



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MR# 2020035

DATE: 9 June 2020

RE: A fully electronic election may be in Amherst's future

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – There is a possibility this fall's municipal election may be the town's first ever all-electronic election.

During the June 8, 2020, committee of the whole meeting, the committee received an update on the preparations for the Oct. 17, 2020, municipal election from town staff.

In the report, staff noted holding the municipal election has been complicated by the COVID-19 state of emergency that requires social distancing and limits the number of people who can gather in one spot.

The report indicated a fully electronic election may be the only way to ensure the health and safety of voters.

The committee, noting Amherst isn't the only municipal unit dealing with the issue, directed staff to prepare a report on an all-electronic election that included any amendments that may be required to enable such an election to take place.

The committee also instructed staff to have the report prepared in time to be presented to Amherst town council's June 22, 2020, meeting.

Fluoride plebiscite

The committee directed staff to proceed with a plebiscite on the fluoridation of the town's water supply.

The committee, noting Amherst isn't the only municipal unit dealing with the issue, directed staff to prepare a report on an all-electronic election that included any amendments that may be



required to enable such an election to take place.

The committee also instructed staff to have the report prepared in time to be presented to Amherst town council's June 22, 2020, meeting.

User Fee Policy

The committee agreed to send an amendment to the town's User Fee Policy, which would correct a typo, to council's June 22 council meeting for approval. The amendment makes it clear that HST is added to the cost of ice rentals at the Amherst Stadium.

Community Support Grants

A staff recommendation to send a list of community support grants to council's June 22, 2020, for approval was approved by the committee. The list of recipients will be released following council's approval.

Burning Bylaw

The committee directed staff to prepare a report on the town's Burning Bylaw, which has not been updated since 2002, and bring any suggested amendments back to a future COW meeting for further discussion.

Tax Reduction Policy

A staff recommendation to send an amendment to the Town of Amherst's Tax Reduction Policy to the June 22, 2020, council session for approval was approved by the committee.

The amendment would see the threshold for a household to qualify for a reduction in taxes be set at less than \$28,000 in income for the 2020-21 fiscal year and ensure the amount was reviewed each year.

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Direct Inquiries to:
Tom McCoag,
Corporate Communications Officer
902-694-6265
tmccoag@amherst.ca

