



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MR# 2020072

DATE: 16 October 2020

RE: Town of Amherst, police union reach new five-year agreement

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – The Town of Amherst and its unionized police force have agreed to a new five-year collective agreement.

Amherst's police officers, members of Atlantic Police Association Local 104, have been working without a contract since March 31, 2019, when the last collective agreement expired.

The new agreement, which was negotiated locally, features much more flexibility in scheduling for significant events and training, a change in the way overtime is calculated that is anticipated to result in some savings and a change in top-up provisions for officers on Workers' Compensation benefits. The financial impact of these changes is expected to be net neutral, but they position the department to be better able to respond to peaks in demands for service.

The introduction of a corporal's rank will result in a net cost saving by reducing acting pay when platoon sergeants are not on shift.



The Town of Amherst and its unionized police force have negotiated a new five-year collective agreement.



The parties have agreed to remove the staff sergeant position from the union, on the retirement of the current staff sergeant, and replace it with a non-union inspector position. This change is expected to be cost neutral in the short term, but will result in significant saving in overtime costs once implemented.

The new agreement expires March 31, 2024. It includes wage increases of 2.5% in each of the five years, costing an average of just over \$60,000 more each year. This positions Amherst police salaries firmly in the mid-range of comparator municipal police departments like Truro, Bridgewater and New Glasgow.

All costs relating to the 2019-20 fiscal year have been accrued and were reflected in the town's most recent audited financial statements. An allowance sufficient to absorb the additional costs for the current year was included in the current fiscal year budget.

This is the first time in recent memory that an agreement has been reached between the town and its unionized police officers without one of the parties submitting the process to costly binding arbitration.

A recent policing review, resulting in a council commitment to municipal policing instead of seeking proposals from the RCMP, contributed to a much improved labour-management working relationship and resulted in productive, constructive discussions at the bargaining table, concluding in a negotiated agreement.

-30-

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

