

PUBLIC MEETING OF COUNCIL
September 12, 2024

A public council meeting was held at the Town of Stephenville Town office on Thursday September 12, 2024.

Present: Tom Rose Mayor, Chairperson
 Laura Aylward Councillor
 Maurice Hynes Councillor
 Tom O'Brien Councillor
 Myra White Councillor

Absent: Susan Fowlow Deputy Mayor
 Darren Roberts Councillor

Staff: Bill Ramsay, CAO
 Deputy CAO, Candace Simon
 Jennifer Brake, Town Clerk
 Marilee Joy-Castillo, Communications Coordinator
 Matthew Simms, Manager, Planning and Development

CALL TO ORDER

24-276 Moved by Councillor O'Brien, Seconded by Councillor Hynes

The meeting was called to order at 12:06pm

In Favor: 5 Aylward, Hynes, O'Brien, Rose, White
Opposed: 0 Carried

Land Acknowledgment

We respectfully acknowledge the Town of Stephenville as the ancestral homeland of different populations of Indigenous people. We also acknowledge with respect, the rich histories and cultures of the Beothuk, Mi'kmaq, Innu and Inuit of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

24-277 Moved by Councillor Hynes, Seconded by Councillor White

Be it Resolved to approve the agenda for September 12, 2024 as presented.

In Favor: 5 Aylward, Hynes, O'Brien, Rose, White
Opposed: 0 Carried

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

24-278 Moved by Councillor Aylward, Seconded by Councillor White

Be it Resolved to approve Special Public Meetings of Council Minutes dated August 28, 2024 circulated.

In Favor: 5 Aylward, Hynes, O'Brien, Rose, White
Opposed: 0 Carried

24-279 Moved by Councillor White, Seconded by Councillor Hynes

Be it Resolved to approve Public Meetings of Council dated August 22, 2024 circulated

In Favor: 5 Aylward, Hynes, O'Brien, Rose, White
Opposed: 0 Carried

MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

NONE

PROCLAMATIONS AND DELEGATIONS

Mayor Rose signed Proclamation declaring the Month of September - Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. During the proclamation signing for Childhood Cancer Awareness month, it was announced that an initiative was being launched in honour of Connor Butt. With his parents blessing two different pins will be sold at local businesses and the proceeds will go Candlelighters NL and the Bay St. George Sick Children's Foundation

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance committee met on September 9, 2024 and the following items were recommended for council approval.

Accounts Payable

24-280 Moved by Councillor White, Seconded by Councillor Aylward

Be it Resolved to pay accounts payable dated September 12, 2024 in the amount of \$196,582.65

In Favor: 5 Aylward, Hynes, O'Brien, Rose, White
Opposed: 0 Carried

Expense Cheques

24-281 Moved by Councillor White, Seconded by Councillor Aylward

Be it Resolved to approve expense cheques for August 2024 in the amount of \$423,399.09

In Favor: 5 Aylward, Hynes, O'Brien, Rose, White
Opposed: 0 Carried

Request for Donation, Sir Thomas Roddick Hospital Foundation

24-282 Moved by Councillor White, Seconded by Councillor Hynes

Be it Resolved that the Town of Stephenville contribute \$1,000.00 to the Sir Thomas Roddick Hospital Foundation Annual Radiothon.

In Favor: 5 Aylward, Hynes, O'Brien, Rose, White
Opposed: 0 Carried

Approval to Submit Canada Community Building Fund Application

24-283 Moved by Councillor White, Seconded by Councillor Aylward

Be it Resolved to submit the Capital Investment Plan to the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs for Canada Community-Building Funds in the amount of \$ 250,494.20 for Street Paving on Georgia Drive from the intersection of Montana Drive to intersection of Pennsylvania Drive.

In Favor: 5 Aylward, Hynes, O'Brien, Rose, White
Opposed: 0 Carried

Approval to Submit Canada Community Building Fund Application

24-284 Moved by Councillor White, Seconded by Councillor Hynes

Be it Resolved to submit the Capital Investment Plan to the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs for Canada Community-Building Funds in the amount of \$ 161,033.65 for Street Paving from the intersection of Main/Queen Street to the intersection of White's Avenue

In Favor: 5 Aylward, Hynes, O'Brien, Rose, White
Opposed: 0 Carried

PLANNING & TRAFFIC COMMITTEE

The Planning & Traffic committee met on September 9, 2024, and the following items were recommended for council approval.

52 Main Street - Outline Planning Permission

24-285 Moved by Councillor Aylward, Seconded by Councillor O'Brien

Be it Resolved to approve Outline Planning Permission to operate existing business as existing non-conforming with Parking permitted at the location 28 Main Street Pursuant to Town of Stephenville Development Regulation 11, Section 3, Schedule D – Off Street Parking Requirements.

In Favor: 5 Aylward, Hynes, O'Brien, Rose, White
Opposed: 0 Carried

149-159 Main Street- Outline Planning Permission

24-286 Moved by Councillor Aylward, Seconded by Councillor White

Be it Resolved to approve outline Planning Permission to consolidate two parcels of land 149-159 Main Street and 161-163 Main Street as per Town of Stephenville Development Regulations.

In Favor: 5 Aylward, Hynes, O'Brien, Rose, White
Opposed: 0 Carried

Issue Request for Proposal - 147 Carolina Avenue

24-287 Moved by Councillor Aylward, Seconded by Councillor O'Brien

Be it Resolved to issue a Request for Proposal for the sale and development of 0.51 acres of land located at 147 Carolina Avenue.

In Favor: 5 Aylward, Hynes, O'Brien, Rose, White
Opposed: 0 Carried

Approval to Enter into Agreement with Quest Canada

24-288 Moved by Councillor Aylward, Seconded by Councillor Hynes

Be it Resolved that the Town of Stephenville participate in QUEST Canada's Net-Zero Community Accelerator (NCA) Program.

In Favor: 5 Aylward, Hynes, O'Brien, Rose, White
Opposed: 0 Carried

Approval to Enter in Partnership Agreement with ICLEI

24-289 Moved by Councillor Aylward, Seconded by Councillor White

Be it Resolved that the Town of Stephenville enter into a partnership agreement with ICLEI- Local Government for Sustainability for Building to Net-Zero (BNZ) Cohort.

In Favor: 5 Aylward, Hynes, O'Brien, Rose, White
Opposed: 0 Carried

BY-LAWS AND REGULATIONS

NONE

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mayor Rose

Mayor Rose restated the proclamation dated October 23, 2023 whereby the "The Town Council of the Town of Stephenville recognizing its rich Acadian and French heritage and recognizing the 50th Anniversary of the Federation des Francophones de Terre Neuve et du Labrador, declares its intention to make steps to incorporate elements into the town. He noted the College of the North Atlantic is offering French Language training. Additionally, the town will begin transitioning into bilingual streets signs and will collaborate with the Federation des Francophones to find suitable location for Francophone school, cultural centre, and daycare.

He attended 9/11 commemorative event along with members of management and council. This year's event recognized ground search and rescue in both Stephenville and Barachois locations.

Councillor O'Brien

Inquired if his previous concern about the mapping from the Upland growth plan has been reviewed for discrepancies for the property boundaries concerning the airport's land ownership.

In response the CAO stated the GIS coordinator on staff has reviewed the mapping, and as the town was not privy to the sale agreement for the airport, we have involved our legal counsel to clarify and ensure the land transferred is accurate and register of deeds is accurate with our files.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Rose

9/11 Commemorative event

He attended the 9/11 commemorative event along with members of management and council. This year's event recognized ground search and rescue in both Stephenville and Barachois locations.

Councillor Maurice Hynes

Councillor Hynes read the following statements:

Statement from the Town of Stephenville on Harassment of Elected Officials and Staff.

The following resolution was passed at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities AGM regarding the Harassment of Elected Local Government Officials: The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) calls on the federal government to work with provinces, territories, and local governments, through FCM, to identify and implement measures to protect elected officials, their family members, and staff—especially women, members of Black and racialized communities, 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, persons with disabilities, and Indigenous people—from harassment, intimidation, and threats, thereby reinforcing a unified front to safeguard democracy.

The Town of Stephenville stands firmly with this call to action. We echo FCM's message and emphasize that harassment of any kind toward our elected officials and staff is unacceptable. These harmful actions do not just affect individuals—they erode the foundations of democracy and the sense of community we hold dear.

The Town of Stephenville firmly denounces any form of harassment directed toward each and every one of our elected officials and staff. Over the past several months, social media has been a significant driver of negative commentary, and this has had a profound impact not only on our workplace but also on the personal lives of those who serve this community. This behavior constitutes a form of bullying and in many cases, these actions constitute defamation. Defamation of character occurs when someone makes a false statement about another that harms their reputation. It takes 2 forms, written defamation, such as false statements published in articles, social media post, emails and other forms of writing.

Spoken defamation, which includes false statements made verbally, often in person or through broadcast by television or radio. Defamation is a criminal offense.

We wish to make it known to the public that the Town of Stephenville cannot and will not support or tolerate this type of treatment. Each and every one of our staff members are selfless, hard-working individuals who dedicate themselves to the well-being of our town. Many of these employees have devoted their entire careers to serving the community, and they take immense pride in their work. They work with the best interests of Stephenville in mind, often going above and beyond to ensure that our town thrives. But beyond their roles, our employees are people—individuals with families, feelings, and personal lives. They deserve to enjoy fulfilling lives outside of work, surrounded by respect and positivity.

It is disheartening to see that kindness and empathy are becoming scarce in our community. We must remember that every member of our town, including those who serve it, deserves respect and compassion. Let us not forget the true meaning of community and the importance of treating one another with dignity and understanding.

We call on every member of our community to take a stand against negativity and actively support the Town of Stephenville in putting an end to this harmful behavior. Let us come together, not just to reject hurtful actions and comments, but to embrace kindness, empathy, and collaboration. By working together, we can create a stronger, more supportive environment where everyone's efforts are respected, and the wellbeing of our town is prioritized.

We have so much to look forward to in Stephenville's future, and now more than ever, we will need the support of the entire community to make these great things happen. There has never been a more important time to come together, to unite behind our shared goals, and to foster a culture of respect and cooperation. By joining forces, we can achieve far more positive and meaningful results, ensuring that the true spirit of our town thrives. Let's lift each other up and work together to build the bright future we all want to see for Stephenville.

Statement to correct misinformation posted on Social Media Platforms.

The Town of Stephenville would like to address and correct some recent inaccuracies and misleading information circulating in the media. These are just a few examples of comments that give an unfair representation of Town business.

The Town Council has approved a water study required by the Water Resources Division of Government NL for future development that may affect town-owned, Crown owned, and private property, including the Hillier Avenue area. This study will help the Town make informed decisions about land development and zoning,

ensuring proper use of water resources for industrial, commercial, and residential purposes.

Regarding the paving of Main Street, the Town clarifies that the project is not delayed due to funding issues. The project is approved and is currently awaiting the tendering process from Municipal Affairs and further input from consulting engineers. We expect the project to be awarded this fall, with construction planned to start in early Spring 2025. The Town has committed funds for our share of this cost-shared project.

The Town also clarifies the borrowing of funds for new equipment purchases. Borrowing allows the Town to spread out costs over time for projects like construction, paving, or repairs, rather than paying upfront. All purchases and projects are subject to approval by Municipal Affairs, ensuring the Town's budget is used efficiently.

The Town of Stephenville remains fully committed to openness and transparency. We encourage any residents with questions or seeking clarification on town projects or purchases to reach out to us directly. You can do so by calling, requesting an in-person meeting with management, emailing, or submitting a comment through the feedback section of our website. We are dedicated to ensuring our residents are heard and will make every effort to respond as promptly and efficiently as possible.

Councillor Aylward

She stated Western Health, Healthcare action committee and town council are continuously working towards a common goal to connect with government officials to address health care issues including recruitment.

Sir Thomas Roddick Hospital Foundation Radiothon will take place on September 26, Stephenville location will be on the air from 2:00pm – 6:00pm and Port Aux Basques location from 9:00am to 1:00pm. Donation can be accepted in person on the 26th.

Councillor White

She stated we need to provide leadership and guidance for the next generation. As parents and leaders, we have the responsibility to set positive examples.

NOTICE OF MOTION

NONE

ADJOURNMENT

24-290 Moved by Councillor O'Brien, Seconded by Councillor Hynes

Resolved that since there is no further business the meeting adjourned at 1:05pm

In Favor: 5 Aylward, Hynes, O'Brien, Rose, White
Opposed: 0 Carried

Mayor

Town Clerk