

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

Date: January 19, 2026
Time: 4:00 pm
Location: Council Chambers, Town Hall

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

Staff Present
Jason MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer
Aaron Bourgeois, Director, Operations
Andrew Fisher, Director, Planning & Economic Development
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
Denise Smith, Finance Manager
Jeff Bacon, Economic Development Officer
Lori O'Connell, Marketing & Communications Officer
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 Davidson

Seconded By Councillor Ripley

That the agenda be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

1.3 Approval of the Consent Agenda

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Deputy Mayor Chambers

To approve the consent agenda with the removal of items 3.2 Affordable Housing Fee Forgiveness Policy and 4.1 Corporate Services Monthly Report.

MOTION CARRIED

1.4 Acceptance of Minutes - December 15, 2025

Mayor Small called for any errors or omissions in the minutes. There being none, the minutes of the December 15, 2025, meeting of the Committee of the Whole were accepted as included in the agenda package.

2. Council Direction Requests

2.1 Curling Club Community Support Grant

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

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Deputy Mayor Chambers

That Council forward to the January 26, 2026, regular meeting, approval for the Amherst Curling Club to carry over into 2026 the 2025 Community Support Grant in the amount of \$8,000.

MOTION CARRIED

2.2 Request for Banners

Moved By Councillor Wells

Seconded By Councillor McManaman

That Council direct staff to:

- 1. Develop detailed eligibility criteria for permanent banner recognition at Town Facilities;**
- 2. Establish a formal, merit-based application and review process for nominations;**
- 3. Draft a terms of reference for a committee to review applications and make recommendations to Council; and**
- 4. Bring the draft documents to the March 2026 Committee of the Whole meeting for consideration.**

MOTION CARRIED

2.3 Street Light Policy

Staff directed to make further amendments to the Street Light Policy and bring back to Council at the February Committee of the Whole meeting.

2.4 Construction of New Residential Streets

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Councillor Wells

That Council direct staff to prepare a new Public Street Contribution Policy for the Town of Amherst that:

- 1. Establishes a municipal contribution of up to \$1,500 per linear metre of new public street constructed and accepted by the Town;**
- 2. Amends the Town's current practice of paying for the top lift of asphalt and concrete curb on new residential streets;**
- 3. Ensures that developers are fully responsible for all construction costs and infrastructure installation;**
- 4. Sets clear eligibility criteria tied to road acceptance and completion of a one-year warranty period;**
- 5. Includes timing requirements for the installation of asphalt and curb works; and**
- 6. Directs staff to bring forward any necessary amendments to the Subdivision Bylaw needed to implement the policy.**

MOTION CARRIED

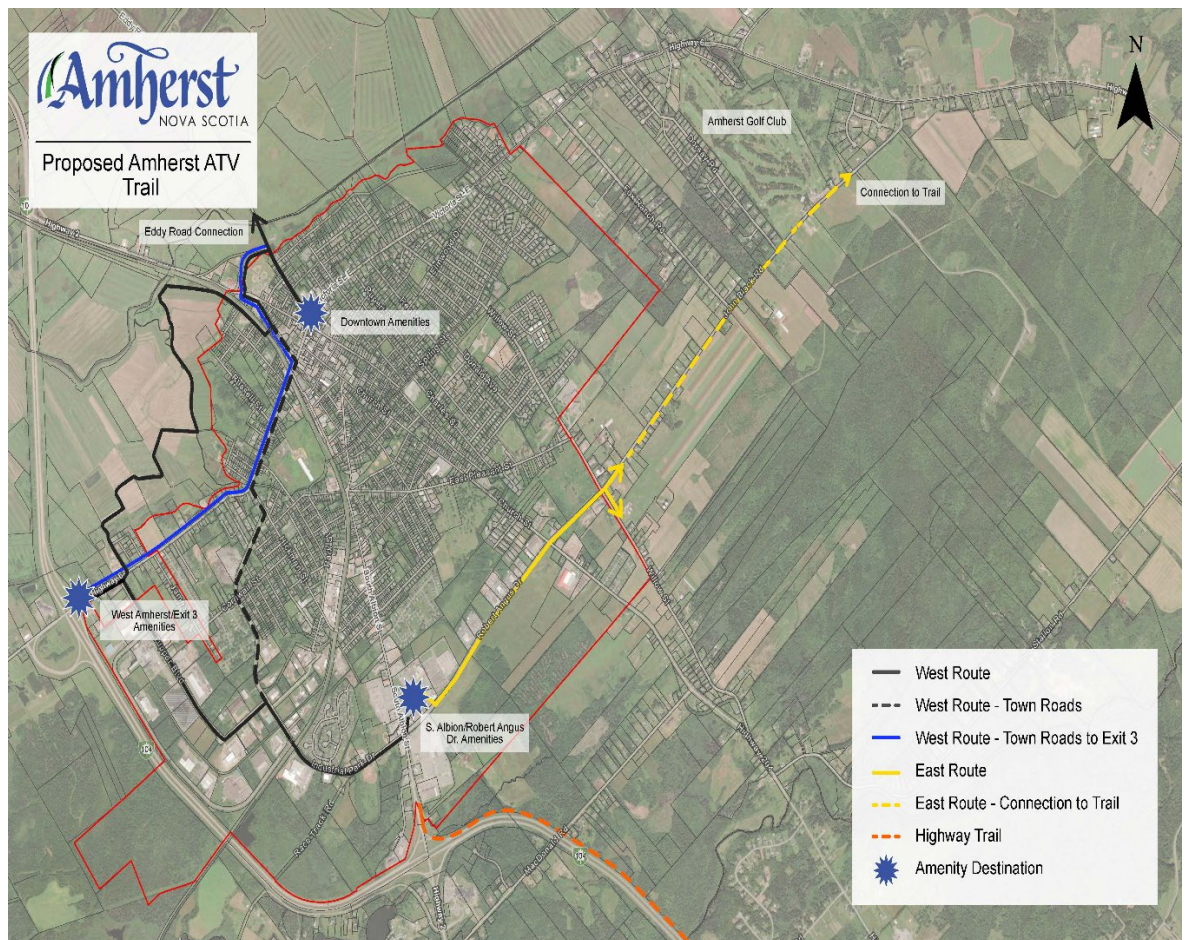
2.5 ATV Trail

**Moved By Councillor Ripley
Seconded By Deputy Mayor Chambers**

That staff be directed to take the following steps listed below for the ATV trail on the Western Route Exit 3 starting at Eddy Street continuing onto Lawrence Street, Erncliffe Street, Sackville Road through the Amherst Sod roads onto Tupper Boulevard, Anson Avenue and then onto Industrial Park Drive (noted in the solid black line of the map below)

- Confirm scope – Limited off-street or trail-based options are the primary focus, consistent with provincial legislation.
- Engage the public – Undertake early, high-level public engagement to understand community concerns and expectations.
- Consult key stakeholders – Continue preliminary discussions with the ATV club, landowners, and police.
- Include Costs - Explore costs to develop and maintain route(s).
- Report back to Council – Summarize public input and high-level options to determine whether a full review is warranted.

MOTION CARRIED



2.6 Requests for Proclamations and Flag Raising Ceremonies Policy

**Moved By Deputy Mayor Chambers
Seconded By Councillor Wells
That Council forward to the January 26, 2026, regular meeting, approval of the Requests for Proclamations and Flag Raising Ceremonies Policy as amended.**

MOTION CARRIED

2.7 Christie Foundation Donation

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

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Deputy Mayor Chambers

That Council forward to the January 26, 2026, regular meeting, approval of the request to receive a donation of \$10,000 from the Dr. & Mrs. H.E. Christie Community Foundation to fund a corresponding grant of \$10,000 to the Cumberland County Minor Hockey Association.

MOTION CARRIED

2.8 Write-Off Uncollectable Accounts Receivables

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Councillor McManaman

That Council forward to the January 26, 2026, regular meeting, approval of the proposed write off of uncollectible accounts in the amount of \$44,334.07.

MOTION CARRIED

2.9 By-law to Amend the Deed Transfer Tax By-law

Moved By Councillor McManaman

Seconded By Councillor Furlong

That Council defer this item to be discussed during budget deliberations.

MOTION CARRIED

2.10 Cumberland Public Libraries Request for Additional Board Members

Moved By Councillor Davidson

Seconded By Councillor Furlong

To go into closed session pursuant to MGA 22(2)(f) litigation or potential litigation.

MOTION CARRIED

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Councillor Davidson

That the CAO be directed to inform the Library Director that Council agrees with expanding the composition of the Library Board by three members: one municipal councillor from Cumberland and two members at large to be appointed by the municipal councils pending a legal review of any liability on the municipal councils with making these appointments, with the process of such to be determined.

MOTION CARRIED

2.11 YMCA Request for Funding

**Moved By Deputy Mayor Chambers
Seconded By Councillor Wells**

That Council forward to the January 26, 2026, regular meeting approval of the funding request from the YMCA of Cumberland in the amount of \$9,000 to come from the Strategic Priority Reserve.

MOTION CARRIED

2.12 Joint Councils Terms of Reference Policy

**Moved By Councillor Davidson
Seconded By Deputy Mayor Chambers**

That Council forward to the January 26, 2026, regular meeting, the repeal of the Joint Councils Terms of Reference Policy 10350-27.

MOTION CARRIED

2.13 Nova Scotia Strong Mayor Powers

**Moved By Councillor Furlong
Seconded By Councillor Wells**

That Council direct staff to not send a letter to the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities expressing the lack of support for Strong Mayor Powers.

MOTION CARRIED

2.14 Visitor Information Centre

Council agreed to return to this item following a discussion at the closed session meeting as per the MGA section 22(2)(c) personnel matters.

2.15 Request for Policy Review

**Moved By Councillor Davidson
Seconded By Councillor McManaman**

That staff be directed to review the Appointment of Members of Council to External Boards 10350-28, and the Council Committees Policy 10350-32 and bring amendments back to the February Committee of the Whole meeting for Council's consideration.

MOTION CARRIED

2.16 Request for Policy Review

**Moved By Councillor Furlong
Seconded By Councillor Ripley**

That staff be directed to undertake a comprehensive review of the Snow and Ice Management Policy and report back to Council no later than the March Committee of the Whole meeting.

MOTION CARRIED

3. Information Items

3.1 Amherst Community Christmas Dinner

Information item only, memo included as part of the agenda package.

3.2 Affordable Housing Fee Forgiveness Policy

Information item only, memo included as part of the agenda package.

3.3 Economic Forum Update

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

3.4 Transit Feasibility Study

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

3.5 By-Law / Policy Review

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

3.6 CAO Task Report

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

4. Monthly Reports

4.1 Corporate

Councillor Furlong asked about the internet restoration at the Wastewater Treatment Facility. The Director of Operations replied that this issue has now been resolved.

4.2 Community Living

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

4.3 Cumberland Business Connector

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

4.4 Financial Services

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

4.5 Fire Services

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

4.6 Human Resources

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

4.7 Operations

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

4.8 Planning & Economic Development

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

4.9 Police Services

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

5. Closed Session

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Councillor McManaman

That the Committee move into a Closed Session.

MOTION CARRIED

Return to Item 2.14 Visitor Information Centre

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Councillor Davidson

That staff be directed to continue and possibly build on the current program this summer, and further that the Mayor write a letter to the province outlining our need and desire for a larger presence at the VIC, potentially in conjunction with the Municipality of the County of Cumberland.

MOTION CARRIED

6. Adjournment

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

Natalie LeBlanc
Municipal Clerk

Rob Small
Mayor