

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Monday, April 7, 2025, at 7:00 pm

A regular monthly meeting of the Committee of the Whole of Middleton Town Council was held in person, via ZOOM and on Facebook Live on Monday, April 7, 2025.

PRESENT

Chairing the meeting, Mayor Gail Smith; Deputy Mayor Gary Marshall, Councilors Dan Smith, Bernadette Knapp, Jonathan Archibald and Sandra Fournier; Chief Administrative Officer, Ashley Crocker, and Recording Secretary, Sara Marceau

Regrets: Councillor John Bartlett

Also in attendance: Heather McCormick and Evan Fairn (left at 7:28pm)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order at 6:59pm.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

250407.01: It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda, as circulated. **Motion carried.**

3. PROCLAMATIONS

Mayor Smith read aloud the proclamation and proclaimed April 27 – May 3rd, 2025, Volunteer Week in the Town of Middleton.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes

March 3, 2025

No errors or omissions were noted, and the minutes were considered approved.

5. PRESENTATIONS

The Annapolis County Housing Association (ACHA) gave a presentation on upcoming public engagement sessions that will take place in the coming weeks. They provided an overview and a package was distributed to Council members.

Councillor Marshall asked when they anticipate breaking ground. ACHA are still working on getting everything ready, applying for grants, and fundraising. The focus is on continuing to move forward with securing funding.

Councillor Archibald inquired about the number of units and the rental rates. ACHA responded that they are unable to release that information to the public at this time and are awaiting feedback from residents during the public engagement sessions

6. ANYTHING BY CITIZENS

CAO Crocker mentioned that a citizen had sent an email expressing a desire to come in and discuss the recent robberies within the Town. However, the citizen did not attend the scheduled meeting.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1 RFD 013-2025 Increase in RCMP Officers

CAO Crocker gave a brief overview of the Increase in RCMP Officers.

Councillor Smith inquired whether the Town can afford new officers, expressing concern about the 2025-26 budget. Specifically, he is unsure whether we will be budgeting for the full increase in officer positions for that fiscal year. He emphasized the importance of not over-budgeting the cost, as he does not want to place an unnecessary tax burden on our residents.

250407.02 It was moved and seconded that Town Council approve adding 2 additional RCMP Officers to the Annapolis District RCMP, for which the Town will be responsible for 25% of the costs, totaling approximately \$115,000 for the fiscal 2025-2026 year. **Motion carried.**

250407.03 It was moved and seconded that Town Council direct the Mayor and CAO to sign and send the attached draft letter to Honourable Becky Druhan, Minister of Justice and Attorney General. **Motion carried.**

7.2 RFD 014-2025 Interim Budget

CAO Crocker provided a brief overview of the Interim Budget.

250407.04 It was moved and seconded that Town Council approve one-half of the Town General Operating Budget of 2024-2025, in the amount of \$2,194,307, for the purpose of providing spending authority in the new fiscal year 2025-2026. **Motion carried.**

250407.05 It was moved and seconded that Council approve one-half of the Water Operating Budget of 2024-2025, in the amount of \$466,389, for the purpose of providing spending authority in the new fiscal year 2025-2026. **Motion carried.**

7.3 RFD 015-2025 Veteran's Crosswalk

CAO Crocker gave a brief overview of RFD 015-2025 Veteran's Crosswalk.

There was a discussion about the ongoing maintenance of the crosswalk. A few key takeaways were:

- Will the Town be responsible for maintaining the themed crosswalk? Will it be repainted annually, and if so, who will be responsible for that work?
- Will the crosswalk painting be coordinated with any patch paving in the area? Is this section scheduled for replacement, and if so, will coordination with the Legion be required?
- If the crosswalk needs to be removed for sewer or water line replacement, will the Town be responsible for restoring the themed design afterward?
- Which specific crosswalk at 300 Main Street is being referred to?

250407.06 It was moved and seconded that Council approves the placement of a Veterans Themed Crosswalk in the Town of Middleton, with the Middleton Legion to cover the costs. **Motion carried.**

7.4 RFD 016-2025 Procurement and Purchasing Policy

CAO Crocker gave an overview of the Procurement and Purchasing Policy.

250407.07 It was moved and seconded by that Council on recommendation from the CAO, approve the draft Procurement and Purchasing Policy. **Motion carried.**

7.5 RFD 017-2025 Approval of 2025-26 Valley Waste Budget

CAO Crocker gave an overview of the 2025-26 Valley Waste Budget.

A discussion took place regarding the rising costs.

Councillor Archibald inquired about the timeline for phasing out the spring and fall clean-up programs. It was confirmed that the change will be implemented in April 2026.

250407.08 It was moved and seconded that Council approve the draft Valley Waste Operating and Capital budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. Motion carried.

8. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

8.1 Heart of the Valley Days Transition Notice

CAO Crocker provided a brief overview of the *Heart of the Valley Days* Transition Notice.

Councillor Smith: Regarding the mid-July date: is there any historical significance to the dates selected in July that Heart of the Valley Days has previously taken place on?

ACTION: CAO Crocker to direct staff to investigate whether the proposed date overlaps with any historical commemorations or events.

8.2 Dangerous and Unsightly Status Report as of March 2025

CAO Crocker gave a brief overview of the Dangerous and Unsightly Status Report for March 2025.

8.3 Community Concerns/Complaints as of March 2025

CAO Crocker provided a brief overview of the Community Concerns/Complaints received for March 2025.

Deputy Mayor Marshall noted that due to the potholes on Main Street, some drivers are now using the sidewalk. He referenced the Town of Wolfville's approach, which was brought forward by a citizen, where they tow a device that recycles shingles into asphalt and tamps it down.

ACTION: Staff to investigate the machine used at the Town of Wolfville.

8.4 2024-25 Capital Projects Update

CAO Crocker gave a brief overview of the 2024-25 Capital Project Updates.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

Three (3) notices of correspondence were distributed to Council members.

- 9.1** March 17, 2025 Letter from MABA re: Cessation of Operations
- 9.2** March 19, 2025 Letter from Department of Municipal Affairs re: Code of Conduct
- 9.3** March 28, 2025 Letter from County of Annapolis re: Recreation Grant Request.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the letter from the County of Annapolis concerning the Recreation Grant Request.

Councillor Smith suggested considering a two-tier pricing system, noting that we can't continue to bear the full cost. He also inquired about the fee charged for soccer to rent the Rotary Park field.

ACTION: Staff to investigate and ensure there is a fair pricing structure in place for use of Town facilities and parks.

Deputy Mayor Marshall stated that the Town's recreation programs are being heavily utilized by non-residents and emphasized that the Town cannot continue to subsidize county residents. He inquired whether a grant application policy is in place.

CAO Crocker responded that staff are currently working on a grant application policy for the next budget year.

10. ANYTHING BY MEMBERS

- Councillor Archibald gave a brief presentation to the Neighbourhood Watch group. He raised the topic of surveillance cameras and inquired about the Town's current approach. He also suggested that, if there are any relevant grants available, the Town should consider applying sooner rather than later.
- Councillor Smith asked whether the Town has a policy in place regarding vehicle damage caused by potholes.
 - CAO Crocker to follow up.

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- Deputy Mayor Marshall expressed concern about recent robberies occurring in broad daylight, noting that this is not reflective of our community. "We are a safe community."
- Councillor Fournier commended the Communications and Events Coordinator for their excellent work and contributions.
- Councillor Knapp raised concerns about the issue of dog feces around town and reminded residents of the importance of cleaning up after their pets.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 8:57 pm.



MAYOR



RECORDING SECRETARY