

A regular monthly meeting of Middleton Town Council was held in-person at the Town Hall, via YouTube Live, on Monday, April 20, 2026, starting at 6:00pm.

PRESENT

Chairing the meeting, Mayor Gail Smith; Deputy Mayor Gary Marshall, Councillors John Bartlett, Bernadette Knapp, Jonathan Archibald and Dan Smith; Chief Administrative Officer, Ashley Crocker; Communications and Events Coordinator, Gina Pearson; and Recording Secretary, Sara Marceau.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

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

2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

260420.01 It was moved and seconded that Council approve the agenda as amended.
Motion carried.

3. **INTRODUCTION**

3.1 S/Sgt Grant Ryland, RCMP

Staff Sergeant Grant Ryland introduced himself as the new Sergeant, replacing Staff Sergeant Mike Maxwell on an interim basis until a permanent replacement is appointed.

4. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

4.1 Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes

2026.02.17 In-Camera Meeting Minutes
2026.03.16 Council Meeting Minutes
2026.03.16 In-Camera Meeting Minutes
2026.03.30 Special Council Meeting Minutes

No errors or omissions were noted, and the minutes were considered approved.

5. **ANYTHING BY CITIZENS**

Nothing to report.

6. NEW BUSINESS**6.1 Committee of the Whole Recommendations****a. RFD 029-2026 Low Income Tax Exemption**

CAO Crocker provided a brief overview of the Low-Income Tax Exemption Policy.

260420.02 It was moved and seconded that Council, approve the proposed revisions to the Low-Income Tax Exemption Policy and increase the exemption amount to \$320 and the household income not exceeding \$26,100. **Motion carried.**

b. RFD 030-2026 Transfer 2025-2026 Surplus to Operating Reserve

CAO Crocker provided a brief overview of the Transfer 2025-2026 Surplus to Operating Reserve.

260420.03 It was moved and seconded that Council authorize staff to transfer any actual operating surplus from the 2025–2026 fiscal year at year-end to the Operating Reserve. **Motion carried.**

6.2 RFD 031-2026 Communications Strategy 2026

Communications and Events Coordinator Pearson gave a brief overview of the Communications Strategy for 2026.

Some comments from Council included the need for stronger emergency communication protocols, concerns about overreliance on social media, and a lack of outreach to the business community. Members debated whether to enable all Facebook comments, balancing public engagement with the challenge of moderating discussions. The importance of a unified Council voice and consistent messaging was emphasized.

There were also suggestions about promoting local businesses, monitoring public feedback in other Facebook forums, and staff capacity to manage these types of communications. Overall, Council agreed on the need to refine policies and better connect with residents.

Councillor Smith asked if approving the strategy now without seeing an updated version, would enable Council to make changes.

- Staff clarified the document is meant to guide principles and does not require immediate adoption of all recommendations, with Council retaining decision-making authority. It was also noted a goal of welcoming new businesses would be added.

ACTION: Schedule a Special Council Meeting for Monday May 4, 2026 following the Committee of the Whole meeting to review an updated Version 2 of the Communications Strategy.

260420.04 It was moved and seconded that Council approve the Town of Middleton Communications Strategy as presented. **Motion defeated.**

6.3 RFD 032-2026 Supplementary Capital Project at Pool

CAO Crocker gave a brief overview of the Supplementary Capital Project at Pool.

Councillor Smith asked whether ongoing maintenance had been discussed with the Rotary Club.

- CAO Crocker confirmed it had not but could be addressed if Council wishes.

Councillor Knapp raised concerns about who would be responsible for maintaining it moving forward.

260420.05 It was moved and seconded that Town Council approve a supplemental budget of \$6,311 (before HST) for the installation of a sunshade structure at the Middleton Pool. **Motion defeated.**

ACTION: Staff to return to the May 4th Special Council meeting with details on ongoing maintenance, replacement costs, and maintenance responsibilities.

6.4 RFD 033-2026 Police Advisory Board Policy

CAO Crocker gave a brief overview of the Police Advisory Board Policy.

Council discussed wording in section 2.2.1 and the need for clearer guidance on appointments. The CAO noted that while the Police Act generally dictates criteria around appointments, it is not explicit in some areas, which could lead to perceived inconsistencies.

Council discussion focused on criminal record checks, including their limitations and how to monitor them. While there was support for requiring checks, some members emphasized fairness - particularly that non-violent or pardoned offenses should not automatically disqualify candidates. Other members that supported the criteria of a clear criminal records check noted that evaluating applicants that had a charge on their record could be very subjective and difficult to evaluate.

260420.06 It was moved and seconded that Council approve the Police Advisory Board Policy as presented. **Motion carried.** Councillor Smith voted against the motion.

6.5 RFD 034-2026 First Reading for 18 King Street

Councillor Archibald declared a conflict of interest and left the table at 7:56pm.

CAO Crocker gave a brief overview of the 1st Reading for 18 King Street.

260420.07 It was moved and seconded that Council give First Reading to the proposed amendments to the Town of Middleton Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to redesignate and rezone 18 King Street, identified as PID 05079264 and PID 05180641, from Residential-to-Residential Mixed Use, and schedule a Public Hearing. **Motion carried.**

260420.08 It was moved and seconded that Council give initial consideration to the draft Development Agreement for 18 King Street, identified as PID 05079264 and PID 05180641, to permit an accessory parking lot associated with the adjacent Bruce Auto Group dealership, and schedule a Public Hearing. **Motion carried.**

Councillor Archibald returned to the table at 8:01pm.

ACTION: Staff to schedule a Public Hearing for 5:30pm on May 19th at the Middleton Fire Hall (if available).

6.6 RFD 035-2026 First Reading – Magee Drive Amendments

CAO Crocker gave a brief overview of the 1st Reading for Magee Drive Amendments.

260420.09 It was moved and seconded that Council give First Reading to the proposed amendments to the Town of Middleton Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to enable Council to consider grouped dwellings within the Residential Designation by Development Agreement, and direct staff to proceed with the required Public Hearing process. **Motion carried.**

6.7 RFD 036-2026 Appointment List Update

CAO Crocker gave an update on the Appointment List.

260420.10 It was moved and seconded that Council, on recommendation from the CAO and the current Pool Society directors, appoint Krystina Johnson, Mark Fowler, Scott Moore, Jenay Armstrong and Morgan Laffin to the Middleton Pool Society. **Motion carried.**

260420.11 It was moved and seconded that Council approve the 2026 Appointment List, as presented. **Motion carried.**

6.8 RFD 037-2026 Community Video Partnership

CAO Crocker gave a brief overview of the Community Video Partnership RFD.

Councillor Smith asked whether this would be a standalone video focused on Middleton or part of a broader Canada-wide feature.

ACTION: CAO Crocker to confirm if a standalone video is possible.

260420.12 It was moved and seconded that Council approve a partnership with Canadian History Ehx for the production of a community feature video and authorize the CAO to execute the necessary agreement on behalf of the Town at a total cost of \$500, to be funded from the communications/advertising budget, with \$250 payable upon engagement and \$250 upon delivery of the final product.

Motion carried.

7. REPORTS

- 7.1 Management Report
- 7.2 Middleton Fire Department Dispatch Report for March 2026
- 7.3 Valley REN LOC Committee Meeting DRAFT Minutes Feb 9/26
- 7.4 Valley Regional Services Board Mar 18/26 Meeting Minute
- 7.5 Planning Advisory Committee Meeting DRAFT Minutes Apr 13/26
- 7.6 Mayor's Report

Mayor Smith noted that the above reports were circulated to Council members with the agenda package and called for questions/discussion.

8. ANYTHING BY MEMBERS

Councillor Archibald attended a Neighbourhood Watch meeting, which included presentations from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). A new officer has been hired and will be conducting required checks on local trails.

Councillor Bartlett noted that the crosswalk flags are missing at the intersection of Main Street and School Street.

Councillor Smith requested final clarification on future meeting times, noting that 6:00pm is challenging to attend and suggesting 6:30pm as a more realistic start time, with meetings running from approximately 6:30pm to 8:30pm.

Councillor Knapp noted that some residents are dumping leaves at Centennial Park.

Mayor Smith asked whether the brush dump is open every day and if it is open on Saturdays.

Councillor Knapp asked if the on-call staff member could be assigned to open the brush dump for approximately two hours on Saturdays for a one-month period.

ACTION: CAO Crocker to discuss with the Director of Public Works.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 8:25pm.

Mayor

Recording Secretary

DRAFT