

**DIGBY TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
May 5th, 2025
Council Chambers**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Mike Bartlett, Chair
Deputy Mayor Paul Saulnier
Councillor Ricke Foote
Councillor William McCormick
Councillor Shane Weir

STAFF PRESENT: Tom Ossinger, Chief Administrative Officer
Leslie Brinton, Executive Assistant
Rob Hartmier, Grant Coordinator

A. CALL TO ORDER

The mayor called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

B. PUBLIC Hearings

B.1 None

C. AGENDA

C.1 Additions/Deletions
I.5 Volunteer Awards
I.6 MLA Caucus Visit

C.2 Approval

MOTION:

Moved by Councillor Weir and seconded by Councillor Foote that the agenda for May 5th, 2025 be approved as amended.

Motion Carried

D. DELEGATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

D.1 None

E. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

E.1 April 7th, 2025

The Meeting minutes were approved by consensus.

E.2 April 24, 2025, Joint Council Meeting

The Meeting minutes were approved by consensus.

F. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

F.1 None

G. REPORTS

G.1 Mayor Report

Report is submitted with the meeting package. Mayor was away from April 1st to April 7th and a thank you to Deputy Mayor Saulnier for filling in. Met with the Fire Department Chief and the CAO and had a productive meeting about improving communication and discussing the plot plan for the training facility. Public engagement sessions went well for MPS and LUB with both sessions well attended. Attended the first Fire Services Committee meeting via zoom through NSFM. DARC announcement for \$1.5 million from the province was announced publicly. DARC director did an amazing job on this grant application. Did gate work for the Vantassel Lake Run which was well attended. Attended the Ukraine Easter event which was well put on by Dianne Axent. Pre-budget open house was a success. Big thank you to staff and Councillor Foote for organizing. Some good feedback from townfolk. Joint Council Meeting was had with some good ideas, plans and policies presented. Met with MLA Balsler and had some good communication over a number of items. There was a great turn out for the Town Cleanup put on by residents and was well attended.

G.2 Chief Administrative Officer Report

Report is submitted with the meeting package. Attended a number of events and participated in a number of committees. NSRAB Thomas Road appeal dates have been set for July 14th – 18th. Deadline for any person wanting interventor status in the appeal is May 8th, 2025. The Mayor asked if we needed to advertise this date. The CAO communicated that the Town of Digby is not required to. NSARB Fundy Restaurant Appeal hearing was held on April 28th – 29th. The appellant and the Town of Digby were represented by Legal Counsel. The Office of the Fire Marshal was also represented. The first day was mostly taken up by testimony given by the appellant followed by cross examination by the Town's Legal Counsel and questions from the board representative. This was followed up by testimony given by the Respondent (Town of Digby Fire Inspector) ending day 1. The respondent being still under oath could not discuss his testimony or the case with anyone including Legal Counsel until the hearing reconvened the next day. Day two started with the cross examination of the Fire Inspector by the appellant's Legal counsel, followed by questions from the Chair of the hearing. Following this there was testimony given by the representative of the Office of the Fire Marshall followed by cross examination of the Respondent's and Appellant's Legal Counsels and the Chair of the hearing.

The next step was that the board will receive written submissions from all parties. The Chair of the board will conduct an on-site visit to the Fundy Complex which is scheduled for May 8th. She will be accompanied by legal counsel representing both the respondents and the applicants. It is likely it will July before a decision will be made by the NSRAB in this matter. Code of Conduct should have been completed by all Councillors as due date was April 30th. An Occupational Health and Safety program has been drafted and

approved by the CAO. This is compliance with the compliance Order 20053043-001 Date Order issued on March 27th, 2025. Thanks to Daniel St. Onge and the Town OH&S Committee for their hard work on completing this.

G.3 Committee of the Whole Report
Report is submitted with the meeting package.

Councillor McCormick would like the plan of the training site to be taken care of first before the Town gives the okay. The CAO communicated that the Fire Department needs to apply for a Development Agreement before any work is done so if there are any issues, they can be addressed in the Development Agreement process.

MOTION:

Moved by Councillor Foote and seconded by Councillor McCormick that the Council approves the Digby Fire Department training facility location as being located at Digby Fire Hall 163 First Avenue.

Motion Carried

MOTION:

Moved by Deputy Mayor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor McCormick that Council approves the purchase of a booth at the Digby Home and Lifestyle Expo in the amount of \$295.00 plus HST.

Motion Carried

MOTION:

Moved by Deputy Mayor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor McCormick that the Council approve the retention of an independent financial advisor to begin to investigate changing the Town of Digby's pension plan from a defined contribution pension plan to the Provincial defined benefit plan in consultation with employees.

Motion Carried

MOTION:

Moved by Deputy Mayor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor Weir that the Council approve the Town of Digby Communication Strategy as presented.

Motion Carried

MOTION:

Moved by Deputy Mayor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor Foote that the Council approves the purchase of banners for the 135th celebration in the amount of \$400.00 plus HST.

Motion Carried

MOTION:

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Councillor Weir that the Council approves the one-year term position of the Public Works Administrative Assistant – Operator.

Motion Carried

MOTION:

Moved by Deputy Mayor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor McCormick that the Council approves the Chief Administrative Officer to begin negotiations involving PID #30231179 for the Sketch 2 option that was provided.

Motion Carried

MOTION:

Moved by Councillor Foote and seconded by Deputy Mayor Saulnier that the Council approves the Chief Administrative Officer to negotiate an easement at PIC #30330534 in the amount of \$8,000.00.

Motion Carried

G.4 By-law and Policy Committee Report

The recommendations and reports are submitted with the meeting package.

MOTION:

Moved by Deputy Mayor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor McCormick that the Council approve Administrative Policy #2025-06 – Council Reports Policy.

Motion Carried

MOTION:

Moved by Deputy Mayor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor Foote that the Council approve Administrative Policy #2025-05 – Council Meetings and Proceedings.

Motion Carried

G.5 Nominating Committee Report

Report is submitted with the meeting package.

MOTION:

Moved by Deputy Mayor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor McCormick that the Council approve the appointment of Anthony Sostar to the Digby Water Commission for a term of 4 years and the appointment of Heather Burlingham to the Accessibility Advisory Committee for a term of 3 years.

Motion Carried

G.6 Joint RCMP Police Advisory Committee Report

Report is submitted with the meeting package. Councillor Weir was nominated and appointed as Vice-Chair for the board. Staff Sergeant Grant Ryland provided an update on staffing, equipment, vehicles and current crime trends with key concerns raised

including financial fraud education, speeding in school zones and increased drug enforcement efforts. A follow-up was requested on traffic study data for Shreve Street. Positive feedback was shared on Axon body cameras. Concerns were raised about youth riding bikes unsafely after school hours.

G.7 Marketing and Promotion Levy Advisory Committee Report

Report is submitted with the meeting package. Councillor Rick Foote has been elected as interim Chair and Councillor Joan Ross has been elected as interim Vice Chair. This will be reviewed once the final members of the committee have been selected. Decision was made to have all correspondence drafted by town staff and emailed to committee when necessary for approval. Otherwise, to be sent as directed through committee decisions on the committee's behalf. 2024 remittances, disbursements and account balance were presented. Requests were received from DATA and the Electric City for funding in 2025. DATA request for funding would total the entire amount that was collected in 2024 and leave no room for other organizations or reserve to build up the levy account. It was decided to request more information regarding expenditures in 2024 in the form of a financial report. In the meantime, partial funding was approved to allow interim operations. It was decided to not approve funding for an ad in American newspapers that was not applied for, discussed or approved prior to the ad being purchased. The Electric City has been requested to bring a presentation to the committee to better understand their project and request.

G.8 Digby Area Recreation Commission Report

Report is submitted with the meeting package. Digby Hall of Fame is continuing work with difficulty in deciding what should be used and sorting through all the material. 2025/2026 budget was formally approved by the board with plans now underway for repairs based on priority to ensure arena opens without delays this coming fall. Discussions started on Volunteer awards. Director of Public Works for the town has conducted a full accessibility assessment of the arena, curling club and swimming pool.

H. CORRESPONDENCE

H.1 Letter – Minister John Lohr

The letter is submitted with the meeting package. Information that the Beautification and Streetscaping grant and the Community Works Program have both been retired and that the funds from those programs have been put into the Provincial Capital Assistance Program. This increases the PCAP program limits from \$690,000 to \$1.69 million.

I. NEW BUSINESS

I.1 Gazebo at former Tide View Terrace site.

The mayor communicated that he would like to see staff move forward on getting the parking lot closed and get some diagonal parking lines printed on the old Tideview area along West Street. The CAO communicated that there needs to be a pre-design/concept done in order to moving forward on this project. The Council gave the CAO direction to move forward on pre-design/concept work be started for the project.

I.2 Request for Decision – Spending Authority and Business Continuity Budget
Request for Decision is submitted with the meeting package. Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer is to approve one-half of the Operating Budget in the amount of \$2,761,155.

MOTION:

Moved by Deputy Mayor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor McCormick that the Council approve one-half of the Operating Budget for 2024/2025 in the amount of \$2,761,155.

Motion Carried

I.3 Community Grant Request

The previous years request for financial support is submitted with the meeting package. There was a clerical error and the Grant Committee did not receive this submission. Due to the error, this request was brought forward to Council due to this error. There was a discussion had about the fact there was no other funding requests made by DALA to other funding partners as well as the expense budget that was presented in the submission. The decision was to ask staff to request the organizers to come and make a presentation to the COTW.

I.4 Digby and Area Health Services Foundation

The Request for funding is submitted with the meeting package. The mayor (as chair) has absolved himself of participating as he is a Foundation board member. The Deputy Mayor explained how the request came about from the foundation. The discussion revolved around the fact that there is no Province involvement in funding this navigator, however other municipalities get a navigator partially funded by the Provincial government. Why not Digby? The foundation covered half of the costs, with the Town of Digby covering 25% and the Municipality covering 25%. The direction from council is that the question of no Provincial funding be presented to the foundation. Councillor McCormick suggested that the discussion of this funding be had at the COTW level to better understand what the funding dollars are used for. More information is needed and Council directed the CAO to

I.5 Volunteer Awards

Addition to the agenda was added by Councillor McCormick. Councillor McCormick communicated that there was a wish for more councillors and the mayor to be present. Volunteer of the year, Yvonne Mullen, was present at tonight's Council meeting and was congratulated by Council on their award.

I.6 MLA Caucus Visit

Addition to the agenda was added by Councillor McCormick. Councillor McCormick requested that as there was discussion about contracts, that this move to in-camera.

J. IN CAMERA

J.1 Contracts

MOTION:

Moved by Deputy Mayor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor McCormick that the Council meeting be moved into In-Camera.

Motion Carried

MOTION:

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Deputy Mayor Saulnier that the Council meeting be moved out of In-Camera.

Motion Carried

K. ADJOURNMENT

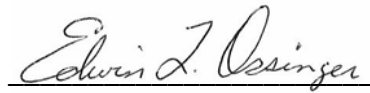
MOTION:

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Deputy Mayor Saulnier that there be no further business that the meeting be adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Motion Carried



Mayor



Clerk