

# Amherst Town Council

## Special Meeting

### Minutes

Date of Meeting: Thursday, October 30, 2014  
 Location: Council Chambers, Town Hall

Members Present: Mayor Robert Small  
 Deputy Mayor Lisa Emery  
 Councillor George Baker  
 Councillor Frank Balcom  
 Councillor Robert Bird  
 Councillor David March  
 Councillor Terry Rhindress

Staff Present: Greg Herrett, CAO  
 Jason MacDonald, Deputy CAO Operations  
 Roger MacIsaac, Director CED  
 Vince Arbing, Treasurer  
 Bill Schurman, Director CED  
 Ian Naylor, Acting Police Chief  
 Rebecca Purdy, Executive Assistant  
 Kim Jones, Policy and HR

## 2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

**Moved By: Deputy Mayor Lisa Emery**  
**Seconded By: Councillor Terry Rhindress**  
**To approve the agenda as distributed.**

**Motion Carried**

## 3. REQUEST FOR DECISION

### 3.1. Police Facility

**Moved By: Deputy Mayor Lisa Emery**  
**Seconded By: Councillor David March**  
**That Council award the contract for the design/build of the police facility on the site of the former Legion property on Havelock Street to Maritech Construction Inc. in the amount of \$2,875,791.14 plus HST**

**Recorded**

Robert Small	Yes	
Lisa Emery	Yes	
George Baker	Yes	
Frank Balcom	Yes	
Robert Bird		No
David March	Yes	
Terry Rhindress	Yes	
<b>Results</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>

**Motion Carried**

Opposed: and Councillor Robert Bird

### 3.2. Council Committee Appointments

**Moved By: Councillor George Baker**  
**Seconded By: Councillor David March**  
**That Council approves the following committee appointments for terms ending October 31, 2015:**

**Mayor Rob Small**

Regional Emergency Management Advisory Committee

**Councillor George Baker**

Amherst Board of Police Commissioners

Downtown Business Advisory Committee

Northern Region Solid Waste Committee

Victorian Order of Nurses Board

Municipal Alcohol Project Committee (alternate)

**Councillor Frank Balcom**

Amherst Board of Police Commissioners

Amherst Youth Town Council

Cumberland Public Libraries Board

LA Animal Shelter Board

Susan Taylor Theatre Advisory Committee

**Councillor Robert Bird**

Cumberland Joint Services Management Authority

YMCA Board

**Councillor Lisa Emery**

Amherst Board of Police Commissioners

Municipal Alcohol Project Committee

Planning Advisory Committee

Regional Emergency Management Committee

Tyndal Wellfield Advisory Committee

**Councillor Dave March**

Downtown Business Advisory Committee

Planning Advisory Committee

Senior Safety Advisory Group

**Councillor Terry Rhindress**

Cumberland Joint Services Management Authority

Planning Advisory Committee

Tyndal Wellfield Advisory Committee

And further, that all members of Council be appointed to the Committee of the Whole of Amherst Town Council, the Town of Amherst Audit Committee and the Amherst 125 Committee

**Motion Carried**

**3.3. Office of Deputy Mayor**

Self-nominations were submitted by George Baker, Lisa Emery and Terry Rhindress. A secret ballot vote was conducted and tabulated by the CAO. As there was a tie on the first ballot, a second round of voting for George Baker and Lisa Emery was conducted, with George Baker having the majority.

**Moved By: Councillor Frank Balcom**

**Seconded By: Councillor Terry Rhindress**

**That Council approve the appointment of George Baker to the office of Deputy Mayor for the term November 1, 2014 to October 31, 2015**

**Motion Carried**

**3.4. Revenue Opportunity - Wastewater**

**Moved By: Councillor George Baker**

**Seconded By: Deputy Mayor Lisa Emery**

**That Council approve the Letter of Intent with Atlantic Industrial Services (AIS) regarding acceptance of treated waste water and authorize the Mayor and CAO to sign on behalf of the Town.**

<b>Recorded</b>		
Robert Small	Yes	
Lisa Emery	Yes	
George Baker	Yes	
Frank Balcom	Yes	
Robert Bird	Yes	
David March	Yes	
Terry Rhindress		No
<b>Results</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>
		<b>Motion Carried</b>

Opposed: and Councillor Terry Rhindress

**4. ADJOURNMENT**

Prior to adjournment, Mayor Small made the following comment on the police department:

Since the fire that occurred, that displaced our Amherst Police Department and placed them in temporary offices above the Town Library, the town has been investigating various options to address the needs of the police department while at the same time, taking into consideration what makes sense for our town.

To give a little history on this, that is sometimes forgotten:

We have pursued consultants to review and report on understanding the needs for policing in this day and age and it is no longer the days of the past. Police Departments have significant responsibilities in terms of the enforcement of the law and we need to ensure we provide these basic needs to ensure we minimize risk and potential liabilities to our town. One of those elements of meeting the needs is to provide the department with appropriate facilities and I am not talking about the second floor of the library.

In terms of consultants' reports, the view was that we needed a facility that was in the cost range of \$6.8 to \$10M depending on what options you include. It also took into consideration future growth of our police force. Council reviewed these reports and felt that this was not a realistic or affordable option.

As a result, we established what we felt was an affordable cost for a facility that would still meet the needs of the police force. The value was \$3M which includes the proceeds from the insurance claim from the fire of approximately \$550K. The balance of the costs would be finance through various means, but primarily through Municipal Finance Corporation.

In terms of location, we initially considered the old town hall as the site for the police station, hoping that we could salvage the building with minor changes to accommodate the needs of the police force. After review of the proposals received, it seemed obvious that the building would need to be demolished in order to construct the required facility. It was the view of council that this would be a waste in terms of a facility in our downtown that still has value and a potential use

Therefore, Council ask for proposals on another site owned by the town, which we discussed today, being the old Legion Property that the town demolished for the purpose of future use in our downtown. The site has both the size and location requirements that support the downtown development strategy and police needs.

There has been concerns raised by some of the local businesses related to the loss of the parking, should the town decide to proceed with the Police Station in this location. As a result, we have asked for suggestions on how to mitigate this loss of parking from various business owners and through a public meeting process. We also studied the users of this parking lot to determine who is using it and for what purpose and took this into consideration as part of the parking mitigation plan.

The parking mitigation plan will see the addition of parking spaces being added to provide on-street parking and additional spaces created on the Town Library property. These additional spaces will be within a 5 minute walk from the current users businesses, while still providing parking for patrons of the various businesses. We believe we have addressed the parking concerns raised by some of our businesses in the downtown.

In addition to the parking issue, there is another underlining issue related to the future of the Amherst Police Force and that is the recent discussions on Regionalization. We have seen where some municipalities have been faced with the decision to dissolve due to financial circumstances and the sustainability of the municipality. While no municipality can say they are immune to this circumstance, Amherst will still require a police force that takes a proactive approach to policing our town. The issue with policing is the costs associated with it maintaining the service, however the service is mandated by the province and until the province comes up with some alternative means to provide this service, we are required to provide it, in the current model.

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With this being said, we cannot predict the future for municipalities other than to say that a police service will be required and council has been supportive of maintaining our own police force which we believe to be an excellent service overall.

We will continue to work any concerns that may arise as a result of the construction of the police force and I hope that the residents and businesses will be patient, as we construct the new facility and we will be communicating to the affected business our plans, as they take place during the construction period.

We hope that you will be proud of the new Police Facility while keeping in mind that we had to keep it affordable for our town. I am sure we will hold an open house when it is ready and if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to send a note to our CAO Greg Herrett, so he can have the appropriate staff member provide a response.

**Moved By: Councillor Terry Rhindress**  
**Seconded By: Deputy Mayor Lisa Emery**  
**To adjourn at 1:06 PM**

**Motion Carried**

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Gregory D. Herrett, CA  
Town Clerk and CAO

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Robert Small  
Mayor