



Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting

Place: Council Chambers, Zoom, streamed live to Facebook
Date: Wednesday, May 22, 2024
Presiding Officer: Mayor Greg Henley
Councillors Present: Carla Black, Paul Jones, Deputy Mayor Arnold
MacDonald, Brenton Colborne, and Chrystal McNutt
Councillors Regrets: Olivia Canning

A quorum was present throughout the meeting.

Staff in attendance: Linda Cloney – CAO, and Stan McDougall - Admin Assistant (recording secretary).

Media in attendance: Mark Rushton, SixRivers News, Radio, and TV via Zoom.

Gallery in attendance: *Nil*

Announcements Made Before Call to Order

Prior to the call to order, Mayor Henley announced that all Councillors and staff are wearing a pin to raise awareness for Access Awareness Week - May 26, 2024, to June 1, 2024. Access Awareness Week provides an opportunity to raise awareness and engage Nova Scotians on issues around access and inclusion. Inclusive activity isn't just about eliminating physical barriers. It's about challenging social attitudes.

Mayor Henley also announced that the agenda for the May 22, 2024, Council meeting was revised and updated before tonight's proceedings.

1. Call to Order – Welcome

At 6:00 PM, Mayor Henley called the meeting to order.

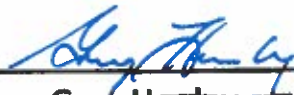
2. Approval of Agenda, pages 1 – 2

Moved by Councillor Black and seconded by Councillor Jones that the agenda of the Regular Council Meeting for May 22, 2024, be approved, as presented.

Motion Carried

**3. Approval of Minutes – April 24, 2024 – Regular Council Meeting – pages 3 - 8
May 8, 2024 – Special Council Meeting - pages 9 – 13**

Approved by



Mayor Greg Henley, on May 22, 2024

4. Business

4.1 Transfer Site Regulations – Approval Requirements - Verbal Report

Linda Cloney discussed with the Council that staff have been working on a request from Nova Scotia Environment and Climate Change made in February of 2024 regarding the contingency and operation plan for the Oxford Transfer Station. This was initiated following a provincial review of emergency preparedness by Nova Scotia Environment and Climate Change. Some of the required documentation needs locating as there has been a turnover of staff since the approval was made. These documents requirements are for a safe, compliant, and efficient operation of the Oxford Transfer Station.

4.2 Bylaw #05-2024 - Alternative Voting Bylaw – first reading - pages 14 – 21

Linda Cloney presented a request for the first reading of the Alternative Voting Bylaw. A review of the current Alternative Voting Bylaw was recommended. The current Bylaw was sent in for review to the legal department, and some changes were recommended. A list of these changes was discussed with the Council and was included in the agenda package.

Rather than amending the current bylaw, it was recommended to repeal and replace the current Alternative Voting Bylaw.

Moved by Councillor Jones and seconded by Deputy Mayor MacDonald to give first reading to Bylaw #05-2024, Alternative Voting Bylaw.

Motion Carried

4.3 Request for Decision – Municipal Election – Alternative Voting Options and Schedule of Fees and Expenses - Verbal Report

Linda Cloney discussed with the Council that for the last few elections, the Town has gone with a fully electronic voting model. The Council was asked to approve an electronic voting model for 2024 and to approve the schedule of fees and expenses as presented. Advantages and disadvantages were discussed with the Council for the electronic and paper voting models and the schedule of fees and expenses were presented for both options and included in the agenda package.

Council had the choice of adopting three models: a paper ballot-only model, a hybrid paper ballot model combined with an electronic voting option, or an electronic voting model only.

Costs for the 2024 Election year for the electronic voting option were presented at \$10,694.85. The paper ballot model for the 2024 Election year was presented at \$6,557.30 with a difference in fees of \$4,137.55.

Moved by Councillor McNutt and seconded by Councillor Black to adopt a fully electronic voting method for the 2024 Council and School Board Election year.

Motion Defeated

Councillor McNutt- Yes

Mayor Henley – Yes

Councillor Black – No

Councillor Jones – No

Deputy Mayor – No

MacDonald – No

Councillor Colborne - No

Abstentions: Nil

Moved by Councillor Jones and seconded by Deputy Mayor MacDonald to adopt the fully paper ballot voting method for the 2024 Council and School Board Election year.

Motion Carried

Councillor Black – Yes

Councillor Jones – Yes

Deputy Mayor MacDonald – Yes

Councillor Colborne - Yes

Councillor McNutt – No

Mayor Henley – No

Abstentions: Nil

Moved by Deputy Mayor MacDonald and seconded by Councillor Black to approve the schedule of fees for the 2024 Council and School Board Election for the fully paper ballot voting method in the estimated amount of \$6,557.30 as presented.

Motion Carried

4.4 Road Trails Designation Bylaw 02-2024 – first reading - Pages 22 – 23

Linda Cloney presented a request for the first reading of the Roads Trails Designation Bylaw 02-2024. The proposed bylaw would make a portion of Main Street, Lower Main Street, and Water Street a designated road trail. Under the Road Trails Act, section 5.2, municipal councils have the right to designate a highway or portion of a highway that is not a road owned by the crown. The purpose, benefits, and potential drawbacks of enacting this bylaw were discussed with the Council as presented in the agenda package.

When the Provincial Road Trails Act came into effect in the spring of 2023, Oxford Town Council designated a committee to review this as an option for the Town of Oxford. The Roads Trails Act Committee met with various experts and held a public information session. The Roads Trails Act Committee recommends that the Council adopt this bylaw. The second reading of the bylaw would not be voted on until the next Regular Council Meeting.

The estimated costs to install signage is \$4,000. This amount has already been allocated for and was passed in the 2024/25 General Operating Budget.

Linda Cloney, CAO also recommends Council consider the Road Trails Designation Bylaw 02-2024. The bylaw can be amended in the future.

Moved by Councillor Jones and seconded by Councillor McNutt to give the first reading of the proposed Road Trails Designation Bylaw 02-2024 under the Road Trails Act which would make a portion of Main Street, Lower Main Street, and Water Streets a designated road trail.

Motion Carried

4.5 Status Update – Public Hearing regarding transferring of properties to Oxford Seniors Club - Verbal Report

Linda Cloney reviewed with the Council that a notice of consideration and public hearing for the transfer of properties to the Oxford Seniors Club has been posted on our website and on social media and that at the next Committee of the Whole meeting a Special Council Meeting will be held to allow for a public hearing for the consideration for or against, the transfer of property to the Oxford Seniors Club before a decision can be made by the Council. The information in the notice to the public provides all the details of the proposed transfer of property.

5. Correspondence

5.1 May 3, 2024 – Amanda Purdy, Social Enterprises – Request for Accessible Parking Space. page 24

Linda Cloney reviewed a letter of request from Amanda Purdy, Manager of Social Enterprises at the Oxford Sunset Community with the Council. The letter requests the provision of an accessible parking space on the Water Street side of the Sunset Community location.

The Public Works Supervisor has provided an approximate cost of \$600 including labour to install signage and paint out the accessible parking spot.

Moved by Deputy Mayor MacDonald and seconded by Councillor Black to approve the request by Amanda Purdy, Manager of Social Enterprises at the Oxford Sunset Community for an accessible parking space on the Water Street side of the Sunset Community location.

Motion Carried

Councillor Colborne inquired if the parking space at the Water Street location was to be entirely accessible or just painted as accessible parking. Linda Cloney reviewed that the letter indicated only a larger accessible painted parking space.

Direction by the Council to staff to investigate all locations of accessible parking spaces to ensure the accessible parking is not in undesirable locations.

5.2 May 10, 2024 – Cumberland Chamber of Commerce – the idea of hosting an all-candidates meeting before the fall’s municipal election. *page 25*

Linda Cloney reviewed with the Council an email from the Cumberland Chamber of Commerce inquiring about hosting an all-candidates meeting for the Town of Oxford before this fall’s municipal election. If it were an interest, an appropriate time for this event would need to be discussed. The Council was asked to provide direction on how to reply.

The meeting could be held at the Fire Hall as a potential location, allowing for a meet-and-greet between potential Councillors and the public. The All-Candidates meeting would be held after Nomination Day ensuring that all potential candidates are official.

Direction was given by the Council that the Town of Oxford would be interested in an All-Candidates meeting to occur after Nomination Day in mid-September 2024.

5.3 May 10, 2024 – Honourable John A. Lohr – Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing – Financial Measures Act received Royal Assent in the Nova Scotia Legislature - *pages 26 – 31*

Linda Cloney discussed a letter from Honourable John A. Lohr, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, included in the package. The Financial Measures Act has received Royal Assent in the Nova Scotia Legislature. One of the highlights in the letter, saving the Town of Oxford in advertising costs provisions the authority to post on municipal websites as an alternative method of notice. This applies to public hearings for the sale, or lease of municipal property, tax sale advertisements, and adoption of bylaws.

The MGA has already been revised with these changes. Municipal Election notices and posting are not covered in the changes and still require posting to paper.

5.4 May 16, 2024 – Nicolas A Barr – Director, Governance & Advisory Services from NS Department of Municipal Affairs – Large increase in fine for illegal burning during wildfire season, Pages 32 – 33

Linda Cloney discussed with the Council that on May 16, 2024, the Town of Oxford received notification of two key changes related to the provincial burn restrictions during wildfire season which also take effect May 16, 2024.

From March 15 to October 15 each year, daily burn restrictions are in place to help prevent wildfires. Under these restrictions, burning is not permitted between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. Each day at 2 p.m. however, the *BurnSafe* map is updated to show the daily burn restrictions for the province. People can also call 1-855-564-2876 (BURN) for this information.

The province announced that the fine for violating the daily burn restrictions has been increased to \$25,000 for this wildfire season. The fine amounts are set in the Summary Offence Ticket Regulations. The \$25,000 fine also includes HST and a victim surcharge, bringing the total to \$28,872.50.

6. In-Camera

6.1 acquisition, sale, lease, and security of municipal property

Before moving to in-camera, Linda Cloney reviewed with the Council that the Oxford Transfer Station summer hours are now in effect. Starting Thursday May 23, 2024, the Transfer Station would be open from

11:00 AM to 7:00 PM and regular hours of 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM on Fridays and Saturdays.

At 6:50 PM it was moved by Councillor Colborne and seconded by Councillor Jones to go in-camera to discuss the acquisition, sale, lease, and security of municipal property.

Motion Carried

At 7:07 PM it was moved by Councillor Jones and seconded by Councillor Colborne to come out of in-camera and resume the Regular Council Meeting.

Motion Carried

Moved by Councillor Jones and seconded by Councillor Colborne to change the June 26, 2024, Council Meeting date to June 27, 2024, due to it being graduation night in the Town of Oxford.

Motion Carried

7. Adjournment

Prior to the adjournment of the meeting, Mayor Henley announced that there is a public lecture to be held at the Oxford Seniors Club Wednesday, May 29th at 6:30 PM on the *Autonomous School Board* by Dick Henley.

The meeting adjourned at 7:09 PM



Mayor Greg Henley, Chair



Stan McDougall, Admin Assistant

2024-06-27

Date Approved