

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
March 26, 2025
Approved Minutes

DATE: March 26, 2025

TIME: 4:00 p.m. – 4:39 p.m.

PLACE: Council Chambers

ATTENDANCE: Deputy Mayor Steve Gallant; Councillors Jill Chandler; Jeff MacDonald; Ron Dowling; Jody Jackson; Jeff MacDonald; Jeremy Crosby, CAO; Kim O'Connell; Director of Finance and Technology; Wendy Watts, Community and Business Engagement Manager; and Mary McAskill, Recording Clerk

REGRETS: Councillor Gordie Cox

CHAIR: Mayor Steve Ogden

1. Call to Order

Mayor Steve Ogden called the Special Council Meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance and those viewing via social media. He noted that this meeting will focus on the approval of our 2025/26 budget.

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. Approval of the Agenda

It was moved, seconded, and carried that the agenda be approved as circulated.

Mayor Ogden turned the meeting over to Councillor Jody Jackson, the Chair of the Finance and Technology Committee.

Councillor Jody Jackson – on behalf of your Stratford Town Council, It is my pleasure to present some highlights of the 2025/26 Town Budget. The upcoming year will be an exciting one for our community as we celebrate our 30th anniversary. We hope that you too are proud to call Stratford home and take some time this coming year to reflect on where we have come from and look ahead with optimism to the next 30 years in Stratford.

Again this year, the preparation of the budget has been a challenge with some tough choices made. As we have noted in the past, and as it continues to be the case, the Town of Stratford and all Island municipalities are without an updated revenue sharing agreement with the

Province of PEI. We continue to negotiate and hope that a resolution will soon come, but until then it is increasingly difficult to maintain the level of service and growth required for our community within the current means available to us. It should also be noted that unlike other levels of government – municipalities are not able to project a deficit when preparing our annual operating budget. We, as a unified Council are committed to making the tough, but right decisions on your behalf, and ensuring that we continue to set our community up for success both now and into the future. We have continued to be a fiscally responsible Council while advocating for our needs as a growing municipality. Last year we announced the first year of a planned residential two cent municipal tax increase for each of the next three years. This increase both last year and again this coming year will assist us in delivering the various projects and services you have come to expect and deserve, while also allowing us to plan for and make investments in areas that are needed for the Town's continued growth and development.

We thank the residents who took the time to review our draft budget and provide their comments through the draft budget survey earlier this month. We were pleased to see that overall respondents are pleased with the budget direction and proposed areas of expenditures and investments. We have reviewed your comments and appreciate your time in providing them to us.

REVENUE AND EXPENSES

The 2025/26 Town of Stratford budget forecasts an operating surplus of \$500 for the upcoming year once depreciation and the principal payments on long-term debt are accounted for. The Town again commits to residents that should any surplus exist at the end of the year it will be placed in a reserve to support future investments in the community, including the community campus. The Town of Stratford is limited in the sources of revenue available to us relying primarily on property taxes, utility charges and fees to pay for our services, programs, and infrastructure with funding sources and programs also regularly explored. As previously mentioned, in order to meet the needs today, as well as into the future, a two cent residential property tax increase is included in the current budget as the second of a three year planned increase.

Our 2025/26 budget includes continued investment in our community through priorities which we know are important to you. These include areas such as active transportation, transit, policing, fire protection, technology, parks and recreation, tree planting and forest management planning, climate change mitigation, housing, and more. Your Council will continue to look ahead and make investments for the future of our community.

In exploring where our largest expenditures are – policing and fire protection make up the largest portion of the General Government expenditures at more than 40% of the budget⁶. The largest departmental expense in all other departments is salaries and benefits, except for the finance and technology department which sees interest payments on capital investments as the largest expense by approximately \$30,000 more than salaries and benefits.

CAPITAL BUDGETS

The Town's capital budget for 2025/26 is \$24,797,536 which after infrastructure funding and other funding partners in the amount of \$15,922,405 will have a net cost of \$8,875,131. Funding for Town capital includes \$3 million in New Deal Funding, \$2.4 million in investing in Canada Funding, and \$4.2 million in Active Transportation Funding, with the remainder from a variety of other funding sources.

The Utility capital budget is \$9,073,770 of which the Town has applied for infrastructure funding of \$3.5 million from the Canada Housing Infrastructure Fund, \$783,421 from the Investing in Canada Fund, and \$500,000 in various climate adaption funding for a net capital expenditure of \$3,722,849.

COMMUNITY CAMPUS

The community campus continues to be looked at as a jewel for our community in the future though the forward thinking of our Council, staff, and community. The upcoming year will be another exciting one with the sports fields scheduled to be completed to be ready for the 2026 playing season. We have recently had a private pickleball facility announce their plans to locate their facility on the community campus with a planned opening by the end of 2025. This complements the overall vision of the community campus. As well, expressions of interest continue to come forward for the development of the new business park lots which are found on the south end of John Joe Sark Drive, and it is the Town's hope to have sales for many for these during the upcoming year. The past year saw John Joe Sark Drive made public and the active transportation path opened. The Province of PEI is well underway on the construction of the high school and a future junior high school has been announced for the property with the construction timeline not known at this time. It was also exciting to announce our first major funder for the community campus with the Provincial Credit Union supporting the new Stratford Youth Centre component with a \$500,000 contribution. The community campus property is well underway, and we hope to have an announcement in the near future of funding to develop the community wellness facility which will house not only the Stratford Youth Centre, but is also planned to include sporting facilities, cultural space,

and leased commercial space. We believe that investments in this property are necessary to meet the current and future needs of our growing community.

TRANSIT EXPANSION

The Town of Stratford has allocated funding to take further steps toward a more inter-community transit service. The annual resident survey currently underway has questions for residents regarding this service and Council and staff look forward to feedback, as well as working with the transit provider to find ways to help residents move within Stratford more seamlessly.

MICHAEL THOMAS WATERFRONT PARK

The boardwalk and lookouts at Michael Thomas Park were officially opened this fall and allow residents and visitors better access to this space. Another addition this past year was the Harry and Donna James pavilion which was opened in time for the Town to hold our first Christmas tree lighting event in the park. With the connection to Charlottetown from the boardwalk across the active transportation land on the Hillsborough Bridge, and with the plans on the Charlottetown side for a new park, this will bring opportunity for further development of the commercial lands around the waterfront park, as well as for additional phases of development in the park in accordance with our master plan. We look forward to holding many other events in this space and know it will become a popular place for residents and visitors to gather.

SHAPE STRATFORD AND HOUSING ACCELERATOR FUNDING

The Town of Stratford continues to be seen as a leader through our Shape Stratford project and also with the projects underway through the Housing Accelerator Fund. These programs are allowing us to support projects and initiatives which will lead to more housing units in the Town of Stratford. The Housing Accelerator Fund is also allowing us to undertake a review of our Official Plan and Bylaw which began in the fall of 2024 and will continue through 2025. While Shape Stratford assisted us in identifying some of the systemic challenges built into our existing process in building, and Council support for projects that increase density, the Housing Accelerator Funding allows us to recognize these needed changes – than plan for and adapt solutions which will lead to both successful housing projects and continued community growth. Through both of these initiatives conversations with the community continue to be important and residents are encouraged to be a part of planning our future when any engagement opportunities are available.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

- Expansion of the e-watch camera system
- Enhancements at four community parks, as well as in some neighbourhood parks
- Installation of mural art at select locations
- Poppy project and other arts and culture projects
- Addition of a parking lot on Sheperd Drive for users of the waterfront park
- Building assessments at Stratford Town Centre and Robert Cotton facility
- Expanded beautification and snow removal budgets
- New Town website to launch; and
- Expansion of active transportation network (subject to funding)

STRATFORD UTILITY UPDATE

The Stratford Utility operates on a cash recovery basis and as such, the Town continually analyzes expenses to ensure that the rates for customers are equitable among our customers, while being sufficient to meet our long term needs. The upcoming budget includes a modest Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase of 1.9% to base and consumption rates effective April 1, 2025. This increase will mean an average increase of approximately \$16 over the coming year, or approximately \$4 per quarterly billing cycle. Stratford Utility customers continue to demonstrate their support by limiting their personal use of water where possible and supporting conservation methods and programs.

The upcoming year will see projects by the Stratford Utility including:

- Further investigative video surveying of sections of the Town's sewer system
- Installation of standby generators at a few of our larger and/or most vulnerable sewage lift stations
- Addition of fire hydrants in the core area
- Replacement of the water distribution system in Reeves Estates (subject to funding)

At the end of 2023, our water usage average was 166 cubic meters per household, a reduction from an average of 172 cubic meters at the end of 2021; however, at the end of 2024 our average usage has risen to 175 cubic meters. While both residents and commercial users have continued to embrace and support our water conservation efforts to date, we hope we can work together to limit future increases. Everyone should be mindful of how much water is leaving their home and entering our system – making changes where you can – every drop saved counts!

Eligible residents may receive a rebate of up to \$2000 to have a sump pump redirected from the municipal sewer system, and a battery backup system installed. Visit our website to learn more. Other water saving initiatives in place currently are a low flow showerhead exchange program and a low flow toilet rebate program.

CLOSING

In closing, on behalf of my fellow members of Council, I first would like to thank our Town staff for their ongoing efforts. I can assure you they are working hard for you every day and are mindful of the budgets set forth and are watching their expenditures carefully. I would also like to thank my fellow Council members who have shown their dedication and passion for our community's success throughout the budget process by engaging, listening, and having thoughtful discussions.

While global instability and uncertainty remains around US tariffs, I would like to assure residents that we are monitoring the situation and making adjustments like you are. We live in the best community, in the greatest country, and tougher we will all get through this.

Our residents are one of our greatest assets in Stratford. We appreciate the time you give to your community volunteering, supporting causes, and being involved. We continue to thank you and hope that you will continue to participate when asked to – whether through our annual resident survey, coming out to a public engagement session, or responding to the draft budget process. Your participation and input matter and is important and necessary. Thank you for your ongoing trust in us to make the best decisions on your behalf.

As we reflect on our 30th anniversary as the Town of Stratford, I hope that you are proud of where you live, work, and play. Our community is truly the best community and together we will continue to prosper and grow. Our future is full of opportunity.

Mayor Ogden noted that this budget reflects the priorities of our Town and of our residents as established by Council's priority setting exercise. The budget is in response to the wants and the needs of our residents.

3. Resolution FT001-2025 – Adoption of the 2025/26 Operating Budget

Moved by Councillor Jody Jackson

Seconded by Councillor Jeff MacDonald

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BE IT RESOLVED that the 2025/26 Town of Stratford Operating Budget with revenue of \$11,750,100, expenses of \$11,535,900, and an allocation to a reserve for future growth of \$213,700 for an operating surplus of \$500, be hereby approved in accordance with the following revenue and expense tables:

	Actual 2024	Budget 2024/25	Budget 2025/26
Property Tax	\$6,170,697	\$7,040,100	\$7,517,900
CUSA Grant	\$1,567,358	\$1,700,300	\$1,759,200
Salary Recovery	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$27,700
Rent Income	\$775,550	\$864,500	\$873,900
Police Fines	60,403	\$57,000	\$57,000
Fees and Permits	\$226,839	\$201,000	\$186,800
Recreation	\$174,948	\$178,800	\$210,300
Other	\$393,634	\$176,200	\$1,117,300
Total Operating Revenue	\$9,379,429	\$10,227,900	\$11,750,100
Government Grants	4,765,556	\$0	\$0
Total Revenue	\$14,144,985	\$10,227,900	\$11,750,100

Operating	Actual 2024	Budget 2024/25	Budget 2025/26
General Government Expenses	\$4,142,406	\$4,400,800	\$5,509,000
Finance Expenses	\$848,246	\$1,094,200	\$1,212,700
Recreation Expenses	\$896,887	\$948,900	\$949,400
Infrastructure Expenses	\$1,517,241	\$1,782,700	\$1,952,300
Planning Expenses	\$463,258	\$520,600	\$812,500
Depreciation	\$974,830	\$1,030,000	\$1,100,000
Total Expenses	\$8,842,868	\$9,777,200	\$11,535,900

Operating	Actual 2024	Budget 2024/25	Budget 2025/26
Allocations and Reserves		\$ 450,200	\$ 213,700
Total Surplus	\$5,302,117	\$500	\$500
Add: Depreciation	\$974,830	\$1,030,000	\$1,100,000
Less: Principal payment	(\$433,164)	(\$396,400)	(\$496,070)
Total Cash Flow Surplus	\$5,843,783	\$634,100	\$604,430

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that:

- the non-commercial municipal tax rate be set at \$0.49 per \$100 of assessment for 2025.
- the non-commercial non-resident municipal tax rate be set at \$0.98 per \$100 of assessment for 2025.
- the non-commercial apartment municipal tax rate be set at \$0.74 per \$100 of assessment for 2025.
- the non-commercial non-resident apartment municipal tax rate be set at \$1.48 per \$100 of assessment for 2025.
- the non-commercial motel municipal tax rate be set at \$0.74 per \$100 of assessment for 2025.
- the non-commercial non-resident motel municipal tax rate be set at \$1.48 per \$100 of assessment for 2025.
- the commercial municipal tax rate be set at \$1.35 per \$100 of assessment for 2025.

Discussion: This resolution bears the recommendation of the Finance and Technology Committee.

Councillor MacDonald took a moment to congratulate his fellow members of Council and to Councillor Jackson who is delivering his first budget. The budget is, as always for many municipalities, and many governments in the developed world a challenging one, and balancing of many competing interests, wants, and desires. Councillor MacDonald stated that the theme that he would like to highlight in our budget is that we are responsive to our citizens' requests. We are responsive to our citizens input in the form of our surveys, but we are also balancing what the citizens are requesting through their input to us with a bold vision of significant investment in the Town; particularly at the waterfront. But in particular with respect to our wellness centre and community campus. We

are taking requests from our citizens to keep residential areas just that, and balancing that with significant investment at the waterfront, as well as our community campus. We view these as the 'jewels' and future jewels of the Town that will become hubs for development, as well as great recreational and commercial activity. We look forward to the development of both of those initiatives and we are 'putting our money where our mouth is' as we are making significant investments in both areas. Councillor MacDonald stated that it is reflective of all the resolutions that are coming before us today. He added that he fully supports the budget as presented. It is reflective of a significant process that is undergone every year through soliciting input through herculean efforts from the Town's finance staff from extensive consultations amongst Council during a number of meetings leading up to the final budget. Councillor MacDonald stated that it is a very long process, and it begins again almost as soon as it ends. He added that he appreciates all of the work that goes into these budget documents, and he fully supports this resolution.

Question: **CARRIED**

4. **Resolution FT002-2025 – Adoption of the 2025/26 Capital Budget and “Four Year Capital Plan**

Moved by Councillor Jody Jackson
Seconded by Deputy Mayor Steve Gallant

WHEREAS as part of the Municipal Government Act, the Town of Stratford is required to submit a five-year capital expenditure plan that includes an asset management program.

BE IT RESOLVED that the 2025/26 Capital Budget per the following schedules be approved in the amount of \$24,797,536, less Investing in Canada funding of \$2,385,505, Canada Community Building Fund of \$3,050,000 and other funding of \$10,486,900 for a net Town Capital Budget of \$8,875,131.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the attached four-year capital plan covering the years 2026/27 to 2029/30 per the following schedules be approved.

Capital	Budget 2024/25	Budget 2025/26
Park Development	\$250,000	\$180,000
Recreation Centre Equipment	\$111,000	\$12,000
Recreation Capital Projects	\$20,000	\$38,000

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Sidewalk/Bike Path/Trail Construction	\$1,797,900	\$4,518,450
Street Lighting	\$20,000	\$64,200
Equipment Replacements/Additions	\$95,000	\$109,500
Town Centre Capital Repairs/Additions	\$354,000	\$20,000
Cotton Park Building Repairs/Additions	\$40,000	\$30,000
Other Building/Grounds Repairs/Additions	\$15,000	\$35,000
Public Art	\$55,000	\$30,000
Computer Hardware	\$27,500	\$50,000
Solar on Town Buildings	\$305,000	
Waterfront Park	\$100,000	\$4,471,000
Land	\$250,000	\$200,000
Community Campus Phase 1	16,366,750	14,809,386
Transit	\$374,000	\$205,000
Traffic Calming	\$20,000	\$20,000
Pondside Watershed Restoration	\$400,000	
Maintenance Building	\$21,000	\$5,000
Total Capital Expenses	\$20,622,150	\$24,797,536

Funding Capital	Budget 2024/25	Budget 2025/26
New Deal Funding		\$3,050,000
ACOA Funding		\$1,100,000
Investing in Canada	\$11,290,326	\$2,385,505
TIE sidewalk/bike lane Partnership	\$932,500	\$4,176,900
Other Grants	\$20,000	\$5,210,000
Total Capital Funding	\$12,242,826	\$15,922,405
Reserve Allocation		

Net Capital Expenditure	\$8,379,324	\$8,875,131
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Discussion: This resolution bears the recommendation of the Finance and Technology Committee.

Question: **CARRIED**

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Capital	Budget 2026/27	Budget 2027/28	Budget 2028/29	Budget 2029/30
Other Building/Grounds Repairs/Additions	\$ 465,000	\$ 115,000	\$ 216,000	
Recreation Equipment	\$ 237,000	\$ 38,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 12,000
Traffic Calming	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000
Street Lighting	\$ 64,200	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000
Active Transportation Path Construction/Sidewalk	\$ 2,275,000		\$ 3,150,000	\$ 3,400,000
Park Development	\$ 900,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000
Public Art	\$ 125,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
Waterfront Park & Connecting Trails (TBD)	\$ 2,353,000	\$ 7,900,000		
Computer Replacement	\$ 57,500	\$ 35,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000
Equipment Replacements	\$ 450,000	\$ 110,000	\$ 127,000	\$ 70,000
Transit	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000
Town Centres Additions/Replacements	\$ 120,000	\$ 570,000	1520000	\$ 2,020,000
Watershed Restoration	\$ 232,000			
Land	\$ 2,910,000			
Community School Campus	\$ 54,600,000	\$ 46,200,000	7500000	
Total Capital Expenses	\$ 65,033,700	\$ 55,413,000	\$ 13,007,000	\$ 5,987,000
Capital Funding	Budget 2026/27	Budget 2027/28	Budget 2028/29	Budget 2029/30
ACOA	\$ 1,550,000			
Green Municipal Fund	\$ 35,300,000	\$ 31,090,000	\$ 5,000,000	
Active Transportation Funding	\$ 1,337,500		\$ 1,250,000	\$ 1,700,000
Other Funding	\$ 265,600			
Total Capital Funding	\$ 38,453,100	\$ 31,090,000	\$ 6,250,000	\$ 1,700,000
Net Capital Expenditure	\$ 26,580,600	\$ 24,323,000	\$ 6,757,000	\$ 4,287,000

Discussion: This resolution bears the recommendation of the Finance and Technology Committee.

Question: **CARRIED**

5. Resolution FT003-2025 – Adoption of the 2025/26 Utility Operating Budget

Moved by Councillor Jody Jackson
Seconded by Councillor Ron Dowling

BE IT RESOLVED that the attached 2025-26 Stratford Utility Corporation operating budget with revenues of \$3,920,600 and expenses of \$3,910,000 for a surplus of \$10,600 be approved as follows:

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Revenue	Actual 2024	Budget 2024/25	Budget 2025/26
Unmetered Sales Sewer	\$297,946	\$311,300	\$311,000
Unmetered Sales Water	\$54,260	\$56,000	\$53,200
Metered Sales Sewer	\$1,747,194	\$1,895,500	\$2,002,000
Metered Sales Water	\$1,184,553	\$1,295,000	\$1,371,900
Frontage Charges Sewer	\$47,030	\$31,100	\$30,600
Frontage Charges Water	20,068	\$12,000	\$7,500
Penalty Charges/Late Fees	\$40,689	\$40,000	\$50,000
Connection Fees	\$13,826	\$11,700	\$10,600
Interest Income	\$26,668		\$26,000
Other Income	\$33,364	\$63,400	\$57,800
Total Operating Revenue	\$3,465,598	\$3,716,000	\$3,920,600
Government Grants	\$4,718,068	\$0	\$0
Total Revenue	\$8,183,666	\$3,716,000	\$3,920,600
Total Expenses	\$3,565,812	\$3,715,600	\$3,910,000
Total Surplus	\$4,617,854	\$400	\$10,600
Less: Donated Capital	(\$139,899)	\$0	\$0
Less: Government Transfers	(\$4,718,068)	\$0	\$0
Add: Depreciation	\$1,374,640	\$1,380,000	\$1,390,000
Less: Principal payments	(\$649,161)	(\$612,800)	(\$592,213)
Total Cash Flow Surplus	\$485,366	\$767,600	\$808,387

Discussion: This resolution bears the recommendation of the Finance and Technology Committee.

Question: **CARRIED**

6. Resolution FT004-2024 – Adoption of the 2024/25 Utility Operating Budget

Moved by Councillor Jody Jackson
Seconded by Councillor Jill Chandler

WHEREAS as part of the Municipal Government Act the Town of Stratford is required to submit a five-year capital expenditure plan that includes an asset management program; and
BE IT RESOLVED that the following tables for the 2025/26 Utility Capital Budget be approved in the amount of \$9,073,770 less Investing in Canada funding of \$783,421, Municipal Strategic Component funding of \$240,000, Canada Housing Infrastructure funding of \$3,527,500 and other funding \$800,000 for a net Capital expenditure of \$3,722,849.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following table for the four-year capital plan be approved covering the years 2026/27 to 2029/30:

Revenue	Actual 2023	Budget 2023/24	Budget 2024/25
Unmetered Sales Sewer	\$280,392	\$329,500	\$311,300
Unmetered Sales Water	\$52,881	\$62,900	\$56,000
Metered Sales Sewer	\$1,589,322	\$1,747,300	\$1,895,500
Metered Sales Water	\$1,081,567	\$1,225,100	\$1,295,000
Frontage Charges Sewer	\$29,333	\$29,000	\$31,100
Frontage Charges Water	8,674	\$7,500	\$12,000
Penalty Charges/Late Fees	\$34,629	\$36,000	\$40,000
Connection Fees	\$5,940	\$6,800	\$11,700
Interest Income	\$255	\$0	\$0
Other Income	\$27,346	\$45,000	\$63,400
Total Operating Revenue	\$3,110,338	\$3,489,100	\$3,716,000
Government Grants	\$454,650	\$0	\$0
Total Revenue	\$3,564,988	\$3,489,100	\$3,716,000
Total Expenses	\$3,342,314	\$3,485,900	\$3,715,600

Total Surplus	\$222,674	\$3,200	\$400
Less: Donated Capital	(\$1,538,508)	\$0	\$0
Less: Government Transfers	(\$454,650)	\$0	\$0
Add: Depreciation	\$1,316,991	\$1,401,700	\$1,380,000
Less: Principal payments	(\$692,002)	(\$655,000)	(\$612,800)
Total Cash Flow Surplus	-\$1,145,494	\$749,900	\$767,600

Discussion: This resolution bears the recommendation of the Finance and Technology Committee and the Committee of the Whole.

Question: **CARRIED**

7. Resolution FT005-2024 – Adoption of the 2024/25 Utility Tariff

Moved by Councillor Jody Jackson

Seconded by Deputy Mayor Steve Gallant

WHEREAS a comprehensive review of water and sewer expenses, as well as a projected 5-year capital plan was completed in 2020; and

WHEREAS these projections were analyzed through utility rate models to determine the rates for the water and sewer rate payers; and

WHEREAS expenses have increased each year due to the cost of inflation and there will be an increase to utility rates for the current year; and

BE IT RESOLVED that the attached Stratford Utility tariff for 2025, which incorporates the following, be hereby approved:

- the unmetered water rate for a single-family dwelling (SFD) will increase to \$94.37 per quarter as of April 2025;
- The unmetered sewer rate for a single-family dwelling (SFD) will increase to \$141.30 per quarter as of April 2025;
- The water base rate for a 5/8 meter customer will increase to \$41.86 per quarter as of April 2025;
- The sewer base rate for a 5/8 meter customer will increase to \$62.66 per quarter as of April 2025;
- the consumption charge for metered water will increase to \$1.0357 per cubic meter as of April 2025; and
- the consumption charge for metered sewer will increase to \$1.5547 per cubic meter as of April 2025.

Discussion: This resolution bears the recommendation of the Finance and Technology Committee and the Committee of the Whole.

Question: **CARRIED**

8. Resolution FT006-2024 – Adoption of the 2024/25 Utility Tariff

Moved by Councillor Jody Jackson

Seconded by Councillor Jill Chandler

WHEREAS Council established a Fees Bylaw, Bylaw # 39, to set fees for licenses, permits, programs, facility rentals, and other matters; and

WHEREAS Schedule 'A' of the bylaw contains the fee amounts that can be amended by simple resolution; and

WHEREAS the Town as part of the budget process reviews Schedule 'A' on an annual basis; and

WHEREAS it is desirable to amend the fee schedule.

BE IT RESOLVED that the attached revised Schedule 'A' to the Fees Bylaw, Bylaw #39, dated March 26, 2025, be hereby approved.

BE IT RESOLVED that the attached revised Schedule A to the Fees Bylaw, Bylaw #39, dated March 26, 2025, be hereby approved.

Discussion: Mayor Ogden noted that it is important that we look at these fees and try to set a fair rate which has been done. This has been looked at by the Finance Committee and it's been looked at by staff. He felt that this was a fair approach, and he hoped that it would be well received. Even though we are not operating on a cost recovery basis, we do need to pay somewhat toward the costs of delivering all the programs which are excellent.

Councillor Jackson stated that even though the costs have increased this year, we have made significant investments in not only the programs, but also the facilities. We have some new fields, and we are constantly increasing the amounts that we need to pay for the maintenance. We do recognize that any increased costs are not desirable, but we are keeping them to the minimum where we can, and it is a good investment in the new fields. Councillor Jackson stated that across the board we are trying to keep any increases to a minimum.

Councillor Chandler noted that we take these discussions very seriously and communication from residents and concerns from our partners and different sporting associations. She noted that we did receive feedback on the fee increase and it wasn't arbitrary at all. There is a lot that goes into the fees and users will see an increase across the board, but that is because it is costing all of us more to deliver the services at every level.

Question: **CARRIED**

Councillor Dowling took a moment to express his appreciation to Councillor Jackson, our senior management, staff, and in particular our CAO and our director of finance Kim O'Connell. He noted that a lot of work goes into putting a budget together, and he felt that this was a very solid common sense budget that will meet our immediate needs and our near future needs.

Councillor Jackson took a moment to thank the former chair of finance Councillor Ron Dowling. He noted that the first real increase in taxes in a number of years was last year. It is not easy to do, and it was not without a lot of thought and debate. He added that he appreciates the leadership that Councillor Dowling and director Kim O'Connell have shown over the last couple of years. Councillor Jackson stated that we are sticking to our plan, and we are going to see it through.

Councillor Jackson thanked all the residents for their feedback and support for our plan going forward.

Mayor Ogden also took a moment to thank both the federal and provincial governments for their support to our Town.

9. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 4:39 p.m.