

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

Date: March 4, 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
Kim Jones, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Krista Crossman, Director, Human Resources
Sarah Wilson, Director, Finance
Denise Smith, Finance 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.

Further to the budget meetings held on Friday, February 27, 2026, and the discussions had at that time, the Chief Administrative Officer asked Council to approve the following motions:

Moved By Councillor Davidson
Seconded By Deputy Mayor Chambers
That Council increase the budget amount for an Economic Development casual/term position to \$25,000.

MOTION CARRIED

Moved By Councillor McManaman
Seconded By Councillor Wells
That Council approve \$20,000 to come from the operating reserves for Wayfinding Signage as part of the Explore Cumberland initiative.

MOTION CARRIED

Moved By Councillor Davidson
Seconded By Councillor Wells
That Council approve an additional \$270,000 in the capital budget to mill and pave Townshend Avenue from Donald Street to Willow Street, overlay Park Street from Mission Street to Hickman Street, and to overlay Chamberlain Street from Newton Avenue to South Albion Street.

MOTION CARRIED

2. Strategic Priorities

Soccer / Track and Field Complex

Moved By Councillor Ripley

Seconded By Deputy Mayor Chambers

That \$8,100,000 be included in the 2026/27 capital budget for the Soccer / Track and Field Complex contingent on grants/fundraising of \$5,000,000 be approved.

MOTION CARRIED

Stadium Ice Making Equipment

Moved By Councillor Wells

Seconded By Councillor McManaman

That \$1,500,000 be included in the 2026/27 capital budget for stadium ice making equipment.

MOTION CARRIED

Cumberland YMCA Gymnasium Expansion Project

Moved By Councillor Wells

Seconded By Councillor Furlong

That staff continue to negotiate with the Cumberland YMCA for the provision of a public gymnasium as part of their expansion project.

MOTION CARRIED

New Community Centre

Moved By Councillor Davidson

Seconded By Councillor McManaman

That Council and staff plan for future construction of a new community centre when financing allows; and further make the decision that 'strategic funds' will only be used for the strategic projects established in the 2026/27 budget process or as amended by Council.

Against (1): Councillor Furlong

MOTION CARRIED

Transit

Moved By Councillor Wells

Seconded By Councillor Davidson

That staff be directed to not pursue a public transit initiative at this time and communicate this decision to the public.

Against (1): Councillor Furlong

MOTION CARRIED

Councillor Ripley requested that the minutes reflect that he remains undecided on the matter. He noted that, during the election, residents expressed support for the implementation of a public transit system. However, he also expressed concern regarding the associated capital and operating costs. Councillor Ripley indicated that he would like to explore additional options that could support alternative modes of public transportation.

3. Adjournment

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

Natalie LeBlanc
Municipal Clerk

Rob Small
Mayor