

**WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY**

**Council Meeting Agenda **Amended****

**December 12, 2023 - 6:00 p.m.**

Sanford Council Chambers, 76 Morison Dr, Windsor, NS

Virtual via Zoom (also FB Livestream)



**West Hants**  
something inspiring awaits

- 
1. Call to Order
  2. Attendance
  3. Announcements
  4. Approval of the Agenda, including additions or deletions
    - a) Dashboard Action Items – Information Log
    - b) Dashboard Action Items – Dangerous or Unsightly Premises
  5. Declaration(s) of Conflict of Interest
  6. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes
    - a) 2023-11-28 Council Meeting Minutes
    - b) 2023-11-28 Public Hearing Minutes 411 King Street Development Agreement
    - c) 2023-11-28 Public Hearing Minutes MacLeod Court, PIDs 45006947 and 45415668 Three Mile Plains Development Agreement
  7. Public Hearings - None
  8. Second Readings – None
  9. Unfinished Business/Postponed Motions
    - c) Consolidation of the Water and Sewer Utilities – Director Rochon and WHRM Councillor Report Water Utility, Consolidation and Other – Councillor Ivey
    - a) Review Committee Expressions of Interest – Mayor Zebian
    - b) Additional Recording Resources for Meetings – Clerk Snair
    - ~~e) Consolidation of the Water and Sewer Utilities – Director Rochon~~
  10. Mayor’s Report
  11. Committee(s) of Council Excerpts/Recommendations
    - a) Committee of the Whole Excerpts (December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023)
      - i. Consulting Services & Writing Fire Apparatus RFPs
      - ii. Letter of Support for Cease Fire in Gaza

12. Councillor Municipal Business/Activity Reports
  - a) Councillor Ivey, District 11 Activity Report
  
13. Correspondence
  - a) Information
    1. Avon Causeway Activity Log - None
  
    2. Correspondence Received Activity Log
      - i. Lubna Jamshaid Re Support Ceasefire in Gaza
      - ii. Andrea Parker Re Health Plan Survey Opportunity
      - iii. Response from MLA Sheehy-Richard Re Additional Carpool Parking Lot
  
  - b) Requests - None
  
  - c) Outgoing Correspondence Log - None
  
14. New Business
  - a) Bulk water and Sewer Rebates – Mayor Zebian
  - b) Brooklyn School Bus Situation (**verbal report**) – Councillor M. McLean
  
15. In-Camera
  
16. Next Meeting Date / Adjournment – December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Special Council Meeting 6 p.m.

## WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

### Council Meeting Minutes

December 12, 2023 - 6:02 p.m.

Sanford Council Chambers, 76 Morison Dr, Windsor, NS

And virtually via Zoom (also Facebook Livestreamed)



**West Hants**

something inspiring awaits.

1. Call to Order - Mayor Zebian called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. Attendance

Council:

Abraham Zebian, Mayor

Rupert Jannasch, Councillor, District 1

Scott McLean, Councillor, District 2 (ZOOM)

Mark McLean, Councillor, District 3

Jeff Hartt, Councillor, District 4

Debbie Francis, Councillor, District 5

Paul Morton, Deputy Mayor, District 8

Bob Morton, Councillor, District 6

Ed Sherman, Councillor, District 7

John Smith, Councillor, District 9

Laurie Murley, Councillor, District 10

Jim Ivey, Councillor, District 11

Staff:

Mark Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer

Carlee Rochon, Director of Financial Services

Todd Richard, Dir. Public Works

Alex Dunphy, Planner

Shelleena Thornton, Municipal Ops Sup.

Sara Poirier, Dir. Planning &

Development Mark Fredericks, Senior

Planner Deanna Snair, Municipal Clerk

Regrets:

Kathy Kehoe, Director Community Development

3. Announcements (6:03 p.m.)

Mayor Zebian acknowledged that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People and that this land is governed by the treaties of Peace and Friendship signed in 1726. West Hants Regional Municipality also recognizes that we are all treaty people and have responsibilities to this land and each other. West Hants Regional Municipality also recognizes African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose history, legacies, and contributions have enriched that part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years. Birthday wishes were extended to Councillor Francis.

4. Approval of the Agenda, including additions or deletions (6:03 p.m.)

Voting occurred by a show of hands.

**MOVED BY DEPUTY MAYOR P. MORTON AND COUNCILLOR FRANCIS  
THAT THE 2023-11-28 COUNCIL AGENDA BE APPROVED. MOTION  
CARRIED**

5. Declaration of Conflict of Interest (6:04 pm) – None

6. Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes (6:04 p.m.)
  - a. 2023-11-28 Council Meeting Minutes
  - b. 2023-11-28 Public Hearing Minutes, 411 King Street Development Agreement
  - c. 2023-11-28 Public Hearing Minutes MacLeod Court, PID 45006947 and 454156688 Three Mile Plains Development Agreement

**MOVED BY DEPUTY MAYOR P. MORTON AND COUNCILLOR FRANCIS  
THAT THE MINUTES OF:  
2023-11-28 COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
2023-11-28 PUBLIC HEARING 411 KING STREET DEVELOPMENT  
AGREEMENT MINUTES  
2023-11-28 PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES MACLEOD COURT, PID  
450006947 AND 45415668 THREE MILE PALINS DEVELOPMENT  
AGREEMENT. MOTION CARRIED.**

7. **Public Hearings** – None

8. **Second Readings** – None

9. **Unfinished Business/Postponed Motions**

a) **Review Committee Expressions of Interest** (6:04 p.m.)

Expressions of interest were passed to the clerk, four names would be drawn. This item was moved further down on the agenda to allow time to prepare the names for the draw.

c) **Consolidation of the Water and Sewer Utilities** (6:05 p.m.)

The November 24<sup>th</sup> memo was included in the package for review. Should Council support proceeding with consolidation an amendment (to the date) would be required to extend timelines.

At this time Councillor Ivey reviewed the information report highlighting previous discussions regarding water utilities and consolidation; specifically, the Windsor water utility deficit (\$425,000), incorrectly billing over the course of more than four (4) quarters and costs for one utility going down while the other utilities cost went up.

Concerns were raised regarding the lack of notations within the auditors reports and lack of awareness regarding the deficit. However, the biggest concern was the accuracy of data built into the study.

There was value in Council have a deeper discussion and having the numbers corrected.

Discussion Points:

- The majority of the credit went into 2021 year, there was already previous usage that was tracking high. By the third quarter it was tracking higher and triggered the investigation.
- The remainder of the credit went into the 2022-23 year. Some of the variance for 2022-23 was due to the credit only going back to June 2021 (a first quarter did not get a correction). Only a portion of the credit would have gone into 2022-23. Due to a correction in the decimal place, the reads were changed. The 2023 credit was a result of the investigation that changed the reads after the revenue was already budgeted.

- The error related to liters and Imperial Gallons was due to a conversion error by staff. The information in the system was already converted to Imperial Gallons. The previous information provided (4-9 million) was in Imperial Gallons not liters, which results in 35-40 million Imperial Gallons per year and tracks with where the current Imperial Gallons sits.
- Director Rochon was unable to speak the data from 2014 in the report as she was not employed with the Municipality at the time and did not have an opportunity to review the report. The numbers have changed since 2014 and a number of Capital projects in Three Mile Plains have occurred due to aging infrastructure and a leak detection Capital project occurred in the first year of consolidation. The meter read was based off of total usage as read by the meter.
- The review during the budget process in January of 2022 triggered the investigation. The correction can only go back four (4) quarters, resulting in the date of June 2021.
- Leak detection is an ongoing process. Three Mile Plains Capital improvements involved replacing all the service laterals to the property along the Number 1 highway (the material that was used was susceptible to leakage). Property owners were advised they should also look at replacing their service from the curb stop to the house.
- The number of bulk water meter readings has been increased and compared to the 5/8 consumption. Bulk water meters consumption should be higher due to leakage on the system. The smaller the meter, the more accurate the reading. Technology has also changed (no moving parts now), reflected increased accuracy.
- Bulk water (District) meters were not accurate on the low flow side. Water loss occurs between the main and the house.
- Variances (unaccounted water) vary yearly depending on leaks. Water lost due to flushing was accounted for.
- 5/8 and 3/4 were the most common residential meters.
- The breakdown of the total volume (5/8 meter) billed compared to the volume going from the plant was requested and currently being investigated by staff to determine meter accuracy, decimal point correct or do both need to be replaced. There was value in knowing this information to determine billing.
- The information/numbers presented were based on the read of one of the bulk water meters. These reads are received quarterly, along with a picture as well. The bulk water meter would feed the majority of the Three Mile Plains area (including the Crossing and a portion of Edward Drive). There were also a few larger sized meters that served the area as well.
- The consultants have already used the amounts as part of the rate study. The total consumption usage for the entire utility was provided to the consultants and utilized for the consolidation study. Both memos reflect the information within their reports and also are reflected in the proposed rates.
- The total deficit was \$245,000.00 for the Windsor Water Utility. The credit from the Windsor Water Utility to the Three Mile Plains bulk meter was closer to \$297,000.00.
- Volumes used for Firefighting (used for outer areas in the region and General Rated) were small amounts and equated approximately \$2-3/tanker load. Most firefighting

used dry hydrants. Part of the water study included a fire protection amount that is billed from the Utility to West Hants (this was what was seen on the General Rate).

- Residential billings were accurate and correct. No one was overcharged or overbilled.
- The error was a result of an inaccurate meter (the size of the meter and unaccounted for water lost) as well as an error in a decimal point allocation that required correcting.
- Staff operate the two (2) utilities as one utility. Consolidating them would eliminate the inaccuracies and discrepancies currently occurring as the larger inaccurate meters were no longer necessary. They could still be used for tracking to see where water goes, but there would be no water being sold between utilities.
- There was value in seeing all the data before a decision was made regarding consolidating the Utilities. Depending on the direction provided, the studies would need to be finalized and rates would be brought back and presented. A draft study supporting the memo was provided on November 24<sup>th</sup> breaks down consumption, fire protection, revenue, capital, depreciation, etc. included in a normal study. The consultant would finalize the report and present rates, so that an application could be made to the UARB.
- Concern was raised that information regarding volume billed and the volume going out was not available. It was important to know leakage amount (whether it was private or municipal responsibilities).
- Concern was raised that the issue was initially highlighted two (2) years ago and Council was only hearing about it now.

**MOVED BY COUNCILLORS IVEY AND S. MCLEAN THAT THE MEETING MOVE IN-CAMERA AT 6:56 P.M. MOTION CARRIED**

**MOVED BY DEPUTY MAYOR P. MORTON AND COUNCILLOR FRANCIS THAT THE MEETING MOVE OUT OF IN-CAMERA AT 7:15 P.M. MOTION CARRIED**

The regular meeting resumed at 7:15 p.m.

Discussions continued regarding consolidation of the water and sewer utilities.

Discussion Points:

- Motion date would need to change from July 1<sup>st</sup> to September 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Sewer was not regulated by the UARB and could be looked at separately from water.
- Base rates were not finalized yet; the amounts would be close to what was referenced as unmetered on an annual basis for 2024-25.
- The direction was to look at a 40% and 50% base rate, this information will come back to Council for review.

Concern was raised that the discrepancy was significant and required additional information to clarify/confirm what actually occurred and resulted in the discrepancy. It was important to identify what additional information was needed in order to move the consolidation process forward.

- Information regarding the discrepancy was being gathered, the volume going through the meter was known, staff were currently reviewing what was billed and comparing the two numbers to determine leakage amounts.
- All billings are based on what has gone through the meter.
- Staff began looking at annual consumption in 2022-23.
- While questions still needed to be answered regarding the discrepancy and billing, there were opinions that the discrepancy and consolidation were two separate issues.
- The consultants used the total volume for all meters (annual consumption for the utility) that was billed out on 2022-23 and the audited 2022-23 financial statements that would account for any discrepancies in their calculations. They would then break things down further based on meter size.
- If it was supported to proceed with consolidation, another report would be presented to Council to consider and approve potential rates. Tonight was about providing direction for staff to begin the consolidation process.

**MOVED BY COUNCILLORS MURLEY AND SHERMAN THAT COUNCIL DIRECT THE CAO TO BEGIN THE PROCESS OF CONSOLIDATING THE WINDSOR AND WEST HANTS WATER UTILITIES INTO ONE ORGANIZATION AND HAVE THIS WORK COMPLETED BY SEPTEMBER 1, 2024. MOTION CARRIED.** Nays: M. McLean, Hartt, S. McLean and Ivey.

If it was supported to proceed with consolidating the sewer services, staff would work with the consultant to bring back rates for Council to approve. In addition to this the two (2) current Sewer By-Laws would be consolidated into one (1) By-Law. The Sewer By-law references the approved rates of Council, the actual rates were not in the By-Law. The standard By-Law process would be adhered to, including Council approval. With respect to sewer, Council would serve a similar role to that of the UARB in relation to water.

**MOVED BY COUNCILLOR MURLEY AND DEPUTY MAYOR P. MORTON THAT COUNCIL DIRECT THE CAO TO BEGIN THE PROCESS OF CONSOLIDATING THE WINDSOR AND WEST HANTS SEWER SERVICES INTO ONE ORGANIZATION AND MAKE THE NECESSARY CHANGES TO THE BY-LAWS AND HAVE THIS WORK COMPLETED BY SEPTEMBER 1, 2024. MOTION CARRIED.** Nays: Francis, M. McLean, S. McLean, Hartt, and Ivey.

a) Review Committee (7:44 p.m.)

The names of all the Councillors who expressed interest in being on the committee were put into a basket. Mayor Zebian requested that Municipal Operations Supervisor Thorton draw four names from the basket.

Before names were drawn, there was support for the mayor to be one of the four to sit on the committee.

**MOVED BY COUNCILLORS MURLEY AND SHERMAN THAT COUNCIL APPROVES THE REVIEW COMMITTEE CONSIST OF THE MAYOR AND THREE COUNCIL MEMBERS. MOTION CARRIED.** Nays: Hartt. S. McLean and Ivey

Municipal Operations Supervisor drew three (3) names from the basket. The first name drawn was Mayor Zebian resulting in another name being drawn, which was Councillor Sherman. The second name drawn was Councillor Murley and the third name drawn was Deputy Mayor Paul Morton.

**MOVED BY DEPUTY MAYOR P. MORTON AND COUNCILLOR MORTON  
THAT THE BALLOTS BE DESTROYED. MOTION CARRIED.**

The ballots were destroyed after the meeting.

b) Additional Recording Resources for Meetings (7:46 p.m.)

Clerk Snair reviewed the information report highlighting the request for staff to explore alternate means for recording meetings held outside of Council chambers for public awareness. The report identified some pros and cons of having an audio recording vs a combined audio/video recording and costs associated with the purchase should Council want to proceed with obtaining the necessary equipment.

Discussion Points:

- There was value in exploring baffling or buffering systems for larger rooms, like the Community Centre or having an expert look at the area to provide guidance on improvements that would provide better sound quality for when meetings are held at this site.
- Important to have two (2) microphones, one for the presenter and one for the audience. A wireless mic would be beneficial for individuals wanting to speak at a meeting.

**MOVED BY COUNCILLOR SHERMAN AND DEPUTY MAYOR P. MORTON  
THAT COUNCIL APPROVES THE ALLOCATION OF FUNDS IN THE  
AMOUNT OF \$3364.00 PLUS APPLICABLE TAXES TO PURCHASE AUDIO  
AND VIDEO RECORDING EQUIPMENT TO BE UTILIZED IN COMMUNITY  
MEETING SETTINGS FOR THE PURPOSE OF AUDIO AND VIDEO  
RECORDING FOR PUBLIC USE. MOTION CARRIED**

10. Mayor's Report (7:52 p.m.)

Mayor Zebian provided a verbal report.

Highlights included attending follow-up Stormwater Management meetings in Hantsport and Windsor (residents looking for immediate results). With the upcoming Special Council meeting, there was value in looking for immediate short-, medium- and long-term solutions to stop overland flooding in the areas. Met with new developers interested in developing in the area to tour the area and discuss process and bylaws associated with development. Attended the PACE program launch at the West Hants Sports Complex, RCMP Staff a Cruiser in support of the Windsor Food Bank, participated in the Hants County Christmas Angels, which was another huge success, a reminder to all to honour any pledges, participated in videos for National Day of Recognition of Persons with Disabilities and National Day of Remembrance and Action Against Women.

Delivered poinsettias to long term care, hospitals and businesses in West Hants for the Spreading of Christmas Cheer. Thanks were extended to Christmas Angels and Avon Valley

Floral for the donated poinsettias.

WHRM has applied for funding under the Nova Scotia Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund to perform a transportation feasibility study. Funds (\$20,000) from the 2023 MCCAP Operating budget will be used to potential leverage more funding if the application were to be successful. Looking for a response by March/April of 2024. In speaking with NS Affordable Housing Association, they also spoke of transportation and their desire to look at a project and the need for transit in the area.

PACHAC meeting this week will see the updated Planning Activity report for the end of November 2023, WHRM has seen little over \$146 million in building activity permit amounts for this year.

Congratulations extended to the organizers of Festoon in Hantsport, it was another huge success.

Attended the Four Seasons Community Orchestra Christmas concert at the Windsor Community Centre.

The Tremaine Crescent Affordable Housing Project has been put off, Geotech was not favourable resulting in the province moving on from that project. The housing report for West Hants indicates we are on track to hit goals by 2023, but the affordability aspect remains lacking. The affordable housing project was a great project if the right land could be found. There was value in providing a nudge to the province as they still own land in the area that could be used instead.

Mayor Zebian stepped down from the chair, Deputy Mayor P. Morton assumed the chair at 8 p.m.

**MOVED BY MAYOR ZEBIAN AND COUNCILLOR MURLEY THAT COUNCIL DIRECT STAFF TO WRITE A LETTER TO THE PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA AND ALL MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE, URGING THEM TO TRANSFER THE PROPOSAL FROM THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA CONSTRUCTION TO ANOTHER SUITABLE SITE WITHIN WEST HANTS TO ADD THE MUCH-NEEDED AFFORDABLE HOUSING TO OUR COMMUNITY. MOTION CARRIED.**

Mayor Zebian assumed the chair at 8:01 p.m.

The Diverse and Inclusive Communities committee planning session has been rescheduled for the new year. Council will be updated on future progress.

Meeting with community members expressing concerns for those experiencing homelessness and looking at ways to help address it. Although it is provincial jurisdiction, it was noted that all three levels of government were needed to address the situation in a meaningful way.

A break occurred at 8:03 p.m. The regular meeting resumed at 8:16 p.m.

11. Committee(s) of Council Excerpts/Recommendations (8:16 p.m.)
  - a. Committee of the Whole Excerpts (December 5, 2023)
    - i. Consulting Services & Writing Fire Apparatus RFPs

**MOVED BY DEPUTY MAYOR P. MORTON AND COUNCILLOR FRANCIS THAT COUNCIL APPROVES GOUDREault ASSOCIATES REVIEWING**

**AND DEVELOPING THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR WINDSOR FIRE DEPARTMENT'S RESCUE ENGINE 4 AND ENGINE 4 AT THE QUOTED PRICE OF \$14,794.16 PLUS TAX. MOTION CARRIED.**

- ii. Letter of Support for Cease Fire in Gaza (8:17 p.m.)

**MOVED BY DEPUTY MAYOR P. MORTON AND COUNCILLOR MURLEY THAT COUNCIL DIRECT STAFF WRITE A LETTER CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA TO DEFEND THE RIGHTS OF ALL INNOCENT PEOPLE WHO DO NOT HAVE A VOICE IN THE GAZA CONFLICT; DENOUNCE ALL HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS CURRENTLY TAKING PLACE AND SWIFTLY CALL FOR PEACE AND A PERMANENT CEASEFIRING IN GAZA FOR THE REGION KNOWN AS PALESTINE. MOTION CARRIED**

- 12. Councillor Municipal Business/Activity Reports (8:18 p.m.)

- a) Councillor Ivey, District 11 Activity Report

Councillor Ivey provided a brief overview of the report. Highlights included attending Community Stormwater Management meetings in Windsor and Hantsport, Fire Chiefs workshop, Christmas with Santa at the Ardoise Hall, Short Term Rental session and the Public Information meeting for three new development opportunities within West Hants. Calls and discussions continue to occur regarding ditches, culverts and flood related matters in low lying areas (College Road, Tremaine Crescent, Chester Road near Hill Crest and the Martock Marsh). Some of the calls related to overgrown ditches (some have trees growing in them) and concern was raised that this has caused a domino defect (municipal ditches overflowing into the overgrown Marsh body, resulting in provincial ditches overflowing and water backing up in provincial ditches causing areas that are holding water to flood residential properties.

residents to experience flooding on their properties. The report also focused on questions surrounding the Windsor Water Utility as a result of the audited presentation to Council. Much of the discussion and concerns were raised earlier in the agenda during the Water and Sewer Consolidation report/discussion (6:05 p.m.).

- 13. Correspondence (8:28 p.m.)

- a) Information

- 1. Avon Causeway Activity Log - None

- 2. Correspondence Received Activity Log

- i. Lubna Jamshaid Re Support Ceasefire in Gaza
- ii. Andrea Parker Re Health Plan Survey Opportunity
- iii. Response from MLA Sheehy-Richard Re Additional Carpool Parking Lot

- b) Requests – None

c) Outgoing Correspondence Log – None

14. New Business

a) Bulk Water and Sewer Rebates (8:30 p.m.)

Mayor Zebian reviewed the report highlighting previous discussions where Council spoke of creating a residential sewer rebate to make life more affordable for residents. With the thoughts for fairness, it was suggested that a bulk water rebate also be created in conjunction with the sewer rebate for residents who met the eligible criteria.

Discussion Points:

- Any rebates were intended to be geared towards lower income families or residents (similar to low-income tax rebate). The wording of the motion can be changed to reflect the intent.
- Concern was raised that residents who do not have or use the services would support/fund the rebates if they were General rated. Residents who have septic systems do not get funding for having their systems pumped out. There was uncertainty on how it could be done.
- With the bulk water rebate a person would need to prove they are buying the services (show a receipt).
- The Utility and Review Board (UARB) will not permit a bulk water rebate to be area rated through the Utility. Sewer is not regulated by the UARB, Council can choose to make changes to it.
- Staff will provide a report on potential options for Council to consider (how it looks, who was eligible, funding options to consider and how to ensure equal access for residents.
- It was supported to move the process forward as long as the funding source was removed from the motion. This will be discussed and determined at a later meeting, following the information report from staff.
- The Municipality does not control the rate for bulk water, it was hoped any cost savings from the new bulk water station in Three Mile Plains would be transferred to the customer, but that would be the responsibility of the water hauler to do so.
- A suggestion was made to consider where bulk water was being obtained from (municipal water vs other water sources) in relation to qualifying for a rebate.

Director Richard advised the water line has been installed from the road, staff were awaiting delivery of the bulk water station unit before the project could proceed forward. Delivery was expected in the new year (2024).

**MOVED BY MAYOR ZEBIAN AND COUNCILLOR SHERMAN THAT COUNCIL DIRECT STAFF TO CREATE A REGIONAL SEWER REBATE IN THE SAME MANNER AS THE LOW-INCOME RESIDENTIAL TAX REBATE THAT INCLUDES A \$50/QUARTER REBATE WITH OPTIONS OF FUNDING AVENUES TO BE PRESENTED BY STAFF. MOTION CARRIED.** Nays: M. McLean

**MOVED BY MAYOR ZEBIAN AND COUNCILLOR SMITH THAT COUNCIL DIRECT STAFF TO CREATE A REGIONAL BULK WATER REBATE THAT**

**WOULD BE SIMILAR TO THE LOW-INCOME RESIDENTIAL TAX REBATE THAT INCLUDES A \$200/YEAR/RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY OWNER TO BE FUNDED THROUGH AVENUES THAT WILL BE PRESENTED BY STAFF. MOTION CARRIED.** Nays: M. McLean

Mayor Zebian assumed the chair at 8:44 p.m.

b) Brooklyn School Situation (8:44 p.m.)

Councillor M. McLean provided a verbal report regarding the on-going concerns around bus cancellations, traffic and safety concerns for students and drivers in the Brooklyn area. The number of bus route cancellations has increased forcing many families to transport or find alternate transportation for their children. The increased traffic in the area creates congestion and cars backing up on a very busy road (Highway 14) in Brooklyn. There was concern that someone would be injured if nothing was done to alleviate the situation.

Discussion Points:

- Annapolis Valley Regional Centre for Education (AVRCE) were aware of the increased frustration felt by families and are working to resolve the issue.
- (AVRCE) has been advertising for bus drivers via radio, newspaper, social media, etc. They have had an unprecedented amount of interest, but time was required to process all the applications.
- Interested parties must meet specific criteria, background checks and have experience driving a bus or be willing to take the necessary training. This also requires additional time.
- With the awareness that this was a provincial issue, there was support to proceed with a letter to highlight safety concerns for students and residents in the area.

**MOVED BY COUNCILLORS M. MCLEAN AND SMITH THAT COUNCIL DIRECT STAFF TO WRITE A LETTER TO THE PROVINCE EXPRESSING CONCERN REGARDING BUS CANCELLATIONS IN THE RECENT WEEKS, MONTHS AND YEARS AND THE LETTER BE SENT TO THE SCHOOL BOARD, PREMIER AND MLA SHEEHY-RICHARD. MOTION CARRIED**

15. In-Camera – None

16. Next Meeting Date / Adjournment – December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Special Council Meeting 6 p.m.

**MOVED BY DEPUTY MAYOR P. MORTON AND COUNCILLOR SHERMAN THAT THE MEETING ADJOURN AT 8:53 P.M. MOTION CARRIED**

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Mayor Abraham Zebian (Chair)

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Deanna Snair, Municipal Clerk