

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

Date: September 15, 2025
Time: 4:00 pm
Location: Council Chambers, Town Hall

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

Staff Present Jason MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer
Aaron Bourgeois, Director, Operations
Corey Crocker, Recreation Facility Manager
Andrew Fisher, Director, Planning & Economic Development
Jeff Bacon, Economic Development Officer
Dwayne Pike, Chief, Police Services
Greg Jones, Director, Fire Services
Kim Jones, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Krista Crossman, Director, Human Resources
Sarah Wilson, Director, Finance
Sharon Bristol, Director, Community Living
Mallory Klooster, Community Well-Being Manager
Sean Payne, Marketing & Communications Officer
Natalie LeBlanc, Municipal Clerk
Cindy Brown, Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order

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

1.1 Territorial Acknowledgement

Mayor Small gave the Territorial Acknowledgement.

1.2 Approval of Agenda

Moved By Councillor Chambers

Seconded By Councillor Wells

That the agenda be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

1.3 Approval of the Consent Agenda

Mayor Small requested that item 3.5 Traffic Line Marking be removed. Deputy Mayor Davidson requested that items 3.2 Themed Crosswalks, 3.4 Naming of Green Space and 4.1 Community Living Monthly Report be removed. Councillor Ripley requested that item 4.8 Planning and Economic Development Monthly Report be removed.

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Deputy Mayor Davidson

To remove items 3.2 Themed Crosswalks, 3.4 Naming of Green Space, 3.5 Traffic Line Marking, 4.1 Community Living Monthly Report and 4.8 Planning and Economic Development Monthly Report from the consent agenda.

MOTION CARRIED

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Deputy Mayor Davidson

To approve the consent agenda as amended to include:

2.1 Capital Budget Amendment Fire Vehicle

2.2 Year End Operating Reserve Transfer to General Operating Solid Waste and Sewer Deficit

2.3 Year End Capital Financing Adjustments

3.1 Basic Income Guarantee

3.3 Decorative Lighting

3.6 Water Supply Review

3.7 Bylaw/Policy Review

3.8 CAO Task Report

4.2 Corporate Monthly Report

4.3 Cumberland Business Connector Monthly Report

4.4 Financial Services Monthly Report

4.5 Fire Services Monthly Report

4.6 Human Resources Monthly Report

4.7 Operations Monthly Report

4.9 Police Services Monthly Report

MOTION CARRIED

1.4 Acceptance of Minutes

1.4.1 June 16, 2025

Mayor Small called for any errors or omissions in the minutes. There being none, the minutes of the June 16, 2025, Committee of the Whole meeting were accepted as included in the agenda package.

1.4.2 July 23, 2025

Mayor Small called for any errors or omissions in the minutes. There being none, the minutes of the July 23, 2025, special Committee of the Whole meeting were accepted as included in the agenda package.

2. Council Direction Requests

2.1 Capital Budget Amendment Fire Vehicle

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

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Deputy Mayor Davidson

That Council forward to the September 22, 2025, regular meeting, approval of an amendment to the 2025/26 capital budget in the amount of \$75,000 to replace the Fire Chief's command vehicle, including the operational accessories.

MOTION CARRIED

2.2 Year End Operating Reserve Transfer to General Operating Solid Waste and Sewer Deficit

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

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Deputy Mayor Davidson

That Council forward to the September 22, 2025, regular meeting, approval of the following transfers from the Operating Reserve to General Operating:

- **Withdraw from the Operating Reserve – Reserve for Solid Waste of \$2,137.73 to fund the deficit in the Solid Waste department for the 2024/25 fiscal year.**
- **Withdraw from the Operating Reserve – Reserve for Sewage of \$2,548.98 to fund the deficit in the Solid Waste department for the 2024/25 fiscal year.**

MOTION CARRIED

2.3 Year End Capital Financing Adjustments

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

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Deputy Mayor Davidson

That Council forward to the September 22, 2025, regular meeting, approval of the following changes to the funding for the 2024/25 Water Capital Budget:

- **Approval of the increase of Water Operating capital from revenue from \$40,000 to \$134,000.**

MOTION CARRIED

2.4 Community Support Grant

Moved By Deputy Mayor Davidson

Seconded By Councillor McManaman

That Council forward to the September 22, 2025, regular meeting approval of the request from Maggie's Place for \$2,000 for back-to-school supplies for children in Amherst and Cumberland County.

MOTION CARRIED

2.5 Capital Budget Amendment West Victoria Street

Moved By Councillor Wells

Seconded By Councillor Ripley

That Council forward to the September 22, 2025, regular meeting, approval of an amendment to the 2025/26 general capital budget, and the 2025/26 water utility capital budget to include the engineering design to reconstruct West Victoria Street from the CNR tracks to Hickman Street to be funded with:

- **\$15,000 from the Operating Reserve – Sewer**
- **\$37,000 from the Operating Reserve – Unrestricted, and**
- **\$15,000 from the water utility depreciation fund**

For a total of \$67,000 inclusive of applicable taxes.

MOTION CARRIED

2.6 Amherst Youth Town Council Policy Amendment

Moved By Councillor Wells

Seconded By Councillor McManaman

That Council forward to the September 22, 2025, regular meeting approval of the amendments to the Amherst Youth Town Council Policy as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

2.7 Workplace Violence Policy Amendments

Moved By Deputy Mayor Davidson

Seconded By Councillor Furlong

That Council forward to the September 22, 2025, regular meeting approval of the amended Workplace Violence & Harassment Prevention Policy as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

2.8 Asset Management Policy

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Councillor Chambers

That Council forward to the September 22, 2025, regular meeting, approval of the new Asset Management Policy as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

2.9 Surplus Fill Policy Amendments

Moved By Councillor Ripley

Seconded By Councillor Wells

That Council forward to the September 22, 2025, regular meeting, the existing Surplus Fill Policy to be repealed and forward the new Surplus Fill Policy for approval as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

2.10 Volunteer Code of Conduct Policy

As per the discussion, staff will make amendments to the draft policy and bring it back to the October Committee of the Whole meeting.

2.11 Dangerous and Unsightly Premises Policy Amendments

Moved By Councillor McManaman

Seconded By Councillor Wells

That Council forward to the September 22, 2025, approval of the recommended amendments to the Dangerous or Unsightly Premises Policy as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

2.12 Keeping of Chickens

Moved By Councillor Ripley

Seconded By Councillor Furlong

That Council direct staff to report back within 90 days with a concise options report and draft to permit and regulate backyard hens on residential properties, addressing; eligible zones/lot types; limits (no roosters/amount of hens); coop/free run and animal welfare standards; feed/waste management; licensing/fees; enforcement approach; consultation with Public Health and NS Department of Agriculture; a brief public engagement plan; an optional 12 month pilot; costs and timeline for implementation.

Against (5): Mayor Small, Deputy Mayor Davidson, Councillor Chambers, Councillor McManaman, and Councillor Wells

MOTION DEFEATED

2.13 Bylaw to Amend the Fire and Burning of Materials Bylaw First Reading

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Deputy Mayor Davidson

That Council forward to the September 22, 2025, regular meeting, first reading of the Bylaw to Amend the Fires and Burning of Materials Bylaw C-7 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

2.14 United Way Request

Moved By Deputy Mayor Davidson

Seconded By Councillor Chambers

That Council forward to the September 22, 2025 regular council meeting the request for property tax relief from the United Way to be denied.

MOTION CARRIED

3. Information Items

3.2 Themed Crosswalks

Deputy Mayor Davidson asked if staff had dates for the installation of the themed crosswalks. The Director of Community Living Sharon Bristol replied that Public Works is working on them, and that the Every Child Matters themed crosswalk will be completed in time for an unveiling for National Truth and Reconciliation Day on September 29, the African Nova Scotia crosswalk will be completed before October 17 as discussed with CANSAs, with the Veterans crosswalk to follow.

3.4 Naming of Green Space

Deputy Mayor Davidson asked staff to confirm that they are still considering a Mi'kma'ki term for "healing place" or "healing space" as a name for the green space next to Town Hall. The Director of Community Living confirmed that yes, staff are working with family and veterans of indigenous descent and hope to bring a recommendation to Council in October.

3.5 Traffic Line Marking

Mayor Small asked staff if it would be possible to contract out option 2 of the memo to tender centreline painting and complete the remainder in-house. The Director of Operations Aaron Bourgeois replied that it would be possible however it would be costly. If Council agrees, he suggested he would make line painting a priority for his staff next spring. Council agreed to see how next year's line painting goes and reassess at that time.

4. Monthly Reports

4.1 Community Living

Deputy Mayor Davidson asked about the Downtown Business Task Force, if they have met and if a Terms of Reference has been developed. The Director of Community Living Sharon Bristol replied that it is a small working group of about 10 people and that no Terms of Reference has been developed.

Mayor Small indicated he noticed a decline in attendance at the summer parks program as it went on. The Director of Community Living replied that this could be due to a number of factors, including family vacations, and the hot temperatures we had this summer. Councillor Wells suggested that staff consider implementing some form of refillable water stations at Town parks, Council agreed this could be a good idea.

Moved By Deputy Mayor Davidson

Seconded By Councillor Furlong

That staff write a letter of thanks to Tourism summer student Brayley Bickerton for the excellent job she did promoting the Town of Amherst.

MOTION CARRIED

4.8 Planning & Economic Development

Councillor Ripley asked for an update on community markets. Jeff Bacon replied that in discussions with the Amherst Farmer's Market they have indicated they are not interested in changing their current set up. He added that they may be open to doing "one off" events to coordinate with other events happening, such as the Christmas Light-up for example.

5. Closed Session

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Deputy Mayor Davidson

that the Committee move to a Closed Session.

MOTION CARRIED

6. Adjournment

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

Natalie LeBlanc
Municipal Clerk

Rob Small
Mayor