



**Agenda (amended)
Regular Monthly Meeting
In-Person & Virtual Meeting via Zoom
27 Pleasant Street, Chester
Zoom ID: 935 442 9176 -- Password: 301715
Wednesday, December 14, 2022, at 7:00 pm**

Page:

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Public Forum**
3. **Approval of Agenda/Additions to Agenda**
4. **Report of the Chief, Chester Volunteer Fire Department**
5. **Review/Approval of Minutes** 3
 - a. Regular Meeting, Wednesday, November 9, 2022
6. **Business Arising**
7. **Correspondence**
8. **Reports**
 - a. Clerk Treasurer 11
 - b. Financial 12
 - c. Committees
9. **New/Other Business**
 - a) Court Filing – Election Lawsuit
 - b) Village Abuse Prevention Policy 13
 - c) In-camera
 - Village promotional items 2023 – contract discussion 14
 - Village Website – contract discussion Hosting and Support 23/24 16
 - Lease renewal for Village Office – contract discussion 18
 - Maintenance contract with MoDC – contract discussion 20
 - Recruitment of Clerk/Treasurer – HR matter

10. Commissioner Roundtable

11. Adjournment

Next Regular Meeting – January 11th, 2023 – 7:00 pm



**Minutes
Regular Monthly Meeting**

In-Person at 27 Pleasant Street
Zoom ID: 935 442 9176 Password: 301715
Wednesday, November 09, 2022 – 7:00 pm

Attendance: Nancy Hatch, Commission Chair; Laura Mulrooney, Commissioner; Geraldine Pauley, Commission Vice-Chair; Randall O'Malley, Commissioner; Jeff Conrad, Interim Clerk/Treasurer; Maxine Veinot, Recording Secretary

Regrets: Nil

Public Gallery: Chester Fire Chief Stevens

1.0 Call to Order

Chair Hatch called the November 9th, 2022, Regular Monthly meeting of the Village of Chester Commission to order at 7:00 pm.

2.0 Public Forum

- a Carol Nauss, Chester Municipal Heritage Society
Mrs. Nauss delivered all necessary Grant paperwork and decided not to be present.

3.0 Review/Approval of Agenda/Additions to Agenda

Motion #22-122: Commissioner Mulrooney moved; Commissioner O'Malley seconded:

The approval of the agenda as presented.

Unanimously Carried

4.0 Report of the Chief, Chester Volunteer Fire Department

Chief Stevens reported on another busy month with 24 emergency calls. Training was held on pump operations. Members were finishing the Hazmat awareness and the last of their Interior fire fighters completed yearly live fire certification. Also, regular monthly training will be held on heavy vehicle extraction focusing on school bus extraction. Nov 22, 2022, CVFD is hosting Fire Chief Jaime Coutts for an information session on the Slave Lake fire, Fort

MacMurray fire and the lessons learned. Commissioners are invited to the session as well. There will be a facility visit completed in November 18th at BattleShield Manufacturing as the body is back from paint and ready to be installed on the chassis. Delivery is expected in late January, 2023. It has been a busy year for the CVFD, and Chief Stevens thanked Clerk/Treasurer Conrad, office staff member Maxine Veinot, as well as Commissioners for their continued support.

5.0 Review/Approval of Minutes

a) Regular Meeting: Wednesday, October 12, 2022

MOTION #22:123: Commissioner O'Malley moved; Commissioner Pauley seconded:

The approval of the Minutes of October 12, 2022, Regular Monthly meeting as presented.

Unanimously
Carried

6.0 Business Arising

- a. Village promotional items 2023
Follow-up on Commissioners investigation of local sources for affordable promotional items.
- ◆ Commissioner Pauley reported a name of the local company is *Fully Promoted*
 - ◆ Commissioner Mulrooney stated the Farmers Market Contact is Golden Silk Screening; Oyster is a local company as well
 - ◆ Chair Hatch spoke with Liz Finny of Bonny Lea Farm who will review the requirements and advise if they would be in a position to take on this work.
- b. Chester Village Christmas contribution
Clerk/Treasurer Conrad reported that in a prior meeting the Commission motioned (22-120) to sponsor the large Christmas Tree for Parade Square, for the Village Christmas, however, the tree has already been looked after. Discussion was held.

MOTION #22-124: Commissioner O'Malley moved; Commissioner Pauley seconded:

To RESCIND Motion #22-120 to authorize the purchase of a large tree up to \$300 for the Village Christmas Activities.

Unanimously Carried

MOTION #22-125: Commissioner Mulrooney moved; Commissioner O'Malley seconded:

To approve a contribution of \$300.00 to the Chester Merchants Association for use in operating the Chester Village Christmas.

Unanimously Carried

7.0 Correspondence

- a) Commissioner resignation notice
Chair Hatch reported that the Commission received Martin Hiltz's resignation as of October 31, 2022. Chair Hatch thanked Mr. Hiltz on behalf of the Commission for his work with the Commission and his years with CVFD.
Chair Hatch announced Paul Mulrooney's retirement after ten years of service on behalf of the Commission.
Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad will get cards and Chair Hatch will sign the cards on behalf of the Village, for their years of service.

- b. Chester Playhouse Update
Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad reported that an update bulletin was received from the Chester Playhouse on the theatre rebuilding.

8.0 Reports

- a) Clerk Treasurer
 - <> Interim Clerk/Treasurer submitted a proposal for the Enabling Accessibility Fund – Small Projects grant. It can take up to four months for a response.
 - <> Municipality of West Hants CAO was visited by Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad to discuss the process they followed in building their fire station. The information of ideas and best practices will be shared with the Fire Services working group.
 - <> The Villages Insurance Company has not agreed on providing Director and Officer's Insurance to the new Fire Services Advisory Committee. The Insurance Company has agreed that if the committees were reconstituted as two advisory groups, one for each partner, then they would fall under the existing insurances of the Village and of MODC.
 - <> The Interim Clerk/Treasurer and Commission Chair Hatch participated in a video call with the Association of Nova Scotia Villages, NS Department of Municipal Affairs, and representatives of a number of other villages across the Province. The discussion was the first of a number of planned conversations regarding potential revisions to the Municipal Government Act.

<> Advertising for a permanent Clerk/Treasurer has taken place on the Village's website, Facebook page, InDeed, LinkedIn, and in the Lighthouse newspaper.

<> A map and listing of all locations in the Village where flower baskets and wreaths are hung, has been completed, which will be useful in future arrangements to look after wreaths and flower baskets.

b) Financial

<> Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad reported on the financials, that the bank balance at the end of September, 2022, was \$323,056.65 and that the 3rd quarter payment of \$247,472.00 taxes levied was received from the Municipal of Chester. The Village is in good fiscal position for the time of year.

<> The investments were carried out as motioned and a dormant GIC account which held 0.08 cents was closed and funds transferred to the general bank account.

<> Third quarter taxes were received from MoDC, therefore the \$50,938.47 repayment to the Fire Apparatus Reserve and the approved 2022/2023 Fire Apparatus Reserve transfer of \$150,000.00 will be made. The existing 1% interest GIC will be cashed in and reinvested. This is the last of the approved 22/23 reserve fund investments, and the last GIC to be renewed at a higher interest rate.

<> On-line review shows a bank balance on November 2, 2022, of \$412,839.48.

c) Committees

Village Planning Advisory Committee

Chair Hatch reported that she was at the meeting and reported that they are still working through the secondary planning strategy for the Village.

9.0 New/Other Business

- a) Grant Application – Chester Municipal Heritage Society
An application was received for a \$5000.00 grant to assist with preparing a plot and placing their recently acquired cabooses upon rails. The application was reviewed and discussed.

MOTION #22-126: Commissioner Pauley moved; Commissioner Mulrooney seconded:

To approve a grant of \$5000 to the Chester Municipal Heritage Society towards the placement of their cabooses for display at the train station. The Heritage Society is to provide a

follow up report and proof of expenses upon completion of this phase, as outlined in the grant policy.

Unanimously Carried

- b) Court Filing – Election Lawsuit
Interim Clerk/Treasurer updated the Commission on the status of the Election Lawsuit. The Commission’s lawyer filed a response, saying that we disagree with the allegations that people were not eligible to run in the election and there is a hearing November 22, to review the filed papers and set another date for testimonies.
- c) Village Election Process – Commissioner Resignation
Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad stated that the Municipal Government Act (MGA) requires that within thirty (30) days of a vacancy the commission is to call a special meeting of the electors of the village for the purpose of filling the vacancy.
This position elected term is ending June 2023. To meet the six-month period the 2023 Annual Public Meeting would need to be held by the end of April, and the Audit is to be presented at the Annual meeting, which cannot be accomplished. Therefore, the Act calls for the position to be filled.
Municipal Affairs said the by-election is to be held for the term ending June 2023.
Then the process as to how to run an election to fill the vacancy is to be carried out.
The MGA allows for two different mechanisms which is hold an election as stated in the election by-law or hold a special meeting and the election is on the meeting agenda. Since the length of the term is just to June 2023, a special election of the Village can be held, and follow the nomination process as for regular elections.
Discussion was to hold the Special meeting/Election in December or wait until January, 2023. It was agreed to hold the Special Meeting in January, 2023.

MOTION #22-127: Commissioner O’Malley moved; Commissioner Pauley seconded:

The Village hold an election to fill the vacant position created by a resignation effective October 31, 2022, and the Village hold a Special Meeting of the electors to fill the position.

Unanimously Carried

- d) Village Election – Proposed Dates

Dates for December 2023 Special meeting/Election were discussed. Due to the holidays in December it was agreed to hold the special meeting/election in January.

Nominations can be accepted in December, 2022 through to January, 2023.

MOTION #22-128: Commissioner Pauley moved; Commissioner Mulrooney seconded:

To have nominations close Wednesday, January 11, 2023 and hold the Special Meeting/Election Wednesday, January 18, 2023.

Unanimously Carried

- e) Interim Fire Services Advisory Committee
Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad stated that it is a struggle to get insurance in place, as the joint committee, will not be covered, unless two separate committee, one for MoDC and one for Village of Chester, and then they can meet together and take the recommendations back to the own group of elected officials.
Interim Clerk/Treasurer stated that making a motion to adopt a resolution and making it clear to the Insurance Company that there will be two committees with resolutions that will meet jointly for the Fire Services Advisory Committees.

MOTION #22-129: Commissioner Pauley moved; Commissioner O'Malley seconded:

To adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Village of Chester, the Municipality of the District of Chester,
and the Chester Volunteer Fire Department wish to employ a partnership to
provide the best emergency services; and

WHEREAS when this agreement is finalized and implemented, and assets transferred, then final policies will be created for the Village, MoDC, Fire Department, and Advisory Committee depending on final duties and responsibilities;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Village of Chester shall establish a Fire Services Advisory Committee to meet jointly with the appropriate Committee established by the Municipality of Chester to provide advice,

guidance, and recommendations on Fire Service and Chester Volunteer Fire Department issues.

Unanimously Carried

- f) Village Office Holiday Hours
Discussion was held on Holiday hours.

MOTION #22-130: Commissioner O'Malley moved; Commissioner Pauley seconded:

That the Village office close at 12 noon on Friday, December 23, 2022, and re-open Tuesday, January 3, 2023, at 9:00 am, with no loss of pay for employees.

Unanimously Carried

- g) In Camera

MOTION #22-131: Commissioner Pauley moved; Commissioner O'Malley seconded:

To move In Camera to discuss Clerk/Treasurer recruitment and Maintenance worker at 8:30 pm.

Unanimously Carried

The meeting continued In Camera.

MOTION #22-132: Commissioner O'Malley moved; Commissioner Pauley seconded:

To resume regular meeting at 9:06 pm.

Unanimously Carried

MOTION #22-133: Commissioner Mulrooney moved; Commissioner O'Malley seconded:

To direct the Clerk/Treasurer to begin exploring the options and costs of hiring a recruiting firm to assist in finding a permanent Clerk/Treasurer.

Unanimously Carried

MOTION #22-134: Commissioner Pauley moved; Commissioner O'Malley seconded:

To direct the Clerk/Treasurer to negotiate a Service Contract with the Municipality of Chester for property maintenance services.

Unanimously Carried

10.0 Commissioner Roundtable

Nil

11.0 Adjournment

MOTION #22-135: Commissioner O'Malley moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:14 pm.

Commission Chair

Commission Vice Chair

**Village of Chester Commission
Clerk/Treasurer Activity Report
December 14th, 2022**

- Recruitment activity for a permanent C/T continues, with a number of additional applications during the month of November, and an interview process being initiated with one candidate.
- Wreaths have been picked up and hung for the season. Due to the warm weather through the fall, the needles were dropping from the wreaths when they were picked up at the vendors. Depending on weather the life span may be shorter than normal this year.
- The driveway at the EHS ambulance building was patched to repair a large pothole that was directly in front of the truck bay door. The lease we have with EHS specifically calls for the Village to maintain the parking area and repair potholes. The work was done by All Outdoors landscaping with hot asphalt and tampers to do a permanent repair.
- Attended the regional meeting of the Association of Municipal Administrators of NS in Bridgewater. There was a presentation on red tape reduction in the building inspection area, an update by NS Municipal Affairs and a round table on activities being undertaken by other Municipalities on the South Shore.
- Attended the presentation hosted by CVFD with Chief Jamie Coutts on wildfire and disaster management.
- Met with representatives of CVFD to discuss ways to improve financial processes, and on implementation of the new fire services agreement.
- Continued meetings and discussions with MoDC on implementation of Fire agreement
- Began exploring process to dispose of current CVFD tanker when new truck is received

Jeff Conrad
Interim Clerk/Treasurer

Date

Village of Chester Commission
Clerk/Treasurer Financial Report
December 14, 2022

- The October bank statement is reconciled and at the end of the statement the bank account balance was \$482,768.13
- The Village is in good fiscal position for this time of the year
- As directed at a previous meeting, and as discussed at the last meeting, the following GICs activity has taken place;
 - Fire Apparatus Reserve – 1.0% interest rate GIC was cashed to yield 965,975.93. This was combined with the 50,938.47 repayment to the reserve for a total 1,016,914.92. This amount was invested in a 1 year cashable GIC at 3.25% that matures November 28, 2023 for 1,049,946.65.
- As discussed at the last meeting, the final reserve amount of \$150,000 to the Apparatus Reserve will be managed following the final purchase of the new fire truck and associated costs.
- On-line review shows that since November 1 there have been bank deposits of 3498.88 and expenses and transfers of 273,905.85 (including CVFD Honorarium and In-Lieu, SCBA breathing apparatus purchase, repayment of loan to Apparatus Reserve, and annual insurance premium) for a bank balance on December 2, 2022 of 212,361.16
- The third quarter financial update will be prepared for the January meeting.
- 23/24 budget preparations and discussions should begin early in the new calendar year in order to be ready for the beginning of the fiscal year.

Jeff Conrad
Interim Clerk/Treasurer

Date

Village Abuse Prevention Policy

Material to Follow

Request for Decision

Topic:	Date: December 14, 2022
Village of Chester Promotional Shopping Bags	Proposed By: Jeff Conrad, Interim Clerk/Treasurer
<p>Issue Summary:</p> <p>The Village Commission had identified several potential vendors for the purchase of promotional shopping bags. Vendors have supplied options and pricing.</p>	
<p>Background:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In previous discussions Commissioners indicated support for providing modest promotional items to visitors • There was an indication that shopping bags were a good fit for the village as they advertised the Village name in a public way – people may carry them in other places and generate interest, whereas a pen or ruler may lay in a drawer rather than be on display • The NS Procurement Policy allows for the purchase of goods under \$10,000 to be made by requesting and considering quotes • Following the November meeting quotes were requested from three companies discussed in the meeting – Oyster Promo Inc., Fully Promoted, and Golden Silk Screening • Following the meeting a potential local vendor was identified and an inquiry made about interest – Playwear • Quotes were received from Oyster, Fully Promoted, and Playwear. Options and pricing are attached. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Playwear is a local company that manufacturers bags from used sails by hand. They do not have a lightweight/low cost option available. They have provided a sample bag which would be \$xx.xx/unit if more than 200 were ordered, plus the cost of adding a logo. They are investigating the possibility of producing bags from other materials in the future, and if not successful on this occasion would like to be considered for future purchases. ○ Fully promoted offered four (4) options that for a quantity of 250 pcs were priced at 3.72, 4.22, 4.35, and 4.82 respectively. Additional costs would be required for printing, and vary by type of bag and type/colour of design. 	

- Oyster offered 9 options that for a quantity of 250 were priced at 3.18, 3.26, 3.38, 4.20, 5.28, 5.90, 6.98, 10.88, and 18.47 respectively. Printing set up fee would be approximately \$137 and there is a run charge per tote of approximately \$2 per tote for a full colour logo. Oyster had the most positive client service orientation.

- All of the vendors would be able to supply product before spring 2023
- In 2019 the Village spent approximately \$2.00 per bag for the existing stock

Options:

- 1) Do not purchase promotional items
- 2) Purchase one of the lower cost options and continue to make them available to visitors as per past practice
- 3) Purchase a more expensive product. Consideration could be given to reducing the distribution as a means to contain costs (not to casual visitors, but at designated events and promotions for example).

Considerations:

Financial Impacts:

A budget line item is in place for advertising/promotion. Depending on timing and production of an order the costs might be in either fiscal 22/23 or 23/24.

Policy Impacts:

N/A

Recommendation:

Option 2) - Purchase one of the lower cost options and continue to make them available to visitors as per past practice

Potential Motion(s):

To purchase from the supplier _____ 250 of the _____ shopping bags with Village Logo in full colour.

Request for Decision

Topic: Website Hosting	Date: December 14, 2022
	Proposed By: Jeff Conrad, Interim Clerk/Treasurer
Issue Summary: The Village's contract for website hosting is ending and renewal or replacement is required.	
Background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia (AMANS) provides website hosting and support to a wide range of municipal units in Nova Scotia • The Village contracted with AMANS in 2018 to create and host the current website • AMANS has been very responsive to the Village's needs, for example when posting special notifications, creating new website elements (like Candidate's Corner during the election) and addressing any performance issues • AMANS provides service in blocks of time based on predicted usage of the user • In each fiscal year between 2019 and 2022 the village has used between 5 and 11 hours per year of support time • The Silver level package includes hosting costs plus 12 hours of support time at a rate of \$750 per year. Additional time can be purchased at \$65.00/hr if required. 	
Options: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do not maintain a website. This would have a significant negative impact on the Village's communication efforts with residents, visitors, and other users. 2. Change providers. It is unlikely that the Village would find a provider at a lower price, and changing providers would require an upfront investment to recreate a website for the Village on a new site. 3. Renew with AMANS at the proposed rates for 23/24. 	
Considerations: <u>Financial Impacts:</u> Budget already allocated <u>Policy Impacts:</u> N/A	
Recommendation: 3 – Renew with AMANS at the proposed rates for 23/24	
Potential Motion:	

That the Village renew its website hosting and support contract with AMANS for 23-24 at the Silver package level.

Request for Decision

Topic: Village Office Lease Renewal	Date: December 14, 2022
	Proposed By: Jeff Conrad, Interim Clerk/Treasurer
Issue Summary: The Village's lease for the Village Office at 27 Pleasant Street ends on December 31 st , 2022	
Background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The landlord has recently hired a property management company, which complicated receiving a proposed new lease in a timely way • The previous lease was for 3 (three) years starting in 2019 and ending in 2022. The previous monthly rate was \$1,300/month for the first year, and \$1,350/month for the final 2 (two) years • In addition to the lease rate, the Village pays all utility costs and agrees to maintain insurance coverage • The Village has a right of first refusal on the space at a mutually agreed lease rate • A lease extension is being offered to the Village for a three year period (2023 – 2025) at a rate of \$1,500 for the first year with a 3% increase each year (\$1,545 in year 2, and \$1,591 in year 3) • The space is approximately 1100 square feet, which means the renewal cost is approximately \$16.36/square foot annually, which is within the typical commercial rental rates for the area • The lease has requested additional insurance information and to be named on the village policy. The Village broker has advised that with a minor wording change to the lease that they can accommodate the request • Leased space for commercial property in the area is limited, so options to this space that would not be with the same landlord or property management company (i.e. that might have a different rate) would be at a premium • It is still contemplated that the construction of a new fire station building may include a new shared location for the Village office 	
Options: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reject the lease and look for a new space. Options are limited, time is short, and prices unlikely to be significantly different 2. Accept the extension for a shorter period than suggested (e.g. 1 year) and look for other options over the next year 	

3. Accept the lease extension as proposed

Considerations:

Financial Impacts:

Budget includes lease costs for the office. The annual increase in the first year will increase costs by \$1800

Policy Impacts:

N/A

Recommendation:

3) Accept the lease extension as proposed

Potential Motion:

That the Village extend its lease with 3259327 Nova Scotia limited under the conditions proposed in the new lease document, assuming satisfactory outcome of the insurance amendments.

Request for Decision

Topic: Village Maintenance Contract - MoDC	Date: December 14, 2022
	Proposed By: Jeff Conrad, Interim Clerk/Treasurer
Issue Summary: The Village's maintenance worker retired in mid-November and arrangements need to be made for replacement services	
Background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commission directed the Clerk/Treasurer to work with MoDC to develop a contract arrangement to provide maintenance services as required by the Village • MoDC has been very collaborative and expressed an interest in continuing to develop a positive relationship with the Village on areas of shared interest • The contract includes a "no profit" clause. • MoDC has developed a draft agreement which includes an initial six month period to work out required processes and test the service, with annual renewals thereafter • The Village has control over what work is done by MoDC on their behalf. For example, hanging and removal of wreaths could be done by MoDC, or the Village could decide to use a contractor for that service • MoDC has indicated during discussions that certain services may require somewhat greater costs because of enhanced health and safety protocols used by MoDC. From a risk management point of view this may be an advantage for the Village. • MoDC has internal capacity that Village does not, which may save the Village money in some areas. • The lease has not been reviewed by legal services of the Village, but was developed in conjunction with MoDC legal services, and Insurance broker review (a common broker and insurer exist for both parties). 	
Options: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the contract as presented. 2. Request changes to address any concerns raised during the discussion. 3. Approve the contract pending satisfactory review by the Village's lawyer. 	
Considerations: <u>Financial Impacts:</u> Budget includes annual maintenance costs.	

Policy Impacts:

MoDC has greater access to tools and equipment than the Village does, and their staff have an internal level of expertise that the Village does not.

Recommendation:

2. Request changes to address any concerns raised during the discussion.

Or

3. Approve the contract pending satisfactory review by the Village's lawyer.

Potential Motion:

To request the Clerk/Treasurer work with MoDC to seek improvements to the contract language related to _____

Or

To approve the contract pending satisfactory review by the Village's lawyer.