

**REGULAR COUNCIL
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
APPROVED MINUTES**

DATE: November 12, 2025

TIME: 4:30 P.M.

PLACE: Council Chambers

CHAIR: Steve Ogden, Mayor

PRESENT: **Deputy Mayor Steve Gallant** **Councillor Gordie Cox**
 Councillor Jeff MacDonald **Councillor Ron Dowling**
 Councillor Jody Jackson

Jeremy Crosby, CAO

Jeremy Pierce, Deputy CAO and Recreation Director

Wendy Watts, Community and Business Engagement Manager

Dale McKeighan, Planning Director

Phil Rough, Town Planner

Jeannie Woodard, Director of Infrastructure

Crystal Burrows, Financial Coordinator

Constable Darren Doucette and

Neala Smallman, Recording Clerk

REGRETS: Councillor Jill Chandler

1. CALL TO ORDER

We acknowledge the land upon which we gather is the unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq, and we pay our respects to the Indigenous Mi'kmaq People of this territory past, present, and future.

Mayor Ogden called the meeting to order at 4:31 P.M.

2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflict of interest was declared.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Councillor MacDonald and seconded by Deputy Mayor Gallant that the agenda be approved as circulated.

4. MINUTES

a) **Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes** – The minutes were included in the agenda package for council to review.

It was moved by Councillor Dowling and Seconded by Councillor Jackson that the minutes be approved as circulated.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

No business arose from the minutes.

6. PRESENTATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

No Presentations.

7. MAYOR'S REPORT

October 8, to November 12, 2025:

- Attended a meeting with MLAs Burridge and Redmond to discuss the Draft Official Plan and other Stratford issues
- Enjoyed attending an event to celebrate communities (including Stratford) who are leaders in ensuring all programs and services include provisions for inclusion of all ability levels
- Participated in a Planning Committee meeting and a meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee
- Honoured to attend and lay wreaths to honour all who have served in our Military at Remembrance Day Ceremonies at Andrews Care Home on Nov 5 and at the Stratford Cenotaph on Nov 11
- Attended three Public Meetings to discuss the Draft Official Plan and Draft Zoning and Development Bylaw. I also met with several individuals and groups of residents on the same subject
- Meeting with Provincial Ministers, Municipal elected officials, and Non-Profit entities to discuss Accessible Taxi service
- Participated in a meeting with Consultants and Council about the draft new Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw
- Honoured to attend the Rural Beautification Awards Ceremony and accept two awards on behalf of the Town. Big congrats to the Stratford Youth Centre who also received an award
- Very happy to participate in a Tree Planting Event with Grade Five students from Stratford Elementary School
- Attended a Conference of Community Leaders called “Vibrant Communities” sponsored by Doane Grant Thornton
- Interviewed by CBC about Halloween
- Participated in the FPEIM Semi-Annual Meeting and a follow-up meeting of the FPEIM Board of Directors
- Honoured to participate in and provide remarks on behalf of the Town at the 20th Anniversary of T3 Transit Event

- Committee of the Whole regular Meeting, also a Special Meeting of Committee of the Whole
- Regular Monthly Council Meeting
- Meetings with residents and Staff members
- Looked after the day-to-day business and internal affairs of the Town

8. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

a) Report

- Along with the Deputy CAO and Infrastructure staff, I attended several meetings to discuss the design and construction of the new pavilion to be constructed on the waterfront within Michael Thomas waterfront park.
- Along with the Deputy CAO, I participated in a meeting with the transit coordinating committee to further discuss a new transit operating agreement.
- I attended and participated in the Intergovernmental Affairs and Accountability meeting.
- I chaired two bi-monthly Department Head meetings.
- I attended and participated in the monthly Town Council meeting.
- Along with the Mayor and the Deputy CAO, I attended the 20-year anniversary celebration of the Tri-Community Transit System. It was great to see all the individuals who contributed to the system's success and to reflect on its history, from its humble beginnings with just a few trolleys to the robust transit network it has become today.
- Along with the Mayor, I attended a meeting with provincial representatives, Pat and the Elephant, and other community stakeholders to further discuss establishing an accessible taxi service to serve the communities of Charlottetown, Cornwall, and Stratford.
- I attended a meeting with planning staff to review several planning files.
- I participated in all three public consultations on the Draft Official Plan and Zoning/Development Plan, including the session held with developers to gather their feedback.
- I met with the sustainability staff to discuss their work plan and the various projects and initiatives they are working on.
- I attended and participated in a meeting with the Sustainability Committee to hear their feedback on the Official Plan.
- I attended a meeting with planning staff to discuss violation of our bylaw regarding a development underway in the community.
- I attended and participated in the monthly committee of the whole meeting.

- Along with the Director of planning we met with a resident landowner to discuss potential zoning changes to their land and hear their feedback.
- Along with the Director of Planning, we met with a resident landowner to discuss potential zoning changes to their property and gather their feedback.
- I attended a meeting with planning staff to review the feedback gathered from the public sessions and to consider potential revisions to the draft zoning plan in preparation for discussions with Council.
- I took part in a meeting with planning staff to review some recent applications.
- I chaired the monthly CAO department meeting.
- I also chaired the monthly staff meeting.

In addition, I have organized and led meetings with staff, developing detailed agendas and providing relevant materials for various committee discussions to ensure everyone stays informed. I've also assessed infrastructure projects, reviewed planning-related issues and the proposed changes to the official plan and zoning and development bylaw, and managed various HR files. I have handled correspondence, responding to emails and letters from residents, stakeholders, government officials, and other relevant parties.

Discussion:

Council requested a review and update of the current policies, noting that some are outdated. CAO Crosby advised that staff are actively working on revisions and will present the updated policies at an upcoming Committee of the Whole meeting.

9. SAFETY SERVICES

- a) **Report** - The report was included in the agenda package for council to review.

Discussion:

Council inquired about updates regarding the installation of new e-watch cameras within the town, particularly on Mason Road. Staff reported that a new camera has been installed at the intersection of Keppoch, Georgetown, and Pownal Roads. They further noted that the camera on Mason Road was installed by Maritime Electric, as the property in that area belongs to them.

- b) **Street Light Report** - Nothing to report

- c) **RCMP Report** - The report was included in the agenda package for council to review.
- d) **Humane Society Report** - The report was included in the agenda package for council to review.
- e) **Fire Company Report** - The report was included in the agenda package for council to review.

10. RECREATION CULTURE AND EVENTS

- a) **Report** - The report was included in the agenda package for council to review.

Discussion:

Councillor Jackson discussed concerns about reduced court times for the long-standing pickleball group with the upcoming opening of the new facility. Councillor Jackson raised the question about what activities will replace those times and the reasoning behind the reduction.

Staff outlined that no final decision has been made regarding the future pickleball program. The town aims to align its offerings with community needs and avoid duplicating programs provided by other organizations, similar to past practices with baseball and softball. The new Atlantic Pickleball Club is expected to open in February, and Stratford will continue to be a major provider of pickleball opportunities. Recommendations will be developed after the Recreation Committee meeting on November 27th, 2025, where the pickleball community has been invited to present their input.

Councillor Jackson further noted that field maintenance costs were lower this year due to drought conditions. A request was made to allocate some of the savings toward improvements at McNeil Field, particularly re-sodding and reshaping the infield and repairing the mound, in preparation for a potential bid to host the National Senior Baseball Championship. These upgrades would enhance safety and playability.

Staff noted that Lower McNeil Field currently accommodates two age groups, which causes extra wear due to multiple mound and base configurations. The new field at the community campus, designed for U15, should help reduce this strain. However, McNeil still requires significant infield maintenance, including re-sodding and reshaping, and specialized equipment for turf upkeep.

11. FINANCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- a) **Report** - The report was included in the agenda package for council to review.

Discussion:

Councillor MacDonald asked whether a deadline has been set for submissions to be considered for inclusion in the upcoming budget. Staff confirmed that no official date has been established. Public input will be sought throughout December, and committees are asked to include budget discussions on their January agendas. The management team will meet several times in January, followed by Council meetings in February. Input can be provided until the first draft of the budget is prepared.

- b) **Financial Statements** - The financial statements were included in the agenda package for council to review.

12. PLANNING DEVELOPMENT AND HERITAGE

- a) **Report** - The report was included in the agenda package for council to review.

Councillor MacDonald gave a brief overview of his report noting a strong month with \$4.6 million in development value. There was a healthy mix of single-detached homes, townhouses, semi-detached units, and commercial projects. Despite ongoing discussions about densification, single-family dwellings remain the largest contributor to development value year-to-date. Council commended the Planning Department for managing the workload efficiently.

- b) **Permit Summary** - The report was included in the agenda package for council to review.
- c) **Resolution - PH056-2025 - RZ003-25 - Grove Developments Ltd. – Off Swallow Dr. - R1-R2 First Reading**

Moved by Councillor Jeff MacDonald
Seconded by Councillor Gordie Cox

WHEREAS an application has been received from Grove Developments Ltd. requesting to rezone five lots located off Swallow Drive from the Low Density Residential (R1) zone to the Medium Density Residential (R2) zone; and

WHEREAS in accordance with the Stratford Zoning and Development Bylaw #45, Sixty-nine (69) notification letters were sent out to property owners whose parcels were within 150 metres of the subject properties, two advertisements were placed in the Guardian on September 19, 2025 and September 27, 2025, and the proposed

zoning amendment was advertised on social media to solicit input and to notify residents of the public meeting; and

WHEREAS a public meeting was held on September 29, 2023, at 7:00 p.m., but was also live streamed on the Town's Facebook and YouTube. Residents were given until October 4, 2025, to submit their comments; and

WHEREAS Comments from the Town's livestream were read into the record and recorded in the minutes; and

WHEREAS Planning staff received: 2 response letters from residents before the meeting; and 5 additional letters after the meeting, before the October 3rd deadline, expressing concerns regarding potential negative impacts on land values from the stacked townhouse dwellings, the limited parking spaces, increased traffic and the proposed density of the unit.

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

This resolution bears the recommendation of the Planning, Development & Heritage Committee as discussed at a meeting held on November 3, 2025.

Discussion:

Town Planner, Phil Rough explained that Grove Development has applied to rezone several lots from R1 (Low Density Residential) to R2 (Medium Density Residential). A similar request in 2023 was denied due to concerns about timing, traffic, potential apartments, and neighborhood fit. Since then, Kelly Heights Phase 3 has advanced, nearby roads are nearly public, and a townhouse project is being built next door. The proposed R2 zone does not allow apartments, addressing earlier concerns, and the province raised no traffic issues. The site lies between existing R1 and R2 areas, making it a logical expansion of medium-density zoning rather than spot zoning. Mr. Rough reported that the proposal aligns with the Official Plan's goal of encouraging diverse housing options and moderate residential intensification. Servicing (water, sewer, stormwater) is adequate, and compatibility with surrounding homes can be achieved through site design and landscaping.

Councillor MacDonald asked for clarification about the existing homes along Nightingale Drive and Swallow Drive. Mr. Rough confirmed that most are single-family homes, with two semi-detached homes on Nightingale and two on Swallow. Councillor MacDonald also asked about the status of stacked townhouses when the previous 2023 rezoning (to PURD) was considered. Mr. Rough explained that at that time, stacked townhouses were being introduced as a potential special permitted use in the R2 zone through a separate bylaw amendment. These two processes, rezoning and the bylaw amendment, were running concurrently, but stacked townhouses were not yet fully permitted by right in R2 during the 2023 application.

Councillor Cox emphasized the importance of protecting the edges between different residential zones, noting that transitions between neighborhoods should be handled carefully to maintain character and minimize disruption. He expressed concern about introducing stacked townhouses at the edge of an R1 area, suggesting it might not fit well with existing single-family homes. He also highlighted that residents are confused about zoning terms, particularly what R2 allows and whether it could lead to higher-density R3 developments in the future.

Councillor Dowling spoke against the rezoning from R1 to R2, despite acknowledging the thorough discussion at committee. He argued the proposal does not fit the character of the established single-family neighborhood and constitutes spot zoning, imposing a higher density use within a defined R1 area rather than creating a true transition zone. Councillor Dowling expressed concern that once rezoned, the developer could later seek conditional uses or increased density, potentially leading to two 12-unit stacked townhouse buildings (24 units total) adjacent to single-family homes. They viewed this as an imposition rather than a transition and cited strong resident opposition both from those directly affected and from broader community feedback during the Official Plan review, where many residents voiced a desire to preserve R1 neighborhoods. He further noted that while the province found no traffic capacity issues, increased traffic would still change neighborhood character. Councillor Dowling also raised concern that conditional use applications are often approved, leaving council little control once zoning is granted. For these reasons, Councillor Dowling stated he would vote against the resolution to rezone the property.

Councillor Jackson spoke in opposition to the Grove Development rezoning, echoing earlier comments about protecting neighborhood edges and maintaining compatibility with existing R1 single-family areas. He cited several sections of the zoning bylaw, particularly 3.2.2(e) (compatibility with surrounding land uses) and 3.2.2(f) (resident input), noting that feedback from local residents was strongly opposed and well-reasoned. After visiting the area multiple times, councillor Jackson said the proposed development does not fit the character of the neighborhood.

He also raised two broader planning concerns:

1. Unclear definitions within the bylaw, specifically the vague definition of a “block”, which he felt creates confusion and inconsistency.
2. The presumptive approach in planning documents suggesting R1 areas will shift to R2 in the future, which he found frustrating and misleading to residents, especially given council’s prior rejection of similar rezonings.

Councillor Jackson concluded that the proposal is incompatible and premature, and he would vote against the rezoning, reaffirming the importance of protecting established neighborhood boundaries.

Deputy Mayor Gallant spoke strongly against the rezoning, focusing on the importance of preserving the character of Stratford’s established neighborhoods. He referred to the definition of neighborhood character as the unique mix of physical and social qualities that create a community’s identity and sense of place.

Deputy Mayor Gallant stated that Stratford's neighborhoods are stable, close-knit, and proud communities, and warned that introducing stacked townhouses or higher-density housing into R1 areas would erode that character. He argued the proposal would bring more traffic, safety concerns, and stress for residents in an area where roads do not fully connect. He also criticized the broader planning approach of "picking away at neighborhoods for density," noting that Stratford already has significant high-density development opportunities in the downtown core, waterfront, and other designated areas. While recognizing housing pressures, Deputy Mayor Gallant urged respect for existing residents and neighborhoods.

Councillor MacDonald provided a detailed overview using a satellite map of the Swallow and Nightingale area to illustrate the distinct differences between two neighboring communities, a newer, higher-density area to the west and an older, predominantly single-family R1 area to the east.

He acknowledged several points made by colleagues:

- Agreed that zone edges are important and must be carefully managed to ensure compatible transitions.
- Disagreed that the Official Plan process has failed, noting it involved extensive public engagement and reflects significant input from staff, consultants, and residents.
- Emphasized that developers are valuable partners and that flexibility in zoning is necessary under planning law, but clear expectations must guide where and how growth occurs.

Councillor MacDonald observed that the two neighborhoods have distinct characters because Swallow Drive has not been connected, effectively separating low- and medium-density areas. He described this rezoning as a classic planning tension between maintaining character and accommodating growth. While recognizing Stratford's need for new housing and responsible growth, Councillor MacDonald concluded that the predominant single-family character of Nightingale Drive should prevail, and therefore, he could not support the rezoning, even at first reading.

Councillor Jackson clarified that he wasn't calling the overall Official Plan a failure but argued that certain aspects of the engagement process fell short. He noted that some major landowners, including long-standing residents and a former mayor, were not consulted about their development plans, which he considered a failure of expected procedure, even if the broader plan involved public engagement.

Councillor MacDonald responded by emphasizing that the plan and its review process are still ongoing and not yet complete, so any judgment of failure is premature.

Mayor Ogden emphasized that the official plan consultation process was followed correctly: consultants developed a plan based on best land use, council provided direction, and landowners had opportunities to give input. While improvements are possible, the process worked as designed. Regarding the proposed development, Mayor Ogden stressed balancing community growth with neighborhood character. Minor increases in density usually don't impact quality of

life, but doubling units could, so special uses and conditional approvals must be carefully considered to provide certainty for residents. Overall, Mayor Ogden framed the council's cautious approach as careful, defensible, and aligned with sound planning principles.

DEFEATED (5 against)

d) **Resolution PH057-2025 - A001-25 - Zoning and Development Bylaw #45 – Fire Separations - First Reading**

Moved by Councillor Jeff MacDonald
Seconded by Councillor Deputy Mayor Steve Gallant

WHEREAS Planning Staff are proposing a housekeeping text amendment to the Zoning and Development Bylaw #45 to reduce confusion in the industry caused by referring to the vertical fire separation required for semi-detached and townhouse dwellings as a “firewall.”; and

WHEREAS the proposed text amendments will not change building permit requirements or the ability to subdivide attached dwellings from what has been required since the Town first adopted the National Building Code of Canada in 2011; 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 2 separate editions (September 19 and September 27, 2025), and notice of the public meeting was posted on the Town’s Facebook and YouTube page; and

WHEREAS a public meeting was held on September 29, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. at the Town Centre and was live streamed on the Town’s Facebook page and YouTube. No questions or comments were received at the meeting and no written comments were received by the deadline of October 3, 2025.

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

FURTHERMORE, BE IT RESOLVED that upon direction from the Minister of Housing Lands and Communities, due to an error in public notice for this proposed amendment when it was originally considered by Council in April and May 2025, the following 3 resolutions for the original readings of Bylaw 45S, PH012-2025, PH015-2025 and PH016-2025 be rescinded;

This resolution bears the recommendation of the Planning, Development & Heritage Committee as discussed at a meeting held on November 3, 2025.

CARRIED (5-0)

13. INFRASTRUCTURE

a) **Report** - The report was included in the agenda package for council to review.

Deputy Mayor provided a brief overview of his report.

Staff have been coordinating with consultants who have begun design work for the Ducks Landing Multi-Use Pathway project and the Harbourview Drive Sewer Redirection project. Construction for each of these will take place in the spring of 2026. The tender closed on October 15th for the Sewer Lift Station Standby Generators project with three bids received. A resolution will be presented this evening to request awarding the contract to the low bidder. Construction of the Myrtle Street Extension is near completion with paving to be done in the coming days. Work is expected to begin on the sewer main rehabilitation on Heron Drive later this month. Staff have been coordinating with the contractor engaged to complete the work.

Infrastructure Staff has been busy with the following:

- Buildings and properties maintenance and repairs is ongoing;
- Preparations for mounting the poppy drapes;
- Inspecting and repairing Christmas decorations;
- Managing the sump pump disconnection program. There are currently 30 projects completed and 19 underway for a total of 49 participants in the rebate program to date;
- Bylaw inspection and follow up is ongoing;
- Applying for funding applications for water and sewer upgrades as well as adding crosswalks throughout the town;
- Creating and issuing an RFP for the Waterfront Pavilion Centre;
- Sanitary sewer gravity flushing and hydrant flushing continues;
- Flushing of customer laterals identified for annual maintenance is underway with approximately 75% completed;
- 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 October there were no sewer or water related emergencies. There was a leak on a water service on Aylward Drive that

was repaired by the Utility, and a sewer lateral blockage to a property on Myrtle Street that was jetted by the Utility

b) **Minutes** - The minutes were included in the agenda package for council to review.

c) **Resolution INC008-2025 Sewer Lift Station Standby Generators**

Moved by Deputy Mayor Steve Gallant
Seconded by Councillor Jeff MacDonald

WHEREAS the 2025 Utility capital budget includes \$1,000,000.00 (excluding HST), with 40% being funded by the Local Leadership for Climate Adaptation Fund, for the provision of standby generators at five sewer lift stations in order to increase the resilience of the Town's sewer collection system as an adaptation to climate change; and

WHEREAS a public tender was advertised, and bids were received on October 15, 2025, with three submissions as follows:

Contractor	Bid Excluding HST
Ainsworth Inc.	\$617,914.00
Hansen Electric Ltd.	\$538,000.00
Hansen Solar Energy	\$512,100.00

AND WHEREAS Hansen Solar Energy having submitted the lowest tender amount of \$512,100.00 (excluding HST) was found to be duly qualified and presented a schedule meeting the project requirements; and

WHEREAS the engineering fees for the project are estimated to be \$158,500.00 (excluding HST), for a total estimated project cost of \$670,600.00 (excluding HST).

BE IT RESOLVED that the Sewer Lift Station Standby Generators project be awarded to Hansen Solar Energy in the amount of \$512,100.00 (HST excluded).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the utility will negotiate with Hansen Solar Energy to increase the scope of work with additional upgrades including adding a generator to a sixth sewer lift station in order to fully capitalize on the funding amount.

This resolution bears the recommendation of the Infrastructure Committee as determined via email poll conducted October 23 – October 31, 2025.

CARRIED (5-0)

14. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

a) Nothing to report for Committee of the Whole

15. SUSTAINABILITY

- a) **Report** - The report was included in the agenda package for council to review.
- b) **Minutes** - The minutes were included in the agenda package for council to review.
- c) **Transit Report** - The report was included in the agenda package for council to review.

16. INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- a) **Report** - The report was included in the agenda package for council to review.
- b) **Minutes** - The minutes were included in the agenda package for council to review.

17. INQUIRIES BY MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

No inquires were made by council.

18. OTHER COMMITTEES

- a) **Stratford Seniors Complex** - The report was included in the agenda package for council to review.

19. APPOINTMENTS TO THE COMMITTEES

Nil.

20. PROCLAMATIONS

- a) **Salvation Army Week** - Mayor Ogden declared that the week of December 8th to 14th, 2025 as "Salvation Army Week" in the Town of Stratford.

Proclamation

***Whereas:** The Salvation Army's Christmas Kettle Campaign is a vital initiative in the fight against poverty and food insecurity in the Town of Stratford; and*

***Whereas:** The Salvation Army is dedicated to ensuring that no one faces hardship alone, offering support and compassion to those in need; and*

***Whereas:** During this holiday season, citizens are encouraged to come together and make a meaningful impact by contributing to a Christmas Kettle or donating online at salvationarmy.ca; and*

***Whereas:** It is through our collective efforts as a town and as a community that we can bring hope to those who need it most.*

Therefore, Be It Resolved that I, Steve Ogden, Mayor of Stratford, do hereby proclaim the week of December 8th to 14th, 2025, as "Salvation Army Week" in the Town of Stratford.

On behalf of the Town of Stratford, I encourage all residents to support the efforts of The Salvation Army in their final push to give hope this holiday season.

21. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was declared.

22. ADJOURNMENT

Steve Gallant adjourned the meeting at 7:04 P.M.

Steve Ogden, Mayor

Jeremy Crosby, CAO

X

Neala Smallman
Approved - December 10, 2025