



Town of Shelburne
Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting
October 7th, 2024
APPROVED

Council Members Present

Mayor Harold Locke
Deputy Mayor Sheldon Ringer
Councillor Elizabeth Acker

Staff Present

Chief Administrator Officer, Sarah Mattatall
Executive Coordinator, Jill Webb

Regrets

Councillor Ben Nickerson
Councillor Rick Davis

Call to Order

Mayor Locke called the Council meeting to order at 6pm.

The Town of Shelburne is located on the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq, (Mi'kma'ki), in the District of Kespukwitk, home to Acadia First Nation. We are all Treaty people.

We also acknowledge the history, contributions, and legacies of the African Nova Scotian people and communities.

Approval of the Agenda

THAT Council approves the agenda for October 7th, 2024, Council meeting with the addition of Source Water Protection minutes under Committee Reports Item b).

Acker-Ringer

CARRIED

Approval of the Minutes

THAT Council approves the minutes from the regular Town Council Meeting held on September 16th, 2024.

Ringer-Acker

CARRIED

Proclamations and Announcements:

a) World Mental Health Day – October 10th, 2024

Mayor Locke Read: World Mental Health Day, observed on October 10th, serves as an opportunity to raise awareness about mental health issues and promote efforts that support mental well-being. This

year's theme, "It's Time to Prioritise Mental Health in the Workplace." As work is a central part of our lives, promoting mental well-being at work is vital for both employees and organizations. Workplaces that prioritize mental health foster a positive environment, improve productivity, and help reduce stress and burnout. Simple steps like promoting open dialogue, providing access to mental health resources, and encouraging work-life balance can make a significant difference. Let's take this day as a reminder to advocate for mental health at work and build healthier, more supportive workplaces for everyone.

b) Fire Prevention Week – October 6th – October 12th, 2024

Councillor Ringer Read: It's Fire Prevention Week from October 6th to 12th, 2024. This year's theme, "Smoke alarms: Make them work for you!", emphasizes the crucial role smoke alarms play in keeping you and your family safe from fires.

Smoke alarms are your first line of defense in case of a fire, and ensuring they work properly can mean the difference between life and tragedy. Here are some important steps to make sure your smoke alarms are fully operational:

1. Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of your home, including the basement.
2. Test your smoke alarms monthly.
3. Replace batteries at least once a year, or when the alarm chirps, indicating that the battery is low.
4. Replace all smoke alarms every 10 years, even if they seem to be working fine. Over time, their sensors become less effective.
5. Create and practice a home fire escape plan, so everyone knows what to do when a smoke alarm goes off. Every second counts in a fire!

Let's all take this week to check our smoke alarms and ensure they're ready to protect our homes and loved ones.

Councillor Ringer added to get your chimneys checked as well!

c) Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Day – October 15th, 2024

Councillor Acker Read: October 15th marks Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Day, a day dedicated to raising awareness, offering support, and remembering the families affected by the loss of a baby during pregnancy or shortly after birth. This day serves as a reminder of the profound impact such losses have on parents, families, and communities.

Miscarriage, stillbirth, and infant loss can be deeply isolating experiences, often accompanied by complex emotions of grief, guilt, and pain. By fostering open conversations, we aim to break the silence around this topic and offer much-needed support to those affected.

To all those who have experienced loss, we extend our deepest sympathies and a reminder that you are not alone. Let us come together to honor the memories of the little ones gone too soon and support each other in healing.

d) Domestic Violence Awareness Month – November

Mayor Locke Read: Domestic Violence Awareness Month, observed every November, is a time to raise awareness about domestic violence and the impact it has on individuals, families, and communities. It serves to honor survivors, remember victims, and educate the public on the importance of prevention and intervention.

Domestic violence can take many forms, including physical, emotional, psychological, and financial abuse. The month-long campaign encourages people to speak out, support those affected, and advocate for stronger protections and resources. It also highlights the role communities play in fostering safe environments, offering help through shelters, hotlines, and services aimed at breaking the cycle of abuse.

Delegations/Presentations: NONE

Correspondence

Action:

a) Letter from Ed Benham regarding maintenance on projects

Councillor Acker informed Council that Mr. Benham has recently done some work on his art project in Secret Park, demonstrating initiative and dedication to enhancing our community spaces. Councillor Acker also proposed allocating funds in the upcoming budget for the maintenance of town signage, with a specific focus on the "Welcome to Shelburne" sign at the Town entrance.

THAT Council approved maintenance in the amount of \$800.00.

Acker-Ringer

M24-262

CARRIED

b) Letter from Wolfgang Schricker regarding the Solid Waste Fee

Councillor Acker concurred with Mr. Schricker's concerns, noting that she shares these sentiments. She expressed her own surprise at the budget increases during the last review period but acknowledged that these changes are beyond the Council's control.

THAT Council direct staff to write a letter responding to Mr. Schricker's concerns.

Acker-Ringer

M24-263

CARRIED

c) Letter from THANS (Transition House Association of Nova Scotia) regarding National Shine the Light on Domestic Violence Campaign.

Mayor Locke inquired whether there is an external light outside the Town Hall that we could use. Councillor Acker was shocked of the numbers of domestic violence.

THAT Council direct staff to investigate the possibility of installing a purple light on the outside of our Town Hall building in support for the National Shine the Light on Domestic Violence Campaign and encourages other businesses to do the same.

Ringer-Acker

M24-264

CARRIED

Information:

a) Town of Shelburne Fall Newsletter 2024

b) Western Counties Regional Library Report – September 2024

This was received for information purposes only.

Council Items:

a) Shelburne Volunteer Fire Department By-law Review

Mayor Locke raised several questions during the by-law review, specifically regarding conference expenses. He inquired whether the Town is expected to cover all conference-related costs, requesting details on the quantity and associated expenses. While not opposed to the initiative, Mayor Locke emphasized the importance of managing costs.

Councillor Acker requested clarification on why Council does not receive the Fire Department's financial records. She reiterated that Council's intent is not to assume control but, given that the Fire Department operates as a Town department, she recommended adding a by-law provision to provide Council with an annual financial review.

Councillor Ringer asked whether the expenses would be covered solely by the Town or if they would fall under shared services. Councillor Acker confirmed that costs would be covered under the existing agreement.

Lastly, Mayor Locke requested clarification regarding the section indicating the removal of RCMP officers as honorary members of the Fire Department.

THAT Council direct staff to get clarification from the Shelburne Volunteer Fire Department regarding item under: Article XII – General, #6, regarding the Fire Chief attending ANY events and paid for by the Town of Shelburne as well as item under: Article XIII – Honourary Members, regarding the removal of the RCMP as Honourable Members of the Shelburne Volunteer Fire Department and request that the yearly financial report of the treasurer be submitted to the CAO and Manager of Finance as well.

Acker-Ringer

M24-265

CARRIED

Committee Reports:

a) Western Counties Regional Library Board Meeting Minutes – June 20th, 2024

b) Source Water Protection Meeting Minutes – January 24th, 2024

Councillor Acker reviewed both items, noting that the WCRL has been diligently working on policy and by-law development.

She provided an update from the Source Water Protection meeting, where members met to complete the mandated Risk Assessment. Although quorum was met, attendees agreed that all members should review the updated plan in full. Following this review, a motion was passed to conduct a vote by email. This vote is anticipated to occur before the new Council convenes, and therefore, Councillor Acker requested that it be included on the agenda for the inaugural meeting of the new Council.

Staff Reports

a) CAO Report

CAO Mattatall provided a verbal update on several key items. Firstly, she addressed the Road Trails by-law signage, noting that the mapping for sign placement is underway, with final confirmation from the Province expected by November to connect the last segment of the trail.

Secondly, she highlighted the importance of emergency management and encouraged Council and the public to utilize the Voyent Alert system. She emphasized that this service is accessible not only to cell phone users but also to those with landlines, directing residents to the Town of Shelburne website for more information.

Additionally, CAO Mattatall sought Council's input on the potential closure of Mowatt Street on Halloween

Night.

In closing, she extended her gratitude to Council on behalf of herself and Town staff for their support over the past four years and wished everyone success in the future.

b) Holiday Closure Staff Report

Mayor Locke addressed the topic first, noting that during Mayor, Warden, and CAO meetings, it was evident that our Town is among the few not yet implementing this practice, which he fully supports. Councillor Acker expressed her agreement.

CAO Mattatall referenced the report included in the meeting package, and Councillor Ringer added that this initiative would provide staff with a valuable opportunity to recharge, spend time with family, and begin the New Year with renewed energy.

THAT Council adopt the proposed holiday office closure procedure, giving staff paid leave from December 24th, 2024 to January 2nd, 2024 each year.

Ringer-Acker

M24-266

CARRIED

c) Noise By-law Amendment Staff Report

CAO Mattatall spoke to the report found in the package. She wanted to reiterate the reason we updated the noise by-law was to do with the Road Trails by-law and that this was just the date for the second reading.

THAT Council proceed with the second reading of this by-law amendment at the next Town Council meeting, November 18th, 2024.

Acker-Ringer

M24-267

CARRIED

d) Short Term Rental Report

Mayor Locke directed questions to Senior Planner Kahn, inquiring whether the rentals in question are classified as residential or commercial. Mr. Kahn clarified that they include a mix of both. Mayor Locke expressed that rentals, whether rooms or entire properties, should ideally be subject to commercial tax rates. Mr. Kahn noted that implementing this change would require an amendment to the Land Use By-law.

Councillor Acker supported the view that rentals should be taxed commercially, emphasizing fairness. Mr. Kahn agreed to further investigate the commercial assessment aspect, and he mentioned that the Town will soon have access to the province's registered short-term rental list. Councillor Ringer suggested that with this list, rentals could be taxed at the commercial rate, potentially generating additional revenue to help reduce overall commercial tax rates. Councillor Acker reiterated that a commercial rate for rentals aligns with equitable taxation practices.

THAT Council directs staff to consider regulation of short-term rentals as part of overall updates to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law.

Ringer-Acker

M24-268

CARRIED

- e) Water Treatment Plant Report
- f) Wastewater Facility Report
- g) Building Inspector Report – September

The above reports were reviewed for information only.

New Business:

Councillor Acker wanted to acknowledge the Empty Bowls fundraiser which took place this past Sunday. A new and exciting event initiated by Janet Sunberg, a local potter and resident. The funds raised will be shared between the Loyalist Food Bank and Our house. Once again, we have volunteers in our community that saw a need and stepped forward. Councillor Acker wanted to thank the local potters who donated the bowls and the restaurants who donated the soups. It was a wonderful community event. Councillor Acker also wanted to acknowledge that there is a new Pet Valu Store opening soon in the mall. Looking over the past several months, we have seen several small businesses open. We are moving forward. Many are looking forward to the opening of the new establishment at the Gosbee Sporting Site. Andrew Locke will be providing a business that will fit well with Shelburne County.

While out campaigning, Councillor Acker had many questions and concerns raised. She had compiled the list and brought to the CAO for review. She did hear one that may need action sooner than later, some residents have water issues and have been using Island Park for both showers and to get water. She asked that the CAO investigate and determine if we need to ensure that our residents can access water. She also mentioned that the Western Regional Library have developed a document on committees and gave to CAO. She feels this would be a great template for the Town of Shelburne's various boards to that new Council will have an idea of what the role of Town Committees and Boards are and which ones they should consider.

Lastly, Councillor Acker wanted to thank the Town Staff, her fellow Councillors as well as Mayor Locke for having the privilege of working with each one of them during the past four years. She is most happy with the work they did at the Council table and couldn't be happier with the dedication of the staff.

Councillor Ringer wanted to echo what Councillor Acker said as well as a lot of work that gets done around the council table, could not happen without community volunteers – thank you! Also, a thank you to Councillor Davis for his 12 years of service.

Mayor Locke said he would personally like to thank the staff – they are amazing. He said we are where we are after the last four years because of staff. A lot of development on the go, and he is looking forward to seeing it come to fruition.

Upcoming Meetings/Events

- a) Giant Pumpkin Festival and Regatta, Dock Street Area, October 12th, 2024.
- b) GRAND OPENING DATE, October 15th, 2024, 11am-1pm, New Town Hall, 162 Mowatt Street.
- c) Municipal Election, October 19th, 2024
- d) Trunk or Treat, October 31st, 2024, 5:30-7pm, Community Centre Parking Lot
- e) Next Town Council Meeting, November 6th, 2024, 6pm, Council Chambers for swearing in of new council.
- f) Business of Excellence Awards, November 7th, 2024, 6:00pm, 63 King Street, Shelburne Community Centre.

Adjournment

THAT the Regular Town Council Meeting of October 7th, 2024, be adjourned at 6:34pm.

Ringer