

**Minutes of a Special Meeting of Amherst Town Council
Held in Council Chambers
Wednesday, April 5, 2006 at 12:30 PM**

PRESENT: Mayor Jerry Hallee
Councillor George Baker
Deputy Mayor David March
Councillor Ed Chitty
Councillor Terry Rhindress
Vince Arbing, Deputy Clerk
Rebecca Purdy, Executive Assistant

REGRETS: Councillor Robert Angel
Councillor Dale Fawthrop

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hallee called the meeting to order at 12:30 PM.

2. PURPOSE OF MEETING

This Special Meeting was duly publicized and called to enable Council to consider a resolution on Fair and Equitable Funding, and to call upon the Provincial Government to accept the three Guiding Principles and begin implementation of the Report's Recommendations.

3. FAIR & EQUITABLE FUNDING

Moved by Councillor Ed Chitty, seconded by Councillor Terry Rhindress:

WHEREAS in October 2004, the UNSM Board commissioned a study by consultants Dr. Paul Hobson, Dr. Wade Locke and Dr. David Cameron, to establish principles against which the current state of municipal finance in Nova Scotia can be assessed for fairness and equality; and

WHEREAS in May 2005, the Report, A Question of Balance – An Assessment of the State of Local Government in Nova Scotia, was submitted to the UNSM by the consultants; and

WHEREAS the Report recommends three guiding principles:

- 1) Each level of Government should fund expenditures in its respective jurisdictions from its own revenues;
- 2) The Province should ensure that municipalities have access to the broad property tax powers and revenues sufficient to finance their spending responsibilities;
- 3) Municipal equalization should adhere to the principal that municipalities across the Province have the fiscal capacity to provide reasonably comparable levels of municipal services for a reasonably comparable tax burden. To ensure this, Nova Scotia's municipal equalization program should be fully funded and paid out of the Province's general revenues.

That were accepted by the UNSM Board on July 12, 2005; and

WHEREAS at the 2005 Annual Conference, the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities' membership endorsed the Report, A Question of Balance – An Assessment of the State of Local Government in Nova Scotia, accepting its Guiding Principles and Recommendations, and mandated the Board of Directors to seek implementation by the Province; and

WHEREAS an Implementation Strategy, which is based on a five-year phase-in of the Recommendations has been approved by the UNSM Board and the three Caucuses;

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THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Amherst joins the UNSM Board in calling upon the Provincial Government to accept the three Guiding Principles and beginning with the 2006/07 Provincial Budget, begin implementation of the Report's Recommendations.

4. MOTION TO ADJOURN

On motion by Councillor George Baker the meeting adjourned at 12:40 PM

APPROVED:

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Gregory D. Herrett, CAO

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Jerry Hallee, Mayor