

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
Approved Minutes

DATE: March 12, 2025

TIME: 4:30 p.m. – 6:52 p.m.

PLACE: Council Chambers

ATTENDANCE: Deputy Mayor Steve Gallant; Councillors Gordie Cox, Jody Jackson, Jill Chandler, Jeff MacDonald, Ron Dowling; Jeremy Crosby, CAO; Jeremy Pierce, Deputy CAO, and Recreation Director; Phil Rough, Town Planner; Kim O'Connell, Director of Finance and Technology; Jeannie Woodard, Director of Infrastructure; Wendy Watts, Community and Business Engagement Manager; and Mary McAskill, Recording Clerk

REGRETS: Nil

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 Jody Jackson and seconded by Councillor Jill Chandler that the agenda be approved as circulated.

4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

It was moved by Councillor Jody Jackson and seconded by Councillor Jill Chandler that the regular monthly meeting of February 12, 2025, be approved as circulated.

It was moved by Councillor Jeff MacDonald and seconded by Councillor Jody Jackson that the public meeting minutes of March 5, 2025, 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 Committee of the Whole
- Participated in a meeting of the Planning, Development, and Heritage Committee
- Attended an online rezoning presentation regarding changing commercial zones to mixed use
- Participated in four Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) virtual committee meetings, Board of Directors, and the Atlantic Caucus meetings
- Attended a public meeting about the proposed Food Vendor Bylaw and the Special Permit Use application
- Participated in a public presentation of the proposed Town and Utility 2025/26 budgets
- Was interviewed by CBC regarding the Food Vendors Bylaw
- Along with the director of recreation Jeremy Pierce and the program and event coordinator Melanie Weatherbie, met with Debbie Reid, Chair of the Stratfords of the World Organizing Committee
- Participated in five Official Plan public meetings to discuss our new Official Plan and the Zoning and Development Bylaw
- Very honoured to participate in and provide remarks at the 50th Anniversary celebration of the Stratford Lions Club
- Participated in a discussion of the Official Plan with consultants and staff about findings of consultations to date
- Met with representatives of a childcare business to discuss several issues
- Participated in two budget meetings with Council and the management team to work on the 2025/26 town budget
- Met with representatives of the Spinal Cord Injury PEI, to discuss ways to make our community gardens more accessible
- Participated in a meeting with representatives of the PEI Symphony to discuss possible opportunities for collaboration
- Participated in “Pink Shirt Day” activities to demonstrate the Town’s opposition to bullying
- Participated in COW’s “Moo Let’s Talk” to raise money for mental health
- Incredibly impressed with the youth who walked for 24 hours as part of the youth centre walkathon
- Spoke and visited with several residents to discuss various issues; and
- Attended internal meetings and looked after the day-to-day affairs of the Town.

8. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER (CAO) REPORT

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

- Attended a meeting with the planning staff and a consultant regarding permit ready housing plans for the Town to expedite development
- Attended and participated in the monthly planning board meeting
- Attended and participated in the flag raising for “Black History Month”
- Chaired the CAO department monthly staff meeting
- Along with the Deputy CAO, had a meeting with the manager of St. John House to discuss the recent fire and the emergency response
- Attended several meetings with department heads and Council to discuss the operational, utility, and capital budgets for the fiscal year 2025/2026
- Attended a meeting with the Deputy Mayor and community business engagement manager to discuss the next steps in the E-Watch program
- Along with the Deputy CAO, we attended a meeting with a developer looking to develop property near our Tea Hill Park operations
- Chaired the bi-weekly department head meeting
- Along with the mayor and Deputy CAO, met with MLA's Burridge and Redmond to discuss two projects and initiatives
- Attended a round table discussion put on by the Charlottetown and Area Chamber of Commerce with the Honourable Nate Erskine-Smith, MP Minister of Housing, Infrastructure, and Communities to discuss housing and infrastructure initiatives on PEI
- Attended a meeting with the Deputy CAO, Director of Infrastructure and the HR coordinator/manager regarding the recommendations laid out within the organizational review
- Attended and participated in the monthly Town Council meeting
- Attended a meeting with the Charlottetown and Area Transit Coordinating Committee (CATCC) to discuss upcoming contract negotiations
- Attended a meeting with the Deputy CAO and the Director of Operations and Engagement for the federal Minister of Housing, Infrastructure, and Communities, to discuss funding for the community campus
- Attended a meeting with the department heads to discuss the new Canada Housing and Infrastructure Fund (CHIF)
- Along with the Mayor and Deputy CAO, attended a presentation by Wild Child PEI on their program of connecting children and families to nature
- Attended the official plan public consultation on future housing needs for the Town
- Attended several meetings with developers regarding the CHIF funding program

- Attended the monthly Charlottetown and Area Development Corporation (CADC) monthly meeting
- Along with the Director of Finance and the Director of Infrastructure, met with Coles Associates to review the building condition survey for the Stratford Seniors Complex to discuss recommended repairs and maintenance over the next 10 years; and
- Participated in the Canada Housing and Mortgage video session regarding the Shape Stratford program.

In addition, organized meetings with staff, prepared comprehensive agendas, and relevant materials for the various committee meetings to keep them up to date. I have also assessed infrastructure projects, reviewed planning related matters, and effectively managed various HR-related files. Additionally, I responded to emails and letters from residents, stakeholders, government officials, and other entities. Currently, I am working on securing funding for the community campus health and wellness facility, reviewing the application process for the federal and provincial government CHIF funding, and the sale of lots in the third phase of the business park.

9. SAFETY SERVICES

a) **No Report** – the committee did not meet in February

b) **Street Lights**

No report

c) **RCMP**

The report for the month of February was included in the agenda package. Councillor Dowling reviewed the report noting that there were 16 motor vehicle collisions with six accidents reporting damage. He added that there were 203 traffic-related offences and a series of Mental Health Act and Criminal Code matters.

Councillor Dowling welcomed Corporal Matthew Paynter who has replaced Corporal Weatherbie. Corporal Paynter introduced himself noting that he has worked for many years with Corporal Weatherbie. He noted that this is his second week on the job in Stratford.

Corporal Paynter reported that during the month of February there were 325 occurrences in Stratford. As previously mentioned, there were 203 traffic-related offences, three of those were for impaired driving, one alcohol, and two for combined alcohol and drugs. He added that the RCMP did three check stops and conducted 29 step files in various areas around the town. In addition, 52 summary offence tickets were issued, 111 warnings and two defects. The majority of the tickets and warnings were related to speeding, expired registrations, and expired inspections.

Corporal Paynter continued to report that there were five fraud files in February. He added that they will be working with the media relations crew to keep the word out about online scams.

Corporal Paynter noted that the public servant at the Stratford office remains busy at 61 index checks in the month of February.

Corporal Paynter reported that he visited Stratford Elementary School this week, along with Constable Sanders and Constable MacDonald, as judges for the school science fair. In addition, Corporal Paynter and Constable MacDonald visited the Montessori school in Stratford for a presentation to the children about police officers and what they do. He added that he will try and line something up with media and fraud specialists to speak with seniors about fraud and scams.

d) Humane Society Report

The report for the month of February was included in the agenda package. Councillor Dowling briefly reviewed the report noting that the calls are largely reactive.

e) Cross Roads Fire Department

The report for the month of February was included in the agenda package. Councillor Dowling stated that one of the pressing issues is a new ladder truck which will be needed in the next couple of years. He added that the trucks are produced in the U.S. and with the tariff issues, companies across the country that are now purchasing trucks are facing higher costs. He noted that the fire company will continue to work with federal and provincial governments to try and find additional funding. Deputy Mayor Gallant stated that a ladder truck will be needed sooner with new higher buildings being built. Mayor Ogden stated that the ladder truck they have will be good for another year and a half. Councillor Dowling stated that his understanding is that they could go beyond the one and a half years in accordance with insurance certification. He added that ideally a new truck would be preferred but given the current climate with tariffs and other factors, a used one may be more applicable.

Councillor MacDonald commented on the number of calls that were false alarms and discussions that have been held in the budgetary process of imposing some sort of monetary penalty for repeat offenders. He asked if there is any way to delineate in our statistics if there are repeat calls for service to the same locations. Mayor Ogden replied that this is an issue that we have been dealing with. He said that the answer could be to put a monetary penalty on it, but the downside of that would be a disincentive for people to report fires or suspicious situations that can endanger lives. He added that the fire company is not really in favour of that monetary penalty.

Mayor Ogden suggested that this should be referred to the Safety Services Committee and discussed with the fire company and other members of the public present and make a recommendation to Council on it. Councillor Dowling agreed with this approach and noted that he will add this to the agenda for the next Safety Services Committee meeting.

10. RECREATION, CULTURE AND EVENTS

Councillor Gordie Cox gave an overview of his report as follows:

Recreation, Culture, and Events – the Recreation, Culture, and Events Committee convened on Thursday, February 27, 2025, at the Stratford Emergency Services Centre, to discuss key updates and initiatives. The agenda covered program updates across recreation, arts and culture, and the youth centre, along with progress on the Stratford community campus project. The committee also reviewed the department's operational and capital budgets and received an informative presentation from the Wild Child program.

Stratford Youth Centre and Youth Council – February was an exciting month at the Stratford Youth Centre filled with community engagement and fundraising efforts. One of the highlights was the youth centre's participation in Bowl for Kids' Sake where 18 enthusiastic participants came together to support a great cause. Through their fundraising efforts, the Youth Centre proudly donated \$1,000 to the event showcasing their commitment to giving back to the community and supporting local youth initiatives. In addition, the youth centre was actively involved in Stratford Winter Fest that took place over two weekends at the Stratford Town Centre. The festival featured a variety of children-oriented events, including the annual 'Fun Fair' with inflatables, face painting, and balloon twisting, as well as a family skate, treasure hunt, arts and crafts room, cost characters, sensory and reading room, bunny trails pet ranch and more. The second weekend of Winter Fest also served as a fundraiser for the youth centre, with a two-day flea market that helped support upcoming programming and initiatives.

Looking ahead, March is shaping up to be another busy month. The 'Walkathon' on March 7 – 8 will bring youth and community members together for an active and fun-filled event. Additionally, March break will be packed with exciting activities, as the youth centre extends its drop-in times throughout the week. With special programs and plenty of opportunities to connect, relax, and have fun, it promises to be a fantastic break for local youth. The youth centre is excited to keep the momentum going and continue providing engaging activities for the community.

Programs – the gymnasium remains a hub of activity, with programming running from morning to evening.. A wide range of sports and recreation activities, including tennis, pickleball, badminton, basketball, and the after-school program make use of the gym daily. Additionally, the fitness area and walking track sees an average of 127 users per day highlighting the gym's

popularity among residents of all ages. With such high participation levels, the facility continues to be a vital space for promoting health, wellness, and community engagement.

Looking ahead, work has begun on the spring-summer program schedule with full details set to be announced this month. In the meantime, a variety of programs remain available catering to diverse interests and age groups. Current offerings include Active Aging Fitness (55+), gardening workshops, Irish Felt Fairy, tropical plant workshop, the art of Henna, co-ed basketball, co-ed volleyball, and multiple sessions of pickleball, tennis, and badminton. With such a wide range of activities, the Stratford Town Centre continues to provide enriching and inclusive programming for the community.

Arts and Culture – the poppy project has received an overwhelming response from the community. With a goal of 4000 crocheted poppies, the project is progressing ahead of schedule and is expected to reach its target much sooner than anticipated.

Meanwhile, artists LaLa and ABSON are working on concept renderings for the upcoming mural art projects at Cotton Park, Pondside Park, and the Waterfront park. Painting is set to take place throughout July and August, bringing vibrant new artwork to these public spaces.

Winter Activities and Spaces – the Bunbury and Pondside rinks had an exceptional winter season, benefiting from a stretch of ideal weather conditions that allowed for weeks of uninterrupted outdoor recreation. Throughout the season, these rinks were well utilized by the community for hockey, ringette, and recreational skating, providing residents with a fun and active way to embrace the winter months. Unfortunately, as temperatures begin to rise, the rinks are now officially closed for the season. However, these versatile spaces will soon transition for spring, summer, and fall use, offering opportunities for basketball, roller hockey, tennis, and a variety of other recreational activities.

Similarly, the Town's trail network experienced a highly active winter season, as consistent weather patterns made for excellent walking, hiking, and snow shoeing. Many residents took advantage of the maintained trails using them for walking, jogging, and outdoor exploration throughout the colder months. As winter winds down, preparations are already underway to prepare the trails for the busy summer season, ensuring they remain accessible and well maintained for continued community use.

11. FINANCE AND TECHNOLOGY

a) The report was included in the agenda package for Council to review. Councillor Jackson gave an overview of his report as follows:

- Utility collection letters were issued and 235 first letters were sent out with a due date of March 24, 2025
- Letters were sent to vendors to advise them that we are changing to an electronic payment system for payables, and there has been a good uptake from the vendors on this project
- Attended a presentation on Phase I of the official plan and bylaw review
- Attended a meeting with provincial representatives on the provincial stream of the Canada Housing Infrastructure Fund (CHIF) funding
- The Finance Committee has reviewed the Town and Utility operating and capital budgets
- Met with staff to discuss the ESRI (GIS software for mapping and spatial analytics) project
- Town and Utility operating and capital budgets were presented to the public on March 6, 2025, and comments are open until March 17, 2025.
- The 2025 Town and Utility budgets will be passed at a special public meeting to be held on March 26, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.
- Working on Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP government claims for funding; and
- Staff are busy with day-to-day items.

Councillor Dowling asked for an update on the revenue sharing and negotiations with the province. Councillor Jackson replied that we are hoping to hear something by the end of March or early April. Finance Director, Kim O'Connell, added that the Federation of PEI Municipalities (FPEIM) is spearheading this for Stratford, Cornwall, and the smaller PEI communities. She added that there is nothing further to report at this time.

b) Financial Statements

The financial statements were included in the agenda package for Council to review.

Councillor MacDonald had a question with respect to the revenue in February from the utility side. He noted that there is a significant amount over and above budget from donated capital from Clearview Estates and he asked if this was anticipated. Finance director, Kim O'Connell replied that anytime we take over the water and sewer from a new subdivision, (when a subdivision is signed over), they have to donate that capital to us and we have to recognize it as revenue on our financial statements, and then we have to take over those assets and manage them. She added that we do not put it in the budget as we do not know when these subdivisions are going to come online. From a planning perspective, we would be aware when Clearview Estates Phase IV would be close to completion, but we do not get the value until it reaches the stage where we can actually sign off on the subdivision.

12. PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND HERITAGE

- a) The report was included in the agenda package for Council to review. Councillor MacDonald stated that we have been wrapping community conversations with respect to our official plan. Each of the community conversations had a different topic for discussion and they are all available for review on our official plan project page. Residents can submit comments and feedback on any of the community conversations until Friday, March 21, 2025.
- b) The Building Permit Summary was included in the agenda package for Council to review. Councillor MacDonald briefly reviewed the summary.
- c) Resolution PH005-2025-A002-24 Child Care Numbers Text Amendments – Town of Stratford Zoning and Development Bylaw #45 – 2nd Reading

Moved by Councillor Jeff MacDonald

Seconded by Councillor Gordie Cox

WHEREAS several text amendments have been identified to bring the Zoning and Development Bylaw #45 into conformance with the Provincial *Early Learning and Child Care Act* and associated regulations. The amendments propose to refer to the Provincial *Early Learning and Child Care Act* and regulations when determining the number of children permitted per Child Care Centre to allow for a dynamic Bylaw, reducing the need for future amendments; and

WHEREAS in accordance with Section 3.2.3. of the Zoning and Development Bylaw #45, notice of the amendments and public meeting occurred through the placement of an advertisement in the local *Guardian* Newspaper on two (2) separate editions (January 18th and January 21st), notification letters were sent to licensed Child Care Centre operators within the Town, and notice of the public meeting was also posted on the Town's Facebook and YouTube page; and

WHEREAS a public meeting was held on January 29, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. with one Child Care Centre operator in attendance. This public meeting was live streamed on the Town's Facebook and YouTube and residents were given until 12:00 p.m. (noon) on January 31, 2025, to submit their comments; and

WHEREAS planning staff received no written comments from residents or Child Care Centre operators; and

WHEREAS one amendment has been made to Bylaw #45-R since first reading to capture unlicensed child care centres, as such, said changes shall be read prior to a decision on this Resolution in accordance with Section 125.(3) of the Municipal Government Act.

BE IT RESOLVED that Bylaw #45R, a bylaw to amend the Town of Stratford Zoning and Development Bylaw, Bylaw #45, be hereby read and approved a second time.

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

Councillor MacDonald stated that as a result of our processes, he is required to read the actual change to the definition to the amendment, which is in the agenda package as item 12 c, in a red box, and reads as follows:

Amendment – Change from:

CHILD CARE CENTRE, FAMILY HOME - means a licensed centre located in a private residence where the operator is authorized to provide services to children, including the children of the operator as regulated in the *Early Learning and Child Care Act* regulations S.P.E.I. 1988, Cap. E-01 and amendments thereto.

Amendment – Change to:

CHILD CARE CENTRE, FAMILY HOME – means a licensed **or unlicensed** centre located in a private residence where the operator is authorized to provide services to children, including the children of the operator as regulated in the *Early Learning and Child Care Act* regulations S.P.E.I. 1988, Cap. E-01 and amendments.

Councillor MacDonald noted that the change in the definition is from a licensed centre to a licensed **or unlicensed** centre.

Mayor Ogden noted that any restrictions or requirements for parking is covered under the bylaw. Councillor MacDonald added that anytime this use is considered, they do have to make an application to planning and it still has to be considered, so parking and otherwise would have to be considered as part of that development application.

Question: **CARRIED**

d) Resolution PH006-2025 – A002-24 Child Care Numbers Text Amendments – Town of Stratford Zoning and Development Bylaw #45 - Adoption

Moved by Councillor Jeff MacDonald
Seconded by Councillor Jody Jackson

WHEREAS Bylaw #45-R, a bylaw to amend the Town of Stratford Zoning and Development Bylaw, Bylaw #45, was read and approved a first time on February 12, 2025; and

WHEREAS Bylaw #45-R, a bylaw to amend the Town of Stratford Zoning and Development Bylaw, Bylaw #45, was read and approved a second time on March 12, 2025.

BE IT RESOLVED that Bylaw #45R, a bylaw to amend the Town of Stratford Zoning and Development Bylaw, Bylaw #45, be hereby adopted and that the Mayor and Chief Administrative Officer be authorized to affix their signatures and the corporate seal of the Town thereto and to be formally declared the said Bylaw passed.

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

Question: **CARRIED**

13. INFRASTRUCTURE

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

Capital projects continue to progress with the tender for the Glen Stewart Drive multi-use paved trail having just closed yesterday. Bids are being reviewed by the consultant and a recommendation for award will be brought to the Infrastructure Committee later this month. Construction is expected to begin in July following the school year.

Design work is almost complete for both the Aptos sewer lift station decommissioning project and the Reeves Estates water distribution replacement project. Funding will be pursued for the Reeves Estates water distribution replacement project through the Canada Housing Infrastructure Fund. Council has made the decision to move the construction of the Aptos sewer lift station decommissioning project ahead to the 2026/27 budget year.

There seems to be a lull in registrations for the sump pump redirection rebate program. We are hopeful that with the milder weather bringing rain and snowmelt, the awareness of sump pumps running will prompt residents to sign up for the program. There is still funding available, and the program will run until funds are depleted.

Infrastructure staff has also been busy with the following:

- Providing input and finalizing the 2025/26 budget
- Preparing workplans for the 2025/26 fiscal year
- Preparing and submitting applications for Active Transportation funding and Canada Housing Infrastructure funding
- Our horticulturist, Heidi Wood, has begun a four-part workshop on preparing for spring gardening. All sessions are fully booked and will run until March 17, 2025.

- Rink maintenance through the month of February consisted of regular snow removal and flooding. They are no longer maintained due to the milder weather
- Winter maintenance and grooming of trails is ongoing
- Brush trimming and removal to widen trails was completed at Fullerton's Conservation Park. Other sections of trail throughout the Town will be completed before the end of March
- Snow clearing and salting of walkways and parking lots is ongoing
- Painting of public areas at the Town Centre continues
- Liability risk assessments were completed by our insurance provider on six of our buildings. We are pleased to report that no major concerns were identified
- Utility staff participated in several training opportunities offered in PEI through MPWWA-ACWWA
- Water and sewer inspections, meter installations, and water turn-ons for new development are ongoing
- Ongoing inspection and maintenance of water and sewer systems and facilities; and
- Managing ongoing customer and resident inquiries and concerns.

During the month of February, there were no sewer or water emergencies. There was a minor blockage in a gravity sewer main that necessitated use of a sewer Jetter machine to resolve. The problem was resolved quickly, and no customers were negatively impacted.

14. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

- a) **Resolution CW005-2025 – Canada Housing Infrastructure Fund**

Moved by Deputy Mayor Steve Gallant
Seconded by Councillor Jeff MacDonald

WHEREAS On April 16, 2024, the Government of Canada announced \$6 billion in federal funding over 10 years to establish the Canada Housing Infrastructure Fund (CHIF). CHIF aims to accelerate the construction and upgrading of housing-enabling drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, and solid-waste infrastructure, directly supporting the creation of new homes, and increasing densification. This investment is part of the Government of Canada's commitment to address the impacts of the housing crisis on communities of all sizes across Canada; and

WHEREAS Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada has committed \$86.2 million over 10 years to the province of Prince Edward Island through the Provincial/Territorial stream to administer and deliver funding to its communities to support provincial priorities while advancing federal housing objectives; and

WHEREAS the Town of Stratford is committed to growing its community and supporting additional housing needs as demonstrated in the Housing Supply Challenge and the Housing Accelerator Fund programs.

BE IT RESOLVED that applications be submitted under the Provincial/Territorial stream of the CHIF program, to support development within the town as follows:

Project Title	Total Estimated Cost
Flourish Heights Municipal Servicing Extension	\$13,869,144
Extension of Water, Sewer and Storm Systems Within the Core Area of Stratford, PE	\$11,292,600

And that Council understands and commits that it will be responsible for its' designated share of the eligible costs of the project.

Discussion: Councillor MacDonald asked if the fund is still open for other applications. CAO Jeremy Crosby confirmed that yes, the fund is still open, and the two projects were ones that were essentially shovel-ready, and they also gave the benefit of demonstrating the amount of housing that can be done with these projects. He added that we are looking at other developers and our own projects within the community that we are going to work on.

Mayor Ogden stated that the idea of this fund is to provide the necessary infrastructure for new housing. Right now, those type of projects are basically unaffordable for a lot of developers and for the town. He added that here are areas of the town that could support more housing that are already established neighbourhoods, but with vacant lots and large lots that could support, for example, secondary suites and other housing approaches, but don't have the infrastructure to support it. This will hopefully allow those areas to be provided with sewer and water and necessary infrastructure.

Question: **CARRIED**

15. SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

- a) Councillor Chandler noted that the committee met on February 12, 2025, and the next meeting will be held on April 2, 2025. She gave an overview of the report as follows:
 - The 2025 residential tree planting program and community gardens are both accepting applications at this time.
 - **Fix a Leak Week**
Fix a Leak Week is an annual initiative aimed at raising awareness about water conservation. This year the initiative is running from March 17 to March 23, 2025. As in

the past, we are collaborating with the City of Charlottetown and the Town of Cornwall, and as part of this initiative we have been working to secure prizes and incentives to engage the community, encouraging participation in leak detection and water saving efforts. Residents from Charlottetown, Stratford and Cornwall can enter a contest throughout the week to win some prizes.

We will also be promoting the Town of Stratford's water conservation programs including the sump pump rebate program, the showerhead exchange program, and the toilet rebate program.

- **Water School**

'Water School' is set to take place once again this year running from April 7 to April 24, 2025. This program provides grade 5 students with an opportunity to learn about watersheds, water conservation, and the importance of protecting local water resources.

The first week of the program will focus on Stratford schools that have already confirmed their participation, while Charlottetown schools are scheduled for the second week. The Town has launched a recent radio 'Think Stratford' radio campaign to support our local community.

An upcoming meeting, date yet to be determined, will hopefully lead to a reinvigorated Stratford Business Group, with some active and interested members of the local business community willing to work together to plan/host upcoming events and activities.

Councillor Jackson had a question and suggestion about the annual surveys. He suggested that instead of offering both resident and business surveys annually, we could alternate each year to have the resident survey one year and the business survey the next year. He explained that with an annual survey, by the time we get through the results and develop some initiatives, there is hardly any time to evaluate and put them in place. He added that having the survey every second year would provide more time to look at feedback, budget, and plan. Mayor Ogden agreed that Councillor Jackson made some good points. He suggested that this should be referred to the Sustainability Committee for discussion and recommendation.

Councillor Jackson asked a question about the Residential Tree Planting Program. He asked if residents who have had their trees cut by Maritime Electric could be allowed to purchase trees at the same rate. Mayor Ogden suggested that we could revive the discussion on a tree bylaw. Councillor Chandler added that one of the requirements for the Residential Tree Planting Program is to have the tree planted in the front yard, which could be closed to a power line, and she suggested that there should be an accommodation or an opportunity to have the tree planted outside of that area. Community and Business Engagement Manager, Wendy Watts, clarified that the reason is that we are working on creating a tree-scape along our streets to help shade and lessen environmental impact

from rains and run off. She added that due to the funding that we receive for that program, that is part of why that restriction is in place, versus being able to just plant a tree anywhere.

b) Transit

The transit graph was included in the agenda package.

Councillor Chandler reported that transit ridership has taken a little dip compared to the same period last year. CAO Crosby reported that we are in contract negotiations with the service provider and that he will be attending several meetings in the future. He added that the provider has indicated that ridership across the board has plateaued a bit across Charlottetown and Cornwall. He added that we are looking at new routes, internal routes, and the rural transit system that could stop at some of the outlying subdivisions and our provider is looking at whether or not that would be feasible. Councillor Chandler stated that it is really important to engage residents and potential riders to find out what aspects of the current system are meeting their needs.

16. INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND ACCOUNTABILITY (IAA)

The report was included in the agenda package for Council to review. Councillor Chandler gave a brief overview of her report:

The annual resident survey launched online on March 4th and will close April 22nd. Paper copies will be mailed later this month to households for those who prefer to complete the survey that way. Councillor Chandler encouraged all residents to participate and asked fellow councillors to also encourage people to participate. She added that this is an important document that we still currently rely on.

Ongoing meetings continue to be held with all levels of government on a variety of topics and matters. The U.S. tariff issue is being monitored by Town staff and Council to make adjustments in ordering products and services.

The Results Matter key performance indicators for the Town of Stratford will begin being updated for 2024. These are reported annually on a newly launched web portal which can be accessed on the Town's website, and we are currently preparing for the next Intergovernmental Affairs and Accountability meeting.

At this point, Councillor Jackson and Mayor Ogden took a moment to thank the Hon. Lawrence MacAulay for everything he has done for Stratford and all of PEI and wished him and Frances and his family well on his retirement.

17. INQUIRIES BY MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

Councillor MacDonald asked the Director of Infrastructure, Jeannie Woodard, if there is a plan in place to address any potential shortfalls with firefighting infrastructure and the placement of fire hydrants in older areas of the town.

The Director of Infrastructure explained that over the last couple of years, since 2022, we have been carrying budget in our capital projects for adding hydrants in the core area of the town. She stated that we have identified a gap in the spacing of hydrants that we have throughout the town, and as a means to better the entire town, our focus has been on the denser areas with apartments and multi-unit residential buildings. She added that it will probably take two more years to complete the core area, but afterwards, we will work to address that gap in our residential subdivisions. Councillor MacDonald stated that he appreciates what we are doing to deal with this.

18. OTHER COMMITTEES

a) Stratford Senior's Complex

Deputy Mayor Gallant noted that the following is an overview of projects and items being worked on:

- Review of the spreadsheet based on building assessment report to help guide the maintenance and capital projects that need to be completed over the next five to seven years
- Met with the director of infrastructure, the CAO, and Coles Associates, to review the building assessment report
- Met with the maintenance person to discuss the maintenance of the building
- Our insurance company visited the site to do an inspection. This is something that is completed every few years
- Received new agreement forms from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and we are currently reviewing the information
- Received notice from a tenant to inform us they will be leaving the building to move into assisted living care
- Reviewing replacement reserve funds to figure out which capital projects can be completed in the current year; and
- There are currently 30 people on the waiting list.

19. APPOINTMENTS TO THE COMMITTEE

a) Resolution CW006-2025 – Committee Member Appointment

Moved by Councillor Jeff MacDonald
Seconded by Councillor Jody Jackson

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WHEREAS Council has established a number of Standing Committees and Sub-committees in the Council Procedural Bylaw, Bylaw # 47, to advise and assist Council in its deliberations; and

WHEREAS the Bylaw provides for the appointment of residents and stakeholders by Council to provide public input to Council in its deliberations.

BE IT RESOLVED that the following resident be appointed for the remainder of a two-year term ending on November 30, 2026, as follows:

Heritage Sub-Committee

- Alex O'Hara

Discussion: Nil

Question: **CARRIED**

PROCLAMATIONS

Nil

20. OTHER BUSINESS

23. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

Mayor Steve Ogden

Jeremy Crosby, CAO