

**DIGBY TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
June 3rd, 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
Rob Hartmier, Grant Coordinator

REGRETS: Leslie Brinton, Executive Assistant

A. CALL TO ORDER

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

B. Land Acknowledgement

Land Acknowledgment stated by the Chair “We would like to begin by acknowledging that we are in Mi’kma’ki (MEEG-MA-GEE), the traditional (or ancestral) territory of the Mi’kmaq people”.

“We also acknowledge that people of African descent have been in Nova Scotia for over 400 years and we honour and offer gratitude to those ancestors of African descent who came before us to this land”.

C. AGENDA

C.1 Additions/Deletions
M.2 Downtown Crosswalk
M.3 Downtown Signs

C.2 Approval

MOTION:

Moved by Deputy Mayor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor Weir that the agenda for June 3rd, 2025 be approved as amended.

Motion Carried

D. DECLARATIONS OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

D.1 None

E. DELEGATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

E.1 None

F. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

F.1 May 5th, 2025

The Meeting minutes were approved by consensus.

G. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

F.1 None

H. REPORT OF CAO

The report was submitted with the package. The CAO reported on a series of meetings and events attended from April 30 to June 3, 2025, including the NSFAM Spring Workshop, AMA Spring Conference and the FCM Annual Conference. Key meetings included discussions related to the Mount Street Manzer Development, Thomas Road Development, and the Queen Street property, as well as ongoing work with the Marketing Levy Committee, Bylaw & Policy Committee, Housing Working Group, and the Digby Water Commission. Several meetings were held with developers, legal counsel, public works, and grant coordinators, among others.

Two planning and inspection matters before the Nova Scotia Residential Assessment Board (NSRAB) were noted. In the Timothy Peck et al. Planning Appeal (Thomas Road Development), hearing dates have been set for July 14–18, 2025, and the appellants' statement of evidence has been filed and uploaded to the Council Cloud and NSRAB website. In the Fundy Restaurant Ltd. fire inspection appeal, the appellant has requested to submit new evidence outside of the initial affidavit, which may delay proceedings.

The CAO provided an update on the Intermunicipal Service Agreement discussions concerning Valley Waste and Kings Transit Authority. The funding formula currently under consideration indicates costs significantly higher than expected for the Town of Digby to participate as a partner. Due to the complexity and financial implications of the agreement, the CAO has uploaded related documents to the Council Cloud for review. He recommends Council not pursue partnership in Kings Transit Authority, citing the unaffordability of maintaining the same level of service. This matter will be discussed further during the in-camera session.

I. REPORT OF MAYOR

The report was submitted with the package. Mayor Bartlett provided a comprehensive update on recent activities and engagements. He attended the NSFAM Conference in Truro followed by a housing project announcement, a tour of new provincial housing units and a meeting with the DDA committee and the Minister of Energy. He also participated in the 100th Anniversary celebration of the Digby Hospital Auxiliary, presenting a certificate on behalf of the Town and also thanked Councillor Foote for attending. The mayor addressed concerns raised by the Anglican Church regarding the closure of the courthouse parking lot, which the church has been using for services and

events. Potential solutions have been identified and are pending cost estimates before being brought to Council. He also responded to misinformation circulating on social media, leading to a productive two-hour conversation with a resident that may result in a future development opportunity. In response to community feedback, the mayor met with a resident who sought more details following a recent public planning meeting. He provided information on the Town's Streetscape initiative and the upcoming Facade Program planned for next spring. Additionally, he addressed a separate concern from another resident regarding the condition of downtown buildings and litter. He noted an increase in similar complaints and proposed that the Planning Committee consider actionable items, such as implementing litter fines, to improve the downtown core. The mayor met with individuals interested in redeveloping the Mount Street building and is awaiting a proposal for Council review. He also discussed the lower Birch Street property with a business owner and directed staff to follow up, as the property is currently under lease. Planning efforts for the Digby 135 celebration are progressing well, with entertainment and guest confirmations underway. A grant of \$2,800 has been awarded in support of the event.

The mayor received a proposal inquiry from an artist interested in creating a Maud Lewis statue, with the proposal being presented to Council once received. A resident inquiry regarding property taxes on a Water Street property was forwarded to staff for response. The Mayor and CAO met with developers exploring potential projects in town, with updates to follow as discussions progress. He also met with the CAO to review committee updates and outstanding items.

Mayor Bartlett recognized Tide View Terrace for being selected as one of the top 30 participants in Health Excellence Canada's "Sparkling Change" award program, earning \$5,000 for their initiative to reduce inappropriate antipsychotic prescriptions in long-term care. Lastly, he continued promotional efforts for the Digby 135 event, coordinated local advertising, and confirmed AVR's participation. He concluded by attending the FCM Conference in Ottawa.

J. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

J.1 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The report was submitted with the package. Councillor McCormick spoke to the fact that the DALA has now set a date for the event. DALA did send a request to the Municipality and has not received a response. Deputy Mayor Saulnier spoke to the fact that this requested dollar amount seems to be high in relation to the other events that are funded.

MOTION:

Moved by Deputy Mayor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor McCormick that the Council approves funding of \$1,500 to the Digby Area Learning Association for Multicultural Festival through the Community Grant Funding contingent on the event taking place.

Motion Carried

J.2 BYLAW AND POLICY COMMITTEE

The report was submitted with the package. The CAO clarified that the positions expected start dates were for June 1st, 2025.

MOTION:

Moved by Deputy Mayor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor Weir that the Council approves the Administrative Assistant/Receptionist job description as presented.

Motion Carried

MOTION:

Moved by Councillor Foote and seconded by Councillor McCormick that the Council approves the Deputy CAO job description as presented.

Motion Carried

J.3 DIGBY AREA RECREATION COMMISSION

The report was submitted with the package. The DARC Board held its regular meeting, during which it voted to adopt the Anti-Racism Charter and approved the accounts payable as prepared by administrative staff. The Director provided an update highlighting recent activities and events, including attendance at the Life Saving Society AGM, the Town's Open House, and Digby Dolphins swim club events. She has also reconnected with the NHL Legends of Hockey to confirm a fall event and finalized plans for the Acadia Hockey Camp. The Director extended appreciation to Councillor McCormick and Warden Gregory for their support at the recent Volunteer Awards.

The community gardens are off to a strong start with the addition of 10 new raised beds, and a spring cleanup event saw many new gardeners participating. The Director met with CIMCO to coordinate work on the ice plant, which has begun with the removal of the old condenser unit. She also consulted with the building inspector regarding upcoming facility improvements.

Preparations for the summer pool season are ongoing, including draining, cleaning, and painting of the pool, and chemical orders have been placed. Three dressing rooms have been repainted, a new hot water tank has been installed to replace the old unit, and all upstairs offices have been repainted except for one previously completed. The ballfield and splash park washrooms are now open, and summer programming is underway. Planning is also in progress for the upcoming opening of the Digby Outdoor Recreation Centre in June.

J.4 MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS LEVY COMMITTEE

The report was submitted with the package. A meeting of the Town of Digby and Municipality of Digby Marketing and Promotion Advisory Committee was held at Digby Town Hall. Present were Interim Chair Rick Foote, Interim Vice Chair Joan Ross, Angela Turner, Evi Andreller, Tom Ossinger, Leslie Brittain, and Tyler Pulley. Hal Theriault and Stacy Doucette of The Electric City presented their project to the committee. The initiative involves developing an interpretive centre in Weymouth, with potential future tours to the Electric City site and a theatre festival featuring plays related to the Electric City and

other topics. The project anticipates employing three staff members along with volunteers, with an expected launch in spring 2026, contingent on funding from ACOA, NS Community and Heritage, and other sources. They requested \$50,000 in funding support. The committee reviewed current and anticipated levy collections, existing funding commitments, and potential future requests. It was agreed that building a reserve fund equivalent to approximately one year of levy revenue is important to maintain the committee's ability to support local tourism initiatives. A funding allocation formula was adopted for the current year: 70% toward Digby Area Tourism core funding, 20% for special projects, and 10% to build the reserve. Any unallocated funds would accrue to the reserve.

In accordance with this formula, the committee approved \$120,000 in core funding for the Digby Area Tourism Association (DATA) for fiscal year 2024–2025. Of this, \$25,000 has already been distributed for April and May, with the remaining \$95,000 to be issued in monthly installments. The committee also approved a \$10,000 contribution to The Electric City project from the special projects budget, contingent on other funding being secured. Additionally, a \$3,500 contribution was approved for the Wharf Rat Rally from the special projects fund, with the expectation that the event will move toward financial self-sufficiency.

Both Deputy Mayor Saulnier and Councillor McCormick applauded Councillor Foote on his initiative with this committee and the results that are already being seen. Councillor Foote lauded the committee itself and how solid of a committee it is.

J.5 ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The report was submitted with the package. The Accessibility Advisory Committee met on May 29th, 2025. Work continues the draft plan to meet the Provincial Government's requirements and extended deadline of July 1st. The committee has agreed to a timeline which would include public input and the final document including any significant suggestions from that input. The committee welcomed the new Town of Digby citizen member Heather Burlingham and thanked her for her willingness to participate. One thing of importance to note, due to the tight deadlines, Town Council may be asked for approval of the recommended plan that would fall between meetings. An electronic vote (with ratification to follow) may be required. Deputy Mayor Saulnier also wanted to make note that the Town Fire Hall, even though it has a ramp at the back, it is so difficult to get to. He is unsure of the solution but wanted to pass this information on.

K. CORRESPONDENCE

K.1 None

L. NOTICE OF MOTION

L.1 None

M. NEW BUSINESS

M.1 Old Tideview Site Park

This item was brought to the agenda by Mayor Bartlett. Mayor Bartlett spoke on the pictures he took. The benches in that park are very rotten. He would like to see public works to go to the park and repair the benches. The CAO spoke to the fact he is unsure where those benches came from. The CAO also communicated that there are two brand new gazebos that can be installed at this location. They are the same as the gazebos at the VIC. The mayor spoke that perhaps the park should be called the Tideview Memorial Park and that we could get some bench sponsorship within in. The mayor also questioned whether the dog park could be increased in size.

M.2 Downtown Crosswalk

This was brought forward by Councillor Weir in regard to the crosswalk near the Fairway/old VIC center. He communicated that he would like to see the crosswalk moved so that he matches up with the regular waterfront sidewalk. Councillor Foote wondered if a person could be seen on the post office side of the road. Councillor Weir talked to having the crosswalk be angled so the end of it didn't end in the parking lot of the laundry. The CAO spoke to the fact that the Traffic Authority needs to have this issue brought to them for any possible recommendations. He also communicated that if this work was going to be done, that the lighting for crosswalks needs to be added as well.

M.3 Downtown Signs

This was brought forward by Deputy Mayor Saulnier. While he appreciates the attempt to get downtown signage up, he felt that the locations could have been better situated. The CAO spoke to the fact the signs were installed there as per the Active Transportation plan. Councillor McCormick spoke to the area near the KFC and utilizing that area for more signage to the downtown.

N. IN-CAMERA

N.1 Contracts

MOTION:

Moved by Councillor Weir 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

O. BUSINESS FROM IN-CAMERA

MOTION:

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Deputy Mayor Saulnier that the Council gives direction to the CAO to communicate that the Town of Digby will be opting out of the KTA - IMSA agreement as currently being proposed.

Motion Carried

P. ADJOURNMENT

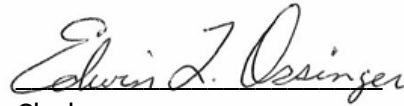
MOTION:

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

Motion Carried



Mayor



Clerk