A regular monthly meeting of Middleton Town Council was held in-person at the Town Hall, via YouTube Live, on Monday, June 15, 2026, starting at 6:30pm.

PRESENT

Chairing the meeting, Mayor Gail Smith; Deputy Mayor Gary Marshall, Councillors John Bartlett, Bernadette Knapp, Darren Boates, and Dan Smith; Chief Administrative Officer, Ashley Crocker; and Recording Secretary, Sara Marceau.

Regrets: Councillor Jonathan Archibald

Also in attendance: Paul Young, CBCL and 6 citizens

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

260615.01 It was moved and seconded that Council approve the agenda as circulated. **Motion carried.**

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

3.1 Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes

2023.12.04 Public Hearing Meeting Minutes
2024.01.15 Public Hearing Meeting Minutes
2026.05.19 Council Meeting Minutes
2026.05.19 Public Hearing Meeting Minutes
2026.06.01 Special Council Meeting Minutes

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

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.1 **Reservoir Decommissioning Project**

Councillor Bartlett opened the discussion by asking about the large price difference of the two (2) bids received from Dexter Construction and IQ Environmental.

- Paul Young of CBCL provided a brief overview of the Reservoir Decommissioning Project, including a breakdown of the tender award process.

Councillor Smith asked whether the duration of the contract would be the same for both bidders.

- Paul Young responded that a kick-off meeting would be held to review the construction management plan and confirm the project schedule.

The Deputy Mayor asked whether IQ Environmental may have submitted a lower bid in order to secure work in the area.

- Paul Young replied that this was possible, noting that IQ Environmental is a growing company.

Councillor Knapp asked about the proposed two-week timeframe and whether additional charges would apply if the contractor exceeded that schedule.

- Paul Young explained that the contractor had submitted a work plan that they believed could be completed within the two-week timeframe. He added that the tender documents clearly define the scope of work to be completed for the quoted price, and exceeding the anticipated timeframe alone would not be grounds for an additional charge.

4.2 Mayor, Council and CAO Expense Report for Q4

CAO Crocker provided a brief overview of the Mayor, Council and CAO Expense Report for Q4.

4.3 Middleton Library Closure

CAO Crocker gave a brief presentation on the Middleton Library Closure.

Councillor Smith questioned how the library closures occurred without prior consultation with Council, noting that funding challenges were known and questioned why service reductions hadn't been explored before branch closures. He sought clarification on the Town's role, the responsibilities of its library board representative, and why Council was not informed before the June 1st announcement. He also raised concerns about the lack of available financial statements, AGM materials, and transparency surrounding the decision-making process.

Deputy Mayor Marshall expressed concern that the closures were made without public discussion or advance notice. He suggested that reduced service levels could have been considered before closing five branches and questioned why Council was not consulted.

5. ANYTHING BY CITIZENS

Residents expressed concerns about the closure of the Middleton library and its broader impacts on the community. Eleni Wade highlighted the library's role in supporting economic development, attracting visitors, and providing valuable community services. Heidi McLean questioned the Town's plans to maintain library services and raised concerns about reports that the RCMP may occupy the building.

CAO Crocker advised that discussions with the AVRL Board and Province are ongoing, and that several options are being explored, including potential library services and future use of municipal facilities. She noted that no concrete proposal is ready for Council consideration and that staff will continue investigating options.

Jo-Ann Hightower emphasized the emotional impact of the closure and the community's desire to see visible support from the Town. She noted that fundraising alone is not a sustainable solution and stressed the importance of recognizing the library's significance to residents. Courtney Curtis spoke about the library's importance to families, particularly lower-income households and children.

Mayor Smith stated that Council learned of the closure at the same time as the public and shares residents' concerns. She advised that meetings with provincial officials are underway and that Council is committed to exploring all available options. CAO Crocker added that there is currently no additional information that can be shared but encouraged residents to direct questions to Town Hall.

Councillor Smith questioned the governance structure of the Annapolis Valley Regional Library (AVRL), noting that local representatives appeared to have been surprised by the closure announcement and asking why local representation on the board is limited. He encouraged residents to continue engaging with provincial representatives and attending public AVRL board meetings.

Deputy Mayor Marshall encouraged residents to contact the Minister of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage and local MLA David Bowlby, suggesting that public advocacy may influence future decisions. Residents advised that letter-writing campaigns are already underway.

Council and residents agreed on the importance of public engagement and accurate information moving forward. Mayor Smith emphasized the need to focus on facts rather than rumors, and that questions should be directed to the appropriate organization – either the Town, or the library board.

6. REPORTS

6.1 Management Report
6.2 Middleton Fire Department Dispatch Report for May 2026
6.3 Valley Regional Services Board May 20/26 Meeting Minute
6.4 Audit Committee Meeting DRAFT Minutes May 21/26
6.5 Valley REN LOC Committee Meeting DRAFT Minutes May 28/26
6.6 Mayor's Report

Mayor Smith noted that the above reports were circulated to Council members with the agenda package and called for questions/discussion.

Councillor Bartlett advised that the Valley Regional Enterprise Network (Valley REN) is voting on a new board member, William Easson, Vice President of Easson's Transportation Group.

Councillor Knapp asked whether Marshall Street would be included in the upcoming Capital Projects

- CAO Crocker advised that only a preliminary assessment and prioritization of roads has been completed to date. Council will be asked to provide direction on project priorities once a report is presented, before the end of the fiscal year.

Councillor Smith noted that the tender for asphalt patching had closed and been awarded to Dexter Construction and asked whether a project timeline had been established.

- CAO Crocker indicated that she would discuss the matter with the Director of Public Works and provide Council with an update by email.

ACTION: CAO Crocker to discuss asphalt timeline with the Director of Public Works.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

7.1 June 9, 2026, Letter from Minister of Municipal Affairs John A. MacDonald re 12-month notice letter to municipalities 2027-2028.

One (1) notice of correspondence was distributed to Council members.

8. ANYTHING BY MEMBERS

Deputy Mayor Marshall raised concerns about truck traffic on Marshall Street. He stated that commercial drivers are aware they are not permitted to travel through residential areas and highlighted concerns regarding traffic from Marshall Street to School Street, particularly near the splash pad.

- CAO Crocker advised that staff would review the Town's Transportation Master Plan to determine whether any recommendations address the issue.

Councillor Boates attended a municipal training session on Robert's Rules of Order at the AMANS Conference, as well as an NSCC graduation ceremony. He reported that both events were well attended.

Councillor Knapp relayed a resident's inquiry about completing the sidewalk connection from Marshall Street (Centre Street area) to Victoria Street and extending it to the Legion.

- CAO Crocker responded that the Town's priority is to ensure there are funds available to maintain existing sidewalks before considering the construction of new ones.

Councillor Bartlett noted concerns about excessive speeding by trucks associated with a local company. He indicated that the issue appears to have improved but noted that truck traffic continues to contribute to wear on local roads.

Deputy Mayor Marshall advised that vehicle compliance officials have been notified of concerns, including those related to Park Street, and encouraged residents to contact Vehicle Compliance directly to report issues.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 7:51pm.

Mayor Recording Secretary