

**TOWN OF AMHERST
Regular Council Meeting
Minutes**

Date: February 24, 2026
Time: 6:00 pm
Location: Council Chambers, Town Hall

Members Present Mayor Robert 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
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 6:00 p.m.

2. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Mayor Small gave the Territorial Acknowledgement.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA / ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

3.1 Approval of Agenda

Moved By Councillor Wells

Seconded By Deputy Mayor Chambers

To approve the agenda as circulated.

Motion Carried

3.2 Acceptance of Minutes

3.2.1 February 2, 2026

Mayor Small called for any errors or omissions in the minutes. There being none, the minutes of the February 2, 2026, regular Council meeting were accepted as included in the agenda package.

3.2.2 February 9, 2026

Mayor Small called for any errors or omissions in the minutes. There being none, the minutes of the February 9, 2026, special Council meeting were accepted as included in the agenda package.

4. REQUESTS FOR DECISION

4.1 Commercial Development Support Program By-law First Reading

Moved By Deputy Mayor Chambers

Seconded By Councillor McManaman

That Council give First Reading of the By-law to Amend the Commercial Development Support Program By-law P-9.

Motion Carried

BY-LAW TO AMEND THE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT PROGRAM BY-LAW P-9

The Commercial Development Support Program By-law P-9 is hereby amended as follows:

In the first paragraph, change 10 years to 5 years and add the wording "from May 1, 2026, forward"

SHORT TITLE

Fix spelling errors to change aslo to "also" and know to "known"

APPLICATION

Add the words "Mixed Use, Business Park, and"

REBATE CALCULATION

Remove the current table and add the following table

- The cumulative payable must be below 50% by the end of the phase-in period.
- The maximum annual rebate amount is \$100,000. Any assessment increase that calculates a rebate amount over \$100,000 will be capped at \$100,000 annually.

SCHEDULE C OF THE AGREEMENT

Remove the second "S" to correctly read "CDS Bylaw – Town of Amherst"

SCHEDULE E OF THE AGREEMENT - ASSESSMENT REBATE CALCULATION

Remove this section in its entirety and replace it with the following

SCHEDULE E
ASSESSMENT REBATE CALCULATION

Address:

Property Identification No:

A. Pre-Development Base Year Taxable Assessed Value:

(1)

Base Year	Base Year Taxable Assessed Value
	\$

B. Post-Development Actual Taxable Assessment Value:

(2) (3)

Years	Rebate Year	Actual Taxable Assessed Value*	Current Commercial Municipal General Tax Rate (excluding any area rates)
1		\$	
2		\$	
3		\$	
4		\$	
5		\$	

*The PVSC assessment in the year following the completion of the development. This amount will not change for purposes of the rebate calculation.

C. Assessment Rebates:

(4) (5)=(2-1)(6) = (5 x 3) (7) = (6 x 4) (8)

Years	Rebate %	Rebate Eligible Assessment	Rebate Eligible Taxes	Rebate Amount \$	Cumulative % Payable	Maximum Annual Rebate Amount \$100,000
1	90	\$	\$	\$		
2	70	\$	\$	\$		
3	50	\$	\$	\$		
4	20	\$	\$	\$		
5	10	\$	\$	\$		
Totals (9) & (10):			\$	\$		
Re-calculate:			50%	\$		
Total Allowable Rebate:			\$	\$		

- If the program ends at any point before the cumulative payout falls below 50%, the rebate needs to be adjusted down accordingly.
- The cumulative payable must be below 50% by the end of the phase-in period.
- The maximum annual rebate amount is \$100,000. Any assessment increase that calculates a rebate amount over \$100,000 will be capped at \$100,000 annually.

4.2 Volunteer Code of Conduct Policy

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Deputy Mayor Chambers

That Council approve the new Code of Conduct for Municipal Volunteers Policy #10350-02.

Motion Carried

TITLE: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MUNICIPAL VOLUNTEERS
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OFFICE
POLICY NO: 10350-02

APPROVAL DATE: February 24, 2026 **CAO Signature: _____**

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear expectations for the conduct of volunteers serving the Municipality. Volunteers play an essential role in delivering programs, services, and events, and are expected to uphold the highest standards of integrity, professionalism, and respect in representing the Municipality.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all individuals who volunteer their time, skills, and services to the Municipality, whether on a regular, seasonal, or one-time basis, including members of advisory committees, boards, community events, and recreational programs.

Volunteer members of the Amherst Fire Department and Amherst Police Department are covered under their own specific policies or standing orders.

3. Principles

Volunteers are expected to:

- Act in the best interests of the Municipality and its residents.
- Conduct themselves in a professional, respectful, and inclusive manner.
- Comply with all applicable laws, municipal policies, and safety regulations.
- Refrain from any conflicts of interest or actions that could harm the Municipality's reputation.
- Maintain a high standard of integrity

4. Standards of Conduct

Volunteers must:

a) Respect and Inclusivity

- Treat all persons with courtesy, dignity, and fairness, regardless of race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or other protected characteristics.
- Refrain from any form of harassment, discrimination, or bullying.

b) Integrity and Accountability

- Perform volunteer duties honestly, ethically, and to the best of their ability.
- Follow through on commitments and notify the appropriate supervisor if unable to attend or complete assigned tasks.
- Shall not use their volunteer position for personal gain.

c) Confidentiality

- Protect confidential and sensitive information obtained through volunteer activities.
- Refrain from disclosing personal or municipal information without proper authorization.

d) Safety and Conduct in the Workplace

- Comply with all municipal health and safety rules.
- Report hazards, unsafe conditions, or incidents immediately.
- Refrain from the use of alcohol, cannabis, or impairing substances while performing volunteer duties.

e) Use of Municipal Resources

- Use municipal property, equipment, and materials only for authorized purposes.
- Return any borrowed items promptly and in good condition.

5. Conflict of Interest

Volunteers must:

- Disclose any personal, financial, or professional interest that may conflict with their volunteer role.
- Refrain from participating in decisions or activities where such conflicts exist or could be perceived.

6. Social Media and Public Representation

- Volunteers shall not speak on behalf of the Municipality unless specifically authorized in advance by the Mayor, CAO or designate.
- When expressing personal opinions publicly, volunteers must make it clear they do not represent the Municipality's official position.
- Avoid posting or sharing content that could damage the Municipality's reputation.

7. Non-Compliance

Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may result in:

- Verbal or written warnings.
- Reassignment of duties.
- Dismissal from the volunteer position by the CAO. In the event the volunteer(s) had been formally appointed by Council, the CAO shall recommend dismissal to Council who shall make the final decision through a motion of direction.

8. Acknowledgment

All volunteers must review and sign the **Volunteer Code of Conduct Acknowledgment Form** before commencing their duties, confirming that they have read, understood, and agree to abide by the policy.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Title/Role	Responsibilities
CAO	Administer policy
Directors/Supervisors	Report any potential breaches of policy to the CAO

For Administrative Use Only:

VERSION LOG

Amendment Description	Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
New Policy	Deputy CAO	Council	February 24, 2026

Minutes reference date: February 24, 2026



I, _____ declare that as a volunteer for the Town of Amherst, I acknowledge that I have read and support the Volunteer Code of Conduct Policy.

Signed: _____

Dated this ___ day of _____, 202_.

4.3 Appointment of Members of Council to External Boards, Committees and Commissions Policy
Moved By Councillor Davidson
Seconded By Councillor Wells
That Council approve the amendments to the Appointment of Members of Council to External Boards, Committees and Commissions Policy #10350-28.

Motion Carried

TITLE: APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF COUNCIL TO EXTERNAL BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS
POLICY NO: 10350-28

APPROVAL DATE: February 24, 2025 CAO Signature: _____

Short Title

1. This Policy may be known as the *Appointments of Members of Council to External Bodies Policy*.

Purposes

2. The purposes of this Policy are to determine:
 - (a) when Council may appoint or decline appointment of Members to external bodies;
 - (b) the reporting requirements regarding other bodies on which Members may choose to serve without the appointment of Council.

Interpretation

3. In this Policy:
 - (a) "CAO" means the Chief Administrative Officer of the Municipality;
 - (b) "Clerk" means the Clerk of the Municipality, and includes a person acting under the direction or supervision of the Clerk;
 - (c) "Council" means the Council of the Town;
 - (d) "External body" means any board, commission, committee, body or local authority of any kind established to exercise or exercising any power or authority under any general or special Act with respect to any of the affairs or purposes of a municipality or parts thereof or of two or more municipalities or parts thereof, or to which a municipality or municipalities are required to provide funds.
 - (e) "Member" means a member of Council, including the Mayor; and
 - (f) "Municipality" means the Town of Amherst.

Roles and Responsibilities

4. (a) Only Council may appoint Members to external bodies.
 (b) Any appointment by Council of Members to external bodies shall be made pursuant to section 8 of this Policy.
5. Council shall only make appointments to external bodies after having received and considered the terms of reference from external bodies.
6. The Clerk shall keep a list of the appointments of Members to external bodies made by Council, known as Appendix A.

External Bodies

7. Council shall not be bound by the by-laws or articles of incorporation adopted by an external body providing for the appointment of a Member to such body.

Council Appointments to External Bodies

8. (1) Council may appoint Members to external bodies as required by enactment, by-law or agreement:
- (a) in accordance with any enactment of the Government of Canada or Province of Nova Scotia;
 - (b) in accordance with the By-laws of the Municipality or an agreement to which the Municipality is a party; or
 - (c) as otherwise directed by Council.
- (2) Council may appoint Members to bodies, including external bodies, which in the opinion of Council are community organizations providing a service to the community and which:
- a. the Municipality is providing funding; and/or
 - b. where Council determines that municipal involvement is required or beneficial.
- (3) An external body Council considers meets the purpose of subsection 1 or 2 of this section shall be named in Appendix A. Council may amend Appendix A to add or remove the name of an external body.
- (4) Reporting
Councillors appointed to external bodies will submit a report to regular Council meetings. Information that generally should be included in the report includes:
- a. Governance issues;
 - b. Financial issues;
 - c. Requests to Council; and
 - d. Service delivery capacity.

These reports are intended to provide important information to Council regarding the operation of the external body and are not intended to be a medium to promote issues / events to the general public.

External Bodies Without Council Appointment

9. (1) A Member who sits on a body that has not been appointed to such body by Council shall advise the Clerk of the name of the body on which he or she sits.
- (2) The Clerk shall retain a list of the names of the bodies provided by the Members pursuant to subsection 1 of this section and the list shall indicate the name of the Member and the name of the body provided.
- (3) The Clerk shall retain the list created pursuant to subsection 2 of this section in the Office of the Municipal Clerk as a public record.
- (4) The Clerk shall provide the list annually to the Members for their review and the Members shall advise the Clerk of any errors or omissions on such list.

Conflict of Interest

10. (1) All members of Council are encouraged to consider the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act in all matters that come before them in their duties as a public representative on any group in which they serve in a capacity other than formally appointed by Council.
- (2) If you feel you are in a position where you may be in a direct, indirect or even perceived conflict you should:
- As soon as practicable after the commencement of the meeting disclose the interest and the general nature thereof; then withdraw from his/her place as a member and
 - In the case of a closed meeting, leave the room in which meeting is held for the duration of the consideration of the matter, and
 - In the case of a meeting that is open to the public, leave his/her seat and take a seat in the public gallery until the matter is concluded.
- (3) When in doubt, Councillors are encouraged to err on the side of caution and declare a conflict.

Appendices

11. Any Appendix attached to this Policy shall form part of the Policy.
- Appendix A – External Bodies to which Members are appointed pursuant to section 8

**Appendix A
External Bodies to which Members
are appointed pursuant to Section 8**

Board, Committee or Commission	Members Appointed	Act, Legislation, By-Law, Agreement or Membership
Cumberland Public Libraries Board	1 Member appointed	By-laws of Board
Regional Emergency Management	2 Members appointed	Intermunicipal Agreement
Northern Region Solid Waste	1 Member appointed	Intermunicipal Agreement
Cumberland YMCA	1 Member appointed	Contribution Agreement
LA Animal Shelter	1 Member appointed	Capital Funding Memorandum of Understanding
Senior Safety Advisory Committee	1 Member appointed	By Request of Organization
GFL Community Liaison Committee	1 Member appointed	Residential Three Stream Solid Waste Collection Agreement

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Title/Role	Responsibilities
Council	Appoint members to external boards, committees and commissions. Notify Clerk of any boards, committees or commissions to which they are members of without Council appointment
Clerk	Ensure Appendix A of this policy, as well as the list of boards, committees and commissions council are members of without Council appointment, is kept up to date.

For Administrative Use Only:

VERSION LOG

Amendment Description	Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
Amend Appendix A to reflect current Council appointments	Clerk	Council	February 24, 2025
Include a provision that states: The report should include any matters that affect the organization's governance, financial structure, or service delivery capacity, remove Appendix B and C.	Clerk	Council	June 24, 2024
Remove Senior Safety Advisory Committee from Appendix A and change LA Animal Shelter Board purpose of appointment from Capital Funding to MOU	Clerk	Council	

Minutes reference date: February 26, 2018 February 22, 2021 April 25, 2022 June 24, 2024
 February 24, 2025

4.4 Membership on National Boards and Committees Policy and Membership in Clubs, Societies and Associations Policy
Moved By Councillor McManaman
Seconded By Councillor Davidson
That Council repeal the Membership on National Boards and Committees Policy #10350-17 and repeal the Membership in Clubs, Societies and Associations Policy #10350-18.

Motion Carried

TOWN OF AMHERST POLICY

NUMBER 10350-17
PAGE 7 of 1

DEPARTMENT: COUNCIL AND ALL TOWN DEPARTMENTS

TITLE: **MEMBERSHIP ON NATIONAL BOARDS AND COMMITTEES**

Minutes reference date: 24 January 2005

PURPOSE:

To set out policy and guidelines for members of Council and staff who may wish to become members on national boards or committees. While Council recognizes the benefits to be obtained by the Town from national exposure, certain policy limits need to be set.

POLICY STATEMENT:

1. (a) All members of Council who wish to become members on any national committees must have permission of Council prior to accepting such appointment or office.
- (b) Fifty percent (50%) of the cost of travel (including meals and accommodations) must be covered by the relevant provincial or national organization or the individual.
2. (a) All members of administration must obtain the permission of the Town Manager prior to accepting any appointment or position.
- (b) Fifty percent (50%) of the costs must be covered by the provincial or national association.
- (c) Time off for meetings or duties at this level must not exceed ten working days per year and normal duties must not be affected.

DEPARTMENT: Council and All Departments**TITLE:** MEMBERSHIPS IN CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

Minutes reference date: 21 February 2005

PURPOSE:

The Town of Amherst has in the past and will continue in the future to hold membership in various organizations and associations that advocate similar viewpoints and visions that help increase our competitiveness and enhance the level of services we provide to our residents.

In addition, Town employees have in the past and will continue to become affiliated with and actively participate in professional organizations that enhance their career competencies and provide the ability to learn new skills and improve existing skills in both a formal and informal setting.

The Town acknowledges that affiliations with organizations that provide advocacy support and professional development opportunities is important and should be supported accordingly.

POLICY STATEMENT:

1. The Town will pay annual membership fees to associations and organizations that have been deemed by council to benefit the towns overall ability to enhance the quality of services provided for residents. Council may appoint an employee or elected official who will represent the Town at meetings and events and may provide reports from time to time that will keep council informed of initiatives or issues that may affect our community.
2. The Town will pay the annual membership fees for employees to relevant professional association to which they are affiliated and are duly authorized by both Department Head and Town Manager. These organizations must be relevant to the work the employee performs on a day to day basis and should demonstrate the ability to enhance the employee's skill levels.
3. The Town continues to encourage employees to contribute to their community through active participation in various community based service organizations that add to a strong social and community environment. For greater clarity, dues for local social and service organizations will be the personal responsibility of the employee

**4.5 Rounding of Cash Transactions Policy
Moved By Councillor Ripley
Seconded By Councillor McManaman
That Council approve the Rounding of Cash Transactions Policy #03000-04 as amended.**

Motion Carried

TITLE: ROUNDDING OF CASH TRANSACTIONS POLICY
SECTION: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
POLICY NO: 03000-04

APPROVAL DATE: _____ **CAO Signature:** _____

PURPOSE

As of February 4, 2013, the Royal Canadian Mint is no longer ~~distributing~~ distributes pennies and as they ~~are gradually being were~~ removed from circulation.

POLICY STATEMENT

All cash transactions of the Town of Amherst will be rounded down to the nearest five cent increment.

This applies to cash payments only. All other payment methods must pay the exact amount.

Title/Rule	Responsibilities
Director of Finance	Ensure Rounding of Cash Transactions Policy is followed.

For Administrative Use Only:

VERSION LOG

Amendment Description	Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
Policy created	Director of Finance	Council	May 27, 2013
Policy review – update wording from current tense to past tense.	Director of Finance	Council	

Minutes reference date: May 27, 2013

5. INTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS**5.1 Audit Committee - Chambers**

Information item only.

5.2 Amherst Youth Town Council – Wells

Information item only.

5.3 Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee- Wells

Information item only.

6. EXTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS**6.1 Cumberland Public Libraries - McManaman**

Information item only.

6.2 Cumberland YMCA - Wells

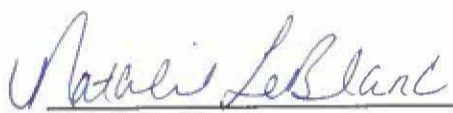
Information item only.

6.3 L. A. Animal Shelter - Davidson

Information item only.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

Natalie LeBlanc
Municipal ClerkRobert Small
Mayor