

MARCH 10, 2025
STELLARTON, NOVA SCOTIA

MEETING

A meeting of the Stellarton Town Council was held on Monday, March 10, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

PRESENT

Mayor D. Stroud, Couns. S. Eis, M. Fortune, S. Campbell and G. Pentz. Also present was CAO S. Higdon, Fire Chief M. O'Sullivan, Marketing and Communications P. Draper and Town Engineer B. Murray

1. AGENDA

The Agenda was approved as amended to include the Accessibility Plan Update, on motion by Coun. G. Pentz, seconded by Coun. S. Campbell. **Motion Carried.**

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from February 10, 2025 Regular Council were approved on motion by Coun. S. Eis seconded by Coun. G. Pentz. **Motion Carried.**

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

4. Proclamation – Purple Day Epilepsy Awareness Day

Mayor D. Stroud read Proclamation raising epilepsy awareness:

WHEREAS Purple Day is a global effort dedicated to promoting epilepsy awareness in countries around the world, and

WHEREAS epilepsy is one of the most common neurological conditions, estimated to affect more than 50 million people worldwide, and 42 people in Canada are diagnosed every day, and

WHEREAS one in ten persons will have at least one seizure during their lifetime, and

WHEREAS the public is often unable to recognize the common seizure types, or how to respond with appropriate first aid, and

WHEREAS Purple Day will be celebrated on March 26 annually to increase understanding, reduce stigma and improve the quality of life for people with epilepsy throughout the country and globally,

THEREFORE, I, Mayor Darren Stroud, Town of Stellarton, proclaim March 26 Purple Day in Stellarton, NS, in an effort to raise awareness of epilepsy in Canada.

Coun. G. Pentz made motion to proclaim March 26, 2025 as Purple Day in Stellarton, seconded by Coun. S. Eis. **Motion Carried.**

5. Presentation – Coastal Nova Scotia – Cindy MacKinnon, Managing Director
Cindy MacKinnon made presentation to Council highlighting:

- Visitors' Services; Events; Partnerships; and Destination Marketing
- Conferences
- Digtible Marketing; Regional Guides
- 8 Visitor Centres in our region; 2 in Pictou County
- Itinerary planning on their website
- E-newsletters

- Partnerships include Events Nova Scotia, 55 Plus Games, Pictou County Style Pizza Documentary, and the Municipalities
- Accessibility Lunch and Learn Project
- Signature events i.e. The Buoys
- Marketing Levy
- Putting in bids to host a National Ball event as well as Music Week in 2026
- Finances
- Requesting same amount from the Town as previous years

Questions/Comments:

Coun. S. Eis re local activities and improvements to facilities infrastructure funding. Cindy replied that Coastal Nova Scotia offers letters of support, not traditionally a funder; could help with marketing and advice where to find grants or other government assistance.

Mayor D. Stroud thanked Cindy for presentation.

6. Presentation – Creative Pictou County – Carissa Ainslie, Executive Director Vivianne LaRiviere Chair of Creative Pictou County addressed Council highlighting:

- Many benefits Creative Pictou County offers
- Impact of art to society
- Art culture sometimes overlooked by local economies
- Recognizing the economic opportunities by supporting art cultures
- Community involvement
- Sustainable future requires support
- Staffing needs
- Asking for additional funding, sponsorships and partnerships

Carissa Ainslie, Executive Director of Creative Pictou County addressed Council highlighting:

- Upcoming projects and grants received
- “Artistry in Action” event March 22, 2025 at the Museum of Industry, and September 11 at the Pictou Landing First Nations School
- “Culture Days” runs four weeks in the fall
- Pictou County ranked 9th in the small municipalities category for most engaged communities during Culture Days 2024
- Pop-up exhibitions across the county
- Free art workshops
- Rely on community partners to provide space, access to networks and events support
- Reiterated their staffing requirements
- Community Grants application submitted

Questions/Comments:

Coun. S. Eis re collaborate during our Homecoming Festival, with focus on youth engagement.

Mayor D. Stroud re paid staff and congratulated them on their operations.

7. Reports from Staff: February (Attached and available online)

a. Chief Mark Hobeck – Stellarton Police Service

CAO S. Higdon reviewed report to Council; 193 Calls in February; 5.5 hours of Foot Patrol; 67 hours of Traffic Enforcement; and 13 hours of Community Relations where Sgt. Morrell attended the African Heritage Month Ceremony at Summer Street; and two officers went to the G. R. Saunders Elementary School to educate students on internet safety.

Coun. G. Pentz made motion to accept Police Service Report, seconded by Coun. S. Eis . **Motion Carried.**

b. Fire Chief Mike O’Sullivan – Fire Department

Chief O’Sullivan reported that the Stellarton Fire Department had 11 calls in February; practices were held every Thursday evening; Equipment checks were completed weekly.

Coun. G. Pentz motioned to accept Fire Department's report for February 2025, seconded by Coun. M. Fortune. **Motion Carried.**

c. Paige Draper – Marketing and Communications

P. Draper mentioned that Volunteer of the Year deadline for nominations is March 19.

Coun. M. Fortune asked if groups can be nominated; P. Draper replied that it would be up to the Selection Committee.

Coun. M. Fortune made motion to approve the Marketing and Communications report, seconded by Coun. S. Campbell. **Motion Carried.**

d. Blaine Murray – Town Engineer

B. Murray noted the South Foord Street project is completed; the traffic light on Foord Street is still down, waiting for parts to arrive.

Coun. G. Pentz re new sanitary line on South Foord Street; B. Murray stated that an issue with that line was discovered in the fall; it will a capital item.

Coun. G. Pentz re water consumption is down again. B. Murray confirmed that it's down 3.9%.

Mayor D. Stroud asked about repairs to #3 Zeeweed. B. Murray explained that Zeeweed is the name of the membranes at the Water Treatment Plant.

Coun. G. Pentz made motion to approve Town Engineer's Reports, seconded by Coun. S. Eis. **Motion Carried.**

8. Correspondence

a. International Disability Pride Re: Request for Flag Raising – CAO S.

Higdon noted that this is Council's first Flag Raising request and the Town has a Flag Raising Policy, enacted in 2020. Mayor D. Stroud recommends tabling request until Council has time to review Policy. CAO S. Higdon will include item on the Committee of the Whole Agenda for March 24.

b. Healthy Pictou County Re: Monthly Report – CAO S. Higdon re for Council's information.

c. Pictou Antigonish Regional Library Re: Funding Update – CAO S. Higdon received this from Chief Librarian Eric Stackhouse to provide brief update on the Provincial Budget and how it impacts public libraries.

d. NSFM Re: Pending Legislation – CAO S. Higdon re Pending Legislation from NSFM; read for the record. CAO S. Higdon and Mayor D. Stroud attended meeting where this was discussed in detail. Follow-up correspondence received re Bill 24; updates will continue.

9. Committee of the Whole Report

The following recommendations are for Council's consideration from the Committee of the Whole meeting held on February 24, 2025:

Recommendation #1

On recommendation of Committee of the Whole Council approve a \$50 donation to the Northumberland Regional High School Boys Hockey Team for the 2025 Provincial Championships.

Recommendation #2

On recommendation of Committee of the Whole Council approve the Rutherford St. water and sewer lines infrastructure project for a total of \$3.05 million, including HST, with 50% funding already approved, CCBF funds for 2025/26 to be applied for sewer with the balance of the funding by provincial debenture for each of the Town and the Water Utility.

Coun. G. Pentz made motion to approve recommendations from Committee of the Whole, seconded by Coun. S. Campbell. **Motion Carried.**

10. Accessibility Plan – P. Draper provided background information; in 2020 an Accessibility Committee was established with representatives from the community; plan was developed and submitted to the Province in 2021 outlining five areas to focus on to become fully accessible by 2030. Revisions were discussed at recent Committee meeting; new plan emailed to Council; looking for approval to submit to the Province. Coun. M. Fortune made motion to approve the Accessibility Plan, seconded by Coun. S. Campbell. **Motion Carried.**

CAO S. Higdon extended appreciation to Paige for her advocacy and work on this project.

11. Equity and Anti Racism Plan Draft – P. Draper noted that the Town is mandated by the Province to submit; recommended a regional plan; P. Draper and CAO S. Higdon have been working with CAO's from Trenton, Westville, Pictou and the Municipality of Pictou County to put together a Draft which was submitted to the Province last week; the other towns will be bringing plan to their Councils for approval as well. Final approval / discussion will occur at our Committee of the Whole meeting. Mayor D. Stroud supports the combined effort.

Paige noted New Glasgow's involvement; they've been a "champion" for Equity and Anti Racism; they have an "Inclusive Community" Committee established several years ago and have been at the table for our planning. The Region has been invited to sit on that Inclusion Community Committee.

12. Open Forum

No one spoke at the Open Forum.

13. Next Council Meeting: Monday, April 14, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.

14. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned on motion by Coun. G. Pentz.

MAYOR

CAO