



TOWN COUNCIL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS TOWN HALL
December 01, 2025

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

STAFF PRESENT: Tom Ossinger, Chief Administrative Officer
Leslie Brinton, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Karen Morrell, Administrative Assistant/Receptionist

REGRETS:

A. CALL TO ORDER – ROLLCALL

B. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

C. CELL PHONE USE DURING MEETINGS

D. AGENDA

D.1 Additions/Deletions

Addition: N.6 News Letter

D.2 Approval

Motion:

Moved by Deputy Mayor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor McCormick, that the agenda for December 01, 2025 be accepted as amended.

Motion Carried

E. DECLARATIONS OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

E.1 None

F. DELEGATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

F.1 None

G. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

G.1 November 03, 2025

Motion:

Councillor Foote and seconded by Councillor McCormick that the November 03, 2025 minutes be accepted as presented.

Motion carried

H. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

H.1 2nd and final reading of Emergency Management By-Law #2025-02

Motion:

Moved by Deputy Mayor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor McCormick that the 2nd and final reading of Emergency Management By-Law #2025-02 be accepted as presented.

Motion carried

I. REPORT OF CAO

The lease with Scotia Harvest Inc. was terminated due to non-responsiveness. Legal counsel is processing the removal of this lease from public records.

CMHC Housing Accelerator Fund Coordinator: The position was advertised, with the application period closing on November 21, 2025.

The proposal to acquire the Rail Trail has been submitted to the Department of Natural Resources and is under acknowledgment.

A successful 3-month performance review was conducted for the Admin. Assistant/Receptionist, with a formal evaluation planned in six months.

A Development Agreement for the Thomas Road project has been executed, awaiting legal registration.

The Director of Finance plans to retire on April 30, 2026, highlighting the need for succession planning.

HAV Coordinator Position: Seventeen applications have been received for the HAV Coordinator role, indicating a robust candidate pool.

The CAO has received the circular material contact, it has been reviewed in detail.

Motion:

Moved by Councillor Weir and seconded by Councillor McCormick that we have the CAO execute the Circular Materials Contract as presented.

Motion carried

J. REPORT OF MAYOR

Attended the NSFM conference in Halifax, where he discussed local issues with MLA Jill Balser and participated in a Remembrance Day service, honoring local youth and witnessing a flyover by 14 Wing (CFB) Greenwood.

Met with Minister of Municipal Affairs, John MacDonald, to address town concerns, followed by a visit to the Thomas Field project.

Conversation with Insite Productions about a documentary focused on the fishing industry and scallops, set to release in early spring 2027.

Engaged in additional meetings, including discussions with Tideview Terrace and planning sessions for transit and community events.

There was a discussion on the GRID representatives for Thomas Rd. was in Digby and they said that they were pleased with the project.

K. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

K.1 Compass Development-Councillor Foote

Councillor Foote visited the former Barton Consolidated School, which has been converted into apartments by Compass Homes Co-op. The visit, held on November 14, 2025, included various council members and emphasized the quality of the renovations and the housing options now available. The building now contains 8 apartments: 3 one-bedroom units, 4 two-bedroom units, and 1 accessible apartment.

Monthly rent ranges from \$650 to \$750 plus utilities. Tenants are required to join the Compass Co-op, which involves a \$5 annual membership fee and must adhere to co-op regulations.

Councillor Foote views the project positively, recognizing it as a successful initiative to meet the local housing needs. He encourages the council to remain receptive to future proposals from Compass Homes Co-op.

Councillor Foote also mentioned that Dr. Habib had a meeting with council where he had a presentation about his findings of comparably sized municipalities in regards to the solutions to a transit system for the Town of Digby.

K.2 Digby Area Recreation Commission

New board member Maria Hersey was welcomed, and discussions took place regarding new policies about Video Surveillance, Telephone Electronic Polls, and Hours of Work.

The committee approved accounts payable totaling \$238,353.68.

Staffing updates revealed the hiring of three students for the canteen.

Parking Issues: Concerns were raised about elementary school staff using facility parking. The committee decided to install signs for facility patrons and designate parking for school staff. Further discussions are planned on issuing parking passes and compliance violations.

There is a need for volunteer recruitment for the speed skating club.

Theatre Updates: Efforts are underway to secure repair quotes for the DRHS Theatre, with approximately \$14,000 allocated for necessary work. The community use of the school's agreement is also under discussion, as it has been inactive for a while.

K.3 DATA-Councillor Weir

Councillor Weir wished to thank all the volunteers for the Town of Digby's Christmas Tree Lighting Event and mentioned how wonderful it was to be a part of the Jordan Town Centre of Excellence opening ceremony.

The "60 Days of Maud". The attendance of the public to this event was disappointing however, the project received positive feedback, and there were discussions about increasing advertising prices in guidebooks with discounts for early purchases.

New marketing campaigns focusing on Ontario are launching, and there's interest in AI-driven marketing strategies and multilingual resources.

Plans for new visitor experiences were discussed, including a five-year plan titled "10 Wonders of Digby."

DATA Building: Discussions about lease considerations began.

Positive feedback was noted regarding advocacy work on ferry pricing and improvements to digital presence.

K.4 Planning Advisory Report

The Planning Advisory Committee recommend to Council that the Town enter into a development agreement with Golden View Enterprises Ltd. to permit the development of a three (3) unit residential structure at 55 Sydney Street (PID 30225874)

The Planning Advisory Committee recommend to Council that the Town enter into a development agreement with Golden View Enterprises Ltd. to permit the development of a three (3) unit residential structure at 55 Sydney Street (PID 30225874) as generally represented in the application and associated Site Plan and Building Details subject to:

- The identification and development of landscaped amenity area, including the provision of privacy features, with a minimum area of 7 sq. meters (75 sq. ft.) per dwelling unit;
- The provision of a privacy fence, a minimum of 1 .8 meters (6 ft.) tall along the western and southern property boundaries adjacent to the new construction.
- The identification and development of a design of containment area for the use of garbage, recyclable, and green bin area storage

Motion

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Deputy Mayor Saulnier that the committee reports be accepted as presented.

Motion carried

L. CORRESPONDENCE

L.1 Fancy Jewellers

Thank you, correspondence, from Fancy Jewellers for the Town’s continued and ongoing support.

L.2 St Anne University Letter of Support Request

The university is requesting a letter of support from the Town of Digby to submit with a Grant application requesting funding from the province for important renovations on their 50-year-old pool.

Motion

Moved by Councillor Weir and seconded by Councillor McCormick that the Town of Digby write a letter of support for St Anne University to accompany a Grant application requesting funding from the province for important renovations on their 50-year-old pool.

Motion Carried

L.3 Youth Summit

Invitation for council to attend the Youth Summit being held on April 24, 2026 at NSCC Burrige Campus, 372 Pleasant St, Yarmouth, NS B5A 2L2.

The summit is being held to engage youth, municipal and systems leaders in meaningful conversations and identify key community issues and needs from multiple perspectives.

They are asking for at least two councillors willing to participate and they are asking for monetary and volunteer support with snacks and lunch during the event.

L.4 Letter to all CAO’s November 25, 2025

In regards to the recent correspondence from Honourable John A MacDonald to provide additional context regarding the municipal financial data shared. It is a list of where the Town of Digby stands compared to other municipalities.

L.5 Letter to Mayors, Wardens & Chiefs November 24, 2025

In response to heavy budget discussions within the Municipal Affairs Office of Minister J. MacDonald wanted all municipalities to see the numbers that his office is using to determine Nova Scotian communities and its circumstances. They wanted every local government to see the same data sets that his office is seeing.

There is a request from the office to check these numbers and report back if there are any discrepancies.

Decisions are made based on the best possible data available.

L.6 Correspondence Reply Tracey Darrow Land Administration Officer

This is a formal notification that your request to purchase Crown lands has been received, and that the department is currently reviewing it. If it is approved the land will need to be surveyed.

L.7 Waste Check Program-Mayor Bartlett

This is the schedule for the 2026 new year's Waste check sorting guide.

M. NOTICE OF MOTION

M.1 none

N. NEW BUSINESS

N.1 By-Law-Development Officer

The Town is expanding the role of the current Bylaw Officer to include the responsibilities of a Development Officer. This adjustment aims to improve service efficiency, streamline operations, and enhance compliance with municipal regulations.

Motion

Moved by Councillor Weir and seconded by Councillor Foote that the final draft of expanding the role of the current Bylaw Officer to include the responsibilities of a Development Officer be approved as presented.

Motion Carried

N.2 Report NSFM Fall Conference-Councillor Weir

Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) Fall Conference, Opened by NSFM President David Mitchell, notable speakers like Tareq Hadhad, who talked about community resilience, and Minister MacDonald, who discussed funding for housing and infrastructure. The importance of trust and job security for firefighters was emphasized by Claudia Chender. Exhibits showcased innovative municipal services.

- Tim Tierney presented on federal budget priorities. A panel of ministers addressed local climate change and housing issues, while the NSFM Annual General Meeting covered financials and by-law updates. A discussion on Basic Income led to a motion to explore a Guaranteed Basic Income model, concluding with a banquet honoring municipal leaders.
- Focused on social media best practices and the importance of transparency in communication. A mental health workshop introduced stress management strategies. The day ended with a ceremony honoring new NSFM Board members and sponsors.

There is a need for collaboration and proactive leadership in municipal governance, stressing themes of renewable energy, housing, climate change, and social equity. We should aim at laying a strong foundation for future planning and advocacy in these areas.

N.3 Strengthening Council Communication-Councillor Weir

Councillor Weir is proposing that the Council uses their shared Outlook Calander to enter any appointments or functions that they are going to so that the council can be well informed as to who is going to a function.

Motion

Moved by Councillor Weir and seconded by Councillor Foote that we make a commitment to use the shared Outlook Calander for logging events that councillors plan to attend on behalf of the town.

Nays _____

Ayes _____

**Deputy Mayor Saulnier
Councillor Foote
Mayor Bartlett
Councillor McCormick**

Councillor Weir

Motion defeated

N.4 Digby Christmas Miracle Parade & Lighting of the Sea Tree

This event will take place December 12, 2025. It is a new community celebration and will be launched at the Digby Center (Marina). All the activities will be funded by Marine Supply and Waylon Mosher. There will be a static Parade and fireworks. The hope is that this will become a annual fixture and will work in tandem with the Town’s lighting of the Tree event.

The event has been approved but next year there will need to be more discussion on permits, traffic plans etc.

Motion

Moved by Councillor Weir and seconded by Councillor McCormick that council approves the Digby Christmas Miracle Parade & Lighting of the Sea Tree. To be held on December 12, 2025 with the parade beginning at 6:30 PM.

Motion Carried

N.5 Development Agreement 55 Sydney St (PID 30225874)

Motion:

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Deputy Mayor Saulnier recommend that Council give first reading into a development agreement with Golden View Enterprises Ltd. to permit the development of a three (3) unit residential structure at 55 Sydney Street (PID 30225874) as generally represented in the application and associated Site Plan and Building Details subject to:

- The identification and development of landscaped amenity area, including the provision of privacy features, with a minimum area of 7 sq. meters (75 sq. ft.) per dwelling unit;
- The provision of a privacy fence, a minimum of 1 .8 meters (6 ft.) tall along the western and southern property boundaries adjacent to the new construction.
- The identification and development of a design of containment area for the use of garbage, recyclable, and green bin area storage

With the Public Hearing being held on January 5, 2026.

Motion carried.

N.6 Newsletter

Deputy Mayor Saulnier talked about ideas for the Newsletter and would welcome any submissions. The suggested timeframe to submit items for the Newsletter will be for the end of December 2025.

O. IN-CAMERA

O.1 Personnel

Motion

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Deputy Mayor Saulnier that we move into In Camera for Personnel

Motion carried

Motion

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Deputy Mayor Saulnier that we move out of In Camera for Personnel

Motion carried

P. BUSINESS FROM IN-CAMERA

Q. ADJOURNMENT

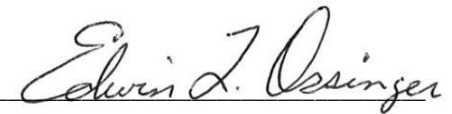
Motion:

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Deputy Mayor Saulnier that there be no further business that the meeting be adjourned at 8:32 PM.

Motion carried



Mayor



Clerk