
ATTENDING

Chair - Councillor Mercedes Brian, Mayor Jeff Cantwell, Deputy Mayor Wendy Donovan, Heather Hill, Gordon Joice, Director of Financial Services Mike MacLean and Recording Secretary Dan Stovel

CALL TO ORDER

The Audit Committee meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED AS CIRCULATED

CARRIED

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 22, 2016 AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING

MOTION: IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JANUARY 22, 2016 BE APPROVED AS CIRCULATED.

CARRIED

3. BUSINESS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:

a. Update on Policy Review:

A year ago, the Audit Committee reviewed a list of [Town Policies](#) that were viewed to have a financial aspect to them and that might benefit from a review with an eye to possible amendments. These Policies included:

- Property Tax Exemption Policy 140-014 – to replace multiple Bylaws
- Open Space Fund Policy 140-012
- Procurement Policy 140-001
- Conference and Membership Policy 110-004
- Reserve Policy 140-006
- Council Remuneration Policy 110-005

Motions were passed to have Committee of the Whole review the Property Tax Exemption Policy and Procurement Policy.

i. [Property Tax Exemption Policy 140-014](#) / Bylaw

- Town Council approved a new Tax Exemption Policy effective for the 2016/17 fiscal year
- The Policy was developed to provide a single policy directing the tax reduction and exemptions for eligible properties in the Town of Wolfville in accordance with Section 71 of the Municipal Government Act
- The new Policy requires the repeal of several bylaws that the Policy replaces and that process is ongoing. In checking with the Town Clerk's Office, it was noted that Second Reading to Repeal will occur at the May 18th Town Council meeting, followed by notification in a local newspaper (as required by the MGA), and finally notice of the repeal will be sent to the Minister's Office.



ii. **Procurement Policy 140-001**

- The Town adopted its current Procurement Policy in December 2012, at the time adopting the general template guidelines issued by the province to assist municipalities. Generally speaking, the Policy has functioned well for both staff and Council, however several aspects have been questioned in the last couple of years, including:
 - Buy local
 - Insurance requirement on tenders
 - Safety requirements required on tenders
- With regard to insurance and safety requirements, this is not something stated in the Town's Policy, but has been a function of the tendering process
 - Staff's recommendation is that the Policy need not address these two items specifically, and that they may fit more appropriately into a Tendering Standard Operating Procedure
- Levels of purchasing authority should be reviewed periodically to ensure that they not become outdated
- At this point, the Town's Procurement Policy is considered to be working and staff's recommendation it to prepare a Standard Operating Procedure for Procurement and one for Tendering

ACTION: Staff to prepare a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Procurement that includes a discount of 5% for local procurement, defined as being from Windsor to Annapolis Royal

- **Note: The Procurement SOP is to be presented in draft to the Audit Committee as a matter of update. Generally SOP's do not come to Committee and/or Council as they are approved by CAO.**

ACTION: Staff to prepare a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Tendering

- **Note: The Tendering SOP is to be presented in draft to the Audit Committee as a matter of update. Generally SOP's do not come to Committee and/or Council as they are approved by CAO.**

4. NEW BUSINESS

a. Information Report: Doubtful Accounts Review

- This report provided a preliminary update on the status of receivable collections during fiscal 2015/16 and to assist in identifying the magnitude of likely bad debts
- Presentation of the information helps to act as an internal control for the Town, providing timely review of accounts receivable arrears that may no longer be collectible
- It should be noted that the Town of Wolfville's success at receivable recoveries is a positive one, which is supported by one of the provincial Financial Indicators, Uncollected Taxes. The Town's score in this area is 5.2% compared to the Town's average of 7.9% and an expected threshold of below 10%
- Regardless of positive efforts to date, continual review of all accounts receivable (A/R) is a process that should occur every year, and this update to the Audit Committee is part of that process
- It has been a couple of years since a formal report has come to the Audit Committee



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- All of the inactive Water/Sewer Accounts Receivable accounts will be sent to a collection agency including amounts approved for write-off by Council

b. Information Report: 2015/16 Audit Plan Update

- The Town Auditors are scheduled to arrive on site Tuesday, May 24th
- The draft Financial Statements will be presented to the Audit Committee at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Audit Committee on Friday, June 24th

5. DISCUSSION:

- a. Mayor Cantwell advised the Audit Committee members that he was approached, as have all other municipalities in Nova Scotia, by CBC with regards to Municipal expenses

6. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE MEETING BE ADJOURNED AT 2:34 PM.

CARRIED

The next meeting of the Audit Committee is scheduled for Friday, July 8, 2016.

Approved at the July 8, 2016 Audit Committee Meeting.

As recorded by Dan Stovel, AA Corporate Services