

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
Approved Minutes

DATE: September 11, 2024
TIME: 4:30 p.m. – 6:14 p.m.
PLACE: Council Chambers

ATTENDANCE: Deputy Mayor Steve Gallant; Councillors Jill Chandler; Gordie Cox; Jeff MacDonald; Ron Dowling; Jody Jackson; Jeremy Crosby, CAO; Dale McKeigan, Director of Planning, Development, and Heritage; Kim O’Connell; Director of Finance and Technology; Jeannie Gallant, Director of Infrastructure; Wendy Watts, Community and Business Engagement Manager; and Mary McAskill, Recording Clerk

REGRETS: Jeremy Pierce, Deputy CAO and Recreation Director

CHAIR: Mayor Steve Ogden

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Steve Ogden called the Regular Monthly Council Meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance and those viewing via social media.

Mayor Ogden took a moment to acknowledge the land upon which we gather is the unceded territory of the Mi’Kmaq people, and we pay our respects to the Indigenous Mi’Kmaq people of this territory past, present, and future.

2. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Nil

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Councillor Jeff MacDonald and seconded by Councillor Gordie Cox that the agenda be approved as circulated.

4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

It was moved by Councillor Jody Jackson and seconded by Councillor Jeff MacDonald that the regular monthly meeting minutes of August 14, 2024, be approved as circulated.

5. BUSINESS ARISING

Nil

6. PRESENTATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Nil

7. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Ogden gave an overview of his report as follows:

- Chaired the regular monthly meeting of Council, and the Committee of the Whole meeting
- Along with Councillor Jackson and CAO Crosby, met with representatives of the Cross Roads Fire Company to discuss current and future needs and funding challenges
- Met with RCMP commanding officer Kevin Lewis and other senior officers, along with Deputy Mayor Gallant and CAO Crosby, to discuss policing in Stratford
- Participated in an event to celebrate the Acadian community on August 15
- Was interviewed by Saltwire about the strategic plan for transit
- Met with the auditors, along with Councillor Dowling and finance director Kim O'Connell, to examine and finalize the 2023/24 Town financial statements
- Participated in a public meeting to discuss proposed changes to the Zoning and Development Bylaw
- Attended a virtual meeting of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Committee, the Infrastructure Committee, and the Transportation Committee
- Along with business and community engagement manager Wendy Watts, had the pleasure of visiting several new businesses and presenting welcome gifts
- Enjoyed participating in a fundraising golf event for the Stars for Life Foundation
- Spoke and visited with several residents to discuss various issues
- Attended internal meetings and looked after the day to day affairs of the Town; and
- Enjoyed a few days of vacation.

8. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER (CAO) REPORT

The report was included in the agenda package for Council to review. The CAO reviewed the highlights of his report as follows:

- Attended a meeting with the mayor and our solicitor to sign the road agreement for the community campus property
- Attended and participated in the EMO training exercise with Town staff and a representative from the Provincial EMO office
- Attended a meeting with representatives from Cornwall and Charlottetown to talk about provincial and federal grants for expanding the transit system
- Attended two meetings with planning staff and local developers regarding the potential for rezoning certain parcels of land within the Town core area
- Chaired the monthly CAO department meeting to discuss department initiatives and projects
- Chaired the bi-weekly department head meeting to discuss Town projects and initiatives
- Attended and participated in the monthly committee of the whole meeting
- I, along with the director of finance, attended a presentation by RCMP Chief Superintendent Kevin Lewis and his staff - in conjunction with revenue sharing discussions. The presentation was to go over RCMP resources, initiatives, and equipment regarding RCMP community policing within the province; and

- I was able to take some time off for vacation and I would like to thank Deputy CAO Jeremy Pierce for looking after Town matters during my absence.

In addition, I organized meetings with staff, prepared comprehensive agendas, and relevant materials for the various committee meetings to keep them up to date. In addition, I assessed infrastructure projects, reviewed several planning related matters, and effectively managed various HR related files. I responded to emails and letters from residents, stakeholders, government officials, and other entities.

9. SAFETY SERVICES

a) No Report

Councillor Jackson stated that the committee did not hold a meeting in August.

b) Street Lights

Nil

c) RCMP

The report for the month of August was included in the agenda package. Councillor Jackson asked Corporal Weatherbie to review the RCMP report that was included in the agenda package.

Corporal Weatherbie reported that there were 272 occurrences in Stratford in the month of August. Traffic related offences make up 42% of the occurrences. He noted that 45 summary offence tickets were written, along with 20 written warning violations. Corporal Weatherbie stated that there were nine impaired complaints, six trespass acts, and 12 mischief obstructing enjoyment of property, with a high percentage of the complaints concerning the encampments that are coming into Stratford. There were 21 reports of theft and 17 of those were gas related incidents.

Councillor Jackson took a moment to welcome Constable Anthony Dowling. Corporal Weatherbie added that he transferred in from Whitehorse, but he is originally from PEI.

Deputy Mayor Gallant noted that there are some parking concerns on Bryer Jones. He explained that there was a similar problem at the old Brown's Court and what they did to rectify the situation was to install no parking signs, ticketed those who ignored the signs and had them towed. Deputy Mayor Gallant asked what should we do going forward and the CAO replied that we can put in a request to the Department of Transportation asking that they put up 'no parking signs' and then we can ask the RCMP to enforce the rules once the signs are up. The CAO added that this item is also going to be on our next Committee of the Whole meeting for further discussion. Councillor Jackson stated that one issue is the high rents which means more people in a unit – and in turn more cars. He added that he didn't want residents to think that it was a planning principle issue.

d) Humane Society Report

The report for the month of August was included in the agenda package.

e) Transit

The report for the month of August was included in the agenda package. Councillor Jackson stated that it is great to see that we are maintaining an average of 300 plus riders a day. We are not yet at the stage where we will see a lot less cars but we are moving in the right direction.

f) Cross Roads Fire Department

The report for the month of August was included in the agenda package. Councillor Jackson noted that we had 20 calls in August – four of them were fires, with one of the fires being a vehicle on the Hillsborough Bridge. We had six motor vehicle accidents, five medical first responses, and one water rescue of a kayaker. We were pleased to have the new rapid response boat on hand for the water rescue.

10. RECREATION, CULTURE AND EVENTS

Councillor Chandler gave an overview of her report as follows:

Stratford Youth Centre and Council – the youth centre opened for the season on Monday, September 9, 2024. There are currently 65 youth members registered for the new season. This number is considerably higher than normal for this early in the season.

Birthday party packages will once again be offered at the youth centre starting in October. This year, older youth members will be hired to supervise the parties. This will give youth a part-time job and some valuable work experience.

The 'Third Annual Cheryl Duffy Walk' will take place on Saturday, September 21, 2024, at Cotton Park as part of Stratford FallFest. Registrations are now open on the youth centre website. The youth centre will be running the Fun Fair and canteen at the Stratford FallFest on September 21-22, 2024.

Events – Stratford Fall Fest will be hosted at Robert Cotton Park on Saturday, September 21 and Sunday, September 22, 2024 from 1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. each day. A variety of activities and performances are planned for the two day event. Some of the activities included:

- Third Annual Cheryl Duffy Memorial Walk
- Food Vendors: Blowing Smoke Food Truck, and Ruthie's Mini Donuts
- Arts: Artisan Market Tent, Vendors, and Displays
- Entertainers will be Michael Pendergast, Michael Lucien Bergeron, Mayflower's Ceilidh, and Dance Virtuosa

Stratford ball fields hosted three provincial championships on successive weekends.

- 13U “A” Baseball Provincials – Baseball Provincials – August 23 – 26, 2024 at Kinlock Field
- U17 Softball Provincials – August 30 – September 1, 2024, at Upper MacNeill Field
- U11 “AAA” Baseball Provincials – September 6 – 8, 2024 at Upper MacNeill Field

Congratulations to the following teams that earned provincial championships

- U11 “A” Tier 3 Stratford Burrige Provincial Champs – Gold Medal
- U11 “A” Tier 2 Stratford Provincials – Silver Medal
- U11 “AA” Stratford Provincial Champs- Gold Medal
- U11 “AAA” Eastern Express Provincial Champs – Gold Medal
- U11 Stratford Stealers Provincial Champs – Gold Medal

Programs – Fall programs return to the Stratford Town Centre after a summer of outdoor programming. Thank you to all sport organizations for providing recreational and social opportunities to young Stratford residents. Stratford ball, soccer, and cricket fields, along with tennis and pickleball facilities were in constant use from May to September.

The Stratford splashpad was decommissioned for the season on Tuesday, September 3, 2024. The splashpad was certainly well utilized and appreciated - thanks to the amazing summer weather.

Soccer fields at the Stratford Soccer Complex will see some fall care and attention. Fields A, C, D, and Keppoch Field are all slated for the fall maintenance program starting Monday, September 16, 2024, with Field B and Fullerton’s staying open through to October 1, 2024. Ballfields and the cricket field at Tea Hill Park will begin similar fall maintenance in the coming weeks. Pickleball and tennis courts will remain open until the weather necessitates the nets and windscreens be taken down.

New and returning programs are now open for registration, with some programs already having started.

- Full Body and Post Natal Fitness Classes – 12 Week Program
- Tennis for Youth and Adults @Town Centre Gym – September to December
- Co-ed Badminton and Volleyball, and Adult Basketball
- Pickleball – Four Daytime Sessions and a Friday Evening Session
- New Programs – Resume for Rookies and Career Exploration Workshops

Town Centre Gymnasium and Meeting Spaces – operation is at full capacity. The new addition to our gym programming for the 2024/25 school year will be the Kid Hub afterschool program

using half of the gym Monday to Friday from 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. and on the stage 3:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Councillor Chandler noted that the Battery Point room has been converted into three office spaces for our expanding planning department. However, meeting space at the Stratford Emergency Centre will be able to pick up the loss of the Town's meeting room.

Councillor Chandler thanked everyone who recently participated in the 'stuff a bus food drive' at No Frills. She added that people were very generous and the need for the foodbank has increased.

Councillor Cox noted that some residents have contacted both him and Councillor Chandler and are upset regarding the increase in costs for the art program. The Deputy CAO stated that it is unfortunate that the cost of some programs had to increase, but the Town offers the lowest possible cost for all of its' programs.

11. FINANCE AND TECHNOLOGY

a) Councillor Dowling noted that the committee did not meet last month. He reviewed his report as follows:

- The next round of utility disconnects will be done the week of September 23, 2024
- There were 171 first letters issued to utility customers with a due date of September 13, 2024
- There were 22 second letters issued to utility customers with a due date of August 26, 2024. The people who have not paid will go to the disconnect stage
- Participated in an Emergency Measure Organization (EMO) training session
- Met with Cornwall to review revenue sharing information and go over how we were allocating expenses to different categories
- Attended a meeting with the RCMP, the province, and the Federation of PEI Municipalities (FPEIM) to discuss what is included in contract policing under the RCMP, and review statistics for the past year
- Met with directors to review revenue sharing information. Submitted financial information to FPEIM
- Participated in a virtual meeting with MRSB who has been hired by FPEIM to gather information for the revenue sharing negotiations with the province
- Audit is complete, draft financial statements are being presented by Michelle Burge to the mayor, deputy mayor, finance chair, and vice chair on September 9, 2024
- Public School Board lease comments have been received from the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure. We are now making final changes so that the lease can be renewed.

- Attended Canada Community Building Fund (CCBF) information session. Funding requests need to be submitted by mid-October (this is the gas tax funding)
- Met with the fire company to review their financial needs for the future
- Audra Bulger is leaving the Town for a new job opportunity and we wish her all the best in her new position.

b) Financial Statements

Included in the agenda package for Council to review.

12. PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND HERITAGE

- a) No Report – the committee did not meet since the last Council meeting
- b) Permit Summary was included in the agenda package for Council to review. Councillor MacDonald briefly reviewed the report.
- c) **Resolution PH024-2024 – DP143-24 – Stratford Youth Centre – 57 Bunbury Road (PID 860379) Temporary Use Permit for up to three Food Trucks for the 2024 Fall Festival**

Moved by Councillor Jeff MacDonald

Seconded by Councillor Jody Jackson

WHEREAS an application has been received from Melanie Weatherbie on behalf of the Stratford Youth Centre for a Temporary Use Development Permit, for up to 3 food trucks, which are proposed to be located at the Cotton Centre Property at 57 Bunbury Road (PID 860379), adjacent to the Gertrude Cotton building as part of the Town's annual Fall Fest which takes place Friday, September 20 to Sunday, September 22, 2024; and

WHEREAS in accordance with Section 8.20 of the Zoning and Development Bylaw #45, where Council deems that there would be no health or safety risks to users and there would be no significant nuisance created for adjoining properties, Council may issue a temporary Development Permit enabling the temporary erection of a Building or Structure and/or the Temporary Use of land to accommodate a celebration or event; and

WHEREAS the duration of a Temporary Use permit shall not exceed thirty (30) days; and

WHEREAS Council may attach conditions to a Temporary Use permit which are appropriate to ensure the health and safety of residents, visitors, and neighbouring residents, or to minimize any potential nuisances.

BE IT RESOLVED that approval be granted to development permit application DP143-24, from Melanie Weatherbie on behalf of the Stratford Youth Centre for a Temporary Use Development Permit, for up to 3 food trucks, which are proposed to be located at the Cotton Centre Property at 57 Bunbury Road (PID 860379), adjacent to the Gertrude Cotton building as part of the Town's annual Fall Fest subject to the following conditions:

1. Up to 3 food trucks may be located on the Cotton Park property under this Temporary Use Permit
2. That the food trucks shall be operated and be located as per the application description and site plan dated August 30, 2024, and the hours of operation shall be as follows:
 - Wednesday, September 18, 2024, from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
 - Thursday, September 19, 2024, from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
 - Friday, September 20, 2024, from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
 - Saturday, September 21, 2024, from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
 - Sunday, September 22, 2024, from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
3. That each food truck operator shall provide the Town with a valid copy of their food service license/permit, and any other relevant license permit issued by the province prior to the respective food truck being located on the Cotton Centre property
4. That the food trucks shall be removed as soon as reasonably possible and not exceeding thirty (30) days following the issuance of the permit
5. That the applicant shall ensure the cleanup of all debris around the location and the site is reinstated to its previous condition prior to the event.

Discussion: This resolution bears the recommendation of the Planning, Development and Heritage Committee.

Councillor MacDonald stated that it has been our practice to accommodate some food service options for Fallfest and two food trucks have been confirmed for the event. One is called Blowing Smoke Barbeque Limited and operates southern style barbeque food, sandwiches, and sides. The second one is Ruth's Mini Donuts which is operated by Ruth Stead and it is fully licensed and inspected and they serve fresh donuts.

Deputy Mayor Gallant noted that there was an issue with the power going out last year and the Deputy CAO stated that we will have generators on site this year.

Question: **CARRIED**

13. INFRASTRUCTURE

a) Report - The Report was included in the package for Council to review. Deputy Mayor Steve Gallant reviewed the report as follows:

- Installation of 11 new hydrants along Mason Road and Myrtle Street has begun. This will improve the firefighting ability in these areas by providing the proper spacing required between hydrants, based on current standards.
- Work at the waterfront boardwalk has been completed with minor deficiencies to be corrected. An official opening ceremony will be held in the coming weeks.
- Rooftop solar projects at the Emergency Services Centre and maintenance building on Hollis Avenue are progressing well.
- Setting up GIS online to replace VUEWorks as the asset management and viewer software for staff.
- A request for proposals has been issued for the design of the multi-use path along Glen Stewart Drive.
- With funding secured for a sump pump disconnection program, staff is preparing the details for the project and material for promoting to residents. This will help reduce the clean water inflow into the sanitary sewer system, resulting in lower operation and maintenance costs for the utility.

Infrastructure staff has also been busy with the following:

- Eaves and gutter repair work completed at Robert and Gertrude Cotton buildings
- Downspout and roof repair work completed at the Town Hall
- Painting the skirting at the soccer complex
- Painting and upgrading the boards and mesh at the Bunbury rink
- Grass cutting and landscaping is ongoing throughout the Town
- Maintenance of sports fields and trails is ongoing, preparation for additional bench installations has begun
- Unsightly premises bylaw complaints continue to be received
- Speed humps are now installed at 11 locations including Glen Stewart Drive – all sets are now deployed
- Fire hydrant exercising and painting is complete
- Gravity sewer flushing continues and will be completed before the end of the year
- The cleaning of lift stations is also being done
- Increasing stock of chlorine for water stations due to the railway strike
- Water and sewer inspections and water turn-ons for new development is ongoing
- Ongoing inspection and maintenance; and
- Managing ongoing customer and resident inquiries and concerns.

During the month of August there was a sewer lateral blockage on Lobster Point Lane requiring a portion of the utility's lateral to be replaced. This issue has been corrected. Two water leaks in Reeves Estates were found to be on the customer side of the lateral and have been repaired.

Councillor Jackson asked for an update on the Rosebank Road active transportation path, and the infrastructure director Jeannie Woodard replied that we were not successful for funding for that particular project, so it is not in our budget for this year. Jeannie added that we had three applications go in under the Provincial Active Transportation Fund this year and we ranked Rosebank as our first priority. However, we were granted funding for Glen Stewart Drive which was our third priority.

14. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Nil

15. SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

- a) Report was included in the agenda package for Council to review. Councillor Cox reviewed the report as follows:

The Sustainability Committee will resume meetings this fall after taking a break during the summer. Staff is working on some of the following items, as well as enjoying some time off with summer vacations:

Business Community

Members of the business community are invited to the upcoming Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce (GCACC) business mixer on September 27, 2024, for both members of the GCACC and any other business in Stratford. We look forward to seeing a great turnout and registration is open on the Chamber's website for anyone interested in attending.

Diversity and Inclusion

The Diversity and Inclusion Sub-committee did not meet during the summer. However, staff is working on items including the 'New Resident Welcome Event' on Saturday, September 14, 2024, and the Town's Legacy Book project for the upcoming 30th Anniversary of the Town. Additional nominations for both the youth writers and resident interviewees are needed and we encourage anyone to please submit your nominations using the online form on the Town's website.

Town Tree Planting Program

This summer, the Town of Stratford received funding from the PEI 2 Billion Trees program, allowing us to plant large trees throughout several parks and trails within the town.

Approximately 150 trees have been planted this year across various locations. These newly planted trees play a vital role in absorbing carbon, providing much needed shade, and contributing to the overall wellbeing of our residents by increasing the urban canopy.

In addition to planting new trees, our summer staff was actively involved in the inspection, assessment, and maintenance of trees that were planted in previous years. This maintenance work included tasks such as pruning, staking, and un-staking, and replacing any trees that did not survive. This ongoing care is essential to ensure the long term success of our tree planting efforts.

National Forest Week

The Town of Stratford is celebrating National Forest Week, which takes place from September 18 to 24, 2024. We will be running a week long social media campaign to share valuable information about the numerous benefits forests provide to our community. We are also organizing a guided walk in partnership with the Stratford Area Watershed Improvement Group (SAWIG) at Fullerton's Trail. During this walk participants will learn about the benefits of the forest, engage in tree identification, and explore various projects that have been carried out in the area. This event will take place on Thursday, September 26, 2024, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and we encourage all residents to join us for this educational and engaging experience.

b) Resolution SC002-2024 Adoption of the "Resilient Roots: Stratford's Climate Action Plan"

Moved by Deputy Mayor Steve Gallant

Seconded by Councillor Ron Dowling

WHEREAS the Town of Stratford has a long-standing commitment to environmental sustainability, recognizing the importance of protecting our community for future generations; and

WHEREAS climate change poses a significant threat to our community, environment, and economy, with rising temperatures, extreme weather events, and environmental degradation being major concerns; and

WHEREAS the "Resilient Roots: Stratford Climate Action Plan" has been developed through a collaborative effort involving residents, organizations, government agencies and environmental experts; and

WHEREAS the Climate Action Plan outlines a comprehensive roadmap and a range of recommendations for the Town to adapt to the impacts of climate change - such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving energy efficiency, enhancing community resilience

to climate change, and promoting environmental equity all aiming to achieve long-term climate resilience.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Stratford approve and adopt the Climate Action Plan as a guiding document for Stratford climate change efforts and proceed with the implementation of the Climate Action Plan.

Discussion: This resolution bears the recommendation of the Sustainability Committee.

Question: **CARRIED**

16. INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- a) Mayor Ogden gave a brief verbal report as the committee did not meet in August. He noted that staff recently awarded the website redesign RFP to AOR Web Solutions and they held their kickoff meeting this week. The new website is expected to be ready by mid-2025, with a lot of work in the coming months to migrate the existing data, review/refresh content and work toward ensuring a user friendly experience for all web users. Residents should not experience any issues during this time as the current Town of Stratford website will continue to house the Town's information and be accessible.

Mayor Ogden noted that Town staff and Council will be receiving a briefing on the Town's Annual Resident Survey results next week with the report expected to be released to the public following this presentation. The Town always looks forward to hearing from residents and receiving feedback annually from the survey, and we continue to use the information in our decision making. We again wish to thank all residents who have completed the survey and provided their feedback through this means.

17. HUMAN RESOURCES

- a) No Report

18. INQUIRIES BY MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

- a) No inquiries were made.

19. OTHER COMMITTEES

a) Stratford Senior's Complex

Deputy Mayor Gallant gave an update on the Stratford Senior's Complex as follows:

- Building assessment has been started by Coles. The draft report is to be completed by September 19, 2024.
- Work that needed to be completed based on annual inspections has been done.
- Snow removal and salting tender for walkways will be issued this month.

- A letter will be issued to tenants regarding garbage sorting. There have been some issues with garbage not being sorted and Waste Watch will not empty the bins; and
- There are currently 26 people on the waiting list.

20. APPOINTMENTS TO THE COMMITTEE

Community and business engagement manager Wendy Watts noted that last week we opened up the two year renewal/recruitment process for new and returning committee members, and residents will hear from us frequently during the next month or so.

21. PROCLAMATIONS

Pulmonary Fibrosis Awareness Month

***Whereas** Pulmonary Fibrosis is a very serious lung disease with no cure and the only known intervention to prolong life at this time is with a lung transplant; and*

***Whereas** new drugs have come onto the market in the past few years to slow the progression of the disease; and*

***Whereas** an estimated 30,000 Canadians suffer from Pulmonary Fibrosis with about 6,000 new cases identified each year; and*

***Whereas** many are not aware of the symptoms or disease until diagnosed, so it is important to learn the signs and symptoms as they can be mis-diagnosed.*

***Therefore, Be it Resolved** that I Steve Ogden, Mayor of Stratford, do here by proclaim September 2024 “Pulmonary Fibrosis Awareness Month” in the Town of Stratford.*

***In Witness, Whereof** I have set my hand and caused the seal of the Town of Stratford to be affixed hereto.*

22. OTHER BUSINESS

Nil

23. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:14 p.m.

Mayor Steve Ogden

Jeremy Crosby, CAO