

SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Thursday, July 3, 2025, at 6:00 pm

A special meeting of the Committee of the Whole of Middleton Town Council was held in person, via ZOOM and on Facebook Live on Thursday, July 3, 2025.

PRESENT

Chairing the meeting, Mayor Gail Smith; Deputy Mayor Gary Marshall (arrived at 6:03pm), Councillors John Bartlett, Dan Smith, Jonathan Archibald and Sandra Fournier; Chief Administrative Officer, Ashley Crocker, Events and Communications Coordinator, Gina Pearson, Director of Public Works Adam Verran and Recording Secretary, Sara Marceau.

Regrets: Councillor Bernadette Knapp

Also in attendance:

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

250630.01: It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda, as circulated. **Motion carried.**

3. PRESENTATION

3.1 Overview of the 2025-2026 Draft Operating and Capital Budgets

Version 2 of the 2025-2026 Draft Operation and Capital Budgets have been circulated to all Committee members.

CAO Crocker provided an overview of Version 2 of the budget process and acknowledged the previous requests made by Council during the Special Council Meeting on Monday, June 30.

CAO Crocker presented an overview of the 2025-26 Water Utility Operating Budget.

3.2 Discussion of Potential Cost Reductions

There was an extensive discussion regarding Valley REN and the Economic Development Coordinator that has been working jointly for the County of Annapolis, Town of Middleton and Town of Annapolis Royal.

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Some Council members expressed that they feel there is more value in having a joint Economic Development Coordinator than being part of the Valley REN. Staff are still waiting to hear back from a grant application that was submitted that would see funding for an Economic Development Coordinator for the next 3 years. The Town would have to pay approximately \$3,900 per year. Council agreed to pause the discussion about the Valley REN until the Town hears back on the grant application.

Councillor Smith stated that there are five (5) people in the Finance Department and asked if the contract staff were needed. The CAO responded that one is needed to cover off the vacancy in the Director of Finance role, but the other can be removed.

Councillor Fournier suggested discussing the possibility of reducing grants.

Deputy Mayor Marshall emphasized the importance of organizations understanding what we provide in lieu of cash and expressed hope that they recognize the value of our in-kind contributions. Council made the following recommendations to staff as changes to bring forward in Version 3 of the budget:

- Pool – reduce from \$12,000 to \$8,000
- Rink – keep at \$4,500 but unable to support the additional requests
- Heart of the Valley – moved the \$4,500 to the Multicultural Festival
- Macdonald Museum – reduce from \$4,500 to \$3,000
- Railway Museum – reduce from \$3,000 to \$2,000
- SW Biosphere – leave as \$500
- Annapolis County Search and Rescue – leave as \$1,000

Deputy Mayor Marshall raised concerns about policing and whether the Town is supplementing services that are being provided to Annapolis County rather than to the Town. Although there has been an increase in police presence, he still continues to question whether the current ratio is appropriate.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 7:56pm.


MAYOR


RECORDING SECRETARY