



ATTENDING

- Mayor Jodi MacKay (*left at 1:40pm*)
- Deputy Mayor Jennifer Ingham
- Councillor Mike Butler
- Councillor Wendy Elliott
- Councillor Ian Palmeter
- Councillor Kelly van Niekerk (*left at 12:09pm*)
- Councillor Howard Williams
- Chief Administrative Officer, Glenn Horne
- Recording Secretary, Laura Morrison

ALSO ATTENDING

- Director of Engineering and Public Works, Alex de Sousa
- Manager of Accounting & Finance Services, Jenny Johnson
- Manager of Communications & Strategic Initiatives, Barb Shaw
- Manager of Community Development, Nick Zamora
- Compliance Coordinator, Kaden Thibault
- Interested members of the public

CALL TO ORDER

Chair, Deputy Mayor Ingham, called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

Mayor MacKay read the Land Acknowledgement

Agenda Item	Discussion and Decisions
1. Approval of Agenda	10-03-25 IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED AS AMENDED. <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of In Camera Item relating to Contract Negotiations
2. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No conflicts of interest declared
3. Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter Dunkier and Mark Fredericks, Wolfville Tree Policy
4. Public Input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No one for public input
5. Staff Reports for Discussion	



Agenda Item	Discussion and Decisions
<p>a. RFD 006-2025: Open Arms Funding Request</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAO Horne presented the report attached to the request for funding from Open Arms. • This program is funded provincially. • Staff recommendation is that the Town continue to work with Open Arms and offer ‘in-kind” support through advocating on their behalf to the province as well as for any other agency offering this high-level assistance. • It was acknowledged that a generous gift by WAIC Council of \$75,000 before Christmas was provided to Open Arms. • Town will continue to work with Open Arms and other services in the area to navigate and provide space where we can support them and continue to advocate in partnership with them and other service providers in the area.
<p>b. RFD 009-2025: One-Time Capital Funding Request – Wolfville Legion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kuli Malhotra Volunteer Consultant and Danielle Grimbergen Volunteer Treasurer represent President of Wolfville Legion presented on the funding request for Wolfville Legion. • Legion has been engaged with Regional Emergency Management Coordinator to make the building a comfort centre. • In process of getting a generator, have acquired half of the funding. • Town funding can be attached to a specific item or as part of the overall project. <p>11-03-25 IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE FORWARD THE FOLLOWING MOTION TO COUNCIL FOR DECISION:</p> <p>THAT COUNCIL CONSIDER IN THE 2025/26 BUDGET PROCESS A \$40,000 ONE-TIME CAPITAL GRANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE WOLFVILLE LEGION BRANCH #74 TO SUPPORT FURTHER UPGRADES TO THEIR FACILITY.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY</p>
<p>c. RFD 010-2025: One-Time Operational Funding Request – Horton High School</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Krista Campbell, teacher at Hortons High School and Duke of Edinburgh Award Unit Leader. • Restructuring of the Duke of Edinburgh organization required us to become a franchise to take part which cost over \$2,000. • Culture exchange - children from Saskatchewan will be in Wolfville for five days. Tour of Acadia booked and hoping to do some more things in Town including local government and businesses. Also planning on tours of other parts of the province. Showcasing local culture.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two expeditions in June, bronze and silver journey. • Currently we have about 30 students at different levels of award. Most are still in school but can be involved up to age of 24. Half are Wolfville residents. • Experience Canada grant provides funding for travel. • Horton is committed to absorbing costs for students where the fee is a barrier. • No funding received for this from School Board or Department of Education. <p>12-03-25 IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE FORWARD THE FOLLOWING MOTION TO COUNCIL FOR DECISION:</p> <p>THAT COUNCIL GIVE FURTHER CONSIDERATION IN THE 2025/26 BUDGET PROCESS TO A \$2,500 ONE-TIME OPERATIONAL GRANT CONTRIBUTION TO HORTON HIGH SCHOOL FRANCHISE TO SUPPORT THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH “EXPERIENCES CANADA EXCHANGE 2025.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY</p>
<p>d. RFD 011-2025: One-Time Operational Funding Request – Good Neighbour Builders Society</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stats Canada 48% of all Canadians express loneliness. • Would like to partner with municipalities and not for profits. • Good Neighbour method shifts culture of the municipality. Create a sense of community. Proprietary good neighbour app acts like a doorbell to bring people together to have face to face conversations through technology. • Recruit volunteers who want their neighbourhoods to be more connected. Four-month period where the mindset changes. • No Wolfville specific data. • Hesitation to add another piece of technology for people who are already inundated. Concerns voiced around staff resources this would involve. • Already have many events where this money might be better used. • There is always room for improvement, but many things are already happening like Soups and Sides and the work our committees are doing with Equity and Accessibility committees. Building great momentum. • No other towns have initiated this project. Believe they had influence on culture shift in Windsor through Happy Communities project.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council agree Community Harmony and physical and mental health is very important. Staff are doing an incredible job. We are working on a happy community through the work that staff are already doing. • No motion passed.
<p>e. IR 005-2025: Budget Process and Accompanying Information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAO Glenn Horne presented the Draft Budget Review. • This is first version which has anticipated Operating surplus of \$58,466 with a \$16.6m budget. • Second version of budget will be presented at the next meeting on March 25th, along with the final Operations Plan. Should they meet councils' approval, a special Council meeting will scheduled for April 1st after regular COW meeting for formal approval. • Slight reduction anticipated in sewer rates. • Estimated revenue is an increase of \$967,377 from last year, assuming general tax rate stays as it was last year \$1.4655 for residential and resource rate, and \$3.5655 for commercial rate. • Acadia taxes were \$1.1m last year and this year is \$1.2m. • Property Assessment shows all residential assessed values have increased by 11.37%. Due to CAP program we can only tax on 7.7% • Total Commercial assessed value has increased by 1.32% • CAP Program is a Nova Scotia wide program. Percentage of properties capped in Wolfville is somewhere in the 66/67% range. • Commercial properties change in value has moved them from exempt to taxable. • Assuming Residential Tax rate stays the same this would result in revenue at \$9.277,300 • Resource rate has gone down slightly from value of properties changing from resource category into residential category. • Commercial rate is slated to stay the same resulting in \$1.5m in revenue for this year's budget. Small decrease from last year because we increased our allowance for commercial to be more accurate. • Overall increase in tax revenue 6.69%. • COLA (Cost of Living Allowance) adjustment - average increase in CPI for immediately preceding year is 2.32%. • Average Residential Assessment is \$512,500 which includes capped and uncapped assessments. • Residential non-capped increase by 12.36% • Residential capped increase by 4.05%.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General trend is the proportion of properties should increase. Sales may stop that and if larger proportion are owned by non-Nova Scotian residents or business interests. In addition to a town deed transfer tax the province also has a deed transfer tax which has increased from 5% to 10%. • If changes to rates occurred at 1 cent on the residential rate up or down, this would result in a change of \$63,255 more or less revenue collected. For commercial 1 cent up or down would result in a change of more or less \$4,400. • Holding the rate and based on the average residential assessment of \$512,500 would result in an increase of \$111,000 per property. • Low Income Exemption to taxes is \$46,491. Last year there were 49 applicants approved. • Budgeted for 50 applicants for 25/26 fiscal year – based on number of exemptions increasing year over year. • Increase in salaries and wages of about 15% due to increase in bargaining unit wages, COLA and merit increases for non-unionized staff. COLA number in the budget is higher and will come down in next version. Two new staff positions in Community Development and one within the CAO Office to provide administrative assistance have been included. Differences stem from full year versus prorated for new hires that started last year. Employee benefits will increase. • Heat has reduced from last year where it was increased in anticipation of a carbon tax which didn't materialize. • The grants that were presented earlier at this meeting are not included in this version of the budget. • Professional development budget wasn't used up last year. This could be down to some changes in key personnel that took place. • Some growth over last number of years in staffing levels but not significant. • Policing Cost increase percentages are provided by the RCMP. Cost for the Detachment Services Assistant role will move from the Contractual budget to the Town's operating budget as this role will become a municipal employee rather than a public services employee. • Project & Program Expenditures on slide show only the increases or decreases to the funding, not total numbers. • Parks Master Plan is a different approach based on feedback from first budget meeting, resulting in more comprehensive review of recreation



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	<p>programming, how we use existing parks versus what was a more architectural view on the parks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There could be a shift in demand for summer camps where the Acadia pool is closing. However, the Town has limitations on space, not enough space to offer more than currently offering. • Night of Lights includes Wolfville Glows including all the lights for the Town. Welcome to Wolfville event is split with Acadia. • Memory Café is 100% funded by grants.
<p><i>Lunch Break from 12:10pm to 12:43pm</i></p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease in Acadia Pool donation. • Grants received last year are not recurring this year. • Soups and Sides moved to programming expenses from Grants to Organizations. • Membership dues of \$3000 are still in the budget for AVTC. • Explanation on the different categories of funding requests the Town may receive. • Acadia Economic Development Major Events is added to the draft budget for the curling event, but it is still to be approved by council. • Existing Strategic Partnership Program applicants have been informed the policy is due for review and renewal and there are no guarantees of funding. • Discussion on Education costs of \$91,155. • Water Utility budget is regulated. Projected deficit of \$9,902. • Water Rates are quite low within the province when compared to other municipal units. Rate study later this year when test period expires for the current study. • Draft Capital Investment Plan – looking for Council approval for year one but will show 3 and 5-year time horizon. • Review taking place this year on capital planning and cash flow forecast. • Year 1 CIP is \$9.1m. • Active Transportation Project and sewer treatment program funded through ICIP (Investing in Capital Infrastructure) Grants. • Capital Reserve Balance at \$3.7m at end of fiscal 2024.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration in Council’s Strategic Plan that there may be a need to increase the 6% in capital reserve funding. Five-year outlook shows pressure on unrestricted capital reserves going forward. • For Version 2 of the budget, we will be updating with the information and feedback from today and other known changes. • Approach is to get as close to a balanced budget as possible to bring back to council for March 25th Special Budget COW meeting. • Discussion on Housing Accelerator Fund. Core HAF activities occurring that we must do, additionally there is HAF related work such as Asset Management and Growth Management Activity • Phase II Expansion of Sewage Treatment Plant in year 1 is biggest driver for year 1 CIP at approx. \$4.3m. • Phase III Expansion of Sewage Treatment Plant could be something to happen in the future. It depends on growth and performance of the upgrades. All calculations for design are theoretical based on best possible assumptions that can be made on data available. ICIP funding deadline is March 2026. • Storm Water Management new projects – over last two years several small projects have been identified. No major projects have been identified. CBCL will start with review of our entire system. We will get comprehensive reports at end of review. • Washrooms for Reservoir will be part of a tender hoping for spring this year. • Dog license comes under Bylaw. • Protective Services include police, bylaw, Fire, REMO and other. It comes under Contracted Services under Protective Services. • Ensure there is enough support in place in the operating budget to ensure we are communicating sufficiently with public. • We will maintain the level of communication for some specific large projects but as we start to do engagement and work around communications strategy that will help outline what future resources might look like. <p>Direction to staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Look into a format for a Volunteer Appreciation event with a budget allocation to acknowledge all volunteers of the Town for next year 26/27. As well as program services that volunteers could offer.</i>



Agenda Item	Discussion and Decisions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Staff to provide a list of all the opportunities/events we offer to the community.</i> – <i>Clarity required on what the increase to Protective Services is under Proposed Staffing Changes (slide 17)</i> – <i>Annapolis Valley Trail Coalition- last year the province reduced funding and Town increased theirs to \$10,000. It appears from the slides that this has been removed. Where is that in the budget for 25/26 fiscal?</i> – <i>Provide council a list of Strategic Partnership Organizations with a breakdown of funding.</i> – <i>Strategic Partnership Program Policy to be updated to reflect that these grants will be reviewed in Council’s 2nd year of term ensuring alignment with the strategic priorities of the incoming Council as reflected in their strategic plan.</i> – <i>Create a Legend in the Capital Investment Plan to explain what the categories mean.</i>
6. Public Input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No one present for public input.
7. Regular Meeting Adjourned to In Camera	<p>14-03-25 IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE REGULAR MEETING ADJOURN TO AN INCAMERA MEETING UNDER SECTION 22(2)(e) CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS AT 1:39pm.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY</p>
8. Regular Meeting reconvenes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The regular meeting of Council reconvened at 1:57pm
9. Motion from In Camera regarding Wolfville Fire Services	<p>16-03-25 IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE FORWARD THE FOLLOWING MOTION TO COUNCIL FOR DECISION:</p> <p>THAT COUNCIL APPROVE THE MEDIATION-ARBITRATION WIND-UP AGREEMENT AS PRESENTED.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY</p>
10. Regular Meeting Adjourned	<p>17-03-25 IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE REGULAR MEETING ADJOURN AT 1:58pm.</p>

Approved by Committee of the Whole Motion 04-04-25 April 2025
 As recorded by Laura Morrison, Town Clerk & Manager of Administration