

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS TOWN HALL  
October 20, 2025**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mayor Mike Bartlett  
Chair Deputy Mayor Paul Saulnier  
Councillor William McCormick  
Councillor Rick Foote  
Councillor Shane Weir

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Tom Ossinger, Chief Administrative Officer  
Leslie Brinton, Deputy Chief Administration Officer  
Karen Morrell, Admin. Asst./Receptionist

**REGRETS:**

**A. CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL**

**B. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**C. AGENDA**

**C.1 Additions/Deletions**

Deletion of, **J.10 Tides of Time Legacy Project** they will not be doing this project this year.

**C.2 Approval**

**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Councillor Foote that the agenda be accepted as amended.***

**Motion Carried**

**D. DECLARATIONS OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

**E. DELEGATIONS/PRESENTATIONS**

**E.1 Proposal for Fire Service Training Facility- Bruce Snell**

Bruce Snell, Fire Services & Emergency Management Coordinator, is requesting funding from the Town of Digby for a regional live fire training facility aimed at supporting the 11 volunteer fire

departments in Digby County. Applications open on October 1, 2025, with a deadline of November 15, 2025.

The purpose of the training facility is to provide realistic training scenarios, enhancing skills and standardizing procedures across departments.

It was noted that controlled training minimizes injuries and operational errors it would cut down travel costs and time for training certification. A modern facility would help to attract and retain firefighters as well as promotes cooperation among agencies and boosts community confidence in fire services.

**Cost-Sharing & Funding**

**Estimated Cost:** \$200,000, with 90% covered by the Emergency Services Regional Provider Fund.

**Local Contribution:** \$20,000 required (10%), split between the Town and Municipality of Digby.

**Funding Timeline**

Applications open on October 1, 2025, with a deadline of November 15, 2025.

The Committee asked where the proposed site for the facility will be and Mr. Snell stated that they were looking at the Victoria Street location where Public Works dumps yard waste material now. The committee noted that Victoria Street has been dedicated to housing and the committee submitted that the Business Park would be more suitable for the facilities needs. Mr. Snell stated that time was an issue and that whatever is offered must be approved by December 1, 2025.

**Motion:**

***Moved by Mayor Bartlett and seconded by Councillor Weir that the Proposal for Fire Service Training Facility be recommended to the next council meeting of November 03, 2025 for review and discussion.***

**Motion Carried**

**E.2 Digby Area Skating Club**

Wonderful presentation from the Digby Area Skating Club. The presentation was a break down of the safety equipment purchased with the grant that the Town had granted them. The Jump Harness is an essential tool in building confidence and provides safety.

**F. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**F.1 September 15, 2025**

**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor Foote and seconded by Councillor McCormick that the minutes of September 15, 2025 be accepted.***

**Motion Carried**

**G. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**G.1 Victoria St Intersection Sign Removal (KFC)**

Councillor McCormick requested clarification on who removed the sign from Victoria St Intersection where the KFC used to be. It was noted that the Town of Digby took down the post and the base and retained the base for future use. Councillor McCormick thanked CAO Ossinger for making sure that that project was completed.

## H. STAFF REPORTS

### H.1 Director of Finance

#### a) Report

Highlights of this report are as follows:

- **Postal Strike:** Delays in tax bill deliveries and vendor payments due to a postal strike are being addressed with hand deliveries and courier services if needed.
- **Tax Bill Issues:** Resolved duplicate taxation for 52 properties; software upgrade has fixed mobile PDF display issues.
- **Cyber Insurance:** Emphasis on multifactor authentication for effective claims processing after ransomware incidents.
- **Daily Bank Reconciliation:** Shift to daily reconciliations to mitigate fraud risks.
- **Employee Benefits:** Importance of preapproval in absence situations highlighted during a training webinar.
- **WCB Rate:** The Town's Workers' Compensation Board rate is decreasing due to fewer claims.
- **Community Engagement:** A kindness meter initiative raised \$436, showcasing community support.
- The kindness meter was emptied and the total of \$436 was recorded as miscellaneous revenue

#### b) Monthly Financial Statement – Operations

Due to the Software Upgrade: Ongoing issues post-upgrade are hindering the generation of custom reports, impacting monthly financial statements hence no report at this time.

#### c) Monthly Financial Statement - Capital

Due to the Software Upgrade, ongoing issues post-upgrade are hindering the generation of custom reports, impacting monthly financial statements. No report at this time.

### H.2 Director of Public Works

#### a) Report

Highlights are as follows:

- **Generators:** New generators have been successfully commissioned and are operational, awaiting final civil work sign-off.
- **Wastewater Lift Station Upgrade:** Upgrades to Lift Station #4 are underway, expected to be completed by mid-November.
- **West and Third Avenue Project:** Progress is noted, with nearly 50% completion of the sanitary sewer installations.

#### Water Management

- **Water Availability:** Low water levels at Vantassel Lake have impacted irrigation for the golf course. Repairs on a main break on Hole #17 are pending.
- **Water Testing:** all tests confirmed with zero counts for Coliform and E-coli.

**Wastewater Management**

- Regular maintenance activities, including the cleaning of lift stations and sanitary mains.

**Streets and Infrastructure**

- Infrastructure improvements include repairs to culverts, sidewalks, and brush clearance along town streets.

**Equipment Acquisitions**

- A UTV and trailer have been acquired from the fire department for use in public works.

**Capital Projects**

- Ongoing capital projects include the installation of storm piping with further work planned for curbs and sidewalks by late October.

**Transfer Station Statistics**

- The report notes client usage and waste management statistics for September, showing slight fluctuations compared to previous months.

**Safety and Training**

- The Public Works Team is emphasizing safety by reviewing data sheets and conducting training, with one employee completing a traffic control course.

**H.3 Special Constable/Bylaw Officer**

**a) Protective Services Report**

- **C.C.T.V. Report:** Responded to an RCMP request for footage at the Sydney Street intersection; no other issues noted.
- **Parking Control:** No concerns reported.
- **Civic Address Changes:** Completed 16 changes and 21 verification updates for various sites
- **Dog Control:** Investigated a complaint about a dog chasing a child; the dog's owner was reminded to keep the dog controlled under local bylaws.
- **Crossing Guards:** Participated in a Traffic Control Course to enhance skills.
- **Vending Licenses:** Issued one special event license; two inquiries were noted. Concerns about unpermitted events were raised, prompting a suggestion for educational outreach to event organizers.
- **Solid Waste Management:** Complaints received for two locations, with agreements from owners to clean up.
- **By-Law Violations:**
  - A \$50 fine was issued for feeding wild birds and animals.
  - Compliance achieved for a rental units standards violation.
  - A water drainage complaint was resolved with the responsible party agreeing to address it.
- **MLEOA Conference:** Attendance at a conference in Ontario covered topics like homelessness and enforcement practices from other provinces.

The committee questioned why there were so many civic changes and it was explained that the address that the residents had were not reflective of what 911 Emergency had on file. We have been changing them when they come up to rectify this matter.

#### **H.4 Dangerous & Unsightly Administrator**

##### **a) Dangerous or Unsightly Premises Reports**

**31 & 33 First Avenue-** Manager indicated they had recently cleaned the yard and the siding is on hold until contractors can return to complete the job. A contractor later came to the Town Hall to inform Bylaw they are waiting on supplies & help to complete task.

**53 Raquette Road –** Owner gave update for demolition to take place in October. Owner stated they are waiting for the contractor to finish additional projects before beginning the demolition. Owner indicates the delay the demolition process is due to the contractor's availability. The CAO reminded the Committee that there was no order To Demolish issued by the Town, this work was done solely on the owners efforts.

#### **H.5 Deputy Chief Administrative Officer**

##### **a) Report**

Many meetings were held during the month.

- **Council Meeting**
- **Digby Development Agency**
- **Senior Safety Meeting:**
- **Marketing Levy Advisory Committee**
- **Transit Ad Hoc Committee**

##### **Administrative Updates**

- The new Administrative Assistant is integrating smoothly into their role.
- The Visitor Information Centre (VIC) on Shore Road is now open five days a week, closing for the season on October 11, 2025.

##### **Community Developments**

- A meeting with Alertable's CEO introduced the community to their services.
- Arrangements for a memorial service honoring fishermen were discussed.
- Discussions regarding project extensions with the Housing Accelerator Fund took place, pending approval for new staff hires.
- The final report for the Community Works Program funding has been completed, focusing on contributions to the Digby Water Commission and tourism.

##### **Communication Efforts**

Improvements in communication strategies were emphasized, including updates for newsletters.

## H.6 Chief Administrative Officer

### a) Report

Highlights for the Chief Administrative Officer are as follows:

- **Development Permits:** Five new permits issued for constructions, including single-family homes and a greenhouse.
- **Fire Department:** Responded to 23 incidents, including alarms and vehicle collisions.
- **Visitor Information Centre:** Welcomed 1,050 visitors in September, with interests in local tours; however, numbers dropped to 15 per day by mid-October.
- **Community Engagement:** Upcoming session on commercial policies on October 23 and a recent amendment to the Code of Conduct limiting complaints among council members only.

### **Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Mayor Bartlett that the staff reports be accepted as presented.***

**Motion Carried**

## I. CORRESPONDENCE

I.1 none

## J. NEW BUSINESS

### J.1 Fundy Institute- Councillor R. Foote

The Comeauville Marine Institute, established in 2014, is suggested as a resource for Councillor Foote's tidal research goals and he strives to make a "Lure piece" highlighting the benefits of Western Nova Scotia's rich coastline and sea beds. We are notable for solar energy, tidal energy potential, biomass, and existing wind farms. Abundant in natural resources and collaboration opportunities supported by regional agencies. The area boasts a highly educated workforce with expertise in natural resources. Its proximity to major North American and European markets enhances trade potential.

### **Motion:**

***Moved by Mayor Bartlett and seconded by Councillor McCormick that we establish an Ad Hoc Committee to develop a Lure Piece and take this to Council for approval.***

**Motion Carried**

### J.2 Banner Program

Banners that are in place now are showing their age and it is time for Council to decide if we would like to run a new campaign or replace the ones we have. Councillor Foote mentioned that the images that are up now are stored on a common drive and can be reprinted if Committee would like to go that route. It was discussed that the Town of Digby had a few complaints regarding the bigger banners up because people were walking into them. Smaller banners would last longer and less of a hazard.

**Motion:**

***Moved by Mayor Bartlett and seconded by Councillor Foote that we establish an Ad Hoc Committee to discuss a Banner Program and take this to Council for approval.***

**Motion carried**

**J.3 Washroom/Shower Digby Station, Extension of Time**

Due to the drought that the area has experienced it was discussed that town delay the closing of the public bathroom and shower at the Digby Station till the end of November.

**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor Weir and seconded by Councillor McCormick that we delay the closing of the public bathrooms/Shower at Digby Station until the end of November and draft correspondence to Municipality to see if they would be willing to help with the costs.***

**Motion Carried**

**J.4 Development Officer Job Description**

The executive committee tasked CAO to draft a job description of the Development Officer. The Committee of the Whole suggested a few amendments to the draft. It was suggested at this time that we move this discussion to In Camera.

**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor Weir and seconded by Councillor McCormick that we move any further discussion of Development Officer Job Discussion to In Camera.***

**Motion carried**

**J.5 Digby Area Food Bank**

Request from Roger Tibbetts, Director of Food Bank, for the Town of Digby, to waive the remaining rent payments until the rest of the Calendar year. There have been several attempts in the past to help in various ways from the Committee but those suggestions have yet to be implemented. The Committee understands the need and urgency of having a Food Bank in the area but queries if there are other avenues for financial aide to help come to a sustainable solution. It was motioned that the committee discuss this further In Camera.

**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor Weir and seconded by Councillor McCormick to move the Foodbank request to In Camera.***

**Motion Carried.**

**J.6 WREN Intermunicipal Agreement**

The agreement Includes towns and municipalities from Barrington to Digby and is effective for five years. It focuses on economic development strategies and fostering business relationships.

Minimum annual funding of \$250,000, with a formula for distribution based on population and assessments.

It is governed by committees such as the Board of Directors and Audit Committee for oversight and accountability and Municipalities can leave with twelve months' notice. Dispute Resolution: Procedures for mediation and arbitration are specified.

The agreement details the roles and commitments of each municipality and establishes a solid foundation for regional economic growth.

**The Inter-Municipal Agreement includes provisions regarding dedicated office space.**

- Each Municipal unit is required to provide in-kind access to both meeting and office space for economic development officers on an as-needed basis.
- Additionally, each municipality must also provide in-kind access to meeting space for the Western REN Board and the Liaison and Oversight Committee (LOC) on an as-needed basis.
- The Committee would like further clarification on ...provide in-kind access to meeting space for the Western REN Board and the Liaison and Oversight Committee (LOC) on an as-needed basis.

**Motion:**

***Moved by Mayor Bartlett and seconded by Councillor Foote that CAO seek clarification on the Office Space provisions, do they require a dedicated office and the agreement be recommend to Council.***

**Motion Carried**

**J.7 Digby Area High School Tutoring Pilot Program**

**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor Weir and seconded by Councillor McCormick that this request be brought forward to a meeting of MLA Jill Balsler asking her about education and the funding of Digby Area High School Tutoring Pilot Program***

**Motion Carried**

**J.8 Sobey's Crosswalk**

**There is a safer crossing at the location in front of Dairy Queen and it is suggested that if the crosswalk by Sobey's will continue that we would like to have flashing lights or something to make it safer. It was asked if we could approach Sobey's to see if they have any input on implementing safety measures at their crosswalk location.**

**J.9 Request meeting with MLA Jill Balsler**

**Recommendation**

**CAO is to request a formal meeting, with MLA Jill Balsler, to discuss various matters discovered through various Committees, at a time and place that is convenient to the MLA.**

**J.10 Tides of Time Legacy Project**

Item has been withdrawn due to the Project not going forward

**K. IN-CAMERA**

**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor Weir and seconded by Councillor McCormick that the committee go IN CAMERA for Personnel and legal items.***

**Motion Carried**

**K.1 Personnel**

**K.2 Legal**

**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor Foote and seconded by Councillor McCormick that the committee go out of IN CAMERA.***

**Motion Carried**

**Motion:**

***Moved by Mayor Bartlett and seconded by Councillor Foote that the Committee has reviewed the legal correspondence and approves it as is.***

**Motion Carried**

**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Mayor Bartlett that the Lease Agreement with Birch Street Seafoods and Yacht Club include the recommended wording of "as is/where is" and the \$500 price each year from ten years to five years.***

**L. ADJOURNMENT**

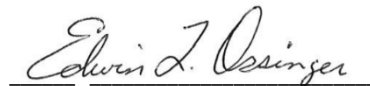
**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Councillor Weir that we adjourn the meeting at 9:30 PM***

**Motion Carried**



Mayor Bartlett



CAO T. Ossinger