

TOWN OF LUNENBURG  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING AGENDA**  
Wednesday, February 12, 2025 | 6 pm  
Lunenburg Town Hall – Council Chamber  
120 Townsend Street



**NOTICE:** COTW meetings are open to the public and held in Town Hall. **Please use the back entrance at 120 Townsend Street.**

The public can also watch meetings through Zoom. To livestream this meeting starting at 6 pm, use this Zoom link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84563260420>

Meeting recordings are also available on the Town's [YouTube](#) channel.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

This meeting takes place in the traditional and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We are all Treaty people.

**3. ADDITIONS/ DELETIONS TO AGENDA**

**4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

4.1 February 12, 2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting Agenda

*\*Please note this meeting was initially scheduled for Jan. 29 but was postponed due to weather*

**Recommendation: That Committee of the Whole approve the agenda for the February 12, 2025 meeting as presented.**

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

4.1 January 7, 2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

**Recommendation: That Committee of the Whole approve the minutes from the January 7, 2025 meeting as presented.**

**6. PRESENTATIONS**

**7. BUSINESS ARISING AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

8.1 Introduction: Marketing Levy By-law

Recommendation: That Committee of the Whole refer the Marketing Levy By-law to Council for first reading.

#### 8.2 Expense and Hospitality Policy

Recommendation: That Committee of the Whole refer the draft Expense and Hospitality Policy to Council for notice.

#### 8.3 Public Input Policy

Recommendation: That Committee of the Whole refer the draft Public Input Policy to Council for notice.

### **9. NOTICES OF MOTION, INFORMATION REQUESTS AND COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

### **10. CLOSED SESSION**

### **11. ADJOURNMENT**

TOWN OF LUNENBURG  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES**

January 7, 2025 | 6 pm

Lunenburg Town Hall – Council Chamber and virtually through Zoom

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Present Mayor Jamie Myra, Deputy Mayor Rachel Bailey, Councillors Renea Babineau, Debbie Dauphinee, Gale Fullerton, Alex Greek and Alison Strachan

Also present Hilary Grant, Interim CAO  
Tyson Joyce, Director of Public Works  
Marc Kiely, Interim Director of Community Development  
Kayla Byrne, Legislative & Policy Manager

Call to Order The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Land acknowledgment It was acknowledged that Lunenburg is located in the unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

Approval of Agenda Moved by Councillor Strachan, seconded by Councillor Greek, that Council approve the agenda for the January 7, 2025 meeting as presented.

**Motion carried unanimously**

The Committee discussed the Lunenburg Daycare Center's request for town-owned land for its proposed new facility. Committee members expressed general support for the project and emphasized the importance of selecting a site that balances community needs with practical considerations.

Discussion points included:

- Floodplain Risks: Concerns were raised about potential flood risks for some proposed sites, particularly the Blue Building site. Members highlighted the need to review past reports and explore mitigation strategies.
- Parking and Accessibility: The adequacy of parking for daycare staff and visitors was discussed, with members noting the importance of reviewing the draft parking study for potential

solutions.

- **Site Feasibility and Preference:** The Blue Building site emerged as the preferred option due to its proximity to recreation facilities and existing services, despite concerns about its current use by Public Works.
- **Public Works Relocation Projections:** The Committee stressed the need for a detailed projection of what it would involve to relocate the functions currently housed in the Blue Building. This includes identifying alternative locations for storage, the carpentry shop, and other operations, as well as the associated costs, timelines, and feasibility. Members expressed interest in exploring temporary and long-term relocation options, noting that any solution must minimize disruption to town operations.
- **Urgency of Decision-Making:** Members acknowledged the tight timeline for securing funding and meeting project deadlines, stressing the importance of having clear recommendations and preliminary cost estimates by the January 14, 2025, Council meeting.

The Committee invited representatives from the Lunenburg Daycare to provide input on the matter. The daycare representative emphasized that the facility would serve not only the Town of Lunenburg but also surrounding communities, where daycare options are limited. They noted that the daycare's waitlist of over 220 children reflects growing demand driven by population increases and more accessible daycare fees. The representative clarified that the daycare is open to various locations for the facility, provided the site is serviceable and functional, though walkability is a preference. They also answered questions from the Committee regarding staffing, parking needs, and the facility's capacity, explaining that the proposed facility would accommodate after-school and summer programs in addition to childcare.

Moved by Councillor Babineau, seconded by Councillor Fullerton, that Committee of the Whole direct staff to prepare a report for Council's January 14, 2025, meeting, incorporating the Committee's direction on the Lunenburg Daycare Centre's request for Town-owned land and

potential partnership opportunities, including the preferred site option of the Blue Building.

**Motion carried unanimously**

Recess

The Mayor called a recess from 6:55 p.m. until 7:04 p.m.

The Committee discussed the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) report, focusing on its purpose, restrictions, and implementation. Members sought clarification on eligible expenses and noted that HAF funding could be used for infrastructure upgrades, such as water, sewer, and community assets that support housing growth. The Committee recognized the importance of meeting all six initiatives outlined in the application to secure the full grant but appreciated that failing to meet the target of 135 housing units by 2027 would only result in the loss of the final installment rather than requiring repayment of funds already received.

Housing  
Accelerator Fund

Concerns were raised about the Town's infrastructure challenges and their potential impact on realizing housing development. Members emphasized the need to prioritize infrastructure improvements to support growth and ensure the feasibility of incentivized development projects. The Committee highlighted the importance of balancing housing incentives, such as tax breaks, with the Town's capacity to deliver necessary services to new developments.

Members also discussed affordability metrics, expressing a preference for using 30% of median renter income as a more reasonable basis for defining affordable housing.

Affordable  
Housing Tax  
Forgiveness  
Program

The Committee discussed the proposed Affordable Housing Tax Forgiveness Program, focusing on its potential benefits, implementation challenges, and the need for clear parameters.

Discussion points included:

- **Affordability Definition:** Some members suggested that the Town establish its own affordability thresholds, as even the lower threshold of \$1,085 per month based on renter income may still be burdensome for many residents.

- **Tax Forgiveness Concerns:** While some expressed reservations about providing tax incentives to for-profit developers, others viewed the three-year tax break as a practical incentive to stimulate affordable housing development without directly impacting the Town's current tax revenue.
- **Pilot Project Approach:** The idea of launching the program as a pilot project was favoured to evaluate its effectiveness and determine whether it achieves its intended goals.
- **Tenant Protections:** The Committee discussed the importance of tying the affordability requirement to specific units rather than tenants to ensure that rents remain affordable throughout the tax forgiveness period, regardless of tenant turnover.
- **Program Scope and Duration:** Members debated whether the program should be limited to new builds or include renovations and conversions of existing properties, with some advocating for broader eligibility to maximize affordable housing development.
- **Administrative Considerations:** Concerns were raised about the administrative burden of overseeing the program. Suggestions included exploring best practices from other municipalities and potentially leveraging external systems like the Residential Tenancies Board to streamline compliance monitoring.
- **Expanded Tax Base Benefits:** Members expressed interest in understanding the potential long-term financial benefits of an expanded tax base after the tax forgiveness period ends.

Moved by Councillor Strachan, seconded by Councillor Babineau, that Committee of the Whole direct staff to develop a draft Affordable Housing Tax Forgiveness Program based on the Committee's feedback, and present the draft program for Council's consideration.

**Motion carried unanimously**

MPS Amendment: The Committee discussed proposed amendments to the Municipal  
DAs for Town Planning Strategy (MPS) to allow development agreements on Town-  
Lands owned lands. These amendments are part of the Housing Accelerator

Fund initiatives and aim to ensure enforceable development rules, particularly for the lower slopes of Blockhouse Hill, which were declared surplus.

Discussion points included:

- **Broadening the Scope:** Members debated whether to expand the proposed amendments to allow development agreements for all lands throughout the Town, not just Town-owned properties. There was general agreement that a broader policy could address various development concerns, such as parking and short-term rentals.
- **Parking Requirements:** Concerns were raised about the 2021 changes to the Land Use Bylaw (LUB) that removed off-street parking requirements for new developments. Members suggested reinstating parking requirements, citing practical challenges for a rural town.
- **Short-Term Rentals:** Members discussed the impact of short-term rentals on housing availability and community dynamics. There was strong support for developing a policy to regulate non-occupied short-term rentals, with suggestions to tax them commercially.
- **Need for Development Agreements:** The Committee emphasized the importance of using development agreements to maintain control over the use of Town-owned lands, ensuring that new developments align with community goals and avoid unintended consequences, such as the proliferation of short-term rentals.
- **Efficiency of the Amendment Process:** Members supported streamlining the MPS amendment process by incorporating multiple potential amendments during the same public engagement timeline, maximizing efficiency while addressing broader community planning concerns.

Motion by Councillor Strachan, seconded by Councillor Fullerton, that Committee of the Whole refer the proposed amendments to the

Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS), as outlined in Attachment A, to Council for consideration, enabling the use of development agreements on lands throughout the Town.

**Motion carried unanimously**

Affordable  
Housing Grant  
Program Policy

The Committee discussed the development of a policy for an Affordable Housing Grant Program, which is part of the Town's Housing Accelerator Fund initiatives. Staff clarified that an internal report on the program is due by February 2025, with a final policy to be approved by February 2026.

Discussion points included:

- The importance of clear affordability criteria, with some questioning whether the 30% of renters' median income threshold was still too high.
- The need to evaluate the track record and experience of developers applying for grants.
- Suggestions to explore alternative affordability definitions, including consulting examples from other municipalities or organizations like the South Shore Housing Action Coalition.

Moved by Councillor Fullerton, seconded by Councillor Strachan, that Committee of the Whole direct staff to prepare a draft policy for an Affordable Housing Grant Program for Council's consideration.

**Motion carried unanimously**

Accessible  
Housing Incentive  
Policy

The Committee discussed the proposed Accessible Housing Incentive Policy, which is part of the Housing Accelerator Fund initiatives. Staff presented a framework focused on waiving hookup and subdivision fees for new accessible dwelling units.

Discussion points included:

- Definition and Eligibility: Council sought clarification on whether the policy applies only to new builds or also to retrofitting existing housing units. Staff clarified that it is currently aimed at new builds, aligning with the Housing Accelerator Fund's focus



on creating new units.

- **Multi-Unit Housing Encouragement:** Councillors expressed a preference for the policy to prioritize multi-unit developments, recognizing the potential for greater community impact.
- **Pilot Project Approach:** There was consensus that the policy could be implemented as a pilot project to evaluate its effectiveness and refine the framework based on real-world outcomes.
- **Compliance and Verification:** Councillors emphasized the importance of robust compliance measures to ensure developers meet accessibility standards before receiving incentives.

The Committee invited a member of the gallery, Jennifer Corson, a local architect and developer, to speak on the matter. She emphasized the importance of aligning the Town's policy with existing CMHC Affordable Housing Fund criteria for affordability, accessibility, and energy efficiency. Corson highlighted the need for accurate local rental rate data to support developers in meeting CMHC's affordability thresholds and stressed that leveraging existing standards would streamline processes and avoid unnecessary duplication.

Moved by Councillor Fullerton, seconded by Councillor Babineau, that Committee of the Whole direct staff to prepare a draft Accessible Housing Incentive Policy for Council's consideration.

**Motion carried unanimously**

Revised Street  
Services Extension  
Policy &

The Committee discussed the Street Services Extension Policy, which was brought forward as a current policy for updates and revision to better support cost-sharing for infrastructure extensions. Staff clarified that the policy aims to make development projects more financially feasible and aligns with the Housing Accelerator Fund, enabling funding for infrastructure extensions through this program.

Motion by Councillor Strachan, seconded by Councillor Greek that Committee of the Whole direct staff to refine the Street Services Extension Policy based on the Committee's discussion and bring a

revised draft to Council for consideration.

**Motion carried unanimously**

Adjournment

There being no further business, the January 7, 2025 Committee of the Whole meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

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The minutes were read and approved.

**Subject:** Marketing Levy By-law – Introduction Report

**From:** Hilary Grant, Interim CAO

**Date:** January 28, 2024



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## **Recommendation**

That Committee of the Whole refer the Marketing Levy By-law to Council for first reading.

## **Alternatives**

- Defer a decision

## **Background**

On February 27, 2024, Council discussed the implementation of an accommodation marketing levy and directed Council to bring forward a draft for first reading. Staff are seeking direction on how to proceed with the proposed Marketing Levy By-law.

Marketing levies may be charged against any accommodation that must be registered under the provincial Tourist Accommodations Registration Act to operate. This includes hotels, motels, secondary suites, B&Bs, Airbnbs, VRBOs, and other short-term accommodation. All short-term rentals were required to register by April 1, 2023. As of June 2024, there were 300 bedrooms in 78 Civic Addresses.

Municipalities can choose if they want to impose the levy and at what rate, up to a maximum of three percent of the total cost of an accommodation.

## **Discussion**

Municipalities may choose if they want to impose a levy and at what rate, up to a maximum of three percent of the total cost of accommodation. For example, a levy of 3% on accommodation that costs \$200.00 per night would be \$6.00. After reviewing other jurisdictions in Nova Scotia with a Marketing Levy By-law, staff recommend that Council approve a 3% levy on the purchase price of the accommodation. A 3% levy has already been approved in Cape Breton, Colchester, Halifax Regional Municipality, Pictou County, Town of Truro, Town of Antigonish, the Municipality of the County of Annapolis, the Municipality of the County of Richmond, and the Municipality of the County of Inverness. The rate is listed in the Marketing Levy Structure (Appendix A of the proposed Marketing Levy By-law). The Marketing Levy is subject to HST, so it has to be applied before the tax.

As proposed, operators would need to pay the levy to the Town twice a year, once in October and once in April, using a remittance form. The payment schedule corresponds to the fiscal year. The 18% a year interest on unpaid levies is the same rate applied to other overdue Town bills.

As per Section 75A(4) of the MGA, the levy would not apply if the daily purchase price is not more than \$20; to students in a building owned and operated by a post-secondary education institution where

they are registered and attending; rooms booked for more than 30 consecutive days and persons who meet the medical treatment criteria outlined in the proposed Marketing Levy By-law.

Pursuant to Section 75A(5) of the MGA, monies obtained through a marketing levy may only be used by Council to promote tourism, attracting people, tourists and events to Lunenburg. The Town may grant money collected to organizations that promote tourism. This money cannot be used for capital upgrades. Council must approve the spending of funds, including whether to give funds to other organizations. Staff suggest that the levy be collected over a one-year period. Afterward, we propose presenting recommendations to Council on potential expenditure options. These suggestions will be informed by an economic impact study conducted in collaboration with local partners. The aim is to identify the work of the Cultural Tourism Working Group towards optimizing the utilization of the funds.

Council may consider delaying the immediate implementation of the Marketing Levy By-law. This delay would offer the opportunity to effectively inform and educate local operators about the impending levy, allowing them to make necessary adjustments to accommodate the new financial requirement. However, a long delay in implementation postpones much-needed revenue and could potentially impact the Town's ability to undertake economic development initiatives identified by the cultural tourism working group. Staff recommend starting to collect the Levy April 1, 2026. This clear start date not only allows operators more time to implement the levy but also facilitates smoother public communications.

### **Strategic Plan Relevance**

Economic Development: Direction to support economic development.

Governance: Direction to enhance internal and external relations through policies, procedures and resources.

### **Relevant Legislation**

Tourist Accommodations Registration Act

Section 75A (2) of the *Municipal Government Act* enables the municipality to impose a marketing levy by enacting a by-law.

### **Financial**

While we know the number of tourist accommodation in Lunenburg, we do not know how much money is collected. Thus, we cannot accurately estimate the monies the levy may generate. However, given the number of short-term accommodations in Lunenburg, Staff are confident the levy will be a net positive revenue for the Town. The financial costs to the Town are limited and would include public notices for the Public Hearing and staff time to manage the By-law.

### **Communications**

The Public Hearing on the proposed Marketing Levy By-law will be advertised in the Lighthouse Now and Town's social media posts. Members of the public are also encouraged to submit written feedback

on the proposed bylaw before second reading. Council can also direct staff to undertake additional public engagement.

If passed, letters will be sent to all registered tourist accommodation operators in the Town of Lunenburg notifying them of the levy.

**Attachments**

Attachment A – Proposed Marketing Levy By-law

## **Attachment A**

Town of Lunenburg

### **MARKETING LEVY BY-LAW**

#### **1. TITLE**

1.1 This By-law will be known as the “Marketing Levy By-law”.

#### **2. PURPOSE**

2.1 Section 75A(2) of the Municipal Government Act enables a Town to impose a marketing levy by enacting a By-law. The Town of Lunenburg is enacting this By-law under Section 75A(2) of the Municipal Government Act.

2.2 The funds collected from the Marketing Levy must be used for initiatives that promote tourism. These initiatives may include but are not limited to, marketing campaigns, events and support for tourism-related projects.

#### **3. DEFINITIONS**

3.1 In this By-law:

- a. “Accommodation” is the provision of one or more rental units or rooms as lodging in hotels, motels, and other facilities required to be registered under the Tourist Accommodations Registration Act
- b. “Council” means the Municipal Council of the Town of Lunenburg.
- c. “Inspector” means a person appointed by the Chief Administrative Officer to investigate compliance with this By-law.
- d. “Town” means the Town of Lunenburg.
- e. “Operator” means a person who, in the normal course of the person’s business, sells, offers to sell, provides or offers to provide accommodation in the Town that is required to be registered under the Tourism Accommodation Registration Act.
- f. “Remittance” means the act of an Operator transferring the collected Marketing Levy funds to the Town.

- g. "Remittance Period" means the period(s) shown in Appendix A under Reporting Schedule.
- 3.2 Notwithstanding Section 3.1, in this By-law, words will have the meaning or meanings assigned to them in the Municipal Government Act as amended from time to time.

#### **4 EFFECTIVE NOTICE**

- 4.1 A person is deemed to have received written notice when the written notice is hand-delivered to the person, sent to the person by email or other electronic communication at the address and/or number registered with the Town for electronic communication, or posted on the person's place of business. A person is deemed to have received written notice upon receiving a hand-delivered notice or three (3) days after the notice is sent to the person by regular mail, email or other electronic communication or posted on the person's place of business.

#### **5 APPLICATION OF LEVY**

- 5.1 A Marketing Levy is now imposed upon every person who, for a daily charge, fee or remuneration purchases Accommodation in the Town. The Town will collect the Levy amounts as set by Council in the attached Marketing Levy Structure (Appendix A). The Marketing Levy Structure may be reviewed annually by Council. Amendments to the Marketing Levy Structure require a motion of Council but do not require an amendment to this By-law.
- 5.2 The Operator must collect the Marketing Levy at the time of sale, regardless of the payment method (cash, credit, installment, etc.). The total levy should be based on the full purchase price before HST. The Operator must then pay this levy to the Town according to the process outlined in this By-law.

#### **6 EXEMPTION FROM BY-LAW**

- 6.1 The Marketing Levy does not apply to:
  - a. A person who pays for accommodation for which the daily purchase price is no more than \$20.00.

- b. A student who is accommodated in a building owned or operated by a post-secondary institution while the student is registered at and attending a post-secondary educational institution.
- c. A person who is accommodated in a room for more than twenty-eight (28) consecutive days.
- d. A person and the person's family accommodated while the person or a member of the person's family is receiving medical treatment at a hospital or provincial healthcare centre or seeking specialist medical advice, provided the person provides the Operator with a personal attestation of the following:
  - i. The person or a member of the person's family is receiving medical treatment at the hospital or centre from a physician licensed to practice medicine in the Province of Nova Scotia.
  - ii. As a result thereof, the person or a member of the person's family is in need of the accommodation.
  - iii. The duration that the accommodation will be required.

## **7 OPERATOR AS AGENT**

- 7.1 An Operator acts on behalf of the Town to collect the marketing levy. They must collect this levy from their customers and then pay it to the Town.

## **8 REMITTANCE OF LEVY**

- 8.1 All Operators must remit to the Town or its delegate within thirty (30) days following the end of each remittance period (as shown in Appendix A).
- 8.2 Each remittance must be accompanied by a completed Marketing Levy Remittance Return Report (Appendix B).
- 8.3 Even if an operator does not collect any Marketing Levy in a given period, they must submit a report stating this on the Marketing Levy Remittance Return Report, as outlined in Appendix B of this by-law.
- 8.4 If an operator stops their business or sells their accommodation property, they must complete and submit the Marketing Levy Remittance Return Report (found in



Appendix B) to the Town. Additionally, they must pay any collected levy within 15 days from when they ceased operations or completed the sale.

## **9 RECORDS**

- 9.1 Every Operator is required to maintain comprehensive accounting books, records, and documents to provide the Town with all the necessary details concerning:
  - a. Sales of accommodations.
  - b. Amount of levies collected.
  - c. Payment of levies to the Town.
- 9.2 In their financial records, Operators must clearly separate all entries related to the Marketing Levy from other financial entries. This separation must be evident in their books of account, records, and documents.
- 9.3 Every Operator must retain any book of account, record or other document referred to in this section for a period of five (5) years.
- 9.4 Where a receipt, bill, invoice, or other document is issued by a person selling accommodation, the levy must be shown as a separate item.

## **10 CALCULATION OF LEVY FOR ALL-INCLUSIVE PACKAGES**

- 10.1 When calculating the Marketing Levy for an all-inclusive package that includes accommodation, meals, and other services, the levy should be based on the standard price of just the accommodation. This means the price should be what the accommodation would cost if it were sold on its own, without the extra meals and services, at the same facility. This calculation ensures the levy is applied consistently, whether accommodation is sold separately or as part of a package.

## **11 REFUND OF LEVY COLLECTED IN ERROR**

- 11.1 If the Town confirms that a levy, or part of it, was mistakenly paid, the Town will return the excess amount to the rightful recipient. This refund will not include any interest.

11.2 If the Town confirms that an Operator has sent the Town a levy amount that they did not actually collect or were not obligated to collect according to this By-law, the Town will reimburse the Operator for that amount. This reimbursement will not include any interest.

## **12 CLAIM FOR REFUND**

12.1 In order to claim a refund under this By-law, a person must:

- a. Submit to the Town an application in writing signed by the person who paid the amount claimed.
- b. Provide sufficient evidence to satisfy the Town that the person who paid the amount is entitled to the refund.

12.2 For the purposes of subsection 12.1 a, if the person who paid the amount claimed is a corporation, the application must be signed by a Director or authorized employee of the corporation.

## **13 INTEREST**

13.1 Interest on overdue levies must be paid at the rate of 18% per annum.

## **14 INSPECTION, AUDIT AND ASSESSMENT**

14.1 An inspector, appointed by the Town, has the right to access, during reasonable hours, the business location of an individual or the place where that individual's records are stored:

- a. To determine whether:
  - i. The person is an Operator, or the premises are Accommodations within the meaning of this By-law.
  - ii. This By-law is being and has been complied with.
- b. To inspect, audit, and examine the books of account, records, or documents.

14.2 The person must offer all necessary cooperation to the inspector, helping the inspector verify if the levy has been collected and submitted according to this By-law.

Additionally, the person must provide any information the inspector reasonably needs to complete their inspection.

- 14.3 Where the inspection, audit or examination reveals that an Operator has not complied with this By-law, a person appointed by the Town will calculate the amount of the levy and any interest due in such a manner and form as the Town deems adequate.
- 14.4 When an Operator fails to provide reasonable assistance in accordance with Section 14.2, a person appointed by the Town may estimate the levy amount that should have been collected and remitted to the Town by the Operator.
- 14.5 Upon calculating or estimating that a levy amount is due, the Town will provide written notice to the Operator that a levy amount is payable.
- 14.6 Regardless of whether the Operator submits an application under Section 14.7 objecting to the amount payable, the Operator must remit the levy amount plus applicable interest to the Town within 30 days of receiving notice that the levy amount is due.
- 14.7 If an Operator objects to the amount payable to the Town, the Operator must, within 15 days of receiving written notice of the amount due:
  - a. Submit to the Town an application in writing signed by the Operator or a representative of the Operator.
  - b. Provide sufficient evidence to satisfy the Town that the Operator has complied with this By-law.
- 14.8 After receiving a request from the Operator, or occasionally, the Town has the authority to evaluate or reevaluate the sums due under this By-law. It can also modify or cancel any previous evaluations. Consequently, the Operator must pay the finalized amount to the Town.

## **15 ALLOCATION OF MARKETING LEVY FUNDS TO ORGANIZATIONS**

- 15.1 Per the provisions of the Municipal Government Act, Council may spend the marketing levy funds to promote tourism or allocate any portion of the funds to organizations engaged in promoting tourism. The allocation of marketing levy funds

to organizations is at the sole discretion of Council. Council will consider the potential impact of the proposed activities on promoting tourism and the overall benefit to the community.

## **16 PENALTY**

16.1 Any person who violates any provision of this By-law, is guilty of an offence and subject to a penalty as provided in Section 505(2) of the Municipal Government Act SNS 1998, Chapter 18 as amended from time to time and the provisions of Section 505(3) of the said Act are applicable.

## **17 ADMINISTRATION OF BY-LAW**

17.1 This By-law shall be administered on behalf of the Town by the Chief Administrative Officer and any persons designated by the Chief Administrative Officer.

## **18 EFFECTIVE DATE**

18.1 This By-law shall take effect on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

## **19 SCHEDULES, APPENDICES AND FORMS**

19.1 Appendix A – Marketing Levy Structure

19.2 Appendix B – Marketing Levy Remittance Return Report

TOWN OF LUNENBURG – **APPENDIX A**  
**MARKETING LEVY STRUCTURE**  
Fees may be reviewed annually by Council



**MARKETING LEVY RATE**

The Marketing Levy is set at a rate of three percent (3%) of the purchase price of the accommodation.

**REPORTING SCHEDULE**

Reporting Period	Payment due date
Period 1: April 1 – September 30	October 31
Period 2: October 1 – March 31	April 30

NOTE: payment will be considered overdue if remitted past the payment due dates above.

**MARKETING LEVY REMITTANCE RETURN REPORT**

A Marketing Levy Remittance Return Report (Appendix B) shall be submitted along with any amounts remitted.



TOWN OF LUNENBURG – APPENDIX B  
**MARKETING LEVY REMITTANCE RETURN REPORT**

A Remittance Return Report must be completed and submitted even if no levy has been collected for the reporting period.

**Please submit reports and payments no later than the payment due dates outlined in Appendix A.**

**MARKETING LEVY REMITTANCE RETURN REPORT**

Required fields are marked with an asterisk (\*)

REPORTING PERIOD: \* From \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ to \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ (dd / mm / yy)

REGISTRANT INFORMATION

Property Assessment Number: \* \_\_\_\_\_

Corporate Name: (as shown in Registry of Joint Stocks) \_\_\_\_\_

Operating Name: (if different from above) \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \* \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \* \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \* \_\_\_\_\_

REMITTANCE INFORMATION

Total Room Revenue for Period: \* \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Adjustment for Bad Debts and Refund due to Errors (Deduct): \* \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Do Not Include Exempted Stays – See Section 6 By-law*

Adjustment to Revenue (Add): \* \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Adjusted Room Revenue subject to Levy in reporting period: \* \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Marketing Levy Collected: \* \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Marketing Levy Remitted: \* \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTALS

Total Number of Available Room Nights for Period: \* \_\_\_\_\_

Total Number of Room Nights Sold for Period: \* \_\_\_\_\_

Amount collected should equal amount remitted.

*Please explain any variances below:*

Name of Authorized Signing Officer: \* \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Authorized Officer: \* \_\_\_\_\_

*I attest that the information provided is accurate and complete*

Payment options for remitting the Marketing Levy:

- In-person: Lunenburg Town Hall, 119 Cumberland Street.  
*Office hours are Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. (holidays excluded).*
- Mail: 119 Cumberland Street, P.O. Box 129 Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, Canada, B0J 2C0.

**For more information about these payment options, or to make an inquiry, please contact us:**

In person or by Mail: Town of Lunenburg Finance Office  
119 Cumberland Street  
PO Box 129  
Lunenburg, Nova Scotia B0J 2C0  
Telephone: 1-902-634-4410  
Fax: 1-902-634-4416

**Subject:** Expense and Hospitality Policy

**From:** Kayla Byrne, Legislative & Policy Manager

**Date:** January 29, 2025 COTW



**Recommendation**

That Committee of the Whole refer the draft Expense and Hospitality Policy to Council for notice.

**Background**

Per the Municipal Government Act (MGA), municipalities must have an expense and hospitality policy and must review this policy by January 31 following a regular election. Council must either re-adopt this policy by motion or amend it as required.

After a review, staff found that the current Council and Management Expense and Hospitality Claims Policy (Policy #86) aligns with the Municipal Government Act (MGA) but doesn't provide clear, practical guidance specific to the Town's needs. While it meets basic legal requirements, the policy lacks detailed processes and oversight measures, which could result in inconsistencies or gaps in how it's applied.

**Discussion**

The following table provides a clear comparison between the Town of Lunenburg's original Expense and Hospitality Policy and the proposed updated version. The purpose of this Committee of the Whole discussion is to compare the current policy with the proposed draft and develop a policy that meets the Town's current needs.

Category	Original Policy	Updated Policy	Key Improvement
<b>Scope and Applicability</b>	Applied only to Council and management staff.	Applies to all Town representatives, including elected officials and staff.	Broader applicability ensures consistency and inclusivity across all representatives.
<b>Approval Structure</b>	Basic approval process with limited oversight; alcohol claims required Council approval.	Comprehensive hierarchy for all representatives, with clear oversight roles (e.g., CAO, Mayor, Director of Finance).	Formalized approval structure ensures transparency and accountability.
<b>Travel and Transportation</b>	Mileage reimbursed at provincial rates with pre-set distance	Retains provincial mileage rates but allows actual travel distances. Adds	Flexibility for actual travel needs and clear guidelines



<b>Category</b>	<b>Original Policy</b>	<b>Updated Policy</b>	<b>Key Improvement</b>
	limits; shared travel encouraged.	planning requirements (e.g., advance bookings).	for cost-efficiency and accessibility.
<b>Hospitality and Alcohol</b>	Hospitality expenses limited to specific scenarios; alcohol required Council approval.	Detailed framework for hospitality events; alcohol requires pre-approval with documented justification.	Structured guidelines align claims with municipal objectives and enhance oversight for alcohol-related expenses.
<b>Meal and Per Diem Allowances</b>	\$15 (breakfast), \$20 (lunch), \$35 (dinner), \$70 daily max; \$15/day incidental cap for events.	\$18 (breakfast), \$23 (lunch), \$37 (dinner), \$78 daily max. Adds \$12 incidental allowance and \$35 private lodging rate.	Adjusts for inflation, introduces incidentals, and adds flexibility for private accommodations.
<b>Credit Cards</b>	Brief mention; prohibited personal use but no detailed procedures.	Expanded section with reporting requirements, documentation, and consequences for misuse.	Formalized credit card use improves accountability and operational clarity.
<b>Professional Development</b>	Referenced annual budget for events; lacked process for professional development requests.	Requires written requests for funding with cost estimates and justification. Claims need documentation post-event.	Transparent process for funding requests, with structured pre-approval and post-activity requirements.
<b>Documentation and Timelines</b>	Claims due within 30 days with basic receipts.	Stricter documentation (e.g., itemized receipts, purpose, attendee details). Late or incomplete claims may be denied.	Reinforces accountability with stricter standards for submission and approval.
<b>Hospitality Claims (General)</b>	Limited guidance; approvals often ad hoc.	Clear pre-approval requirements for all claims, including purpose, attendees, costs, and benefits to the Town.	Aligns hospitality claims with structured and transparent processes.
<b>Alcohol Claims</b>	Required Council approval; rarely addressed explicitly.	Pre-approval mandatory for all alcohol-related expenses, with clear approval hierarchy and detailed documentation.	Strengthens oversight and ensures consistency in handling alcohol-related claims.

### *Administrative Procedures*

Accompanying the proposed policy are the Administrative Procedures, which are approved by the CAO. These procedures operationalize the policy by providing detailed guidance on implementation, including pre-approval processes and documentation requirements.

### **Financial**

The updated policy includes a modest increase in meal per diem allowances to reflect current inflation rates and the rising cost of dining. For regular operations, the increases are not expected to create significant strain on the budget.

### **Relevant Legislation**

Municipal Government Act, S. 23

### **Attachments**

- Current policy
- Proposed policy

## TOWN OF LUNENBURG PROCEDURAL POLICY #86 - COUNCIL AND MANAGEMENT EXPENSE AND HOSPITALITY CLAIMS

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### **PURPOSE**

1. This Policy provides a process and criteria by which Lunenburg Town Council (“Council”) and management staff expense and hospitality claims may be considered for approval. These provisions were previously included in the Town’s Personnel Policy, but are now stated in this Policy for ease of reference and inclusion of the following 2017 amendments to the Municipal Government Act (“Act”).

#### *Section 23 (3)*

*(3) Each municipality shall adopt an expense policy and a hospitality policy.*

*(4) An expense policy must*

- (a) prohibit the municipality from reimbursing expense claims for alcohol purchases by an individual;*
- (b) identify the persons who have signing authority to authorize the reimbursement of an expense;*
- (c) where applicable, set out rules respecting the use of corporate credit cards;*
- (d) apply to every reportable individual in the municipality; and*
- (e) comply with the regulations.*

*(5) A hospitality policy must*

- (a) establish the expenditures, including an alcohol purchase, that may be a hospitality expense;*
- (b) establish the approval process for authorizing hospitality expenses;*
- (c) establish the scope and applicability of the policy; and*
- (d) comply with the regulations.*

*(6) An expense may only be reimbursed if that expense is authorized pursuant to the expense policy or the hospitality policy.*

*(7) By the January 31st immediately following a regular election held under the Municipal Elections Act, the council shall review the expense and hospitality policies and, following a motion by the council, either re-adopt the policies or amend one or both of the policies and adopt the policies as amended.*

2. Reference should also be made to the Town’s Council Professional Development and Conference Attendance Procedural Policy for information regarding the approval procedure for same.

3. Expenses considered under this Policy are for attendance at conferences, training, meetings or other business events (“event”) representing the Town that are in compliance with this Policy and the Act, have been pre-approved by Council in the Town’s annual budget and/or by specific request, or by the CAO or designate for management staff.

## **PROCEDURE**

4. Expenses for attendance at approved events representing the Town will be reimbursed as follows within approved Council budget amounts.
  - (a) Transportation: the actual cost of the most economical mode of travel, typically by personal vehicle. Vehicle costs will be reimbursed at the Provincial standard rate as amended from time to time. The following are pre-determined maximum allowable travel claim distances to:

- Bridgewater	40 kilometres
- Chester	80 kilometres
- Dartmouth	220 kilometres
- Halifax Airport	250 kilometres
- Halifax	200 kilometres
- Liverpool	130 kilometres
- Mahone Bay	25 kilometres
- Sydney	1100 kilometres
- Wolfville	200 kilometres

Variances from these pre-determined maximum amounts will be considered if the expense claimant provides the actual kilometers based on their vehicle odometer reading or travel distance calculator and confirmation on the Expense Claim Form that they picked up and/or dropped off multiple Town representatives to attend the same approved event, and/or travel was required during an event to multiple event venues, or similar circumstances as approved by the CAO, Finance Director and/or Mayor as set out in Section 4 (g) herein.

If more than one Council and/or management staff member are attending the same event they are expected, when reasonable, to travel together in one vehicle.

If a Town vehicle is used, the approximate cost of fuel will be billed to the relevant Town budget account used to pay for event attendance.

Air travel reservations may be made by authorized Corporate Services staff following the Town’s Purchasing Policy and Municipal Credit Card Use Administrative Policy as applicable.

- (b) Accommodations: actual cost for the authorized Town Council or management staff member, plus approved parking and internet fees as applicable.

Accommodation reservations and payment will be made by Corporate Services staff following the Town’s Purchasing Policy and Municipal Credit Card Use Administrative Policy as applicable.

- (c) Meals: out of Town events - \$15.00 breakfast (departure from Lunenburg required before 6:30 a.m.), \$20.00 lunch (unable to return to Lunenburg before 1:00 p.m.), and \$35.00 dinner (unable to return to Lunenburg before 6:30 p.m.), to a daily maximum of \$70.00 with no receipts required. If a meal is provided as part of the event, an additional meal claim shall not be made. Reimbursement for alcohol purchases is not permitted.

A \$15.00 meal expense may also be claimed if attendance at an in-Town event occurs during these meal periods and the event does not provide a meal and it is not possible for the Council or management staff member to leave to have their regular meal. Corporate Services staff will generally make prior catering arrangements for a meal to be provided in such circumstances through the use of a Town Purchase Order. Reimbursement for alcohol purchases is also not permitted.

Council may also budget for a maximum of \$1000./year, plus HST to provide for the attendance of Council members and/or senior management staff at relevant special event dinners, e.g., Lunenburg Board of Trade AGM, Habitat for Humanity and MICA annual dinners, etc.

- (d) Registration Fees: actual cost to be paid in advance by Corporate Services staff in compliance with the Town's Purchasing Policy, Municipal Credit Card Use Administrative Policy and/or other relevant Town Procedural Policies.
- (e) Miscellaneous Expenses – Council and management staff members may also claim up to \$15.00/day for each overnight stay for an approved out of Town event to a maximum of \$75.00/week without receipts for expenses for which receipts are generally unavailable when attending same which exceed one day and require an overnight stay outside Town (other than their own residence). Miscellaneous expenses may include tips, parking meters, taxis, bridge and ferry fares, buses, etc., but cannot be used to increase meal allowances noted above or purchase alcohol. Receipts should be presented for all miscellaneous expenses whenever possible.
- (f) Hospitality Expenses - the Mayor, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and/or their designate(s) may use the per person meal allowances listed above in subsection (c) for hospitality purposes with visiting officials while conducting Town business.

A Town Purchase Order should be used in such instances in accordance with the Town Purchasing Policy or detailed receipts provided for subsequent reimbursement. Council must approve the reimbursement of expense claims that exceed these limits or for any alcohol purchases.

- (g) Expense Claim Form - all claimants must submit a completed Town Expense Claim Form when seeking reimbursement for expenses listed above. This shall be submitted within thirty days of expenses being incurred to the CAO and Finance Director for approval. The Town Finance Director and Mayor shall determine if expenses claimed by the CAO may be approved for payment. The

CAO, Finance Director and Mayor may request of the claimant additional verification of the expense prior to approving payment.

- (h) Spousal Expenses - expenses for the spouses of Council and management staff members will not be reimbursed.
  - (i) HST - all maximum expense amounts stated herein do not include HST which may be claimed as an additional expense for payment on proof of HST payment.
5. No reimbursement will be made for Council and/or management staff attendance at partisan political events.
6. No advances for expenses will be paid unless pre-approved by the CAO and Finance Director. All advances shall follow the same reporting format as outlined in this Policy and a final Expense Claim Form shall be submitted to determine if repayment of any advance is required or additional reimbursement is due.

Clerk' Annotation For Official Policy Book

Date of notice to Council members of intent to consider Policy amendments: May 12, 2020

Date of passage of Policy amendments: May 26, 2020

I certify that this Policy amendment was adopted by Council as indicated above

\_\_\_\_\_

Municipal Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

## Expense and Hospitality Policy

Date adopted by Council: **TBD**



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### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Town of Lunenburg is committed to ensuring that all expenses and hospitality expenditures incurred by Town representatives are necessary, reasonable, and transparent. This commitment reflects the Town's dedication to accountability and responsible stewardship of public funds.

### 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish high-level principles and responsibilities for claiming, authorizing, and reimbursing expenses and hospitality costs incurred by Town of Lunenburg representatives. Detailed procedural requirements are outlined in the accompanying Administrative Procedures.

### 3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Town of Lunenburg representatives, including elected officials and staff, who incur expenses while conducting official Town business.

### 4. DEFINITIONS

"Business Meals" refer to meals taken during meetings between Town representatives where the primary purpose is to discuss official Town business.

A "conflict of interest" occurs when a Town representative's personal interests or the interests of their family could affect their official duties. This includes situations where their own or their family's personal, financial, or other interests might benefit from their official decisions.

"Incidentals" refer to minor, necessary expenses incurred by Town representatives during travel for Town business. These expenses are typically supplementary to the primary costs of transportation, lodging, and meals. Incidentals include minor, necessary expenses incurred during travel for Town business, such as gratuities, local transit fares and minor business supplies.

"Signing authorities" refers to the designated officials responsible for reviewing, authorizing, and validating expense and hospitality claims. These officials ensure that all claims are processed in accordance with the Town's policies and procedures.

“Town of Lunenburg business” means any legitimate business conducted for the governance, administration, development, and community engagement of the Town of Lunenburg. Permitted expenses are further defined within this policy.

“Travel expense” includes but is not limited to accommodations, airfare, rail or ferry transport, kilometrage, meals, gratuities, taxi, parking, bridge tolls, and work-related phone calls related to any Town business per this policy and procedures. Items excluded are vehicle fuels and vehicle operating costs, including repairs to personal vehicles.

“Town representatives” refers to Town of Lunenburg elected officials and staff.

## **5. RESPONSIBILITIES**

All Town representatives incurring expenses for Town business are required to:

- Understand and adhere to this policy and its procedures.
- Complete and submit expense and hospitality claims with all necessary supporting documentation.
- Exercise diligence and fiscal responsibility when incurring expenses.
- Cancel reservations or bookings promptly when necessary to avoid unnecessary costs.

If a Town representative incurs expenses for an approved activity but does not attend, they will be responsible for any costs incurred by the Town unless the non-attendance is due to:

- Personal or immediate family illness or emergencies,
- Severe weather conditions,
- Travel disruptions,
- Town-related emergencies, or
- Other exceptional circumstances, as determined by the CAO, Director of Finance, or the relevant department director for their respective staff.

## **6. APPROVAL OF EXPENSE AND HOSPITALITY CLAIMS**

Expense and hospitality claims must be reviewed and approved to ensure alignment with this policy, operational compliance, and accountability to the public. Specific submission and approval processes are detailed in the Administrative Procedures.

- Council Member Expenses: All expenses incurred by Council members, except the Mayor, must be approved by the CAO and the Mayor.



- **Mayor's Expenses:** All expenses incurred by the Mayor must be approved by the CAO and the Deputy Mayor.
- **CAO Expenses:** All expenses incurred by the CAO must be approved by the Mayor and the Director of Finance.
- **Staff and Director Expenses:** All expenses incurred by staff and department directors must be approved as outlined in the Administrative Procedures.
- **Prohibition of Self-Approval:** No individual may approve their own expense claims.

## **7. PERMITTED EXPENSES**

Subject to and in accordance with this policy and procedures, the following expenses incurred by a Town representative are eligible for reimbursement:

- **Authorized Travel within Nova Scotia:** Includes transportation, accommodation, and meal costs for Town business. These activities may include attending meetings, conferences, or other events directly related to the official duties and responsibilities of the individual.
- **Out-of-Province Travel:** Includes transportation, accommodation, and meal costs for activities requiring travel outside Nova Scotia. Such expenses must be pre-approved and are related to Town business, such as attending national conferences, inter-provincial meetings, or other significant events.
- **Pre-approved Training or Continuing Education Costs:** Includes expenses for professional development courses, workshops, educational conferences, and training. These activities must be pre-approved and relevant to the staff member's role or professional development within the Town of Lunenburg. Professional development for Council members is defined in a separate policy.
- **Attendance at Relevant Local and Regional Special Events:** Includes costs for attending special events, dinners, or activities associated with or relevant to the Town of Lunenburg. Examples include community award ceremonies, local or regional economic development forums, industry association dinners, and cultural or heritage celebrations.

When incurring expenses, Town representatives must avoid conflicts of interest, such as selecting service providers with whom they have a personal relationship. If limited options require the use of such a service provider, the representative must:

- Transparently disclose the potential conflict.
- Submit a written explanation of the situation.
- Obtain prior written approval from the CAO.

## **8. TRAVEL**

Council members and staff must travel by the most direct route and use the most economical means of transportation whenever possible.

## **9. BUSINESS MEALS**

Business meals are eligible for reimbursement when they are necessary to support the effective conduct of Town business.

A business meal is considered necessary when:

- It involves discussions directly related to Town projects, policies, or initiatives.
- It facilitates engagement with external stakeholders critical to advancing Town objectives.

## **10. HOSPITALITY EXPENSES**

The Town of Lunenburg recognizes the value of hospitality in fostering relationships and advancing municipal objectives. Reimbursement for hospitality expenses is permitted in the following situations:

- Hosting foreign dignitaries or officials from other levels of government (e.g., federal, provincial, or municipal).
- Engaging in official public matters with representatives of governments, businesses, industries, labour organizations, or community leaders.
- Sponsoring or hosting conferences.
- Hosting ceremonies or recognition events.
- Other official functions pre-approved by the CAO.

All hospitality expenses must receive prior approval in accordance with this policy. Apart from alcohol purchases, if prior approval cannot be obtained due to unforeseen circumstances, the following must accompany the reimbursement claim:

- A detailed description of the event, including its purpose, attendees, and associated costs.
- A written explanation of why prior approval could not be obtained.

Without prior approval or proper justification, reimbursement for hospitality expenses, including alcohol, will not be granted.

### **10.1 Alcohol**

Alcohol purchases are prohibited as individual expenses under this policy and will not be reimbursed unless incurred as part of a pre-approved hospitality expense. Alcohol may only be reimbursed under the following conditions:

- Hosting foreign dignitaries or official visitors as part of a formal event.
- Sponsoring or hosting conferences where alcohol is served as part of a professional networking event.
- Recognizing significant achievements or milestones during formal Town ceremonies or award presentations.
- Other official functions where alcohol is deemed appropriate and necessary for maintaining protocol or fostering relationships, subject to approval.

The purchase of alcohol for hospitality purposes must always receive prior approval to qualify for reimbursement. Approval must be obtained from:

- The CAO and Mayor for staff or Council member expenses.
- The CAO and Deputy Mayor for Mayor expenses.
- The Mayor and Director of Finance for CAO expenses.

Alcohol expenses must be reasonable and consistent with the nature and purpose of the event.

### **10.2 Gifts**

Unless otherwise stated in another policy, providing token gifts is permitted to foster goodwill, promote Town initiatives, or adhere to diplomatic or protocol standards, provided the gift's value does not exceed \$300. Examples of acceptable occasions include:

- Official visits or ceremonial occasions.
- Strengthening business or community relationships.
- Promoting Town initiatives or programs.

### **10.3 Exceptional Circumstances for Higher-Value Gifts**

In cases where a gift exceeds \$300, a written request must be submitted to Council for approval. The request must include:

- The rationale and purpose of the gift.

- The estimated cost.
- The intended recipient.
- The source from which the gift will be obtained.

## **11. LIMITS ON REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES**

The following limits apply to the reimbursement of expenses:

- **Personal Incurrence:** Claimants will only be reimbursed for costs they have personally incurred.
- **Air Travel:** Air travel must be booked by Town staff whenever possible to ensure the most cost-effective options are secured. If the claimant books their own air travel, reimbursement will be limited to the lowest available rate for a reasonable itinerary.
- **Lodging:**
  - Reimbursement for commercial lodging, including hotels, bed and breakfasts, Airbnbs, cottages, and similar options, is limited to the cost of a standard double occupancy room.
  - A standard double occupancy room is defined as a room with basic amenities and two beds or one bed suitable for two people, without premium features such as suites or executive-level upgrades.
  - If no standard options are available, an alternative may be chosen.
  - For conferences, accommodations must be booked at the conference's standard rate. If unavailable, or if the booking is unrelated to a conference, accommodations should be booked at establishments offering government or corporate rates whenever possible.
  - **Accessibility Needs:** Upgrades or premium accommodations may be reimbursed if required to meet accessibility needs, such as for mobility impairments, hearing or visual impairments, or other medical requirements.
  - **Use of Suites for Hosting:** When attending conferences, the Mayor may request a suite to host official Town-related functions, such as meetings or receptions. Suites must be pre-approved by the CAO and justified as necessary for hosting purposes.

- Reimbursement for private, non-commercial accommodations (e.g., staying with family or friends instead of a hotel) will be provided at the rate specified within this policy.
- Meals: Meal reimbursements will be based on the per diem amounts specified in this policy. Receipts are not required for per diem claims.
- Alcohol: The cost of alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed unless part of an approved hospitality expense.
- Non-reimbursable Items: The Town will not reimburse fees, deposits, interest charges, or surcharges incurred on personal credit cards, including but not limited to late payment fees, foreign transaction fees, or over-limit charges.
- Combined Personal and Business Travel: When personal and Town business travel are combined, only expenses directly related to the Town business portion are reimbursable. Any extended travel time and associated expenses are the traveller's responsibility.

## **12. KILOMETRAGE, PER DIEM, AND ACCOMMODATION REIMBURSEMENT**

### **12.1 Kilometrage**

Kilometrage will be reimbursed at the rate set by the Nova Scotia Provincial government under its [Kilometrage and Transportation Allowance Rate Changes](#).

Receipts are not required for kilometrage reimbursement; claimants must provide a detailed record of the travel, including the purpose and distance travelled.

### **12.2 Per Diem for Meals and Incidental Expenses**

Per diem rates for meals and incidental expenses are as follows:

- Breakfast: \$18
- Lunch: \$23
- Dinner: \$37
- Daily Incidental Rate: \$12

Receipts are not required for per diem claims.

### **12.3 Private Non-Commercial Accommodation Rate**

Town representatives who stay in private, non-commercial accommodations (e.g., with family or friends) are eligible for a \$75 per night allowance. This allowance will cover both the cost of the accommodation and travel between the private accommodation and the designated conference, meeting, or work-related destination. As such, Town representatives may not claim kilometrage for travel between the private accommodation and the event or work location.

#### **12.4 Excess Costs**

Claimants are responsible for any meal, incidental, or accommodation expenses exceeding the established rates. Reimbursement will be limited to the per diem or allowance amounts unless explicitly pre-approved under a separate policy.

#### **12.5 General Conditions**

Claimants may not claim a per diem or reimbursement for meals, incidentals, or accommodations provided as part of an event or conference.

All claims must be submitted using the Town's approved expense claim form and must include sufficient detail to verify the travel purpose and dates.

### **13. BUDGETARY COMPLIANCE**

All expense and hospitality claims must fall within approved departmental or municipal budgets. For expenses that do not require pre-approval, claimants are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy and their department's budgetary limits.

Claimants are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of their claims and adherence to all procedural requirements.

### **14. FRAUD, MISUSE, OR MISAPPROPRIATION OF TOWN FUNDS**

Fraud, misuse, or misappropriation of Town funds is strictly prohibited and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Any Town representative who becomes aware of or suspects fraud, misuse, or misappropriation is obligated to report it immediately to the CAO or Director of Finance.

The Town will thoroughly investigate all reported incidents to ensure accountability and transparency.

### **15. COMPLIANCE WITH THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT**

All expense and hospitality claims will adhere to all related provisions of the Municipal Government Act, including but not limited to reporting and review provisions.

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

### Expense and Hospitality Policy

Date approved by the CAO: TBD

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#### 1. APPROVAL OF EXPENSE AND HOSPITALITY CLAIMS

All expense and hospitality claims must be approved by the designated **Signing Authorities**, as outlined below. Approval must follow this structure:

Claimant	Approval Required By
Regular Staff	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Department Director</li><li>2. Director of Finance</li></ol>
Department Directors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. CAO</li><li>2. Director of Finance</li></ol>
Director of Finance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. CAO</li><li>2. Mayor (or Deputy Mayor, as applicable)</li></ol>
Council Members	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. CAO</li><li>2. Mayor (or Deputy Mayor, as applicable)</li></ol>
Mayor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. CAO</li><li>2. Deputy Mayor</li></ol>
CAO	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Mayor</li><li>2. Director of Finance</li></ol>

## **1.2 Alcohol-Related Hospitality Claims**

All alcohol-related claims require explicit pre-approval and must follow these additional requirements:

A written request must be submitted, including:

- Purpose of the event and justification for serving alcohol.
- Anticipated number of attendees.
- Estimated cost of alcohol.
- Budget allocation for the expense.

### **Alcohol Pre-Approval Authority:**

- Staff or Council Member Expenses: Pre-approved by the CAO and Mayor.
- Mayor's Expenses: Pre-approved by the CAO and Deputy Mayor.
- CAO's Expenses: Pre-approved by the Mayor and Director of Finance.

## **1.3 Documentation for Reimbursement**

For all expense and hospitality claims, the following documentation must be submitted:

- A detailed claim form, including:
  - Purpose of the event or expense.
  - Attendees (for hospitality claims) and their affiliations.
  - Itemized receipts or per diem allowances (where applicable).
- Claims that lack sufficient documentation or exceed pre-approved limits may be denied.

## **1.4 Delegation of Authority**

The CAO, Director of Finance, and all department directors may delegate signing authority to other staff for efficiency. All delegations must:

- Be documented in writing, specifying the scope and duration of the delegation.
- Ensure adherence to this policy.

## **2. BUSINESS MEALS**

Eligibility Requirements: Business meals must clearly align with the policy's definition of necessity, focusing on advancing Town business.

Claims must include detailed, itemized receipts that outline:



- The date and location of the meal.
- The attendees (names and affiliations).
- A clear description of the business purpose.

Expense claims without sufficient documentation may be denied.

Pre-approval is not required for standard business meals.

### **3. TRAVEL GUIDELINES**

Staff travel time for Town business will be compensated as working hours.

Compensation applies to travel for approved activities, including meetings, conferences, training sessions, or other duties related to official roles.

#### **4.1 Travel Planning and Booking**

- Travel must be planned to prioritize cost-efficiency and practicality:
  - Booking Timeline: Book transportation (e.g., flights, train tickets) and accommodations at least two weeks in advance whenever possible to secure lower rates.
  - Carpooling: Use carpooling when multiple representatives are attending the same event, unless:
    - Schedules or departure times conflict.
    - Travel involves multiple stops for distinct purposes.
    - Accessibility or health accommodations require separate transportation.

#### **4.2 Kilometrage Claims**

- Kilometrage for personal vehicle use must be calculated using reliable mapping tools (e.g., Google Maps) to determine the most accurate distance travelled.
- Submit travel purpose, dates, and locations with the kilometrage claim.

#### **4.3 Pre-Approvals for Exceptions for staff**

Travel requiring alternate routes, higher-cost transportation, or exceptions to standard guidelines must receive pre-approval from the CAO when requests are received from staff.

### **4. VEHICLE RENTALS**

The cost of renting a vehicle will be reimbursed in the following situations:

- Reasonable ground transportation services such as public transit, taxis, or hotel shuttles are unavailable; or
- Two or more Council members, the CAO, and/or staff of the Town of Lunenburg are travelling together, and it is more economical than the combined cost of other ground transportation options.

Compact, economical vehicles must be used unless:

- Three or more persons are travelling together,
- The bulk or weight of goods being transported requires a larger vehicle, or
- A compact, economical vehicle is unavailable.

To protect both the claimant and the Town of Lunenburg, claimants must ensure that adequate insurance (collision, comprehensive, and third-party liability) is in place for all drivers.

The applicable deductible must be the lowest available for the coverage described above.

## **5. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SPECIAL EVENTS FOR STAFF**

If the Town of Lunenburg has a budget for professional development, staff can apply in advance to their respective Signing Authorities for approval to use this budget for professional development or attend special events, as long as:

- The request is made in writing and includes an estimate of all costs, such as course fees, transportation, accommodation, meals, or event-related expenses.
- The course, meeting, conference, or special event is related to municipal government or relevant to the Town of Lunenburg.
- The annual budget for professional development has not been used up and won't be exceeded by this request.
- When submitting an expense claim for reimbursement, the claimant must provide a brief written summary explaining the nature and benefits of the professional development or special event.
- If the relevant Signing Authorities approve the expenses for professional development or special events and the claimant has already paid for some or all pre-approved expenses, the claimant can be reimbursed after submitting an expense claim according to this policy.

## **6. PRE-APPROVAL FOR EXPENSES**

When pre-approval for expenses is required per this policy and procedures, the following steps must be completed:

- Complete the relevant pre-approval form or written request, including:
  - Purpose: Reason for the expense.
  - Details: Description, dates, locations, and activities.
  - Estimated Costs: Detailed budget (e.g., transportation, accommodation, meals, fees).
  - Benefits: Expected benefits to the Town.

- Submit the form to the designated Signing Authorities at least five business days before incurring the expense to allow sufficient time for review and approval.

## **7. PREFERRED PAYMENT METHOD**

The preferred payment option is to issue a purchase order for an expense that can be invoiced directly to the Town. When this option is not available, using a corporate credit card after completing a purchase order is the next preferred method for covering expenses aligned with this policy.

### **10.1 Misuse of Corporate Credit Cards**

The Town of Lunenburg expects all corporate credit cardholders to use these cards strictly for authorized Town business in accordance with this policy. Any misuse of corporate credit cards, including unauthorized personal purchases, failure to provide receipts, or exceeding approved limits, will result in disciplinary action.

## **8. EXPENSE CLAIMS**

Expense claims must be submitted on the form provided by the Town of Lunenburg and signed by the claimant.

The business reason for each expense must be included with all expense claims.

For reimbursement claims requiring a receipt, if no receipt is available, the claimant must submit a written attestation explaining why the receipt is unavailable and providing an itemized list of the expenses. Debit or credit card transaction records alone will not be accepted as a substitute for a receipt.

A Signing Authority may request additional explanations, documentation, or justification from the claimant and may refuse to approve any claim or expense deemed unreasonable or not in compliance with this policy.

Expense claims that are incomplete, lack required documentation, or do not adhere to this policy will not be processed. Claimants will be notified and must provide the missing information or documentation before their claim is reviewed.

## **9. HOSPITALITY CLAIMS**

All hospitality events require prior authorization and the request must include:

- The purpose of the event.
- The list of attendees and their affiliations.
- The estimated cost and budget allocation.
- The anticipated benefits to the Town of Lunenburg.

In instances where a hospitality event has been held without prior approval, the individual seeking reimbursement must submit a detailed Expense Claim Form. The form must include:

- The details of the event (e.g., purpose, attendees, costs).
- A document explaining why prior approval was not possible.

Alcohol-related expenses will not be reimbursed under any circumstances without prior approval.

#### **10. TIMEFRAME FOR SUBMITTING CLAIMS**

Expense claims must be submitted for approval within 30 days of incurring the expense.

Expenses must be charged to the year in which they occur. They cannot be carried over to future years.

**Subject:** Public Input Policy  
**From:** Kayla Byrne, Legislative & Policy Manager  
**Date:** January 29, 2025 COTW

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## **Recommendation**

That Committee of the Whole refer the draft Public Input Policy to Council for notice.

## **Background**

The Town's current policy on Public Presentations at Council and Committee Meetings covers the basics of managing presentations but doesn't reflect how public engagement and correspondence are currently handled. Without clear guidelines for managing public input during meetings—now a regular item on Council agendas—or for addressing correspondence, staff may find it difficult to handle requests consistently. Setting clear directions from Council would help staff manage requests more effectively, keeping Council meetings efficient and on track.

The former Council discussed this draft policy at a Committee of the Whole meeting in August 2024 and ended up making a motion in September 2024 that "Council refer the draft Council Meeting Submissions and Public Input Policy to the incoming Council for its consideration"

Staff have made minor additions and edits to the policy since it was last presented to Council to enhance clarity and readability.

## **Discussion**

The draft policy establishes clear procedures for public input, correspondence, presentations, and petitions at Council meetings. Its primary goals are to:

- Enhance public participation by creating accessible avenues for engagement.
- Ensure consistency and fairness in handling public submissions.
- Support effective and efficient Council meetings by setting clear parameters for input and correspondence.

### *Key Features of the Proposed Policy*

#### **1. Public Input Sessions:**

- Introduces a standing agenda item for public input, allowing individuals to comment or ask questions during meetings.

- Sets clear guidelines, such as a three-minute time limit per speaker and a total of 20 minutes allocated for public input per meeting.
- Provides a structured follow-up process, ensuring public questions and comments are addressed appropriately.

## **2. Presentations to Council:**

- Defines the types of presentations permitted, prioritizing topics of significant public interest, community initiatives, and local achievements.
- Limits presentations to two per meeting, with a 10-minute maximum for each presentation and 5 minutes for Council questions.
- Establishes procedures for reviewing and approving presentation requests, including criteria for denying promotional or jurisdictionally irrelevant presentations.

## **3. Correspondence Handling:**

- Details submission requirements, including deadlines, content guidelines, and formats for written and audiovisual correspondence.
- Differentiates between correspondence for action (requiring a Council decision) and information (shared for awareness).
- Introduces procedures for addressing inappropriate or disrespectful content, including opportunities for revision.

## **4. Petitions:**

- Sets standards for submitting petitions, including the requirement for full names and residential addresses of signatories.
- Ensures petitions are summarized for Council agendas to protect personal information.

## **5. Accessibility and Accommodations:**

- Commits to providing reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities or other needs to participate in Council meetings.
- Allows for virtual participation in public hearings and presentations.

## **6. Transparency and Public Records:**

- Ensures all submissions, including correspondence and presentations, are part of the public record unless withheld for specific reasons (e.g., sensitive information).

- Implements live-streaming and public archiving of Council meetings to promote transparency.

### *Administrative Procedures*

Accompanying the draft policy are the Administrative Procedures, which are approved by the CAO. These procedures explain how the policy will be put into action and ensure it is applied consistently. Council sets the rules and decides what goes on their agenda, while the administrative procedures guide staff on how to carry out those decisions to meet Council's expectations.

### **Relevant Legislation**

Municipal Government Act, S. 47

### **Attachments**

- Current Policy
- Proposed policy

**#68. TOWN OF LUNENBURG PROCEDURAL POLICY:**

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS AT TOWN COUNCIL,  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

**I. PURPOSE**

This policy describes the procedure for members of the public, both individuals and groups, to make presentations to meetings of the Lunenburg Town Council ("Council") and Committees. Public presentations are encouraged and welcomed by Council to ensure public consultation on Council matters. The policy is intended to facilitate the efficient organization, co-ordination and considerations of public presentations to Council and Committees of Council.

**II. POLICY PROCEDURE**

1. Individuals and groups ("delegation(s)") are permitted to make presentations to the following Town "bodies (body)" as further described in this policy:

- (a) Town Council;
- (b) Committee of the Whole Council; and
- (c) Town Committees.

2. If a delegation wishes to make a presentation to a body as noted above, they shall apply in writing (fax, letter or email) to the Town Manager/Clerk ("TM/C") four (4) business days before the scheduled meeting outlining the purpose and content of their presentation. If within a body's jurisdiction, the TM/C will place the delegation on the relevant body's agenda and circulate the delegation's written application to body members. The TM/C will notify the delegation of the meeting particulars and relevant provisions of this Policy in preparation for their presentation.

3. If the subject matter of the presentation is outside the Town's jurisdiction, the TM/C in consultation with the Mayor, may refer the application to the appropriate jurisdiction.

4. Delegations shall:

- (a) be scheduled to a maximum of four (4) presentations per body meeting;
- (b) address one main topic within a body's jurisdiction that is relevant and timely;



- (c) consist of a maximum of six (6) presenters;
- (d) address the body for a total maximum of ten (10) minutes, plus five (5) minutes for questions from body members, unless the body grants by motion a time extension; and
- (e) not debate with body members or staff.

5. For planning public hearings, the relevant body shall accommodate additional delegations as requested and not require advance written presentation summaries.

6. The body may direct staff to investigate and make a report on the delegation's presentation and defer and/or refer the hearing of the delegation or the discussion of the presentation pending review of the staff report.

7. If an unscheduled delegation seeks to make a presentation at a meeting, the body on motion may approve this request.

8. The TM/C will notify in writing the delegation of the body's final decision in response to their presentation.

## LUNENBURG TOWN COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

To assist you in making presentations to meetings of the Lunenburg Town Council and its Committees this information has been prepared for your reference. Please note:

- Lunenburg Town Council and Committee meetings are held each month usually at the Lunenburg Town Hall, 119 Cumberland Street. Please contact Bea Renton, Town Manager/Clerk (634-4410) for the meeting date, time and location of the meeting you are interested in making a presentation at.
- A list of Council and Town Committee members is attached.
- If you wish to make a presentation to Council or a Committee, please notify the Town Manager/Clerk prior to the meeting to request that your name and the subject matter of your presentation are added to the appropriate agenda. Presentations are typically first made to the relevant Committee and then referred to Council for further consideration where you may also make a presentation. This enables the Committee which deals more specifically with the subject matter you will be presenting on to first consider your request, seek any additional information in support from you, and make a recommendation to Council, if, required.
- A written copy of your submission or summary must be given to the Town Manager/Clerk for circulation to the appropriate body five (5) days before their meeting before you will be added to a meeting agenda. By providing advance information, Council and/or Committee members are better prepared for your presentation and to consider your request.
- The Town Manager/Clerk will determine which body is most appropriate for you to make your presentation to. If you do not agree, please speak with the Town Manager/Clerk to see if other arrangements can be made.
- Presentations are usually scheduled at the beginning of every meeting so you will not have to wait.
- Audio visual equipment and a flip chart can be made available for your presentation. Please let the Town Manager/Clerk know so this can be pre-arranged.
- It is helpful when making your presentation to introduce yourself and any other presenters with you.
- Presentations should be no longer than ten (10) minutes, unless the Council or Committee agrees otherwise. If required, an additional five (5) minutes for questions and answers may be provided by the body. If you want to make additional comments later during the meeting, please seek the permission of the Council or Committee meeting Chair.

- Council or a Committee may advise presenters that their presentation should be made to another body if it can be better addressed by the latter. Council or a Committee may also refer the issues you have raised to another body or defer consideration for further study before making a decision. You will be notified of this and their final decision in response to your presentation.

Thank you for your interest in making a presentation to the Lunenburg Town Council and Committees. We hope these guidelines are of assistance. If additional information is required, please contact Bea Renton, Town Manager/Clerk at 634-4410/[explorelunenburg@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:explorelunenburg@ns.sympatico.ca)

Encl. (1) - Council and Committee Appointment List

## Public Input Policy

Date adopted by Council: TBD



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### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy establishes a framework for public participation in Council meetings, enabling individuals to provide feedback on Town matters. Through multiple avenues of engagement, the Town of Lunenburg seeks to ensure open communication, encourage community involvement, and support informed decision-making

### 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear procedures for presentations, public input, and correspondence at Council meetings.

### 3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all individuals and organizations wishing to participate in or engage with the Town of Lunenburg's Council meetings. This includes, but is not limited to, presentations, public input, correspondence, public hearing submissions, and petitions.

### 4. DEFINITIONS

"Accommodation Request" is a formal request submitted by an individual seeking modifications or adjustments to facilitate their participation in public meetings.

"Input" refers to any comments, questions, or feedback provided by individuals or organizations regarding municipal affairs during Council meetings. This includes verbal contributions during public input sessions, written submissions, and other communication directed toward Council.

"Operational responsibilities of the CAO and staff" refer to the duties and activities that fall within the scope of the day-to-day administration, management, and execution of municipal plans, policies, and programs.

"Presentation" is an organized and formal delivery of information to the Council during a Council or Committee of the Whole meeting

"Public Hearing" refers to a formal process held during a regular or special Council meeting where Council considers public input on specific matters, such as proposed bylaws or other significant issues.

## 5. PRESENTATIONS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Presentations are made at Council meetings or, when practical, at Committee of the Whole meetings.

A maximum of two presentations may be made at any meeting.

For the purpose of this policy, Council will only hear presentations that fall into one of the following four categories:

- Updating Council on local or regional initiatives, projects, budgets, or operations.
- Raising Council's awareness of community initiatives or projects.
- Highlighting topics of significant public interest or impact on the community that affect the broader community rather than individual concerns.
- Celebrating successes and achievements of local or regional volunteer-based or not-for-profit organizations with a social, cultural, economic, or environmental well-being in their mandate.

Presentations must be respectful and free of personal attacks, defamatory statements, or offensive language.

These presentations will be allotted 15 minutes (10 minutes for the presentation and 5 minutes for questions from Council to the presenter).

Presentations are deemed to be for informational purposes only. If Council wishes to proceed with binding decisions based on the content of a presentation, a notice of motion is required. Non-binding or procedural actions, such as requesting additional information or directing staff to review the matter further, may be initiated through a motion at the same meeting.

## 6. PROHIBITED PRESENTATION REQUEST

The following types of presentation requests will generally be refused to ensure Council meetings remain efficient and focused on matters within their authority. Exceptions may be made at Council's discretion if the presentation provides significant new information, highlights matters of public interest, or aligns with the Town's strategic priorities:

- **Promotional Presentations:** Requests solely for the promotion of private businesses, groups, or individuals, unless they involve initiatives that align with community or municipal objectives.
- **Matters Outside Jurisdiction:** Subjects that do not fall within the legislative or decision-making authority of the Town of Lunenburg.

- **Public Hearing Topics:** Matters for which a public hearing has already been held or is currently scheduled, to avoid duplication and maintain the integrity of the formal public hearing process.
- **Operational Topics:** Topics that fall exclusively within the operational responsibilities of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and staff, unless they raise issues of significant public concern requiring Council's awareness.
- **Duplicate Presentations:** Requests that duplicate or closely replicate topics discussed within the past six months, unless they provide significant new information, updates, or perspectives.

The CAO will inform the Council of any presentation requests not granted and provide the rationale for the refusal.

## **6.2 Subsequent Presentation Requests**

Requests to present again on the same matter will only be allowed if the new presentation includes substantial new information, perspectives, or updates not shared before, such as new data, research, evidence, or changed circumstances.

## **7. PUBLIC INPUT AT COUNCIL MEETINGS**

At regular Council meetings, the public can comment and ask questions during the agenda item titled "Public Input and Questions," which will be included as a standing item on all regular agendas. During this period, the public may address any municipal or community matter relevant to the Town of Lunenburg, following these guidelines:

- Topics must relate to Town affairs, services, or community issues.
- Comments and questions must be respectful and constructive.
- Individual speakers are limited to three minutes each, with a maximum of 20 minutes allocated for public input per meeting.

All questions and comments should be directed to the Chair to maintain order and facilitate discussion.

### **7.2 Follow-up for Public Input and Questions**

If information is readily available, staff or Council will address comments or questions during the "Public Input and Questions" section.

For follow-up requests requiring new documents, detailed analysis, or significant staff time, Council must direct staff to take further action. The requester will be informed of the outcome, including any anticipated timelines.

## **8. CORRESPONDENCE**

The public may submit correspondence for possible inclusion in a Council agenda package. To be considered, correspondence must:

- Be addressed to the Mayor and Council.
- Include the sender's full name and contact information.
- Be relevant to matters within Council's jurisdiction.
- Be respectful and free of personal attacks, defamatory statements, or offensive language.

Written Submissions: Letters, emails, or other text-based documents should not exceed two pages. Supporting materials may be attached, but the primary submission must summarize key points within the page limit.

Audiovisual Submissions: Videos or audio recordings should not exceed three minutes. Exceptions may be made for accessibility needs or complex topics

Correspondence will be listed under "Correspondence for Action or Information."

"Correspondence for Action" includes items requiring Council's decision or aligned with existing Town policies (e.g., letters of support, proclamations, flag raisings)

"Correspondence for Information" includes all other submissions.

Correspondence is generally considered for informational purposes. If Council wishes to proceed with binding decisions based on correspondence, a notice of motion is required. Non-binding or procedural actions, such as requesting additional information or directing staff to review the matter further, may be initiated through a motion at the same meeting, provided the action aligns with Council procedures and does not contravene the Municipal Government Act.

### **8.1 Special Cases:**

- Submissions related to a scheduled public hearing will be held until the hearing and included as background information.
- Subsequent submissions from the same author on the same topic will only be included if they provide significantly new information or updates.
- Anonymous submissions will not be acknowledged unless they raise serious public safety or liability concerns.

- Unsolicited goods and services will not be acknowledged.

## **8.2 Operational Matters**

Correspondence regarding operational issues (e.g., inquiries or complaints) will be directed to staff for resolution. If unresolved, the matter will be escalated to the CAO. Staff may recommend when operational matters should be brought to Council for consideration of potential policy or by-law changes.

## **9. PUBLIC HEARING SUBMISSIONS AND PARTICIPATION**

Submissions for a public hearing must be received by the deadline specified in the public notice and will be included in the agenda package for the scheduled hearing.

Public hearing attendees may sign up to speak in person or request to participate virtually. Speakers will be allocated up to five minutes each to present their views. Audio/visual submissions may also be played during the hearing, subject to time limits and content guidelines specified in advance.

There is no limit to the number of speakers at a public hearing; however, the Chair may manage speaking times to ensure all participants have a chance to be heard within a reasonable timeframe.

## **10. Addressing Misinformation**

The Town is committed to ensuring that information included in Council agenda packages is accurate and contributes to informed decision-making. Submissions containing false or misleading information may be excluded from the public agenda package.

The Town will evaluate submissions for accuracy where practical and may request clarifications or supporting evidence from the submitter. If a submission is excluded for containing misinformation, the submitter will be notified and given the opportunity to revise and resubmit their content.

This policy does not restrict opinions, perspectives, or interpretations, provided they are clearly identified as such and do not misrepresent facts

## **11. PETITIONS**

Petitions are deemed presented to Council when filed with the Municipal Clerk. A petition to Council must include each petitioner's full name and residential address.

## **12. ACCOMMODATIONS**



The Town is committed to ensuring that public meetings are accessible and inclusive for all individuals. Reasonable accommodations will be provided to address accessibility needs in compliance with relevant regulations.

Requests for additional accommodations should be submitted in advance to allow sufficient time for arrangements to be made. Accommodations will be provided unless doing so would result in undue hardship, defined as significant financial, operational, or safety challenges.

If an accommodation cannot be provided, the Town will communicate the reasons and work to identify alternative solutions where feasible.

### **13. RESPECT AND CONDUCT AT COUNCIL MEETINGS**

All participants in Council meetings, including presenters, individuals speaking during public input opportunities, and members of the public gallery, are expected to conduct themselves respectfully. This includes:

- Refraining from shouting, applause, or other disruptive audience participation.
- Avoiding personal attacks, defamatory statements, or offensive language.

The Chair is responsible for maintaining order during Council meetings. If a presentation or public input does not comply with the guidelines in this policy, or if a participant behaves disrespectfully, the Chair may:

- Interrupt or stop the presentation or input.
- Issue a warning to the individual.
- If the behaviour continues, request the individual leave the meeting.

### **14. PUBLIC RECORD AND LIVESTREAMING**

All items included in a Council meeting agenda package, including presentations and correspondence, are part of the public record and will be published on the Town's website.

- **Redaction of Personal Information:** The Town will redact personal information, such as full street addresses, personal phone numbers, and personal email addresses, from written submissions. However, staff will not edit audio-visual submissions to remove personal information. It is the responsibility of the submitter to ensure that audio-visual content does not include information they do not wish to make public.
- **Live-Streaming and Consent:** Council meetings are live-streamed and archived on an online public platform. By participating in a meeting or submitting content, individuals acknowledge and consent that their contributions will be included in the public record and live-stream.

- **Exceptions and Privacy Laws:** In rare cases, such as when sensitive information poses a safety concern, the Town may redact or withhold content in accordance with applicable privacy legislation.

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

### Public Submission Policy

Date approved by the CAO: **TBD**

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#### 1. MAKING A PRESENTATION REQUEST

Presentation requests must be made to the Municipal Clerk in writing. The request must include the following:

- Individual's name or the name of the organization
- Contact information of the presenter(s)
- The subject matter and a summary of the presentation
- Provide information on any requests being made by the Town
- Any other relevant background information

Upon receipt of a presentation, the Municipal Clerk will outline the process to the presenter, explaining that presentations are for informational purposes only. Should any follow-up action be directed by Council, the Municipal Clerk will ensure that the presenter is informed of any developments.

Based on this guidelines set out in this policy (Sections 5 & 6), the Municipal Clerk will review presentation requests to determine their suitability for a Council meeting. If approved, will work with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to determine at which Council meeting the presentation will be scheduled.

##### 1.2 Approved Presentation Requests

Once a presentation request has been approved, all documentation intended for Council must be submitted to the Municipal Clerk at least eight days before the meeting. These documents will be included in the public Council agenda package. Failure to meet this deadline may result in rescheduling the presentation to a later Council meeting.

The preferred method for presentations is in person. However, presenters may request to present virtually. Anyone wishing to present virtually must notify the Municipal Clerk at least 24 hours before the meeting.

##### 1.3 Prohibited Presentation Requests

The Municipal Clerk will notify the requester if a presentation request is refused based on the paramaters outlines in this policy. The notification will include the reason(s) for the refusal and,

if applicable, suggestions for resubmitting the request or other avenues for presenting the information to Council. The CAO will be informed of all refusals and ensure the rationale aligns with this policy.

## **2. REGISTRATION FOR PUBLIC INPUT**

Individuals wishing to speak must register at the start of the Council meeting by filling out the sign-in sheet available at the meeting venue. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. Staff may adjust this process when necessary, provided it continues to offer the same opportunity for public input as outlined in this policy.

### **2.1 Follow-up Process for Public Input and Questions**

When members of the public sign up to speak during the "Public Input and Questions" portion of the meeting, on the sign-up sheet, they have the option to request a follow-up from staff in writing regarding any questions posed. If the follow-up request is outside the scope of the report on the Council agenda or requires significant staff time to answer, staff will provide a rationale to the requestor and Council explaining why their request cannot be accommodated and possible next steps.

## **3. SUBMITTING CORRESPONDENCE FOR A COUNCIL AGENDA**

Submissions must be received at least eight business days before the meeting to be included in the agenda. Failure to meet this deadline may result in the submission being added to a later Council agenda.

Upon receipt of incomplete or ambiguous correspondence, the Municipal Clerk will contact the sender to request additional information or clarification. If the sender does not respond or provide the required information, the correspondence will not be included in the Council agenda package and will not be considered for further action. The Municipal Clerk will inform the sender of this outcome.

The Municipal Clerk will confirm with those who have submitted correspondence whether they intend to include their letter in a public agenda package or if they prefer it to be sent directly and solely to Council for information.

Upon receipt of correspondence, the Municipal Clerk will outline the process to the sender, explaining that correspondence is initially considered for informational purposes only unless a request aligns with existing Town legislation or practices. Should any follow-up action be directed by Council, the Municipal Clerk will ensure that the sender is informed of any

developments.

### **3.2 Handling of Correspondence Received by Individual Council Members**

All correspondence addressed to any Council member, including the Mayor, will be handled at the recipient's discretion. A copy of the correspondence may be shared with other Councillors for their information.

If a Council member, including the Mayor, receives correspondence directly and wishes to bring it forward for consideration by Council, they must submit the correspondence to the Municipal Clerk to be considered for a future meeting agenda, in accordance with this policy.

### **3.3 Correspondence Received by All Council Members**

When a correspondence item has been sent to all Council members, but staff have not been included, it is the responsibility of Council to forward the correspondence to the Municipal Clerk for staff follow-up or consideration for inclusion in a Council agenda package.

### **3.4 Correspondence Received by the CAO**

If the CAO receives information they deem relevant as correspondence, it may be included in the agenda package.

### **3.5 Anonymous Correspondence**

The CAO will determine whether an investigation is warranted if any anonymous correspondence raises potential safety, liability, or health issues.

### **3.6 Handling of Inappropriate or Disrespectful Content**

Staff reserve the right to withhold or redact any written correspondence, audio recordings, or audio-visual recordings deemed inappropriate or disrespectful. This includes:

- Profane or vulgar language
- Hate speech or discriminatory remarks based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or any other protected characteristic
- Personal attacks or threats against individuals or groups
- Sexual content or explicit imagery
- Insults or name-calling

The submitter will be notified if their content is withheld or redacted, provided with an explanation, and given an opportunity to revise and resubmit their contribution. A record of all withheld content and the reasons for withholding will be maintained.

## **4. PUBLIC HEARING SUBMISSIONS AND PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES**

The Municipal Clerk must receive any submissions at least eight days before the meeting. Submissions received after this deadline will be circulated to Council and relevant staff but will not be included in the public record.

Unless otherwise stated in this section, submitting submissions for a public hearing adheres to the rules outlined in the correspondence sections of this policy and procedures.

Anyone wishing to participate virtually in the public hearing must notify the Municipal Clerk at least 24 hours before the meeting.

## **5. PETITIONS**

To protect personal information, the Municipal Clerk will create a summary of any petitions received, noting their rationale and the number of signatures they received. This summary will be included as correspondence within a Council agenda package.

## **6. ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS**

Accommodation requests should be submitted to the Municipal Clerk at least seven days before the meeting to allow sufficient time for arrangements. The Town will review requests in consultation with relevant personnel and may request additional information to better understand the requirements.

If an accommodation cannot be provided due to undue hardship, the Municipal Clerk will notify the requester with the reasons and, where possible, propose alternative solutions