

**TOWN OF STELLARTON  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING  
February 24, 2025**

**MEETING**

A Committee of the Whole meeting of Stellarton Town Council was held on Monday, February 24, 2025 at 5:27 p.m. in the large Committee Room, Stellarton Town Hall.

**PRESENT**

Chair Deputy Mayor S. Eis, Councillor S. Campbell, Councillor G. Pentz, Councillor M. Fortune and Mayor D. Stroud. Also present CAO S. Higdon, Finance B. MacKay and Town Engineer B. Murray.

1. **Call to Order** Chair S. Eis called the meeting to order at 5:27 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved with two additions to Correspondence: d. GRID Application and e. Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage on motion Councillor G. Pentz, seconded by Councillor S. Campbell. **Motion carried.**

3. **Approval of Previous Minutes**

The Minutes of the January 27, 2025, meeting was approved as presented on motion Councillor S. Campbell, seconded by Councillor M. Fortune. **Motion Carried.**

4. **Business Arising from the Minutes**

*Deer Population Update.* CAO S. Higdon reported that the Town of New Glasgow would like to get together with Stellarton and the town's of Trenton and Westville, along with representatives from DNR to discuss strategies to manage deer population. Mayor D. Stroud will still bring the matter to a Mayors and Warden meeting for discussion at the end of March as all six units will be in attendance.

5. **Correspondence**

a. *Municipal Affairs Re: Interprovincial Trade Barriers/NSFM Letter re: Same*

S. Higdon reported on correspondence received from the Honorable John Lohr, Municipal Affairs, asking the Mayors and Warden to express support for greater resource development within the province by letter or press release. S. Higdon also reported receiving a subsequent letter from the NS Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) President, Mayor Pam Mood, also addressed to the Mayors and Warden, referencing the above correspondence from the Hon. John Lohr. The correspondence states that NSFM is aware that there are impacts on each municipality and elected officials and that more information is needed before

municipalities can respond to the request put forth by the Minister. NSFM is working with the province to gather that information specifically and is focused on the call for greater resource development within Nova Scotia and the reduction on interprovincial trade barriers and what this means. Discussion. Councillor G. Pentz thinks we should wait until we hear back from NSFM. Deputy Mayor S. Eis said step one is asking for that clarity.

*The Committee will wait to hear back from NSFM before responding to the Minister.*

a. *NRHS Boys Hockey Re: Request for Donation*

Councillor G. Pentz moved a motion to donate \$50.00 to the NRHS Boys Hockey seconded by Mayor D. Stroud. **Motion Carried.**

b. *Growth and Renewal for Infrastructure Development Program (GRID) Application*

S. Higdon reported the GRID program application for funding has been approved for \$1.3 million - 50% of the projected cost of the Rutherford Street infrastructure project to replace 100+ year old infrastructure.

S. Higdon is looking for Council to approve the project now that we have 50% funding.

B. MacKay said the overall project cost is \$2.7 million. GRID approved 50% funding of the actual project cost up to the \$2.7 million (\$1.2 million is the sewer portion of the project and \$1.5 million is the water portion). B. MacKay said the funding sources for each of these portions is different: 50% of each will be funded by GRID. She is recommending that Stellarton use the Canada Community Building Fund allocation for 2025-2026 for the sewer portion of the project and then the balance by debenture. The debt that she is proposing for these two projects will be over 25 years. She said the impact on the general operating side for the budget will be \$20,000 to \$25,000; on the water side, \$50,000 to \$60,000. B. MacKay added that anything planned for the water will be part of the water rate study and will be built into the rates that will get approved going forward.

B. MacKay said we will continue to seek out other funding options. The GRID funding is stackable, adding that we always reassess how a project is funded depending on the availability of resources.

Councillor G. Pentz felt the project must be done. He noted we might see an increase in future housing developments in the area over the next 20 year with several older homes coming down. Deputy Mayor S. Eis asked if there are sidewalks on both sides of Rutherford Street, and if so, would it be a budget idea to have only one sidewalk replaced. Councillor G. Pentz responded there is a

policy in place that if sidewalks need replacement, and there are sidewalks on both sides of the street, only one sidewalk goes back in.

Councillor G. Pentz made a motion to recommend to Council approve the Rutherford Street water and sewer lines infrastructure project for a total of \$3.05 million, including HST, with 50% external funding already approved. The CCBF funds for 2025-26 to be applied for sewer with the balance of the funding by provincial debenture for each of the Town and the Water Utility, seconded by Mayor D. Stroud. Discussion. Mayor D. Stroud asked if B. MacKay could explain again the impact on the budget. **Motion Carried.**

c. *The Department of Communities, Cultures, Tourism and Heritage*

S. Higdon reported the following funding contributions received from the Department of Communities, Cultures, Tourism and Heritage:

- \$150,000 to support improvements at the Albion Ball Field,
- Pioneer Track \$150,000 which will go towards our building and making it accessible, and
- the Dorrington Ball Field is receiving \$80,000 (\$40,000 was received in 2024).

P. Draper stated that the funding for the Albion Ball Field will go towards netting, drainage, and dugouts. She said what to purchase with money left over will be decided later.

B. MacKay said this funding would be used for capital purchases only.

As information only – the Pioneer Track and Dorrington Ball Field are owned by the town of Stellarton but are run by outside groups.

6. **Accessibility/Anti Racism Plan – Paige Draper**

P. Draper reported that we are mandated by the province to be fully accessible by 2030. She said the town submitted an accessibility plan back in 2021; she is in the process of updating that plan. The deadline to resubmit to the province is April 1<sup>st</sup>. P. Draper was pleased to say that more achievements and priorities were met than she initially thought from the original plan. The accessibility committee will meet on March 5<sup>th</sup> to go over revisions to the plan and a draft copy of the plan should be completed at that meeting.

P. Draper reported that we are also mandated by the province to have an anti-racism & equity plan. She met with the provincial representatives and was encouraged to do a regional plan with other municipalities in the County. The Town of New Glasgow has had an existing plan for over a decade; they will not be part of the regional plan, however, community engagement will take place with everyone. P. Draper is happy the regional

approach is going forward. Council will review a draft plan prior to being approved at Council.

**7. Volunteer of the Year Process**

P. Draper explained that because we no longer have a Recreation Committee, Council has become our selection committee for Volunteer of the Year. She continued to explain the Volunteer of the Year concept/process mentioning that nomination letters and forms have gone out to approximately 30 community organizations. Due date for nomination forms is on March 19<sup>th</sup>. Our Volunteer of the Year reception is being held May 1<sup>st</sup> at 7 p.m. upstairs in the Stellarton fire hall. Council will receive the list of nominees at the March meeting and select the winner at the April meeting.

*Nomination forms are available at the town office.*

**8. Next Meeting Date: March 24, 2025**

**9. Adjournment** motion by Councillor G. Pentz