



**Council Minutes
Council Chambers
March 25, 2025**

- 1. IN ATTENDANCE:** Warden Linda Gregory, Deputy Warden Matthew Ross, Councillor Joan Ross, Councillor George Manzer, and Councillor Peter Scherer

STAFF PRESENT: Tyler Pulley, CAO, Cora Lee Ross, Director of Finance, and Taylor Robinson, Executive Assistant, who took the minutes of the meeting.

ALSO PRESENT: Hugh MacKay, Rural Communities Foundation and Nancy Whalley, the Digby Area Community Navigator to provide presentations to Council, as well as three members of the public

REGRETS: None

CALL TO ORDER: Warden Gregory called the March 25, 2025 Council meeting of the Municipality of the District of Digby to order at 5:00pm.

PAUSE TO SEEK GUIDANCE: Warden Gregory welcomed everyone and asked to pause to seek guidance.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROCEDURAL ISSUES

2.1 Approval of Agenda-Additions/Deletions

MOTION #C2025-03-25-01

It was regularly moved and seconded that the agenda for March 25, 2025 be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

2.2 Delegations/Presentations:

MOTION #C2025-03-25-02

It was regularly moved and seconded that Hugh MacKay from Rural Communities Foundation, come before Council to present.

MOTION CARRIED

Mr. MacKay introduced himself to Council and shared that the Rural Communities Foundation is a community-based organization that has supported rural Nova Scotia through convening, fund development, and granting for over 20 years. He went over some of their current projects such as the Ukrainian Nova Scotia Resettlement Fund, the Joan Feynman Climate Change Fund, Housing for Health, Soaring Eagle Fine Arts Grants, Community Impact Conferences and most recently the Dave Gunning Zero Hunger Fund. The Dave Gunning Zero Hunger Fund is aimed at supporting 'Free Stores' in rural Nova Scotia schools which provide food for students to take home for their families who are struggling to provide adequate nutrition. In December 2024, the organization distributed \$100,000 in grants to 36 Free Stores in schools across Nova Scotia, including two in Digby County (Islands Consolidated & Weymouth Consolidated), which each school received \$3,500. Their 2025 goal is to raise \$200,000 which is why they are applying for funding through the Community Grants Program. It was noted that any funds that are donated by the Municipality of Digby will go towards schools within the district as long as they apply for the program. It was also asked that Council provide individual and corporate awareness/support for the campaign. Council asked various questions and thanked Mr. MacKay for the informative presentation.

Hugh MacKay and one member of the public left Council Chambers at 5:19pm.

MOTION #C2025-03-25-03

It was regularly moved and seconded that Nancy Whalley, the Digby Area Community Navigator, come before Council to present.

MOTION CARRIED

Mrs. Whalley provided a detailed description of all the work she has done since being hired as the Digby Area Community Navigator in November 2022. She has applied for the Office of Healthcare Professionals Recruitment Community Fund for the past three years; a big portion of this year's community fund ask was for a healthcare anti-racism campaign. She described that she has organized many networking and social events, presentations, established valuable connections, and has attended various recruitment trips, conferences, and job fairs. The Digby Health Foundation has acquired a second apartment which has assisted in accommodating locum physicians & NPs, and medical students. Overall, they have welcomed and helped settle 7 doctors, 2 nurse practitioners and several other healthcare professionals. Mrs. Whalley and Dr. McCormick are scheduled to attend ICEM 2025 (International Conference of Emergency Medicine) in Montreal in May and will continue to work with Kim Charles, Site Lead/Health Services Manager at Digby General Hospital on recruiting and settling nurses in the area. Council commended Mrs. Whalley on all the fantastic work she has done for healthcare in our community.

Nancy Whalley and two members of the public left Council Chambers at 5:38pm.

2.3 Approval of Minutes: Council February 25, 2025

MOTION #C2025-03-25-04

It was regularly moved and seconded that the minutes from February 25, 2025 be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

2.4 CAO Report

a) Meeting Reminders

Warden Gregory went over the meeting dates/reminders.

b) Action Items from Previous Meetings

All action items have been addressed to date.

c) Update on Capital Projects 2024-2025

Council reviewed the update on the capital projects.

d) Financial Report

i) Income & Expense Reports

The February 2025 Income & Expense reports were circulated.

MOTION #C2025-03-25-05

It was regularly moved and seconded that the February Income & Expense report be approved as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

3. STANDING COMMITTEE ITEMS

By-Law & Policy Recommendations

1) Digby Fire Services Inventory Report

MOTION #C2025-03-25-06

It was regularly moved and seconded that Council accept the Digby Fire Services Inventory Report.

MOTION CARRIED

- 2) Fire Services Coordinator Extension
MOTION #C2025-03-25-07
It was regularly moved and seconded that Council extend Bruce Snell's role as Fire Services Coordinator for one more year until March 31, 2026.
MOTION CARRIED

- 3) Low Income Tax Exemption Amounts and Income Levels
MOTION #C2025-03-25-08
It was regularly moved and seconded that Council increase the 2025- 26 Low Income Tax Exemption "income level" by \$1000.00 per category.
MOTION CARRIED

- 4) Kings Transit Budget
MOTION #C2025-03-25-09
It was regularly moved and seconded that Council approve the Kings Transit Budget of \$424,907 with the deficit of \$21,918.
MOTION CARRIED

- 5) IT Contract
MOTION #C2025-03-25-10
It was regularly moved and seconded that Council approve the IT Contract with NCR Networks Incorporated as presented.
MOTION CARRIED

- 6) Anti-Racism and Equity Draft Plan
MOTION #C2025-03-25-11
It was regularly moved and seconded that Council approve the Municipality of Digby Equity & Anti-Racism Plan as presented.
MOTION CARRIED

- 7) Letter of Support – Smith's Cove Fire Department
MOTION #C2025-03-25-12
It was regularly moved and seconded that Council write a letter of support for the Smith's Cove Fire Department in their efforts to obtain funding from the Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund.
MOTION CARRIED

- 8) 3rd Annual Ukrainian Easter Event Funding
MOTION #C2025-03-25-13
It was regularly moved and seconded that Council spend up to \$100 on refreshments for the 3rd Annual Ukrainian Easter Event.
MOTION CARRIED

- 9) Letter to Bell Regarding Fibre Op Box at Plympton Fire Department
MOTION #C2025-03-25-14
It was regularly moved and seconded that Council write a letter to Bell National Incident Centre to express concerns for the location of the Fibre Op Box at the Plympton Fire Department (7208 Highway #101) that impacts the road view and safety of those driving.
MOTION CARRIED

- 10) DARC Letter of Support
MOTION #C2025-03-25-15
It was regularly moved and seconded that Council write a letter to support DARC's application to co-host the 2026 Hiking Summit in Digby.
MOTION CARRIED

11) 2025-26 Salary Scales

MOTION #C2025-03-25-16

It was regularly moved and seconded that Council approve the salary scales for 2025-26 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

Committee of the Whole Recommendations

12) Provincial Road Winter Maintenance Standards

MOTION #C2025-03-25-17

It was regularly moved and seconded that Council write a letter to the Honourable Fred Tilley, Minister of the Department of Public Works and copy Jill Balser, MLA for Digby-Annapolis, indicating safety concerns for the winter maintenance standards.

MOTION CARRIED

13) Bowl for Kids' Sake Event – Team Registration

MOTION #C2025-03-25-18

It was regularly moved and seconded that Council register up to two teams in the amount of \$1,000 (\$500 per team) for the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Annapolis 2025 Bowl for Kids' Sake Event.

MOTION CARRIED

4. BUSINESS ITEMS

4.1 Capital Budget Approval

CAO Pulley and Cora Lee Ross, Director of Finance, went over the recent changes to the capital budget which were primarily in Year 1 and Year 2. After reviewing the variations, Council agreed to approve the 2025-26 capital budget.

MOTION #C2025-03-25-19

It was regularly moved and seconded that Council approved the 2025-26 Capital Budget as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

4.2 Fire Service Registration Policy

CAO Pulley explained that fire departments are required to register with their municipality which is why this policy has been created. It was noted that Bruce Snell, the Fire Services Coordinator will communicate with all 11 departments to ensure they are all registered.

MOTION #C2025-03-25-20

It was regularly moved and seconded to approve first reading of the Fire and Emergency Service Providers Registration (Policy No. LEG-4000-09) as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

4.3 Solid Waste Collection Contract

CAO Pulley explained that the Request for Tenders for the Collection and Transportation of Solid Waste (for the period from April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2030) closed on March 18, 2025. The Municipality of Digby received one tender from Digby Salvage and Disposal in the amount of \$3,730,658.58. It was recommended by staff that the Solid Waste Collection Contract be awarded to Digby Salvage and Disposal.

MOTION #C2025-03-25-21

It was regularly moved and seconded that the Solid Waste Collection Contract be awarded to Digby Salvage and Disposal for the amount of the five-year bid of \$3,730,658.58 plus HST.

MOTION CARRIED

4.4 Electric City Grant Roll-Over Request

MOTION #C2025-03-25-22

It was regularly moved and seconded that Council agree to move \$10,000 of community grant funds into a reserve and bring it forward for the 2025-26 fiscal year for the Electric City.

MOTION CARRIED

4.5 Marketing Levy Funds

Cora Lee Ross, Director of Finance, provided a brief history of the Digby Marketing and Promotions Levy By-Law and explained why the Municipality of Digby should forward all funds collected to the Town of Digby to be held in a Marketing Levy reserve. The Town of Digby has administered all funding disbursements requested by the Marketing and Promotions Levy Advisory Committee (MPLAC) and with the timing of funds transfers, the reserve can be underfunded. It is recommended by staff in consultation with Grant Thorton to improve the processes for handling these funds. It is recommended that as the requests are received from the MPLAC, the funds will be available for the Town of Digby to fund the request which will avoid the reserve being under funded.

MOTION #C2025-03-25-23

It was regularly moved and seconded that Council agree to forward all Marketing Levy funds collected by the Municipality to the Town of Digby to be held in a reserve to fund the requests of the MPLAC.

MOTION CARRIED

4.6 Write Off Request AAN#01807323

MOTION #C2025-03-25-24

It was regularly moved and seconded that \$42.55 be written off for customer code FROSE005 (AAN#01807323).

MOTION CARRIED

4.7 Write Off Request AAN#06170188

MOTION #C2025-03-25-25

It was regularly moved and seconded that \$75.27 be written off for customer code REWSD001 (AAN#06170188).

MOTION CARRIED

4.8 Westport Recreation Auxiliary Letter of Support

MOTION #C2025-03-25-26

It was regularly moved and seconded that Council send a letter of support for the Westport Recreation Auxiliary's multipurpose court project.

MOTION CARRIED

5. INFORMATION ITEMS

5.1 Correspondence

- a) Minister Tilley's Response Re: Lack of Adequate Funding
Deputy Warden Ross shared his disappointment in Minister Tilley's response, as this area is so far behind on road projects.
- b) Letter from Minister Lohr Re: Wind Turbine Setbacks
CAO Pulley noted that this matter will be going to the Planning Advisory Committee to discuss as the Municipality of Digby will have to make changes to the MPS and LUB for these setbacks.
- c) Aquaculture North America March/April 2025
Reviewed and noted.
- d) Letter to Mayors and Wardens Code of Conduct
Reviewed and noted.

5.2 Councillor District Activity Report

Deputy Warden Ross gave an update to Council on various district activities such as attending Danny Harvieux's retirement party and DARC's facility walkthrough with CIMCO Refrigeration. He also helped the Frugal Moms Society give out meals, met with MP Chris D'Entremont to discuss issues and funding opportunities, and spoken to many residents regarding road conditions, and concerns with the early rink closure.

Councillor Ross gave an update to Council on various district activities such as attending the Bear River & Area Health Clinic's Open House and Senior Day, the Climate Capacity Summit in Dartmouth, weekly community coffee in Smith's Cove, the community breakfast at Bear River Fire Department, met with MP Chris D'Entremont, met with the Smith's Cove Fire Chief to discuss support for the Sustainable Community Challenge Fund, and served at the Bear River Community Kitchen.

She also attended a public meeting with staff from the Nova Scotia Power at the Digby NSCC where they discussed extended outages in Jordantown and Acaciaville. It was noted that there was a lot of open conversations, as the biggest issues are number of outages extended over a period of days. Nova Scotia Power agreed to look into the issues but suggested for those who are at risk – to sign up for the critical care list to be moved up on priority list.

Councillor Manzer gave an update to Council on various district activities such as attending an informal meeting with MLA Jill Balser, a meeting with MP Chris d'Entremont, assisted the Art Bank Jury in purchasing four pieces of art, helped seniors apply for the heating rebate and housing grants, and speaking with many residents regarding road concerns.

Councillor Scherer gave an update to Council on various district activities such as attending a meeting with MLA Jill Balser, the Healthcare on the Islands stakeholder monthly phone call, a meeting with Tiverton Village Commission, a community potluck in Westport, a meeting to discuss tidal project in Tiverton (will keep Council updated), and has had miscellaneous calls regarding property assessments and natural resources.

He has also had some conversations with residents regarding septic systems and working with the Westport Auxiliary Recreation on their multipurpose court project.

Warden Gregory gave an update to Council on various district activities such as attending the community breakfast at Bear River Fire Department, Danny Harvieux's retirement party, the Digby Care 25 meeting, Divert NS Summit, picked up food from Frugal Moms Society to drop off to families, a meeting with Jill Balser, a meeting with MP Chris d'Entremont, and has had various calls with residents regarding roads, personal issues, etc.

MOTION #C2025-03-25-27

It was regularly moved and seconded that Council move into in-camera at 6:23pm to discuss personnel and contractual item.

MOTION CARRIED

6. IN CAMERA ITEMS:

- 6.1 Personnel
- 6.2 Contractual

Council resumed regular session at 6:46pm.

MOTION #C2025-03-25-28

It was regularly moved and seconded that Council appoint Jonathan Wilson to the Heritage Advisory Committee for a two-year term.

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION #C2025-03-25-29

It was regularly moved and seconded that Council appoint Christian Thibaudeau and Christopher Tidd to the Joint RCMP Advisory Committee for a two-year term.

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION #C2025-03-25-30

It was regularly moved and seconded that Council appoint Vincent Giles to the Planning Advisory Committee for a two-year term.

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION #C2025-03-25-31

It was regularly moved and seconded that Council approve the contract with Seamark Renewable Energy Incorporated as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

7. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION #C2025-03-25-32

It was regularly moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned at 6:49pm.

MOTION CARRIED

Warden Gregory

Tyler Pulley, Chief Administrative Officer