planning Advisory Committee - Ripley
Information item only, included as part of the agenda package.

6.2 Amherst Board of Police Commissioners - Davidson
Information item only, included as part of the agenda package.

6.3 Audit Committee - Chambers
Information item only, included as part of the agenda package.

7. EXTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

7.1 Cumberland Public Libraries - McManaman
Information item only, included as part of the agenda package.

7.2 Cumberland YMCA - Wells
Information item only, included as part of the agenda package.

7.3 L. A. Animal Shelter - Davidson
Information item only, included as part of the agenda package.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Small thanked Town staff for all their hard work over the past summer, including planning several events and making our town look beautiful.

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

Natalie LeBlanc
Municipal Clerk

Robert Small
Mayor