



Town of Amherst
Committee of the Whole

Date: November 22, 2021
Time: 4:00 pm
Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

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6.	Adjournment	



Town of Amherst
Committee of the Whole
Monday, November 22, 2021

Consent Agenda

MOTION:

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

- 1.3. Approval of Minutes**
- 3.1 Noise Bylaw**
- 3.2 Yield Signs Memo**
- 3.3 Addressing Drugs and Addictions**
- 3.4 Strategic Priorities Update**
- 3.5 Procurement Update**
- 3.6 Cumberland Business Connector Report**
- 4.1. Corporate Services Monthly Report**
- 4.2. Operations Monthly Report**
- 4.3. Police Department Monthly Report**
- 4.4. Fire Department Monthly Report**
- 4.5. Planning & Strategic Initiatives Monthly Report**
- 4.6. Community Well-Being Report**

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

Date: October 18, 2021
Time: 4:00 pm
Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

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

Staff Present Jason MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer
Michael Hunter, Chief Financial Officer
Dwayne Pike, Police Chief
Andrew Fisher, Director of Planning & Strategic Initiatives
Aaron Bourgeois, Director of Operations
Kim Jones, Director of Corporate Communications and
Community Well Being / Municipal Clerk
Cheryl Laliberte, Community Well-Being Manager
Tom McCoag, Corporate Communications Officer
Natalie LeBlanc, Deputy Clerk

Staff Absent: Greg Jones, Director of Fire Services

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic this was a virtual meeting held via Zoom.

1. Call to Order

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

1.1 Approval of Agenda

Moved By Councillor Emery

Seconded By Councillor Landry

That the agenda be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

1.2 Approval of the Consent Agenda

Moved By Councillor Landry

Seconded By Councillor Emery

To approve the consent agenda with the removal of items 3.3 and 4.5.

MOTION CARRIED

1.3 Approval of Minutes September 20, 2021

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

Moved By Councillor Landry

Seconded By Councillor Emery

To approve the minutes of the September 20, 2021 Committee of the Whole meeting as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

2. Council Direction Requests

2.1 Community Support Grants Policy Amendment - Laliberte

Moved By Councillor Baker

Seconded By Councillor Fawthrop

That Council forward the Community Support Grant policy revisions to the October 25, 2021 regular Council meeting for approval.

MOTION CARRIED

2.2 Transfer from Reserves - Green Bins - Hunter

Moved By Councillor Baker

Seconded By Councillor Christie

That Council forward the transfer from the Green Bin Replacement Reserve up to \$47,000 to fund the purchase of replacement green bins to the October 25, 2021 regular council meeting for approval.

MOTION CARRIED

2.3 The Dr. & Mrs H.E. Christie Community Foundation Donation - Hunter

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

Moved By Councillor Landry

Seconded By Councillor Emery

That Council forward to the October 25, 2021 regular meeting approval of the acceptance of the donation from The Dr. & Mrs. H.E. Christie Community Foundation and disbursement to Cumberland County Minor Hockey Association, in accordance with the request of the donor.

MOTION CARRIED

2.4 CIBC Wood Gundy - Amherst Little League Donations - Hunter

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

Moved By Councillor Landry

Seconded By Councillor Emery

That Council forward to the October 25, 2021 regular meeting approval of acceptance of donations from CIBC Wood Gundy offices and disburse funds to Amherst Little League Association, in accordance with the request of the donors.

MOTION CARRIED

3. Information Items

3.1 Noise Bylaw - Pike

Moved By Councillor Landry

Seconded By Councillor Baker

That staff be directed to suggest changes in order to simplify the bylaw and bring back Council for second reading.

MOTION CARRIED

3.2 Capital Projects Update - Bourgeois

Moved By Deputy Mayor Davidson

Seconded By Councillor Baker

That the CAO provide Council on the status of outstanding procurement.

MOTION CARRIED

3.3 Contract Awards Less than 250K - Hunter

Information item.

4. Monthly Reports

4.1 Corporate Services

Information item; approved as part of the consent agenda.

4.2 Operations

Information item; approved as part of the consent agenda.

4.3 Police Services

Information item; approved as part of the consent agenda.

4.4 Fire Services

Information item; approved as part of the consent agenda.

4.5 Planning & Strategic Initiatives

Information item; no direction given or action required.

4.6 Community Well Being

Information item; approved as part of the consent agenda.

5. In Camera

Moved By Councillor Landry

Seconded By Councillor Emery

That the Committee move to an In Camera session.

MOTION CARRIED

6. Adjournment

Moved By Councillor Emery

Seconded By Councillor Landry

To adjourn the meeting.

MOTION CARRIED

Kimberlee Jones
Municipal Clerk

David Kogon, MD
Mayor

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Kogon and Members of Council
FROM: Kimberlee Jones, Municipal Clerk
DATE: November 22, 2021
SUBJECT: Amherst Area Heritage Trust Request to Present

Staff have been contacted by Leslie Childs on behalf of the Amherst Area Heritage Trust to give a presentation to Council.

In accordance with Policy 10350-24 Proceedings of Council Policy, I am seeking Council's direction on whether it may be interested in such a presentation. Should Council have an interest I will proceed to arrange for a presentation at a future meeting.

Natalie LeBlanc

Subject: FW: Request to present to Council

On Nov 3, 2021, at 10:09 AM, Leslie Childs <leslie1248@gmail.com> wrote:

Amherst Area Heritage Trust (AAHT) would like the opportunity to present our position to the Mayor and Council to show how a healthy well-managed Heritage Property process will contribute to our economic development, community well-being, and overall quality of life.

AAHT is now six years old, has 60 paid local members, our numbers are growing as more new people arrive, and our Facebook reach is often in the thousands.

We believe that Amherst's Heritage Property Bylaw, Heritage Property Committee, and our whole approach is in need of review and updating to reflect current values and attitudes. Amherst Area's important buildings and its residents deserve the very best.

Leslie Childs

The mission of Amherst Area Heritage Trust is to preserve, protect, and promote the unique heritage buildings and artifacts in this community.

TO: Mayor Kogon and Members of Council

SUBMITTED BY: Aaron Bourgeois, Director of Operations

DATE: November 22, 2021

SUBJECT: Snow and Ice Management Policy

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

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY: MGA section 47(1) states; The council shall make decisions in the exercise of its powers and duties by resolution, by policy or by by-law.

RECOMMENDATION: That council refer approval of the amendments to the Snow and Ice Management Policy to the regular meeting of Council on November 29, 2021.

BACKGROUND: As we are nearing the winter season and in conjunction with Council's strategic priority to review all policies it is an ideal time to review policy 31600-25 Snow and Ice Management.

DISCUSSION: Upon review, there are no changes being recommended to the service level expectations for streets outlined in the policy as staff believe they are realistic and obtainable. Staff are however recommending adding a definition of "bare pavement", updating the list of the Town owned and/or leased public parking lots, and some minor "housekeeping" items for consistency in the language used in the policy. A priority route is being recommended for sidewalks to be plowed prior to the usual commencement of sidewalk snow removal. This was being done on a trail basis for about two years now.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: There are no financial implications.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS: Advance sidewalk clearing along Albion Street will allow for easier access for pedestrians walking to work in this area.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS: There are no environmental implications.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: There is no community engagement contemplated at this time.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Council direct staff to make additional changes to the policy;
2. Do not adopt any changes to the policy at this time.





COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CDR# 2021094

Date: November 22, 2021

ATTACHMENTS: Revised Snow and Ice Management Policy 31600-25.

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



DEPARTMENT: OPERATIONS

TITLE: **SNOW AND ICE MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Date: 24 November 2014 23 November 2015

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction to staff involved in snow and ice management operations to ensure streets, sidewalks, fire hydrants and parking lots are cleared in a safe and timely manner.

POLICY STATEMENT:

1. Snow and ice management operations will commence after 5 – 10 cm of snow has fallen and snowfall is continuing.
2. Salting of streets on the ‘salt route’ will commence when conditions warrant and salting of remaining streets not on the salt route will occur as needed.
3. Upon completion of the public streets, sidewalk operations will commence.
4. Priority will be given to heavily travelled streets and sidewalks, as defined in this policy.
5. Safety of the public and our operators is paramount in all aspects of our work.
6. Additional street widening and intersection clearing will occur upon the completion of the priority operations and as time and budget allow.

SERVICE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

Level of Service for Roadway Types

The objective is that all streets will be cleaned of snow within 6 hours from the end of a snow storm of up to 30 centimetres.

Street Priority 1

- Plow continuously during storm, visibility permitting
- Plow to bare pavement, whenever possible
- Normally plow curb to curb within 4 hours after storm ends

Street Priority 2

- Plow continuously during storm, visibility permitting
- Salting of hills, intersections, as needed
- Normally plow curb to curb within 6 hours after storm ends

Level of Service for Sidewalk Types

The objective is that all sidewalks will be cleaned of snow within 24 hours from the end of snow plowing operations, for snow storms up to 30 centimetres.

Sidewalk Priority 1 (Cleared within 12 hours)

- Sidewalks in school zones
- Sidewalks in the Core Area District (Downtown)
- Arterial streets

Sidewalk Priority 2 (Cleared within 24 hours)

- Collector streets
- Local streets

Sidewalks will generally be maintained with salt to remove excess snow and ice. However, sand may be used under certain ice and temperature conditions under which salt is not effective.

While sidewalk clearing generally commences after street snow clearing operations have been completed, staff will make an initial pass along sidewalks on Albion, South Albion, Robert Angus Drive, Willow Street, portions of East and West Victoria and Hickman Streets DURING street clearing operations to improve pedestrian accessibility in these areas whenever possible.

Level of Service for Fire Hydrants

The objective is that all fire hydrants will be accessible by emergency personnel 96 hours from the end of snow plowing operations, for snow storms up to 30 centimetres.

The Streets **Public Works** Foreman will decide if the accumulation of snow around the fire hydrants, and/or the snow bank along the street in front of the fire hydrant, warrants the clearing operation to be activated.

Town crews are available to clear hydrants in an emergency, whenever required.

MAJOR STORMS

A major storm will be declared by the Transportation **Public Works Foreman, or on-call supervisor, when snow clearing crews are no longer able to keep all Town streets cleared of snow and the storm continues.**

During a major snowstorm, crews will attempt to keep at least one lane of the following streets open:

- Abbey Road
- Albion & South Albion Street
- Anson Avenue
- Chamberlain Street
- Chandler Road
- Church Street
- Havelock Street
- Hickman Street
- Industrial Park Drive
- LaPlanche Street
- King Street
- Electric Street
- Lawrence Street
- McCully Street
- Pleasant (East & West)
- Spring Street
- Robert Angus Drive
- Rupert Street
- Townshend Avenue
- Tupper Blvd
- Victoria Street
- Willow Street
- Prince Arthur (Church to Havelock)

During a major snowstorm, the Town Hall Parking Lot, Fire Station and Stadium parking lots will be kept open to allow emergency off-street parking.

To provide quick response in an emergency, a “storm line” will be activated during major storms (664-6000). This line will be monitored 24 hours a day until all of the streets have been opened.

As snowfall intensity decreases, Town equipment will commence snow plowing operations on other streets.

PRIORITY STREETS – BARE PAVEMENT

Town snow clearing crews will attempt to create a “bare pavement” condition within 12 hours following a snowfall event of up to 30 cm on the following streets:

- Victoria Street
- Church Street
- Willow Street
- Albion / West Pleasant intersection
- Albion Street
- South Albion Street
- Lawrence Street
- LaPlanche Street
- Robert Angus Drive
- East Pleasant
- West Pleasant
- Hickman Street

For the purposes of this policy, bare pavement conditions refer to winter road conditions where all travel lanes of the roadway are primarily clear of snow and ice build-up that could impair safe travel on the road.

SNOW HAULING

Within 48 hours of the accumulation of 10 or more centimeters of snow, the snow will be hauled away from the boulevards of the Town streets listed below:

- Victoria Street from Herbert Street to C.N.R. Tracks
- Church Street from Victoria Street to YMCA Driveway
- Havelock Street from Victoria Street to Prince Arthur Street
- Ratchford Street
- King Street and Princess Street
- Electric Street
- Prince Arthur Street from Acadia Street to Station Street
- Acadia Street from Victoria Street to Prince Arthur Street
- Albion Street and South Albion Street from Church Street to the Lord Amherst Drive
- LaPlanche Street from Victoria Street to Civic # 12
- Lawrence Street from Victoria Street to Civic # 17
- Academy Street from Spring Street to Queen Street on (West side only)
- Charles Street from Spring Street to Dunlap Street (West side only)
- Spring Street from Albion Street to Church Street
- Maltby Court and Cornwall Avenue (West Side)
- Hickman Street from Mission Street to Park Street
- Mission Street from Hickman Street to Cornwall Avenue

TOWN OWNED PROPERTY

Town staff will take necessary steps to minimize public hazards due to snow/ice conditions on Town-owned/leased property.

Public Parking Lots

Snow will be removed by private contractors before 8:00 a.m. each day. The lots will then be checked for slippery conditions by Town staff and appropriate measures taken, using salt and **or** sand to alleviate any hazard to the public. Further periodic checks are to be made as conditions warrant throughout the day.

- Town Hall
- Library **and CCUBIC**
- Ratchford Street **and Dayles Grand Market**
- George Blanche
- Corner of Maple **Street** and Electric **Street**
- ~~Corner of~~ **Bounded by west side of Church Street** and **north side of Electric Street**
- **Paramount Theatre and Lions Den** ~~Bounded by Church, Prince Arthur, Maple and Electric~~
- Trinity **St. Stephen Church**
- Baptist Church and Church of England
- **King Street**
- **Dickey Park**
- ~~YMCA~~
- Stadium
- Fire Station

Public Buildings

The public entrances and adjacent sidewalks to Town operated facilities will be checked by Town staff for hazardous snow and ice conditions each day, before the building is open to the public. Excess snow will be removed and slippery conditions will be addressed using salt, sand and other suitable ice control material. Further periodic checks are to be made as conditions warrant throughout the day.

- Town Hall
- Police Station
- Fire Station
- Library
- Works Garage
- Stadium
- **CCUBIC**

SALT MANAGEMENT

The Town of Amherst is committed to the efficient management of its road salt, while continuing to provide effective winter maintenance for the safety of motorists and winter maintenance workers.

The Town will demonstrate environmental responsibility by implementing and maintaining a Salt Management Plan (SMP) and associated best management practices.

To ensure the Town successfully meets its commitment, it will:

- Conduct operational activities in a manner that protects the environment and prevents or minimizes pollution;
- Continue to provide snow and ice control on Town streets so that service level standards are achieved;
- Address concerns raised by the federal government's review of road salts and their effect on the environment;
- Comply with environmental legislation, relevant standards, and industry codes of practice that apply to the Town's facilities and operations;
- Provide all winter maintenance personnel with appropriate training and resources so they are able to complete their assigned tasks in a manner that is consistent with the requirements of this Policy;
- Establish and track objectives and targets to verify effectiveness and identify opportunities for continual improvement of processes and operations;
- Monitor operations and implement appropriate corrective and/or preventive actions to improve performance;
- Communicate the requirement of this Policy and the Salt Management Plan to all employees





MEMO

TO: Mayor Kogon and Members of Council

FROM: Andrew Fisher, Director and Planning & Strategic Initiatives

DATE: November 22, 2021

RE: **Emergency Shelter Project**

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update and seek Council's direction with respect to an initiative by Holy Family Catholic Church to locate an 'emergency shelter' on the front yard of their property at 63 Church Street over the winter months. The church is responding to the attached invitation by the Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth to undertake this project in Amherst.

The shelter, constructed in Halifax and assembled onsite, will be approximately 8 ft x 10 ft in size containing a bed, table and chair. It will have a smoke/CO2 alarm, be insulated and water tight with a lockable door and a window. The exterior will be plywood, Tyvek and duct tape. The structure will not have water, heat, or electricity. A port-a-potty will be located onsite nearby, and shower facilities will be available at the YMCA. At this point it is not clear who will occupy the shelter or how they will be chosen, but the church did provide the attached draft occupier agreement. At the end of Winter, the shelter would be removed from the site, at least until the following winter.

On November 15th, Town staff including Andrew Fisher, Marc Buske and Greg Jones met with church representatives Evelyn Pollard and Deacon Howard Gotell. In summary, Staff advised Ms. Pollard and Mr. Gotell that no permits could be issued for the shelter as it did not meet the requirements of the Land Use Bylaw, Building Code, Fire Safety and/or other relevant Bylaws. However, of principle concern is that the very basic life safety elements must be incorporated into the shelter: watertightness, insulation, a functioning smoke/CO2 alarm, and a lockable door. In response, the church representatives confirmed that these basic life safety elements would be present.

Staff further advised church representatives that this matter would be discussed with Council with the potential that it would be considered a short term emergency shelter and provided that and the basic life safety elements are present and maintained, Town Staff would not enforce all relevant Bylaws and regulations.



September 30, 2021

Dear Friends,

Many of us have seen the increasing news coverage regarding the intense housing shortage in our Province. In response, Archbishop Dunn named homelessness as one of our four diocesan pastoral priorities. This priority asks all of us to do what we can to combat homelessness and housing insecurity at every level and encounter the Lord Jesus in the those who do without (cf. Matthew 25:45). We invite your parish to consider supporting an emergency tiny shelter this winter.

According to the Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia there are currently 407 people without homes. In the last three months only 16 individuals have been able to find permanent long-term housing while an estimated 22 persons have stopped looking for housing and have likely return to living rough (sleeping in tents or outdoors). Presently there are between 30 and 40 persons living in tents on the peninsula of Halifax. Sadly, there is no place for these people to go. Winter is coming and the homeless need shelter from harsh conditions. Emergency tiny shelters are one temporary solution. Placing these shelters on church properties provides a measure of protection from eviction on public land.


We have established a support team to answer questions and help you with this undertaking while we continue to explore other initiatives that will help to bring permanent housing to those in need. The attached guidelines are based upon the experience of St. Ignatius parish last winter in housing one individual in an emergency tiny shelter. If you would like more information on this program please join us for an information session with the team, via Zoom, on Thursday October 14th, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.


Sign Up Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAsduqvrjwoH9AvziHXEiS2AF9sd-dDn3t->

Thank you for considering this opportunity to serve.

Sincerely in Christ,


Deacon Robert Doyle
Chancellor
Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth


John Stevens
Pastoral Life & New Evangelization
Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth

Emergency Shelter Occupancy Agreement

As an occupant of an Emergency Shelter, located on the property of the Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth, at Saint Ignatius church in Bedford, I understand and agree to the following rules:

- Fires are not permitted in the shelters or on the designated property.
- Use of illegal drugs is prohibited.
- Maintain site cleanliness by not littering and using the garbage cans.
- A quiet, respectful environment should be maintained at all times.
- Use and care of the porta-john responsibly. It will be serviced weekly
- Consent to participate in regular, agreed-upon meetings with the street navigator to discuss and resolve any on site problems.
- Communication to St. Ignatius directed solely to Parish Council secretary.
- The use of the designated property is for shelter occupants only.
- The parish of Saint Ignatius agrees to provide the designated site for only the occupants, and accepts no liability for personal harm, injury, or accidents as detailed in Occupant Wavier document.
- Having emergency shelters on private land sets a precedent. Following the rules indicated will help to encourage more land availability for emergency shelter occupants.

Occupant name (printed)

Signature of Occupant

Current date

Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth

Emergency Shelter Project

Guidelines in Q&A Format

1. What is the project?

By partnering with existing organizations, parishes can use their properties as the sites for emergency shelters, as a way to mitigate homelessness in the areas we serve.

2. Why do it?

Predictions indicate an unprecedented need for shelters, with the affordable housing crisis creating a significant increase in homelessness. This project will provide a much-needed short-term alternative for those “living rough” during the winter months.

3. Who can do it?

This is an opportunity for any parish or group within the Archdiocese. Communities can support the project financially or by placing a shelter on their property – or both. It is anticipated that there will be a greater need for shelters in peninsular HRM – the downtown area.

4. Why should my parish get involved?

As Catholics, we are called to minister to all persons in need. This is an opportunity to make a real difference and to live your faith through deeds. This is particularly true in our own local Church, where Archbishop Dunn has asked all parishes to commit to the pastoral priority of homelessness. This project is a concrete opportunity to serve those in our midst who are currently experiencing homelessness.

5. Who provides the shelters?

Shelters are built and transported as needed by the Halifax Mutual Aid Society. Halifax Mutual Aid is a group of people committed to acting against homelessness by building small crisis shelters for those who need them (<https://www.halifaxmutualaid.com/>).

6. What is the duration of the project?

The timeframe is flexible for participating parishes. We recommend that shelters be provided from December through to no later than May 30, subject to parish discretion, with occupants there the full time during this time period. The goal is for a single occupant to remain in a shelter for the entire season, rather than have a series of short-term occupants.

7. What about liability issues?

Liability issues are covered by the insurance policy of the Archdiocese. A code of conduct will detail the conditions that must be met to ensure continued coverage.

8. What about bylaws and zoning?

We are proposing that these shelters are placed on parishes' private property, which means permission to meet existing bylaws and zoning regulations is not required.

9. Who coordinates the archdiocese-wide project?

A diocesan team is in place to propose initiatives for the pastoral priority of homelessness, and its members will assist with coordination, communication, and steps for installation. They will also assist in sharing ideas, answering questions, and providing guidance on what strategies and action work best.

10. Who oversees/coordinates at the parish level?

If you are interested in this initiative, begin by talking to your pastor and Pastoral Council. Parishes who take on this initiative should appoint a parishioner as a contact/liaison person. This contact should communicate and follow up regularly with the Street Navigator* (see description on page 4).

11. Who monitors the site?

The parish contact/liaison, if issues arise. However, sites are to be self-monitored by occupants. The model is based on the idea that occupants should communicate and build relationships with each other, as a community, to help meet immediate needs. This builds autonomy, self-actualization, and dignity.

12. What if there are issues with an occupant?

The parish contact/liaison can seek the assistance of the Street Navigator*.

13. What if the neighbours push back/complain?

Community concerns would most likely come to the parish office, and would go to the parish liaison. Parishes would be supported by the diocesan team and the Street Navigators in handling negative feedback.

14. Who gets to stay in a shelter?

Shelters are assigned to individuals, who receive a key, rather than being first-come-first-served. Street Navigators*, along with community members and Halifax Mutual Aid, identify likely candidates for shelters and who may be a good fit for the parish project. They discuss with potential occupants appropriate and expected behaviours, and the details of their tiny shelter. Ultimately, the occupant, Street Navigator, and Halifax Mutual Aid determine together whether the occupant accepts the shelter location.

15. What is the process at the parish level?

- Consider feasibility (financial means, location, community support) of supporting this initiative. If there is a desire to help but concern about feasibility, please contact us to discuss your options!
- Decide on a number of shelters to be placed
- Decide where the shelter/s will be located on church property
- Contact the diocesan team to indicate your plans
- Arrange for construction and delivery of a shelter
- Contact a port-a-potty company and arrange for delivery and maintenance (waste removal, toilet paper, etc.)
- Provide garbage and recycling bins, and determine who will assist with ensuring the waste and recycled items are removed regularly
- Monitor the site
- Communicate with occupants regularly
- Communicate with the appropriate Street Navigator (see description on page 4)
- Provide updates to the pastoral council and parishioners

16. What is the cost for the parish?

Minimal costs:

- The shelter costs (approx. \$1,300 is covered by the Halifax Mutual Aid Society)
- Approximately \$100.00 per month for the port-a-potty
- Potential donated supplies and/or funding
- SSVP may help with food and/or gift cards

17. Besides providing housing shelters, what else can a parish do?

- Communicate and promote the project during Masses

- Ask for volunteer carpenters to help with construction
- Donate funds to help with the cost of building supplies
- Explore further options for assistance, such as providing supplies for the inhabitants (food, blankets, winter-appropriate clothing/footwear, etc.)

*Street Navigator – member of the Navigator Street Outreach Program (NSOP). This program was launched in HRM in May 2008 to address homelessness and panhandling in Halifax and Dartmouth’s downtown business districts. NSOP supplements existing social services aimed at street-involved and homeless individuals. The program is a proactive, positive lifeline for individuals who struggle with securing and maintaining housing and employment due to addictions, mental health issues and homelessness. NSOP works on the street, as opposed to within the shelter system. NSOP supports unsheltered street involved and homeless individuals who are unwilling or unable to access provincially-funded support persons that work out of Halifax’s shelters. NSOP staff also work extensively with clients who lack official documentation. Without documentation, street involved and homeless individuals face significant challenges in renting accommodations, finding employment and accessing government programs. This program employs 2 Street Navigators on the peninsula of Halifax and the program is funded jointly by HRM, the Downtown Halifax Business Commission and the Spring Garden Area Business Association.

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Kogon and Members of Council
From: Dwayne Pike, Chief of Police
Date: November 22, 2021
Subject: Noise Bylaw Update

BACKGROUND

On December 14, 2020, Council requested a drafting of a noise bylaw as a result of increased complaints of loud muffler noise in the community. A review of the legislation determined that Motor Vehicle Act did not permit the development of a bylaw to address issues relating to the regulation of vehicle equipment. As a result, any enforcement relating to noise from a vehicle would have to be dealt with under the applicable sections of the Motor Vehicle Act. The draft, which did not include any sections to deal with motor vehicle noise, passed first reading on June 21st, 2021.

DISCUSSION

On October 22nd, a new bill was introduced that allowed council to make regulations or bylaws in respect to motor vehicle noise. This bill gave council the ability to determine what is considered an 'objectionable noise', determining a method of measuring noise and prohibiting the operation of a vehicle if it is determined that the noise produced by a vehicle is 'objectionable'. On November 5th, 2021, this bill received Royal Assent and is now a part of the Nova Scotia Motor Vehicle Act.

CONCLUSION

With the new bill allowing municipalities to develop bylaws and regulations around motor vehicle noise, the current noise bylaw requires a rewrite and further review to address the initial concerns of council. In making these changes, more time will be required and the change will be significant enough that it will not be able to be forwarded for second reading. It is anticipated that changes will include the addition of a means of measuring motor vehicle noise and a determination of what is considered 'objectionable' noise. This will also require further review into the equipment and training required to accurately measure motor vehicle and other types of noise. Because of the additional changes, a new draft bylaw will require a return to 1st reading once completed.

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Kogon and Members of Council
From: Dwayne Pike, Chief of Police
Date: November 22, 2021
Subject: Yield Sign Review

BACKGROUND

As a result of the addition of a crosswalk in the area of Mission Street and Park Street, a decision was made by the traffic authority to change yield signs to stop signs at streets in the nearby area. Since that time, public works has also been directed to make similar changes to signs at Cordova and Pender Streets. The use of yield signs at any intersection should only be authorized after the completion of an engineering study to determine that their use is appropriate and warranted.

DISCUSSION

Many areas within town still have yield signs at the intersection of streets. It appears that the signs were likely posted many years ago prior to the available guidance that we utilize in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Canada. In the manual, the use of a yield sign is suggested for use when the basic right of way rule may not be the safest choice for traffic flow and when a stop sign is too restrictive. The manual suggests that one would only authorize the installation of a yield sign after the completion of an engineering study into the intersection and when considering numerous variables such as traffic volume and speed and intersection sight lines. At this time, we have no information that exists to say that an engineering study was completed when the yield signs were initially installed years ago.

CONCLUSION

In reviewing the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices and in a cursory review of some of the yield signs placed at various intersections, it appears that many yield signs do not comply with the criteria for their use. As Traffic Authority for the Town of Amherst, I have decided it is time to review the continued appropriateness of using yield signs versus using stop signs. In the interest of increasing both pedestrian and vehicular safety and to ensure compliance with the criteria as listed in the Manual, this review may result in the removal of some of the yield signs and replacing them with stop signs.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Kogon and Council
From: Dwayne Pike, Chief of Police
Date: November 22, 2021
Subject: Council Priority – Drugs and Enforcement

BACKGROUND

One of the priorities identified by Council is addressing drugs in our community. Drugs and addictions have a significant impact on the well-being of our community and our people. Problematic substance use affects not only the individual, but their families and community health, often stigmatizing those struggling with substance-use issues and creating barriers to care and help.

DISCUSSION

Our community, like most others, has witnessed the increase in substance-use disorder over the past few years. While opioids continue to be an issue, we have also seen a sharp rise in methamphetamine and crystal meth use. Our Street Crime Unit, a 5-person integrated team comprised of members of the Amherst Police Department and the Cumberland RCMP are often tasked with focusing on these issues and have made numerous arrests in Cumberland County resulting in multiple seizures over the last few years of significant amounts of methamphetamine. To provide further resources to combat this problem, we recently added a second member to our Major Crime Unit and in doing so, civilianized the crime prevention position. The second MCU member, while providing support and resources to APD MCU investigations, has also been tasked to assist SCEU with drug investigations and enforcement, with the expectation that up to 50% of their time will be dedicated to this issue. Constable Jeff Goodwin, the new MCU member is also scheduled to attend the Drug Recognition Expert Training in March/April 2022 which is funded by the province. Our new Crime Prevention Coordinator, Melanie Siddall, will be working with different community organizations in regards to education and support for those dealing with substance use issues. Since March 2021, Chief Pike has been a member of the “Atlantic Meth Strategy” group which consists of Police Leaders in the Atlantic Provinces working together to share information and provide education in relation to the growing methamphetamine issue in our communities.

CONCLUSION

The staffing changes at APD have provided some extra resources to assist with Council’s priority for addressing drugs in the community and has allowed us to provide more focus on the growing issue of drugs in our community. Drug Enforcement is information led and often involves in-depth investigations and cooperation between different law enforcement agencies as well as other organizations. Investing the time, energy and effort into drug investigations will have to be a long-term commitment to ensure success.

MEMO

TO: Mayor Kogon and Members of Council

FROM: Andrew Fisher, Director of Planning & Strategic Initiatives

DATE: November 22, 2021

RE: **Council Strategic Priorities – November update**

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update with respect to Council's priorities.

1. The development and construction of a **new community centre**
Last month Council approved the draft terms reference for a feasibility study, and preliminary discussions with potential partners and stakeholders is ongoing. To that end, staff are submitting to the County of Cumberland a formal request to contribute financially to the feasibility study. Staff have also been doing background work on potential locations for the facility.
2. A complete review of the **Town's Municipal Planning Strategy**
The Request for Proposals garnered proposals from six different consultant teams. Staff are reviewing the proposals and will be making an award recommendation as soon as the review process is completed, likely in time for December Committee of the Whole.
3. A complete **review of the committees of Council**, Council's participation on external boards and committees and **all Town policies and bylaws**.
This work is ongoing. A priority list was submitted to COW. The Snow and Ice Policy has been include this month, as has an update on the draft noise bylaw. Last month the Communities Support Grants policy was updated and the Vaccine Policy was adopted. Significant work has taken place on the Salary Administration Policy.
4. The potential expansion of the **Amherst and Area Industrial Park**
Council have instructed staff to enter into negotiations to purchase lands that may serve to address this priority, or at least significantly impact how this project moves forward.
5. Continuing to foster the conditions to **facilitate business development**
Staff continue to respond to provide information and support to new and existing businesses. The Business Development Officer position is currently being advertised. A process for the review of the five year agreement for the Cumberland Business Connector has been established.

6. Continuing the work that has been ongoing to **ensure community vibrancy**
Town staff facilitated the Moveable Park Tactical Placemaking Project to create a public space to gather on a downtown greenspace. This project has been positively received.

7. **Attracting people to live in Amherst** by ensuring it is an inclusive, welcoming community in which **to live, work and play**

The Inclusion, Diversity and Equity committee held an orientation session this month and arrangements are being made to hold a similar session with the Accessibility Committee in the coming weeks. A request has been made to the lead from Wolfville to attend the meeting virtually to share their experience and provide some tips and “things they wish they had done differently”. Schedule coordination is ongoing.

8. Promotion of the history and culture of Amherst through **continued festivals and events that celebrate our heritage and culture**

Planning continues on the Christmas Parade, and staff are supporting the local business group with a planned Block Party on December 4th. Tickets are now available for the annual Cookie Crawl to take place December 10-11th. The modified Stage 5 gathering restrictions have created some challenges with events. Scarecrow and Esther Fest went ahead with some events needing to be altered or cancelled.

9. **Addressing drugs and addiction**

A separate memo on this priority is included in the COW package.

10. Addressing the need for **sufficient supply of suitable and affordable housing in Amherst**

An in-camera Council Decision Request is on this month’s agenda that would be relevant to this priority. Staff will also be seeking direction with respect to an emergency shelter being initiated by the Holy Family Catholic Church. Staff and the Mayor will be attending a meeting on November 23 about local collaboration on this initiative. Staff are reviewing land owned by the Town that may be able to be made available for this initiative.

MEMO

TO: Mayor Kogon and Members of Council
FROM: Michael Hunter, CPA, CA – Chief Financial Officer
DATE: November 22, 2021
RE: **Items from Procurement List**

At the October Committee of the Whole staff were directed to provide updates on the following projects that are 'with procurement':

New overhead doors – Works Garage (water)
New overhead doors – Works Garage (streets)
Works Garage – security doors (carry over)

Due to the nature of this work it will take place during the winter months. Therefore, procurement is just getting started on this project.

Replacement – Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA)
Ballistic Plates – Hard Body Armour – Carbine – 15 sets
Trackless Aerator

Equipment such as this is generally procured after the spring / summer construction season work is through the procurement process.

New Backhoe – sewer

This item was pre-approved by Council for inclusion in the 2022/23 Capital Budget. Procurement is timed for a spring 2022 delivery.

For general information, each spring a prioritized procurement list is created which takes into account construction / installation season, safety needs, required lead time, etc. Projects / items are then procured according to the prioritized list.

Cumberland Business Connector
CEO Report on Strategic Priorities Progress
April – October, 2021

1) Support Existing Businesses

- a) **Expand the CUMBERLAND BUSINESS ACCELERATOR program** to support businesses with high growth potential
- b) **Productivity Improvement for businesses**
 - Promote digitalization and automation and connect businesses to appropriate resources
 - Promote process improvement and simplification
- c) **Identify and support at least 2 opportunities within the Natural Resource Sectors** (Agriculture, Aquaculture, Forestry)
- d) **Keep the Business Directory up to date**
- e) **Advocate to the province to remove Hwy 104 tolls for businesses**
- f) **Advocate to keep our provincial border open with New Brunswick**
- g) **Other advocacy work**
- h) **Connect businesses to the resources that they need**

Current business needs that have been identified include:

- Critical need of additional financial support from the Province of Nova Scotia for businesses mandated to close in Spring 2021 (Wave 3 of COVID)
- Assistance for businesses who have been cut off from their existing New Brunswick customer base
- Labour force shortage – particularly skilled trades and labourers
- Need to invest in equipment and / or software to improve productivity
- Need for financial support for specialized training
- Marketing
- Branding
- Business Plan Development
- Website improvements
- Lending options for small farm expansion
- Advice in dealing with infringement of copyright
- Inquiries for building or site for expansion
- Assistance to understand business culture in Canada (for immigrant business owners)

Accomplishments

- 1 a) **The Cumberland Business Accelerator Program** is designed to support businesses with high growth potential. It addresses both the business's immediate challenges and also works toward addressing strategic issues. This includes identifying management gaps as well as gaps in the business plan.
 - Assisted 8 of the businesses with marketing strategy, design and implementation
 - Coached 3 businesses in digital analytics to monitor effectiveness in reaching target audiences
 - Assisting 5 existing businesses start up secondary, new start-up businesses
 - Assisted 3 new start up businesses that each have high growth potential

- Assisted one of the start-up businesses by identifying a market opportunity for their Enterprise Management System, arranged for beta testing of the software with five local businesses, and introduced this business to Ignite Labs and government departments that could provide additional support. This resulted in this Amherst-based business winning 2nd Prize and \$40,000 in the SPARK Business Competition for Northern Nova Scotia on November 1st, 2021. This is the first time that a Cumberland-based business has even entered the SPARK Business Competition.
- Assisted 8 businesses in adopting digitalization and more sophisticated business processes. This included moving into e-commerce, tapping into new export markets, and deploying more efficient distribution structures.
- A 3-part (8 hour) Design Thinking training session was provided to the businesses which was hosted by the Acadia Entrepreneurship Centre. The focus was on using Design Thinking tools to address human resource challenges and customer challenges.
- All of the pre-existing Accelerator Businesses (that started in 2019) as well as the more recent ones are still in business. Without the support of this program, at least 3 have said that they would not have survived the turmoil of the past 18 months.

1 b) Productivity Improvement for businesses

See section 1 a

1c) Identify and support at least 2 opportunities within the Natural Resource Sectors (Agriculture, Aquaculture, Forestry)

Work continues with the natural resource sectors, particularly forestry which directly employs hundreds of people in the Cumberland Region and is a major purchaser of goods and services from other local businesses.

- We continue to work with and support the Cumberland Forestry Advisory Committee to help the Forestry sector transition through the turmoil of losing its largest market. More details on the extensive work of the CFAC will be provided in a separate document in December.
- We have worked with the Town of Amherst's Business Development Officer on very preliminary discussions with a business that had approached the Town. If these discussions were to result in a business getting established, it would use wood fibre that previously would have been used for pulp.
 - We provided background information on the logistical strength of the region, and the size of the local pulp wood supply
 - In collaboration with town staff, I reviewed a draft business plan and highlighted areas needing more work
 - With the Business Development Officer position vacant, I continue to be the main point of contact for this business
- Our map of Maple Producers in the Cumberland Region brought an increase in profile to 16 local businesses. It also served a secondary purpose of highlighting seasonal activities that add to the region's quality of life.
- Extensive video footage has also been shot during the maple syrup season to create another business video, highlighting another important industry in this region. This will be released prior to the 2022 maple syrup season to maximize the impact to our region's economy. The Cumberland Region accounts for approximately 70% of Nova Scotia's maple syrup production.
- A short video highlighting local innovation in making birch syrup will also be released in the New Year, showing another value-added opportunity.
- Along with other members of the Cumberland Forestry Advisory Committee we met with senior staff of the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal to discuss:
 - a more science-based approach to spring road closures based on temperatures not just dates.

- To provide feedback on the new process for trucking permits during road closures and where improvements could be made to simplify the process.
 - Opportunities to use more wood in provincial infrastructure such as using cross-laminated timber in construction of Elementary Schools.
- The Connector provided background information to the N.S. Department of Agriculture on our earlier work identifying opportunities with the beef/sheep sector. The province is looking at investing/upgrading Community Pastures across NS as a way to allow beef farms to scale up with better utilization of these pastures. The Community Pasture in Minudie is the largest in NS.
- 1 d) Keep the Business Directory up to date**
- New businesses have been added to the on-line business directory every few weeks.
- 1 e) Advocate to the province to remove Hwy 104 tolls for businesses**
- This was a campaign promise of the new Provincial Government. It is anticipated that no further work will be needed on this file.
- 1 f) Advocate to keep our provincial border open with New Brunswick**
- Along with the Amherst and Area Chamber of Commerce, we wrote to the Minister of Business/Minister of Finance to open Exit 1 by the Visitor Information Centre. Pre-COVID this exit had 550,000 vehicles per year use this exit, many of whom continued down Laplanche Street to downtown Amherst and to then on to other areas of Cumberland County.
- 1 g) Other advocacy work**
- Along with the Amherst and Area Chamber of Commerce, we requested that the Department of Inclusive Economic Growth to set up a specific fund to help Amherst/Cumberland businesses who have been cut off from a significant portion of their customer base in New Brunswick due to the Public Health Restrictions for 9 of the first 13 months of the pandemic.
 - We also raised concerns with the Deputy Minister of Inclusive Economic Growth that there was insufficient support for small businesses under the Small Business Impact Grant announced in May. Many other business organizations expressed the same concern that our small retail and restaurant businesses wouldn't make it until summer. With consistent feedback coming from all parts of the province, the province adapted this program, announcing in late May that there would be a flat \$5,000 grant to all of the eligible businesses.
- 1.h) Connect businesses to the resources that they need**
- Businesses have been referred for specific supports to external organizations, such as:
 - ACOA's Regional Relief and Recovery Fund
 - Tourism Nova Scotia's Digitalization Program
 - Ignite Labs
 - CEED
 - Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses
 - Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture
 - Etc.
 - Other businesses have been helped with referrals for:
 - Marketing and Time Management skills
 - Providing a Business Plan Template
 - Advice on incorporation

- We have provided business plan review and coaching for businesses that won the Cumberland Business Challenge.
- The Connector compiled and updated (often weekly) a summary of programs that were available for businesses from the various levels of government to help them survive through COVID. This was emailed out to hundreds of businesses through our partners such as the Chambers of Commerce and municipal Economic Development Officers.
- We have provided free COVID rapid screening kits to local businesses for their employees. This program is free and available for all sizes of businesses. The Connector, REN's and Chambers of Commerce were approached by the province and asked to distribute these to small businesses that want them.
- We connected Futurepreneur (and their client) to an Amherst restaurant owner to mentor this entrepreneur who is planning on opening a café in the County.

2) Relationships that will support business recovery and Growth

a) Business

- (1) **Increase the number of 1-on-1 business visits**
- (2) **Continue to host Business Workshops** in collaboration with our partners
- (3) **Support the Tourism Sector** with ongoing monthly Coffee Chats and workshops
- (4) **Increase business membership in the Cumberland Business Connector**

b.) Partners

- (1) **Work collaboratively with Municipal Staff, Elected Officials and Liaison and Oversight Committee** to minimize duplication, increase efficiency, and enhance co-ordination in priority areas of Economic Development.
 - **Support new Municipal Economic Development Officers**
 - **Implement the Joint Community Economic Development Strategy** in collaboration with the municipalities
 - **Build relationships with new Municipal Councils**

c.) Other business organizations and partners

- a) **Collaborate with Regional Enterprise Networks across Nova Scotia**
- b) **Build relationships with Economic Development Partners in Westmorland County**
- c) **Other**

2.a.1) Increase the number of 1-on-1 business visits

Most interaction with businesses have continued to be by phone, email, or zoom with some taking place in person.

- Over the past three years we (and others) have worked to support an immigrant businessman who has come to start up a business in Amherst. This included taking him to meet other immigrant business people in Northern Nova Scotia.

2.a.2) Continue to host Business Workshops in collaboration with our partners

The Mind Your Business Workshops are going well. This is a collaborative effort between the Connector, The Amherst and Area Chamber of Commerce, CBDC Cumberland, the Municipality of the County of Cumberland, and the Towns of Amherst and Oxford. This series of workshops are on-going and include the following workshops:

- April 8 – What is Social Media Marketing
- April 15 – How to Create Eye-Catching graphics
- May 6 – Designing a Positive Customer Experience
- May 19 – Win in Marketing
- Sept 21/22 Process Improvement for Employee Retention (7 h course)
- Oct 19 Take Back the Holiday Shopping Season

November workshops include:

- Nov 16 – How to be Effective with your Recruitment
- Nov 23 – Why your Customers Really Buy

January to March 2022 Workshops will be planned out during late November and Early December by the collaborating organizations.

2.a.3) Support the Tourism Sector with ongoing monthly Coffee Chats and workshops.

- In late March 2021, a ½ day Tourism Symposium had been held. One of the lessons learned from the participating businesses was that they did not have a forum for networking and information sharing with each other. The idea of a 1-hour coffee chat was well received and was implemented. Follow up Zoom coffee chats were held on:
 - May 7
 - Aug 10
 - Sept 15

Another sessions is scheduled for November

- Nov 10

- A Regional Digital Footprint has been developed for the Cumberland/Colchester region. This was part of the follow up work done jointly with the Truro-Colchester Partnership and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency to support tourism businesses during COVID. A digital footprint is created from many different sources, such as businesses' websites as well as sources such as user-generated content and online reviews. Combined, these paint the picture that a user or potential visitor sees when they search online.

This report summarized the findings from reviewing the digital footprints of 24 (tourism) businesses in Colchester and Cumberland Counties from a visitor point of view. The report contains findings, remarks and recommendations to consider for further development of tourism in the region. This has been passed along to the Joint Tourism Committee as an additional resource.

2.a.4) Increase business membership in the Cumberland Business Connector

- We have standardized the process for Membership onboarding and management
- Created a webpage on the website for membership registration

- We have created a member resources portal that is password protected for members only to access additional webinar recordings, powerpoints and other resources.

2.b) Partners

2.b.1) **Work collaboratively with Municipal Staff, Elected Officials and Liaison and Oversight Committee** to minimize duplication, increase efficiency, and enhance co-ordination in priority areas of Economic Development.

- **Support new Municipal Economic Development Officers**

As these positions are filled, the Business Connector (and the other Economic Development partners on Team Cumberland) are willing to assist and help get up to speed on collaborative projects where relevant.

- **Implement the Joint Community Economic Development Strategy** in collaboration with the municipalities

The Economic Development Officers of the Municipalities and the Connector presented the Joint CED strategy to the Joint Council meeting (in March 2021). It was also presented to the Cumberland Business Connector's Board.

I made a follow up presentation of the Joint CED Strategy to the Town of Oxford as requested. All four organizations have approved the Joint Community Economic Development Strategy.

The Business Connector is continuing to work on several areas of the Joint Community Economic Development Plan where it has been tasked with leading or supporting.

- **Build relationships with new Municipal Councils**

We continue to meet quarterly with the Municipality of Cumberland's Economic Development Staff.

Meetings with the Liaison and Oversight Committee (LOC) have commenced again after major staffing changes have occurred in the senior management of all Municipalities. Recommendations include:

- Having the Mayors join in the LOC as a way to consistently connect and inform the three Councils of the Connector's work
- Ongoing co-ordination with the Municipal Economic Development Officers (when these positions are filled) to continue to make progress on the Joint Community Economic Development Strategy.
- Get back on track with a quarterly update to all Councils.
- The council's have rationalized the number of committees that councillors sit on and Amherst/Cumberland will no longer be regularly attending the Cumberland Forestry Advisory Committee. They would like the Connector to take responsibility to include a report on the CFAC with the quarterly updates from the Connector.

2.c) Other business organizations and partners

2.c.1) Collaborate with Regional Enterprise Networks across Nova Scotia

- Collaborated and shared resources extensively with our counterparts across the province as we worked collectively to support businesses throughout COVID, including during the business lockdown in the spring of 2021.
- Collaborated on launching the Virtual Advisor Program to provide mentoring support to small businesses struggling through COVID
- Joint REN CEO and Department of Economic Development calls with:
 - Department of Economic Development
 - They are responsible for the development of the NS Loyalty Program
 - Expected to be more active in outreach to businesses and Econ. Dev. Partners
 - The Finance Department will lead the implementation of the Payroll Rebate Program
 - The Dept. of Agriculture will lead the priority of increasing the share of consumers' food budget spent on local products to 20%
 - Develop Nova Scotia
 - Events East
 - Innovacorp
 - Tourism Nova Scotia
 - Department of Energy and Mines

2.c.2) Build relationships with Economic Development Partners in Westmorland County

2.c.3) Other

- Provide Physician and other Healthcare Recruitment Committees with copies of the Business Directory that is included in their information packages
- Over the past year, we have continued to attend weekly briefing coordinated by the Halifax Chamber of Commerce that brings together the 3 levels of governments and economic development organizations across NS. These sessions allow the business community to engage in a two-way discussion with Deputy Ministers and other government staff about challenges facing the business community. It has allowed us to have Rural Nova Scotia and Cumberland-specific concerns reach decision makers.
- We are continuing with the monthly Team Cumberland meetings
- Meetings continue with the Nova Scotia Quality of Life Local Leadership Team.

3) Increase the workforce of Cumberland County

- a) **Sign MOU with Pictou County REN** to provide Immigration Support for Businesses – 30% FTE
- b) **Restart School Liaison work** with Greg Nix and local schools. Restart initiatives that were put on hold due to COVID
- c) **Continue to market the Cumberland Region across Canada**
- d) **Create more Business Videos to highlight career opportunities**
- e) **Create a Pilot Program to bring people who are unemployed/under-employed into the workforce.**
- f) **Other**

Labour Force shortages are the single biggest factor affecting the viability of businesses in the region. The retirement wave of the baby boom generation is hitting both the private sector and the public sector extremely hard. Increasing the workforce of the Cumberland Region is the single biggest challenge that has to be addressed in order to maintain the businesses that are already here. Solving this crisis will require a better utilization of existing workforce, attracting workers from across Canada, increased immigration and increased automation.

3.a) **Sign MOU with Pictou County REN** to provide Immigration Support for Businesses – 30% FTE

A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with the Pictou REN to have Becky work with businesses in the Cumberland Region to help them navigate the process to hire immigrants. This builds upon her experience doing this with Pictou Region businesses. Becky commenced this work in October, 2021.

3.b) **Restart School Liaison work** with local schools. Restart initiatives that were put on hold due to COVID

- We partnered with the Town of Amherst to hold a “Pitch Yourself Competition” for high school students. Student created a video as to why businesses should hire them for the summer.
- The 2021 Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge was reformatted into a 4-part Webinar Series. It is geared towards grades 5 through 8. Each student that completed a business plan received a small cash award. There also is an option for a repayable micro loan through CBDC Cumberland.
- Our Post Secondary booklet listing all of the courses offered in Cumberland and the surrounding area has been undated. After final review it will be printed early in 2022.
- A presentation was made in October to Grade 10 and 11 students in Parrsboro regarding; local career opportunities, work ethic/dependability, and overview of key economic sectors.
- During the 2nd semester, we hope to engage more with local schools.

3.c) Continue to market the Cumberland Region across Canada

Our Challenge - Attract workers to the Cumberland Region who have little to no knowledge about the region.

Objective - Highlight the quality of life and career opportunities in the region and thereby attract working age families to the area.

Target Audience - Younger families and adults 30 - 40 years old

Advertising Channels - Instagram and Twitter

Campaign Theme

The first part of this campaign used the tag line “Downgrade to Better.” Combining the words “downgrade” and “better” was meant to catch people’s attention and stop them as they scrolled through their social media accounts, engage them, and then cause them to consider the Cumberland Region which most would never have previously heard of.

We have moved up the second portion of our advertising campaign by 1 month so that it started this November. The 2nd phase tagline is “Join us in Cumberland.” Our objective in this phase is to take the people who’s attention we caught in the 1st campaign, and close the deal in getting them to move here in the second phase. This second phase will have a greater focus on jobs that are available in the region.

Performance Metrics of the “Downgrade to Better” portion of this campaign

Display/Video Impressions	945,983
Conversions (Video Views)	396,099
Click through to site	9,113
Click Through Rate (CTR) compared to Travel and Hospitality Industry Benchmark	40% higher
Most engaged demographic group	
Instagram	Women 55 - 65 years old
Twitter	Men 25 - 45 years old
Top three locations for Impressions	Toronto Alberta Greater Vancouver
Other results	
	A retail business from Halifax contacted our twitter account stating that they will be opening a physical store in Amherst in 2022
	A couple from Toronto with a young family, reached out and told us that this campaign made them look for a job in Nova Scotia. They have since moved to the Province and the husband now has a teaching job.
	This campaign caught the attention of CBC who did an interview about the campaign objectives

In the “Join us in Cumberland” portion of this campaign we will also track these key metrics.

3.d) Create more Business Videos to highlight career opportunities

- We continue to develop our own series of business videos with the primary aim of showcasing the variety of careers available in the region. The primary target market is local youth.
- We have worked with Skills Nova Scotia to shoot a video promoting skilled trades. They are doing a video of different business sectors which are being used to encourage youth from across Nova Scotia to choose a career in Trades. One of the ongoing local labour market gaps includes a lack of automotive technicians. We collaborated with Skills Nova Scotia to create a video for this sector. This video will be completed in December 2021. Students who view this video across the province will see an Amherst business, not a Halifax-based business featured.

3.e) Create a Pilot Program to bring people who are unemployed/under-employed into the workforce.

3.f) Other

- Provided input to an Agricultural Workforce Development working group
- Matthew hosted a session for immigrants in collaboration with YREACH in Amherst. He was able to connect some of the attendees with potential employers.
- I have met with the Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration on ways to support (a) Workforce Development, and (b) Succession Planning initiatives. Their interest is on initiatives that are innovative and that will have a practical impact on the workforce.
- We have started discussions on a survey of our regional business community regarding Labour Force vacancies and Supply Chain gaps. This is necessary in order to quantify the immediate workforce needs.
- Took part in a focus group with the Affordable Housing Commission to discuss the challenge that the lack of housing is creating when businesses are trying to attract workers to rural areas.

4) Communication – internal and external, in support of the other identified priorities

- a. Grow website and Social Media traffic
 - b. Start regular radio interviews and/or write articles for local print media
 - c. Produce regular newsletters to members and the broader community
 - d. Hold regular meetings with the Liaison and Oversight Committee
-
- We are continuing to collaborate with the Regional Enterprise Networks to produce a bi-monthly provincial REN Newsletter.
 - As part of our new Communications Strategy, we prepared and sent out newsletters to all homes in the Cumberland Region. The first newsletter was sent on the second week in May. The second newsletter went out mid-September, the third one is planned to go out in mid-December. This is to reach additional business owners and potential entrepreneurs.
 - We have had interviews with Saltwire network as well as with the Atlantic Forestry Magazine
 - A summary of the Business Connector was sent to the Municipality of the County of Cumberland for inclusion in their newsletter.
 - Meetings have been held with the Liaison and Oversight Committee.

5) Administration – organization running smoothly

- a. Governance
- b. Finance
- c. Staffing

Accomplishments

- Progress has been made on the evolution of roles of staff and CEO as discussed by the HR Consultants. The job descriptions have been updated to reflect each position's focus.
- The Executive Assistant position has been posted and candidates are being interviewed
- The final draft of the 2021-22 Budget has been created and has been approved
- The Annual Report is completed
- The Annual General Meeting was held as a hybrid in-person and Zoom meeting
- As workforce challenges mount for businesses, the Job Ready Workforce Committee of the board has again been set up to support and oversee this important work of the Connector
- The new Human Resource Committee, Communications Committee, and Finance Committee continue to meet.

Monthly Report

Corporate Services

November 2021

CORPORATE SERVICES

We have started the Capital Budget process for fiscal 2023. Initial budgets have been sent out to directors for their review.

Property tax sale is scheduled for Tuesday, December 7 at CCUBIC at 10am. Bidding registration will begin at 9:30am.

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.

FINANCIAL

2nd Quarter Report is ready and will be presented to the Audit Committee at a meeting to be scheduled in the next few weeks. Bank reconciliations for October are in progress.

Tax Certificates – there were 33 Tax Certificates prepared – Oct/21

2021/22 Fall Tax Sale – 8 properties were advertised in the local paper. 1 has since been removed. Tax sale scheduled for Tues, Dec 7, 2021.

Water Collection – 17 property owners received a hand delivered notice of water disconnection on Nov 3/21. Fourteen of these properties made satisfactory payment arrangements. Three properties remain with their water shut off.

Property Tax Collection - there were approximately 650 property tax statements mailed to property owners with outstanding taxes.

2021 ASSESSMENT APPEALS

As of November 1st, there were 50 accounts who have appealed their assessment, 4 of these are outstanding, 11 are withdrawn, 35 are complete.

	# of Accounts Appealing	Total Assessment Value Being Appealed	Appeal Completed as of Nov 1/21	Pending as of Nov 1/21	Withdrawn as of Nov 1/21	Outstanding Appeals as of Nov 1/21	Appeals Successful as of Nov 1/21	Loss of Assessment Value	Amount of Revenue Reduction	Nova Scotia Assessment Appeal Tribunal Status
Residential /Resource	28	\$14,920,7	20	0	7	3	14	\$ 526,400	\$ 8,791	7
Commercial	22	\$26,387,2	15	0	4	1	10	\$ 799,400	\$35,733	0
TOTAL	50	\$41,307,9	35	0	11	4	24	\$1,325,800	\$44,524	7

WATER / SEWER BILLING & COLLECTION

Water reads and billing for the 2nd quarter were completed.

CUSTOMER SERVICE TRACKING – E11

There was a total of 76 opened cases in October and 106 cases closed. The category with the most opened/closed cases in September was related to compost bin replacement/repairs.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Hiring Competitions Completed in October:

Police Constable (PT): APD completed the hiring process for a casual/part-time Constable position. The position was awarded to successful candidate, Julian Galloway.

Water/Sewer Billing Clerk: an internal competition was completed and the current acting Water/Sewer Billing Clerk, Sherry Rideout, was awarded the position permanently.

Administrative Assistant – Community Well-Being & Clerk’s Office: this competition closed on October 29th. Cindy Brown was the successful candidate with a start date of November 22.

Culture, Events & Marketing Coordinator (term position): this competition closed on October 27th. Selection is currently in progress.

October also saw the departure of Community Well-Being Manager, Cheryl Laliberte. We thank Cheryl for her service and wish her the best in her future pursuits.

PROCUREMENT

Staff continues with preparing, coordinating and completing the procurement process for both capital projects and operational requirements. Continued work with insurance requirements, vendor file management and project work, as necessary.

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct
Capital													
Expected Procurement from Capital Budget: 49:													
Scopes for capital received in the month	5	2	0	0	4	0	8	12	2	3	4	5	2
All procurement:													
Total new scopes of work received in month	19	3	0	6	6	4	14	12	5	4	8	13	7
Released to the public in the month	23	4	4	7	5	3	7	7	6	6	2	12	12
Closed during the month	21	9	4	6	7	4	7	4	6	6	2	12	10
Awarded by par/council during the month	15	8	3	10	5	7	7	2	2	6	3	10	8
Open at the end of month (released month a, closed month b)	6	5	5	1	1	2	3	4	2	2	2	1	3

INFORMATION SERVICES

We updated the install for the client security software on the System Management Server. Rolled out the update on Town Hall computers.

Ordered Firehall server and desktop computers.

We were busy with all the everyday Desktop IT issues that occur in all the buildings for the Town of Amherst.

Monthly Report

Operations

November 2021

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

RECREATION & HORTICULTURE

- The dog park was closed from October 22 to November 5 due to cases of kennel cough. The water service at the dog park has been shutoff for the winter.
- The Christmas holiday skating schedule is now available online.
- The stadium will be closed on December 24 at noon until 7 am on December 29th.
- Eastern Fence will be repairing the fencing at Robb's multipurpose court repaired in December.
- The tactical place making project (portable park) has been completed.
- Bulbs for spring flowers are being planted.

ENGINEERING

- Spring St (Croft to Church) is complete.
- Capital paving completed on November 8th.
- Service cut restoration completed by November 19th.

PUBLIC WORKS

- Unidirectional flushing is complete and staff are working on winterizing of fire hydrants.
- Decorative Christmas lighting being installed throughout Town.
- Sewer crew completed sludge sampling of the WWTP lagoons.
- Sidewalk maintenance work to be completed on Queen Street.
- One broken water main was repaired on Spring Street.
- Crosswalk flag pilot project, staff have only had to replace 2 flags.
- New painted crosswalk and signage installed on East Victoria at Willow Street.
- Salt storage building has been filled to capacity, approximately 850 tonnes. Based on historical use the current stockpile would last until early February.

Upcoming projects:

- Complete installation of Christmas lighting and decorations prior to light up.
- All snow removal equipment to be checked and fully operational by November 19, 2021.

Monthly Departmental Report

Amherst Police Department

November 2021

TRAINING

Firearms Training 9mm/Carbine/Shotgun: Two groups of Carbine Operators completed their mandatory annual firearms qualifications in 9mm pistols, shotguns and carbine rifles. The training is provided by Cpl Jeff Walsh and Cpl Derek Hebert. The carbine officers receive 2 days training and are required to successfully complete the department's qualifications. Training covers tactical deployment, containment and working in teams. Each officer also has to successfully complete a use of force scenario which includes legal articulation. Legal articulation by the officer is an important component of the training. Even if their use of force was appropriate, if they can not effectively explain their decision process important information could be missing and could impact the findings of a review of their actions. One more group is scheduled to complete their training before the department annual firearms training is complete.

PERSONNEL

New part-time officers: Julian Galloway, a recent graduate of the Atlantic Police Academy, was hired as a part-time officer as a result of a recent competition. While at the APA, Cst Galloway was the recipient of the Sir Robert Peel award " To the cadet whose commitment best exemplifies pro-active community policing" and won the Comradeship Award " To the cadet who best displays outstanding personal attributes". Constable Galloway is heavily involved in the community events and sports. He has been hired on a 'call-in' basis to cover shortages due to sickness or other reasons.



OPERATIONAL

Shooting – November 8th, 2021: On November 8th, shortly after 2:00pm, members of the Amherst Police Department responded to a complaint of a shooting at a residence on Bayview Drive. When members arrived, they located a person outside the residence who had a gunshot wound and was in serious condition. The suspect in the shooting was arrested immediately and the scene was secured by Police. EHS was cleared to attend and the victim was transported to the hospital where he later succumbed to his injuries and passed away. Joseph Thomas Hartson, aged 33 has been charged with murder as a result. The victim in the incident was 23-year-old Jerry Jordan Morrissey. The investigation is being led by the APD Major Crime unit with assistance from members of the Patrol Unit, our Street Crime Unit and the RCMP Forensic Identification Section.

Arson Conviction – October 28th, 2021: Two people were charged in relation to arson that occurred in the early morning hours of February 27th, 2021. Police and Amherst Fire responded to a complaint that a fire had been set to the front steps of a residence on Spring Street. The suspect had fled the scene after he appears to have accidentally lit himself on fire. The residence contains several apartments and as a result, the 18-year-old male suspect and a 27-year-old female were

charged with Section 433 of the Criminal Code, Arson with disregard for human life. Isaac Reid, 19, of Halifax was sentenced to two years in federal prison after pleading guilty in Halifax provincial court on Thursday, Oct. 28, 2021, to a charge of arson with disregard for human life. The court also placed Reid on three years probation, which will follow the completion of his incarceration, and ordered him to pay restitution. The second person, Jasmine Llewellyn, 28, of Salmon River is also facing a charge of arson with disregard to human life as a result of the investigation in to the fire. Her matters are currently before the courts.

MADD/Project Red Ribbon Campaign, October 29th, 2021: The local chapter of MADD Canada, supported by the Amherst Police Department, Cumberland County District RCMP and local dignitaries, launched their annual Project Red Ribbon campaign on Friday, Oct. 29, 2021. The campaign, which runs from now until the new year, promotes sober driving during the holiday season. The red ribbon is a small but powerful symbol of the wearer's commitment to sober driving, and helps keep the sober driving message top of mind for all who see it.



Uttering threats/Weapons Charges, October 27th, 2021: A 29-year-old male who was arrested on an outstanding warrant is now facing numerous charges of breaching his release conditions, uttering threats to kill police officers and their families, threats to burn down buildings, damage to property and possession of weapons for a dangerous purpose. The male has been remanded into custody and is scheduled to appear in court on November 25th, 2021.

Barricaded Person – October 25th, 2021: Members of the Amherst Police Department and the Cumberland Integrated Street Crime Unit assisted the Cumberland RCMP in report of a barricaded person at the corner of James St. and West Victoria Street. During the incident, neighbouring homes were evacuated as a precaution. Approximately 2 hours later, the situation was resolved peacefully and the RCMP took the person into custody safely and without injury.

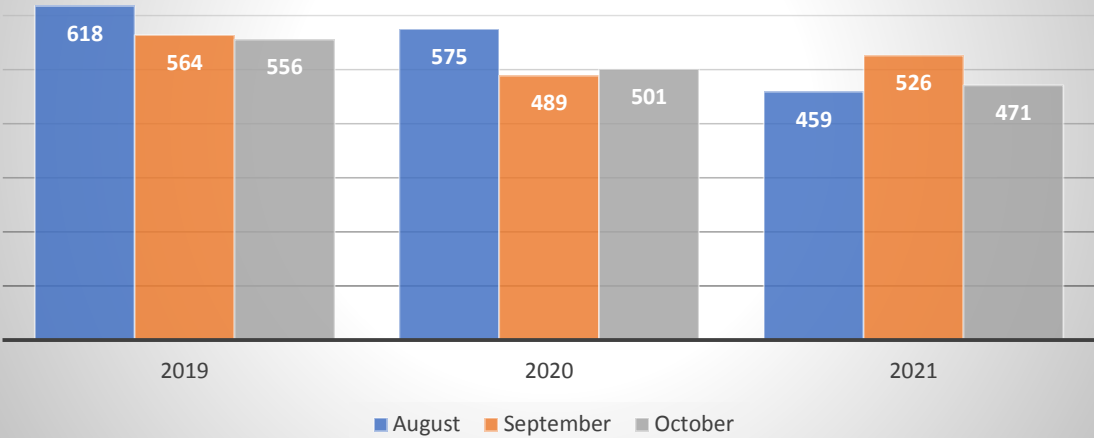
CRIME PREVENTION/SCHOOL RESOURCE

Constable Harrison and Crime Prevention Coordinator Melanie Siddall continue to work closely and engage with the schools and in other crime prevention initiatives. Melanie has been introduced and included with community groups that include Intra-Agency on Family and Sexual Violence, Senior Safety Committee, Municipal Alcohol Project, Bar Suspension Program, Crime Stoppers and Opioid Council. As has been for the last year and a half, many of these engagements continue to be through online platforms such as Zoom, Skype or Teams.

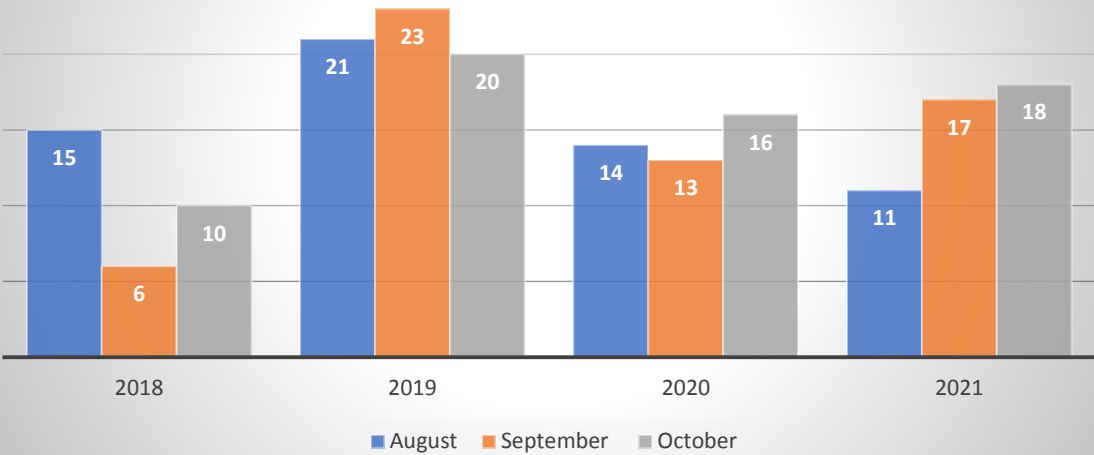
OPERATIONAL STATS – OCTOBER 2021

Occurrences:	471	Criminal Code Charges:	32
Impaired by Alcohol:	2	CDSA:	0
Impaired by Drug:	0	CBCA:	0
Traffic Tickets:	29	PPA:	0
HPA:	0	Traffic Written Warnings:	44
Vehicle Checks:	165	LCA:	1
Foot Patrol Hours:	23 hrs, 24 min	Bike Patrol Hours:	0

Occurrences - August, September October 2019-2020-2021



Prisoners - August, September & October 2018-2019-2020-2021



2018 – 3-month total = 31 prisoners
 2019 – 3-month total = 64 prisoners
 2020 – 3-month total = 43 prisoners
 2021 – 3-month total = 46 prisoners

Monthly Departmental Report

Fire Department

November 2021

RESPONSE #'s (October)

Town of Amherst – 16 events

- 1 Structure fire
- 3 Monitored alarm activations
- 3 Motor vehicle accidents
- 2 Smell of smoke / Air quality check
- 2 Hazmat materials
- 2 Dumpster / Garbage can fire
- 1 Sprinkler head failure
- 1 Open burning
- 1 Flooded basement

Contract area (District 2) – 4 events

- 1 Smell of smoke / Air quality check
- 1 Motor vehicle accidents
- 1 Open burning
- 1 Rescue – trapped in elevator

FIREFIGHTERS' AWARDS EVENT

On November 4th the Fire Department held an awards event for members only, during training. Unfortunately, because of the COVID-19 this was the second year that we had a smaller scale event. Annually, this is an opportunity to look back on the past year and acknowledge the years of service and efforts that the members of the Amherst Fire Department and the Amherst Fire Firefighters Association put forth. This year, 11 individuals received service awards.

RECRUITMENT

Since the recruitment drive in September the department has received applications from individuals interested in becoming volunteer firefighters. To date, nine successful candidates have been selected and have joined the department. These new members started their volunteer firefighting journey as recruit firefighters on November 1st, 2021, and will commence an 8-month training program later in November. The department continues to accept applications. For more information, please go to www.amherst.ca/volunteer-firefighter.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

MADD Red Ribbon Campaign Launch - Members of the Amherst Fire Department participated in the annual MADD Red Ribbon campaign launch. Annually, following the launch of this campaign, red ribbons are attached to our response vehicles to remind everyone of the importance of project red ribbon.

Pumpkin Patrol - Members of the Amherst Fire Department participated in the annual pumpkin patrol event. Six members and three vehicles participated in this year's event.

Monthly Departmental Report

Planning & Strategic Initiatives

November 2021

In early November, staff attended a NS Planning Directors Workshop where directors from around the province get together. The theme was housing and not surprisingly, the increased demand for housing is being acutely experienced in almost all areas of the province. The workshop included a presentation by Neil Lovitt with Turner Drake Ltd. author of the now somewhat famous blog, "What in the Housing?!". Mr. Lovitt's piece is an excellent reference for better understanding the various factors that influence the housing market and affordability in the region. The blog can be found here:

<https://www.turnerdrake.com/blog/2021/02/23/WhatInTheHousing.aspx>

Further to the housing issue, also on the agenda for this meeting will be a Council Decision Request with respect to the upcoming Tax Sale in December, and a memo seeking Council's direction regarding emergency shelters.

A marketing push is being launched for the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program to garner more attention to this opportunity for home owners to make energy efficiency upgrades. To date, uptake has been relatively slow in Amherst with only a couple participants since it launched in 2020. The campaign will include social media ads (shared on TOA channels), Saltwire digital ads, and print ads in the Herald and Cumberland Wire. These ads will be running throughout the month of November.

With regard to the NS Power Solar Garden, a public launch will take place on Thursday, November 25th. The Deputy Mayor will be on hand to speak on behalf of the Town. Installation of the two Solar PV systems at the treatment facility and water reservoir remains slated for December.

The Clean Foundation have offered the town an opportunity to undertake a vehicle fleet assessment that will look at opportunities to convert to electric vehicles. This project is intended to support municipalities and towns in reducing their fleets' GHG emissions by providing them with data and a business case to do so. An application is being submitted to the Low Carbon Communities to fund 100% of the study cost that will be led by the Clean Foundation. The town's contribution will be in-kind in the form of allowing vehicle use logging devices, staff completing two surveys and test driving an EV. Should the application to the Fund be successful, staff will provide more detail to Council.

The Municipal Planning Strategy Renew Request for Proposals garnered responses from six consultancies. Staff are reviewing the submissions and will be bringing to Council a recommendation to award in the near future.

With regard to business development, the Business Development Officer position opening has been posted. Staff attended the Cumberland Team meeting in early November. The Connector will hold a ‘Mind Your Business’ session on ‘What Drives Your Customer to Purchase From You’ on November 23rd. The Moveable Park Tactical Placemaking Project was completed on the corner thanks to Recreation and Public Works crews, with special thanks to Chelsea Baird who led the design, procurement, and installation of the project. It is hoped that the community partners will promote the use of the space as a place for people to gather.

New Business Certificates are in the works for new businesses:

- Nova Social Media
- East Coast Records
- Healing Touch Holistic
- Henney Wales Garage
- Abstract Coffee
- Scotland Yard Contracting
- Elm Tree Tavern (new owners)

If Council is aware of any additional new businesses that have opened or are going to open, please feel free to contact staff.

Planning Staff continue to provide planning and development services for the Town of Oxford, and cover for the currently vacant Business Development Officer position.

Monthly Departmental Report

Community Well Being

November 2021

COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

- Assisted in the coordination of the Remembrance Day Ceremony with the local Legion branch.
- Conducted orientation to new members of the Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee.
- Continue to support the Physician Recruitment Committee through promotional materials.
- Attended the AYTC monthly meeting.

CULTURE MARKETING AND EVENTS

- Coordination and preparation for Christmas Parade December 4th, with the local Y's Mens Club.
- Met with local business group to support the Amherst Christmas Block Party on December 4th
- Cookie Crawl is happening again the weekend of December 10-11th
- Designed Shop Local media campaign.

ACTIVE LIVING

- Public skating is ongoing at the Amherst Stadium and has been well attended.
- The walking track continues to be well used.
- Amherst Cumberland Multisport has been on hold but resumes with Ringette NS on Nov. 21 at the Amherst Stadium. There are 27 participants in the program.
- Friday Night Fun at the YMCA has been on hold but resumes Nov. 19.
- The town light up will be virtual this year on Nov. 19.
- The town is partnering with Make your Move, an organization run by Doctors NS and Worker's Compensation, to launch a pilot project with a business in town to run "Make your Move at Work". The pilot project is designed to increase movement during the workday.

We are pleased to welcome Cindy Brown to our team. She has accepted the Administrative Assistant position and joins us on November 22nd.

We are also in the final stages of the hiring competition for the 4-month term position for the Culture, Marketing and Events position.