



**MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF WEST HANTS
Committee of the Whole Minutes
September 25, 2018, 6:00 p.m.
Sanford Council Chambers**

Present:	P. Morton	Deputy Warden
	A. Zebian	Warden
	R. Jannasch	Councillor District 1
	K. Monroe	Councillor District 2
	D. Keith	Councillor District 3
	T. Leopold	Councillor District 4
	D. Francis	Councillor District 5
	J. Daniels	Councillor District 7
	R. Zwicker	Councillor District 10 (Arrived 6:09 p.m.)
	M. Laycock	Chief Administrative Officer
	B. Carrigan	Director of Public Works
	B. Craik	Active Communities Programmer
	R. Brown	Municipal Clerk
	J. Woodman	Administrative Assistant
Regrets:	R. Hussey	Councillor District 6

There were 8 members of the public in attendance.

1. Call to Order
Chair Morton called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. Announcements
Chair Morton announced the meeting was being broadcasted on Facebook Live and reviewed the standard fire evacuation procedure.

MLA, Chuck Porter was in attendance, he offered his appreciation for Council's leadership in the consolidation process and suggested once the legislation passes it will bring good discussion and actions. He indicated that he has been receiving calls from other areas of the Province who are interested in the opportunities for collaboration. He felt that Windsor and West Hants working together will lead the Province down a positive path.

Councillor Leopold announced that the Girl Guides of Canada started their fall cookie campaign and encouraged everyone to support them. She noted that the Ardoise Hall will be celebrating their "40th" Anniversary this Saturday and will be hosting a full day of activities to celebrate.

CAO Laycock reported a surplus sale is scheduled for this Friday and Saturday, at the Hants County Court House and Public Works yard in Hantsport. He noted Friday is for non-profit organizations and Saturday is open to the public.

3. Approval of Agenda, including additions or deletions
MOVED and SECONDED that the agenda be approved with the following additions:
 - 11 (a) – Alternate for Transition Committee – Councillor Daniels
 - 11 (b) – Regional Government – Councillor Keith
 - 11 (c) – Water Bill 62 - Councillor Francis**Motion Carried.**

4. Approval of Minutes
MOVED and SECONDED that the Committee of the Whole Minutes of August 28, 2018 be approved, noting any errors or omissions.
Motion Carried.

5. Presentation (s)

a. Active Living Strategy 2018-2022

B. Craik presented an overview of the Active Living Strategy achievements and the action plan developed to guide physical activity promotion within the region. She distributed a summary of the Active Living Strategy 2018-2022, that she encouraged Councillors to post in their communities.

Councillor Leopold asked if the Parks & Recreation Department had a plan for the acquired Meadow Ponds. B. Craik responded that staff had just recently discussed this and their hope is to maintain access to the pond, so residents can continue to fish, and staff want to explore different opportunities for the trail network. Councillor Leopold asked if there were plans to repair or improve the access to the pond. B. Craik confirmed that is the plan.

Councillor Monroe asked if the Town of Windsor is participating in the strategy. B. Craik confirmed the Town is currently not participating but that staff did consult with them. Councillor Monroe suggested the posters for the communities should draw more attention to the need of call for action. B. Craik thanked her for her comments and advised that she has expressed the need for more marketing resources for the Parks & Recreation sites.

Councillor Daniels suggested when West Hants puts out the Strategic Plan that this should be part of it as well. CAO Laycock indicated that staff are currently revamping the Municipal website to ensure there is more pertinent information rather than historical information, and he suggested he would add the Active Living Strategy to the list. Councillor Daniels commended staff for the work they did on the Active Living Strategy and felt it will be a benefit for the community.

**MOVED and SECONDED that the Summary for Advancing Recreation in Nova Scotia page and The Framework for Recreation in Canada be received and placed on file.
Motion Carried.**

Warden Zebian expressed appreciation to the Parks & Recreation Department for all that they do, and suggested it was important and noticed in the community.

**MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council, that Council approve the Active Living Strategy 2018-2022 and endorse the Shared Strategy for Advancing Recreation in Nova Scotia.
Motion Carried.**

6. Hearing (s) – Dangerous & Unsightly

There were no Dangerous & Unsightly Hearings.

7. Business Arising from Minutes

- a. Tabled motion from August 28, 2018 Committee of the Whole meeting “that a recommendation be made to Council, that Council approve the Wellness Policy (COOH-002.00) as shown in the Wellness Policy Recommendation Report presented to Committee of the Whole on August 28, 2018.

Councillor Daniels confirmed that her concerns were addressed, she indicated that she was agreeable to proceed with the motion.

**MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council, that Council approve the Wellness Policy (COOH-002.00) as shown in the Wellness Policy Recommendation Report presented to Committee of the Whole on August 28, 2018.
Motion Carried.**

8. Report of the Chief Administrative Officer

- a. Hantsport Fire Station and Public Work Facility (Information Report)

Councillor Daniels declared a conflict of interest and left the Council table.

The Director of Public Works highlighted the main points of the report. He explained that an architect reviewed the existing issues of the Fire Department in Hantsport and it was pointed out that the building lot and yard is not sufficient for long term.

CAO Laycock reported there are some drawings and a proposal, and it has been deemed the Fire Department could be combined with the Public Works compound. He clarified that this report was prepared prior to consolidation considerations and suggested that Council should keep this in mind when making decisions. He noted the report includes financial implications and a rough estimate, but the true cost would be determined through a request for proposal (RFP). He explained Council would need to review the two projects from a financial point of view, adding for the fire station approximately 25% of service is provided to Kings County and that the Municipality is negotiating a five-year agreement for cost services with them. He indicated this would decrease the estimated cost and result in approximately \$96,750 per year for 25 years.

Councillor Leopold indicated that she recognized the inadequacies in terms of size and the state of the building. She questioned what impact these projects would have when Council is approaching a regional fire service, and the unknowns in the imminent future. CAO Laycock explained that this project has not been budgeted for this year, adding Council has until the next fiscal year and suggested that the discussion could take place at the Transition Committee prior to the budget.

The Director of Public Works suggested there is still going to be a need in Hantsport to provide a level of service to the streets and sidewalks and they will still require all the equipment to do this and a place to store them.

Councillor Monroe indicated that she would like to see this come from a Fire Services Coordinator position so there is more continuity and to look at the larger picture. She asked what would happen to the old fire station. CAO Laycock advised that HMCC has expressed interest but offered it would need to go through the Disposal of Assets Real Property Policy.

Councillor Zwicker reminded there is health and safety issues at the Fire Department and Public Works compound and agreed with the Director of Public Works that equipment is always going to be needed to be accessible in Hantsport for year-round work that is required. He suggested that it was premature and felt it should be budgeted for next year. Warden Zebian asked if this project would qualify for funding assistance. CAO Laycock explained the Fire Department would not qualify, however the Public Works compound could be investigated.

Warden Zebian felt that the members of the Hantsport Fire Department have been patient and worked with what they've had, and he offered appreciation that they merged with West Hants. He agreed that a new station is needed. CAO Laycock cautioned adding this to the budget, as the Public Works would absorb costs through user rates and wouldn't just affect the general tax rate, so it would impact sewer and water rates; but the Fire Department would impact the tax rate.

Councillor Francis agreed with comments that a Fire Services Coordinator should have input on a new fire station and cautioned that Council needs to realize there could be an impact when combining services, she suggested being prudent and ensure it is cost effective.

CAO Laycock suggested this be discussed and given consideration during budget deliberations.

Councillor Daniels rejoined the Council table.

b. Gas Tax Funding – GFL Newport Rink & Gordon Hughes Tennis Club

**MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council, that Council approve the use of \$75,000 of Gas Tax to fund upgrades to the dehumidification system at the GFL Newport Rink.
Motion Carried.**

**MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council, that Council approve the use \$12,500 of Gas Tax to Fund upgrades to an energy efficiency lighting system at the Gordon Hughes Tennis Club.
Motion Carried.**

c. VoIP Phone System

CAO Laycock reported the Voice-Over-Internet-Protocol (VoIP) phone system was scheduled in the capital budget for next year, however he felt it is now a priority. It is not a major expense, but it needed to be brought to Council as it was not budgeted. He explained currently if phones need to be relocated it takes approximately a month and it costs for the visit from Bell. He suggested with more changes anticipated he felt this would be beneficial to complete now. He added the new system also offers a significant number of features that currently are not available.

MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council, that Council approve the purchase of the required hardware for the Voice-Over-Internet-Protocol phone system with the funds to come from the Operating Reserve to a maximum of \$5,000.

Motion Carried.

Councillor Zwicker voted nay.

d. 2018 MFC Fall Debenture

CAO Laycock reported that Council approved funding for breathing apparatus for the Hantsport Fire Department and the Temporary Borrowing Resolution. He indicated this equipment was purchased and is being funded through an internal loan between the General Operating fund and the Capital fund.

MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council, that Council authorize the Warden and Municipal Clerk to sign the Resolution for Pre-Approval of Debenture Issuance, subject to interest rate confirmation not to exceed 5.5%, to enable the Municipality of the District of West Hants to issue a 5-year debenture of \$82,502.08.

Motion Carried.

e. HMCC 2017-18 Financial Statements

CAO Laycock reported that Hantsport Memorial Community Centre (HMCC) made a request for an area rate allowing the Municipality to collect and transfer revenue for services provided by HMCC.

MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council, that Council accept the financial statements provided by HMCC and that any 2017-18 hold backs and eligible 2018-19 area rated payments be paid to HMCC for the purposes of providing the services defined in the 2018-19 budget.

Motion Carried.

9. Reports – Other Committees
There were no reports from other Committees.
10. Correspondence
There was no correspondence.
11. Miscellaneous/New Business

- a. Alternate for Transition Committee (Councillor Daniels)

Chair Morton asked for a first call for nominations for an alternate for the Transition Committee. Warden Zebian nominated Councillor Daniels and Councillor Monroe

Chair Morton called for a second and third nominations. Chair Morton closed the nominations. He asked Councillors Daniels and Monroe if they accepted the nominations, they did.

A vote was taken by secret ballot. The Municipal Clerk declared Councillor Daniels as the alternate for the Transition Committee.

**MOVED and SECONDED that the ballots be destroyed.
Motion Carried.**

- b. Consolidation Plebiscite Motion (Councillor Keith)

Councillor Keith put the following motion on the floor regarding a plebiscite.

MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council, that Council for the Municipality of the District of West Hants, in accordance with Section 53 (1) the Municipal Government Act, directs that a plebiscite be held in the Municipality on Saturday December 22, 2018 on the following questions:

"Do you favor the consolidation of the Municipality of the District of West Hants and Town of Windsor into one municipal unit?"

And that there be two possible answers to the plebiscite question: "Yes" and "No".

Councillor Monroe asked why this is being proposed now and questioned how this will be paid for. She asked whether Council knows enough about this process to educate the constituents. She inquired what will this outcome serve to do and pointed out the consolidation process is in motion. She felt this would create further division in the community and place the Municipality in a position contrary to true leadership. She suggested this would only satisfy one Councillor's need to have a yes/no vote in front of him.

Councillor Daniels stated it was her understanding that there would not be a plebiscite because the Province is providing funding to ensure that councillors engage the community, so they are fully involved. She expressed concern that social media gets misconstrued and questioned whether a plebiscite would be viable. She noted you cannot guarantee how many residents would be making an informed decision.

Councillor Keith expressed disappointment and asked how the Municipality could compare a plebiscite to a petition where residents were not even clear about what they were signing. He felt this is a significant change and that residents need to be heard. He questioned why a petition was going around and hardly any residents knew about it and he wondered how this petition stayed off social media.

CAO Laycock cautioned that a plebiscite would require the full attention of the Municipal Clerk and Communication Coordinator for 3 months and they would not be available to work on the services required for the consolidation process.

The Municipal Clerk confirmed a plebiscite is run like a special election after the date it is called and needs to be done no less than 10 weeks after the date is proposed. She suggested the cost to hold a plebiscite would be approximately \$50,000.

Councillor Zwicker advised that he supported Councillor Keith and felt the Avon Region Citizens Coalition group encouraged people to sign the petition without being well informed first. He agreed that the public deserved to be heard and felt that this has been forced on the Municipality.

Councillor Monroe suggested the answers to Councillor Keith's questions could be found in the petition which is public material. She clarified it was not just a yes or no question instead it provided a full explanation of the issue. She offered that time was taken with everyone who signed it and was done to create a community action when one was needed. She reminded that the Municipality is in the middle of a consolidation process and felt a plebiscite would only upset the Province who would be less considerate of the financial needs. She felt Council was voted in for their ability to lead and do the right thing.

Councillor Leopold disagreed with Councillor Monroe's comments that the proposed plebiscite is to satisfy one Councillor's agenda. She suggested a plebiscite would serve those citizens who did not sign or agree with the petition. She indicated that she had seen a petition at a local business with no one there to provide information. She advised the petition was strategically formatted to highlight certain issues to get residents to sign. She advised personally she knows two people that signed the petition and did not understand what it truly was.

Councillor Leopold indicated that she is interested to know if residents sufficiently understand the impact of consolidation of the two units. She felt the way the process unfolded was wrong and residents were misled. She asked if there was any flexibility on the dates proposed for a plebiscite. The Municipal Clerk confirmed the MGA states it must be held on a Saturday no less 10 weeks after the date its proposed. Councillor Leopold noted that citizens want to be involved and advised she is in favor of a plebiscite otherwise it would be an injustice for the residents of West Hants.

Councillor Jannasch commented that social media should not be a barrier for a plebiscite. He felt that the public are wanting answers and explanations and he suggested to date there has been poor leadership from the Province. He indicated that the facilitator for the workshops has been out of line and did not help the process. He also felt there was no leadership shown from our Provincial elected representative, who should have offered guidance and support, or shown interest. He noted in his community his residents want a choice and want explanations and advised that he supports a plebiscite in hopes to get clarity on how to move forward.

Councillor Francis expressed frustration with Council going back and forth on issues. She suggested legislation is through and reminded that the Province encouraged public information sessions. She acknowledged that the residents need to be heard and advised that she would be supporting the motion. Chair Morton asked the CAO if a plebiscite is held whether the Province would pull their support for the process. CAO Laycock indicated that he could not speak on behalf of the Province. He suggested that an in-camera session was required to discuss staff workload.

Councillor Keith explained that he has been encouraging a plebiscite for over a year, but it kept getting rejected and felt this should have been done a long time ago, so the residents could be heard.

MOVED and SECONDED to table the motion.

Motion Carried.

MOVED and SECONDED to move in camera to discuss personnel issues.

Motion Carried.

The meeting moved in-camera at 7:33 p.m.

The meeting moved out of in-camera at 7:50 p.m.

MOVED and SECONDED to pick the motion up off table.

Motion Carried.

Warden Zebian advised that Council had decided and were cautioned that financial support could be lost from the Province if a plebiscite is held. He suggested that Council is sending mixed signals and that he supports the residents having a voice but suggested this needed to be done two years ago. He asked why Council makes decisions and then turns around

and tries to change those decisions. He understood the plan was to consult and engage the public's opinion throughout the process. Councillor Daniels agreed with the Warden and indicated that she appreciated democracy but reminded that Council needed to follow the MGA that got the Municipality to this point. Councillor Francis agreed and suggested at this point the Municipality is all in.

Councillor Leopold asked if this could come back to Council at the end of the fiscal year, as she did not want citizens to make an uninformed decision until they know the details of this process. Councillor Monroe advised that she does have concern for the opinions of the constituents which is what led to this action to start. She offered that some Councillors seem to have hope that a plebiscite would end the consolidation and suggested they are uninformed as it would not be binding. She noted if a plebiscite takes place the Province will withdraw funding and suggested that Council move forward in a positive way and accept this is happening.

The Municipal Clerk advised the earliest date the plebiscite could be held is December 22, 2018. Warden Zebian questioned how many people would vote at that time.

Motion Carried.

Warden Zebian, Councillors Monroe, Morton, Daniels voted nay.

MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council, that Council direct the CAO to hold a public meeting in connection with the plebiscite.

Motion Carried.

Warden Zebian, Councillors Monroe, Morton, Daniels voted nay.

MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council, that Council set the day of Saturday December 15, 2018 as the other advanced polling date for the plebiscite in addition to the December 18, 2018 dated prescribed by legislation.

Motion Carried.

Warden Zebian, Councillors Monroe, Morton, Daniels voted nay.

MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council, that Council approve the use of the Municipal website, social media and posting of notices in each District as additional Notice of Preliminary List of Electors preparation; and that the Municipal website, social media and voter cards can be used as additional Notice of Poll for the plebiscite.

Motion Carried.

Warden Zebian, Councillors Monroe, Morton, Daniels voted nay.

MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council, that the Preliminary List and any amendment during the revision period be completed by November 21, 2018.

Motion Carried.

Warden Zebian, Councillors Monroe, Morton, Daniels voted nay.

Councillor Monroe suggested since this has passed that she would like to put a motion to show what will be on delay due this action going forward.

MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council, that should Council approve the consolidation plebiscite the water utilities consolidation and rink project will be put on hold.

Motion Carried.

Councillors Leopold and Keith voted nay.

c. Water Bill 62 (Councillor Francis)

Councillor Francis reported that she has had residents who had been in touch with the MLA regarding water and Bill 62. She advised she had sent a copy of an email to the CAO and Public Works and requested that they reply to it.

12. Public Participation

No members of the public spoke.

13. Date of Next Meeting
The next regular Committee of the Whole will be on October 23, 2018.

14. Adjournment
MOVED and SECONDED that the meeting adjourn.
Motion Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Paul Morton, Chair

Rhonda Brown, Municipal Clerk