

A Special meeting of Middleton Town Council was held in-person at the Town Hall, via YouTube Live, on Monday, March 30, 2026, starting at 5:30pm.

PRESENT

Chairing the meeting, Mayor Gail Smith, Deputy Mayor Gary Marshall, Councillors John Bartlett, Bernadette Knapp (arrived at 5:38pm) Jonathan Archibald (arrived at 5:34pm) and Dan Smith; Chief Administrative Officer, Ashley Crocker; Director of Finance Leah Profitt, and Recording Secretary, Sara Marceau.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

260330.01 It was moved and seconded that Council approve the agenda as circulated.
Motion carried.

3. **NEW BUSINESS**

3.1 **RFD 022-2026 Approval of the 2026-2027 Operating Budget**

Director of Finance Profitt provided a brief overview of the 2026-2027 Operating Budget.

260330.02 It was moved and seconded that Council approve the 2026-2027 Town General Operating Budget as presented, with total expenditures of \$5,095,585.

260330.03 It was moved and seconded that Town Council estimates that the sum required for the lawful purposes of the Town for the year 2026-2027, after crediting probable revenues from all sources, other than the rates for the year, is the sum of \$5,095,585 and;

That Town Council hereby authorizes the levying and collection of a rate for the current year of \$4.300 per \$100 on the value of the property assessed in the assessment roll as Commercial property and Business Occupancy and \$1.820 per \$100 on the value of the property assessed in the assessment roll as Residential and Resource property, the rate of \$3.14 per acre for property assessed in the assessment roll as Farm Acreage, and the rate of \$3.23 per \$100 on the value of the property assessed in the assessment roll as Seasonal Tourist Businesses, and a sewer service charge of a flat fee of \$250 plus an additional rate of \$0.1512 per \$100 on the value of the property assessed in the assessment roll as taxable Residential and Commercial property on which any building is connected to the

sewage system of the Town, and a fire protection (hydrant) rate of \$0.1441 per \$100 on the value of all properties assessed in the assessment roll, these being the rates the Council deems sufficient to raise the sum to defray the expenditures of the Town for the current year and;

That the rates and taxes be due and payable the last business day of September 2026 and;

That an interest rate of 18% per annum, compounded, be charged on the 2026-2027 final tax bills still outstanding after the last business day of September 2026 and;

That a sewer usage rate of \$0.936 per one cubic meter of water consumed by tax exempt properties, which are not paying full grants in lieu of taxation, be levied in accordance with the Sewer Service Charge Bylaw for the year 2026-2027. **Motion carried.**

3.2 RFD 023-2026 Approval of the 2026-2027 Capital Budget

Director of Finance Profitt gave a brief overview of the 2026-2027 Capital Budget.

260330.04 It was moved and seconded that Council approve the 2026-2027 Capital Budget for Town General and Water in the amount of \$1,576,009 as presented. **Motion carried.**

260330.05 It was moved and seconded that Council approve the five-year Town General Capital budget for the years 2026/27, 2027/28, 2028/29, 2029/30, and 2030/31 in the amount of \$10,640,555. **Motion carried.**

260330.06 It was moved and seconded that Council approve the five-year Capital budget for the Middleton Water Utility for the years 2026/27, 2027/28, 2028/29, 2029/30 and 2030/31 in the amount of \$1,637,522. **Motion carried.**

260330.07 It was moved and seconded that Council receive the presentation of the five-year Capital Budget for years 2026-2027 to 2030-2031 in the amount of \$12,278,077, and direct staff to file the five-year Capital Investment Plan with the Province. **Motion carried.**

3.3 RFD 024-2026 Approval of Water Utility Budgets

Director of Finance Profitt gave a brief overview of the Water Utility Budgets.

260330.08 BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Town of Middleton Water Utility Operating budgets for the years 2026/27, 2027/28, and 2028/29, with planned expenditure

amounts of \$1,062,301, \$1,198,407 and \$1,222,375 respectively, and projecting no annual surpluses or deficits, be approved. **Motion carried.**

3.4 RFD 025-2026 Appointment List Update

CAO Crocker gave a brief overview of the Appointment List Update.

260330.09 It was moved and seconded that Council, on recommendation from the CAO, appoint Jo-Ann Hightower, Janet Davis and David Britney to the Town's Police Advisory Board. **Motion carried.**

CAO Crocker asked Councillors if they would be interested in serving on the Police Advisory Board.

- Mayor Smith and Councillors Archibald and Knapp expressed interest

260330.10 It was moved and seconded that Council appoint Mayor Smith, Councillor Archibald and Councillor Knapp to the Police Advisory Board. **Motion carried.**

CAO Crocker also asked Councillors who would be interested in taking over Sandra Fournier's committee assignments until a new council member joins.

- Councillor Smith will serve on the Audit Committee.
- Councillor Bartlett will serve on the Source Water Protection Advisory Committee.

260330.11 It was moved and seconded that Council approve the 2026 Appointment List, as amended. **Motion carried.**

3.5 RFD 026-2026 Award for RFP for Climate Risk Assessment

CAO Crocker gave a brief overview of RFD 026-2026 Award for RFP for Climate Risk Assessment.

260330.12 It was moved and seconded that Council award the RFP for a Climate Risk Assessment to Dewolfe & Morse Surveying Limited for an estimated amount of \$50,565 plus HST. **Motion carried.**

3.6 Participation in the Valley REN

Councillor Archibald introduced a motion for the Town to withdraw from the Valley REN.

Discussion among Council reflected mixed views. Councillor Bartlett strongly opposed the motion, expressing concern that leaving the REN would eliminate existing economic development support and leave the Town without a clear

alternative, especially as growth pressures increase from nearby CFB Greenwood. He questioned the impact, noting that while some businesses closed during the REN's involvement, others may have remained open because of it.

Councillor Smith supported the withdrawal, stating that business closures occurred while the Town was part of the REN and emphasized that opting out does not mean abandoning economic development. He suggested the Town could pursue a more locally focused approach and noted that other municipalities may be considering similar changes.

Deputy Mayor Marshall indicated he was conflicted, acknowledging the REN has done good work but questioning the value received by Middleton and the organization's long-term sustainability if membership decreases. He also raised concerns about future costs.

CAO Crocker clarified that if the Town gave notice to withdraw, and then wanted to change their mind later, re-joining would require a one-time payment under the Inter-Municipal Services Agreement.

Further discussion included the potential to create a local economic development structure, such as a board or advisory group, and the possibility of revisiting economic development initiatives with the County of Annapolis and Town of Annapolis Royal when budget allows.

260330.13 It was moved and seconded that Council authorize the Town of Middleton's withdrawal from the Valley Regional Enterprise Network (REN) effective March 31, 2028 and give 24 months' notice to the other parties, as per Section 38 of the Inter-Municipal Service Agreement dated May 5, 2023. **Motion carried.** Councillor Bartlett voted against the motion.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 6:16pm.

Mayor

Recording Secretary