

Town of Berwick Council Meeting

October 8, 2024

Town of Berwick Council Chambers

6:30 pm

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of the Agenda

3. Approval of the Minutes

- a. September 10, 2024 Council Meeting

4. New Business

- a. RFD034-2024: Cleaning Service RFP Award
- b. RFD035-2024: Wastewater Treatment UV Lights Expenditure Approval
- c. RFD036-2024: Committees of Council Policy

5. Committee of the Whole

a. Department Reports

- i. Community Development
- ii. Public Works
- iii. Finance
- iv. CAO

b. Committee Reports

- i. AREA Board (Alternative Renewable Energy Authority)
- ii. Kings Point to Point
- iii. KMCC Governance Committee
- iv. Sports Hall of Fame Committee
- v. Valley Regional Enterprise Network Liaison and Oversight Committee

6. Correspondence

7. Mayor's Report

8. In-Camera

9. Adjournment

REQUEST FOR DECISION

RFD034-2024: Cleaning Services



To: Council
From: Director of Public Works
Date: 08 October 2024
Subject: Cleaning Services Proposals

References/Attachments

- Tender Bid Response (LPT Holdings Incorporated) (incumbent)
- Tender Bid Response (Pro-Kleen Janitorial Ltd)

Recommendation

That the Town of Berwick approve the award of a 3 year Cleaning Services contract, effective the start of next calendar year (2025), to Pro-Kleen Janitorial LTD, with an annual estimated cumulative cost of \$42,390.00 (pre-HST).

Background

The Town of Berwick (TOB) issued Tender "BER2024-011 Cleaning Services" on 15 August, 2024 seeking bids from qualified cleaning service providers for the regular cleaning of the Town Hall, Fire Hall (shared cost / shared service), Carol's Place, PW / BEC Shop, and Fitness Centre, with the intention of entering into a three-year service agreement.

This request for decision seeks approval to move from the incumbent (LPT Holdings Inc) to Pro-Kleen Janitorial LTD at the end of the current calendar year and begin cleaning services by way of a 3-year contract.

Key Highlights:

- Two tender responses were received:
 - Both companies have comparable recent relevant experience in the Annapolis Valley;
 - Both companies appear to be experienced and qualified to do the work;
 - Both companies show intent to conform with the RFP work scope in their bids;
 - LPT Holdings Inc offered a yearly total cost of \$58,620.00 for the work scope;
 - Pro-Kleen Janitorial LTD offered a yearly total cost of \$42,390.00 for the work scope.

Both tender responses meet the requirements of the Tender Specification, and appear comparable in experience and capability. The tender response from Pro-Kleen Janitorial LTD is expected to be the lower cost option for the TOB.

REQUEST FOR DECISION
RFD034-2024: Cleaning Services



Financial Implications

A forecasted expenditure of \$42,390.00 from the 2025/26 TOB Operating Budget.

Priority Alignment

Check Applicable	Strategic Priority Area	Comments
X	Economic	
X	Environmental	
X	Social	
	Cultural	

Alternatives

Remain with the incumbent service provider at an estimated expenditure of \$58,620.00 from the 2025/26 TOB Operating Budget.

Community Engagement/Communication

N/A

CAO Comments

I support staff recommendation.

CAO Initials: JB

Target Decision Date: Jun 11, 2024

REQUEST FOR DECISION

RFD035-2024: WWT UV Lights Maintenance



To: Council
From: Director of Public Works
Date: 08 October 2024
Subject: Unplanned Maintenance – WWT UV Disinfection System

References/Attachments

- Sansom Equipment Invoice INV-TR-20343
- Enaqua Ultraviolet Disinfection System O&M Manual D3t.06061U

Recommendation

That the Town of Berwick approve the use of operating reserves for the payment of Sansom Equipment Invoice No. INV-TR-20343, total \$32,829.05 (including HST).

Background

The Town of Berwick (TOB) Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWT) experienced a failure of the Ultraviolet (UV) disinfection system in late-June 2024, which prevented the disinfection of effluent entering the receiving water.

The Approval to Operate for the WWT (2008-065566-R01) issued by Nova Scotia Environment and Climate Change states that "strict adherence to the attached terms and conditions is imperative in order to validate this approval". One of the listed performance criteria in the Approval to Operate is as follows:

The Facility and Sewage Collection System shall be managed and operated in such a manner that the effluent being discharged from the Facility satisfies the following criteria:

- a) ...*
- b) ...*
- c) E. Coli shall not exceed 200 E. Coli / 100 mls;*
- d) ...*

The proper operation of the UV system is required to adhere to this performance criteria.

Once the failure was observed, the WWT Operator engaged with the Manager of Public Works and the Director of Public Works, and the decision was made to immediately reach out to Sansom Equipment (the supplier) for onsite maintenance support. At the recommendation of the supplier, the appropriate parts were ordered, and were installed by the supplier once they arrived. Full repairs were completed by the 15th of July 2024.

The repair required the replacement of lamps, lamp ballasts, and ballast control boards, and cooling fans. While the UV unit was torn apart, it was also an opportunity to replace

REQUEST FOR DECISION RFD035-2024: WWT UV Lights Maintenance



the UV lamps.

The total cost of materials, labour, and mileage was \$28,547.00 pre-tax; \$32,829.05 including HST.

Financial Implications

Lisa??.

Priority Alignment

Check Applicable	Strategic Priority Area	Comments
	Economic	
X	Environmental	
	Social	
	Cultural	

Alternatives

Non-compliance to regulatory requirements.

Community Engagement/Communication

N/A

CAO Comments

I support staff recommendation.

CAO Initials: JB

Target Decision Date: Jun 11, 2024

REQUEST FOR DECISION

RFD036-2024: Committees of Council Policy & Terms of Reference



To: Council
From: Administration
Date: October 8, 2024
Subject: Committees of Council Policy and Terms of Reference

References/Attachments

- Draft Committees of Council Policy
- Terms of Reference:
 - Audit Committee
 - Planning Advisory Committee

Recommendation

That Council approve the Committee of Council Policy and attached Terms of Reference for the Audit Committee and Planning Advisory Committee as presented.

Background

The Committee of Council Policy has been developed to outline standard general functions for all Committees of Council to ensure common standard of operation for all committees under the Town's jurisdiction, sufficient resources are available to fulfill committee mandates and provide clear expectations and process for member roles and appointments to internal and external committees.

Committees of Council

There are six Committees of Council identified in the policy. However, at this time, only two terms of references (TOR) have been drafted for approval: the Audit Committee and the Planning Advisory Committee. These two committees are mandated under the Municipal Government Act.

There are two other Committees that are mandated by legislation: the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC), and Police Advisory Board (PAB), which is a change in name to be consistent with provincial regulations. The PAB may require a bylaw for the terms of reference in accordance with the Police Act. Staff are investigating this and will bring forward the appropriate terms of reference at a future meeting. The AAC does have an approved TOR, which will need to be updated to meet legislation. Furthermore, with the recent approval of new Equity and Anti-Racism legislation, many municipal units are combining the work of their AAC to include Equity and Anti-Racism. In consultation with the new Council, staff and AAC, staff will provide a recommendation and draft TOR at a future meeting.

The Community Development Committee also currently has a TOR and during the first few months of the new Council, staff are recommending that Council identify their priority

**REQUEST FOR DECISION
RFD036-2024: Committees of
Council Policy & Terms of Reference**



areas then review the TOR to ensure it meets the needs of Council. Berwick Electric Commission TOR is outlined in the Berwick Electric Commission Act.

Membership

The policy recommends that in an election year, and the second year of Council’s term that Councillor appointments be reviewed for potential rotation of representation and alternates on committees. It also recommends equitable and fair distribution of workload amongst members, selection of committee chair and vice chair and expectations for reporting on committee work to Council, including external committees.

The policy also recommends a standard process for citizen appointments, terms, and expectations.

Conflict of Interest, Code of Ethics and standard Rules of Engagement have also been identified.

Included as attachments to the Policy for approval are the TOR for the Audit Committee and the Planning Advisory Committee.

Staff recommend that upon approval of the policy and TOR’s that all current committee members be provided with notice they have been approved for a two-year term, unless otherwise approved by the TOR or by Council effective until November 2026. Per the Policy, those members would be able to reapply for another term.

Financial Implications

N/A

Priority Alignment

Check Applicable	Strategic Priority Area	Comments
	Economic	
	Environmental	
X	Social	
X	Cultural	

**REQUEST FOR DECISION
RFD036-2024: Committees of
Council Policy & Terms of Reference**



Alternatives

Other – as directed by Council.

Community Engagement/Communication

Communicate with all current committee members the new policy and TOR's and term information.

CAO Comments

This policy will standardize processes, expectations, appointments and mandates for Council and citizen appointments to Committees.

CAO Initials: JB

Target Decision Date: October 8, 2024

Committees of Council Policy

Department: Council & Admin **Policy No:** **1.001**
Adopted: Month, DD, YYYY **Revision Dates:** n/a

1.0 Purpose

To ensure that all Committees of Council adhere to a common standard of operation.

This policy outlines standard general functions for all Committees of Council to ensure sufficient resources to fulfill committee mandate, and to ensure clear and consistent processes.

This policy also outlines the process for appointment and expectations of representing the Town on external committees.

Individual Committees of Council will also have policies and procedures that outline specific mandate(s), goals or objectives, and other governmental requirements.

2.0 Scope

This Policy is applicable to all committees of council, and their appointed members, within the Town of Berwick.

3.0 References

3.1 [Nova Scotia Municipal Government Act](#)

4.0 Definitions

4.1 **CAO** is the Chief Administrative Officer for the Town of Berwick

4.2 **Committee(s)** is any committee under Section 5.1 of this Policy.

4.3 **Quorum** is the number of members required to make decisions at the meeting. A majority of members present equals quorum.

5.0 Policy

This policy shall apply to all Committees of Council unless otherwise stated in the respective policies or bylaws. All Committees report to Council.

5.1 Committees of Council

The following Committees of Council must adhere to the procedure laid out below:

- Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Audit Committee
- Planning Advisory Committee
- Community Development
- Police Advisory Board
- Berwick Electric Commission

Any other committee, panel, or board struck by council.

5.2 Terms of Reference

5.2.1 Every Committee of Council shall have a committee-specific policy that defines its Terms of Reference and must include:

- Purpose/Mandate
- Composition
- Total number of committee members
- Quorum
- Requirements/expertise of committee members
- Frequency of Meetings
- Other duties, responsibilities, regulations, or requirements as necessary

5.3 Notice of Meetings

5.3.1 A notice of a meeting shall be posted on the Town's website for each meeting at least one week before the meeting date.

5.3.2 Where a committee has regularly scheduled meetings, a single notice stating the scheduled dates may be posted.

5.3.3 If a meeting is changed, a special notice stating the new date shall be posted. Such a notice shall be posted a week in advance where possible.

5.3.4 Notice of Emergency meetings shall be posted as soon as the date is set.

5.3.5 All committee meetings shall be open to the public.

5.4 Agendas and Minutes

5.4.1 The agenda for any meeting of a Committee of Council shall be posted on the Town's website and circulated to Committee Members as soon as it is finalized.

5.4.2 The draft minutes of any meeting will be circulated to Committee Members at the same time as the agenda for the next meeting.

5.4.3 Approved minutes will be posted to the Town's website as soon as possible after approval.

5.4.4 All Committees of Council must maintain minutes of Council.

5.5 In-Camera Sessions

5.5.1 In camera discussions may only be held for the following topics in accordance with section 22(2) of the MGA:

- Acquisition, sale, or lease of municipal property
- Minimum price to accept at tax sales
- Personnel matter
- Labour relations
- Contract negotiations
- Litigation
- Legal advice
- Public security

5.5.2 To encourage attendance during regular, public sections of meetings, Committees of Council should hold in-camera items until the end of the meeting.

5.5.3 The minutes shall reflect the time an in-camera session began and concluded and under which of the eight possible topics the discussion fell.

5.6 Council Membership

5.6.1 By January of the election year and December the second year of Council's term, the Mayor and CAO will recommend Councillor appointments including alternates to committees referenced under section 5.1 of this Policy.

5.6.2 These recommendations will be based on Council member interests, Committee needs, and Council member scheduling conflicts, along with other considerations that may be relevant (i.e., family and work commitments). The Mayor and CAO will

strive to bring forward recommendations that are equitable and fair when distributing the workload amongst Council members.

- 5.6.3 Once appointed to Committees, Council members are expected to attend and be fully committed to each Committee they are appointed to.
- 5.6.4 The Mayor, or Deputy Mayor when acting in the Mayor's stead, shall be an ex-officio voting member on all Committees of Council.
- 5.6.5 Where a Committee has two or less Council members, one Councillor will be appointed as an alternate to fill in for any Council member on that committee who may be unavailable.
- 5.6.6 Committees will be chaired by a seated member of Council unless otherwise stated in the approved Terms of Reference or mandated by legislation.
- 5.6.7 Committees will be vice chaired by a seated member of Council unless otherwise stated in the approved Terms of Reference or mandated by legislation.
- 5.6.8 The Chair and Vice Chair will be selected annually by Council unless otherwise stated in the approved Terms of Reference or mandated by legislation.
- 5.6.9 Council members attending a Committee who are not the appointed official for that Committee shall sit in the viewing gallery and have the same rights and privileges as any member of the viewing public.
- 5.6.10 The Chair or designated Council representative to the Committee will provide an update from their committee meeting using the "Committee Update Template" to be included in the next regularly scheduled Committee of the Whole meeting. If the timing between meetings does not allow for a written submission to be produced prior to the agenda being circulated, a verbal report may be given at the meeting with the written report circulated and included in the next COTW agenda package.

5.7 Citizen Membership

- 5.7.1 All vacant citizen committee positions will be advertised on the Town's website, social media and kiosks and will include a

description of the committee, its purpose, membership term, and directions to apply.

- 5.7.2 Applications are to include a resume and/or a detailed letter describing how the applicant's experience and education are relevant to the committee's purpose. Where an applicant does not have significant experience and/or education, they should demonstrate a willingness to learn and an interest in the committee's subject matter.
- 5.7.3 Applications are to be submitted to the Chief Administrative Officer or a designated staff person. The Chief Administrative Officer will discuss the application(s) with the Committee Chair before making a recommendation to Council for appointment.
- 5.7.4 Council will review all applications and select citizen appointments to Committees in December of each year.
- 5.7.5 Citizen members serving on any Committee shall be eligible to reapply for a consecutive term. Applications of returning members shall be reviewed along with new applicants. Completion of a first term does not guarantee selection for a second term.
- 5.7.6 Citizen members who have served two consecutive terms on the same Committee must take a leave of absence for at least one term before reapplying to serve on the same Committee but could apply for a different Committee without any such break.
- 5.7.7 A citizen member may serve on more than one Committee at a time.
- 5.7.8 Citizen members will serve without pay except the members of the Berwick Electrical Commission.

5.8 Term of Citizen Membership

- 5.8.1 The standard term of membership for citizen members for any Committee of Council is two years unless other legislative regulations apply.
- 5.8.2 The standard maximum length of membership is five consecutive years. Members may reapply to join the same committee after two years of no involvement in that committee. The maximum length of membership would again be five consecutive years.

5.8.3 Each committee can opt for all member term lengths to be the same, or a mix of term lengths to encourage diversity as well as consistency in transition/succession planning.

5.9 Termination of Citizen Membership

5.9.1 Members may terminate their membership at any time by submitting written notice to the committee Chair and/or Chief Administrative Officer.

5.9.2 Committees may terminate a member's membership by majority vote upon:

- The member's absence from three consecutive meetings without valid notice
- The member's inability to adhere to the Code of Ethics
- After applying remedial measures, the member still does not contribute to or participate in committee activities or decisions.

5.9.3 If a Committee terminates a member's membership, notification must be sent to the Chief Administrative Officer and Council.

5.10 Code of Ethics

5.10.1 The Town believes that the proper operation of municipal government requires that committee members:

- be independent of any external influences or pressures
- be impartial and responsible to the citizens of the Town
- should not use their position for personal advantage

5.10.2 No committee member shall grant any special consideration, treatment, or advantage to any citizen beyond that which is available to every other citizen.

5.10.3 All committee members must abide by the Code of Ethics section of this policy and sign an accompanying declaration form.

5.10.4 It is the responsibility of all committee members to:

- Uphold and carry out the policies and bylaws of the Town, as well as applicable Federal and Provincial laws, to foster and enhance respect for government.
- Promote a high standard of morality and to discharge faithfully the duties as a committee member, regardless of personal considerations and interests.
- Be loyal to the objectives expressed by the citizens and the programs developed to attain those objectives.

- Adhere to the terms of reference and responsibilities established as the standard for their positions.
- Never exceed their authority, breach the law, or ask others to do so.
- Work in full cooperation with other public officials and employees unless prohibited from doing so by law or by officially recognized confidentiality of their work.

5.11 Conflict of Interest

- 5.11.1 No committee member shall engage in any business or transaction or have a financial or personal, direct or indirect, which is incompatible with the proper discharge of their official duties in the public interest or would tend to impair their independence of judgment or action in the performance of their duties as a committee member. Personal, as distinguished from financial interest, includes an interest arising from blood or marriage relationships or close business or political association.
- 5.11.2 Specific conflicts of interest are listed below for the guidance of committee members.
- **Incompatible Employment:** No committee member shall engage in or accept private employment or render service for private interests when such employment of service is incompatible with or would tend to impair their independence of judgment of action in, the performance of their duties as a committee member.
 - **Disclosure of Confidential Information:** No committee member shall, without proper legal authorization, disclose confidential information concerning the property, government, or affairs of the Town, nor shall they use such information to advance the financial or other private interest of themselves or others.

5.12 Decision Making

- 5.12.1 Decisions will be made by a majority vote of the members present providing quorum has been met.

5.13 Scheduling

- 5.13.1 Council shall review and approve a meeting schedule in December of every year for the following January – December calendar year.
- 5.5.2 All Council, Committee of the Whole and Committees of Council meetings will be included in this schedule.

5.14 Qualifications

- 5.14.1 Committee members shall reside in the Town of Berwick, unless otherwise stated in the approved Terms of Reference or approved by Council.
- 5.14.2 Citizen members are selected by Council, after consideration of various factors including skillset, knowledge, experience, level of interest and reason for applying, as well as any identified knowledge/experience gaps currently on the Committee. Specific knowledge/experience requirements are included in the Terms of Reference for each Committee.
- 5.14.3 All Committee appointments are made at the discretion of Council.

5.15 Rules of Engagement

- 5.15.1 A majority of the members of a committee constitutes a quorum.
- 5.15.2 All committees shall meet in accordance with their Terms of Reference
- 5.15.3 Committees may move or cancel a regularly scheduled meeting with advanced notice to all members, the CAO, and the public.
- 5.15.4 Special meetings of Committees of Council, with the exception of Committee of the Whole, may be called by the Chair with advanced notice to all members and the CAO.
- 5.15.5 Subject to the principles set out in the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, all committee members present including the person presiding shall vote on a question.
- 5.15.6 Any member attending virtually in accordance with Virtual Meeting Policy is deemed present for quorum and voting purposes.
- 5.15.7 The role of all committees is limited to advising Council unless otherwise stated in the bylaw or resolution governing that committee.
- 5.15.8 Unless specifically granted the power to do so, no committee has the power to commit the Town to either spend money or take any particular action.
- 5.15.9 No member of a committee shall give specific directions to any staff member at any committee meeting. The

responsibility for giving specific directions to staff shall reside with the full Council at a duly assembled meeting unless otherwise delegated to the CAO.

- 5.15.10 A committee may choose to endorse the report of staff to Council or offer a different solution (alternative); in either instance, the staff report should always be attached to the agenda.

5.16 External/Partnership Committees

- 5.17.1 Council may participate on committees with other municipal partners via request or through Intermunicipal Service Agreements.
 - i. These committees include, but are not limited to, AREA, Kings Regional Emergency Management, Valley Waste-Resource Management, Kings Transit, and Valley Regional Fibre Network.
 - ii. These committees will be governed by their approved Terms of Reference and /or IMSA and are outside of this Policy.
- 5.17.2 Council will participate in committees with other partners via request or through established contracts or policies.
 - i. These committees include, but are not limited to, Kings Point to Point Transit Society, Annapolis Valley Regional Library, and the Annapolis Valley Trails Coalition.
 - ii. These committees will be governed by their approved Terms of Reference and are outside of this Policy.
- 5.17.3 Council will appoint Council representatives including alternates to External/Partnership committees identified under Section 5.17.
- 5.17.4 Alternates for these committees are appointed by Council.
- 5.17.5 Each Council representative will provide an update from their committee meeting(s) at the Committee of the Whole using the "Committee Update Template" to be included in the next regularly scheduled Committee of the Whole meeting. If the timing between meetings does not allow for a written submission to be produced prior to the agenda being circulated, a verbal report may be given at the meeting with the written report circulated and included in the next COW agenda package

6. Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

CAO

Date

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference

Approved: Month DD, YYYY

1.0 Purpose/Mandate

The purpose of the Audit Committee is to provide advice to Council on matters relating to audit and finance of the municipality. The Committee fulfills the legislative requirements as outlined in Section 44 of the Municipal Government Act (MGA).

The Committee increases both the reliability and credibility of financial reporting, enhances the independence of external auditors, and influences the overall corporate "tone" for quality financial reporting, risk controls, and ethical behaviour.

2.0 Composition

2.1 Total number of committee members

2.1.1 Minimum of five (5) to a maximum of (7)

2.2 Requirements/expertise

2.2.1 At least two (2) members are Town residents not elected or employed by the Town. In instances in which qualified town residents cannot be found, other qualified applicants may be considered.

2.2.2 Possess or acquire accounting, auditing, financial reporting and/or finance expertise.

2.3 Quorum

2.3.1 The standard measure for quorum shall be 50% plus 1 of the total number of committee members unless otherwise defined in this policy.

3.0 Frequency of Meetings

3.1 Audit Committee meetings will coincide with the stages of the audit:

3.1.1 The first meeting should be before the commencement of the audit. The Committee will review the program and the estimated fee.

3.1.2 The second meeting should take place after the completion of the audit. The Committee will review the annual finance report and management or internal control letter.

- 3.1.3** There will be no limit to the number of meetings; the Committee shall convene whenever circumstances demand.

4.0 Duties, Responsibilities, Applicable Legislative Requirements

- 4.1** Audit Committee meetings are open to the public and suggestions and recommendations of the Committee are made available to the public.
- 4.2** The Committee has unrestricted and complete authority to delve into any affair of the Town. It has full access to staff reports and full access to management and the auditor.
- 4.3** The Committee must maintain minutes of meetings and annually report to Council on how the committee has performed its duties and met its responsibilities.
- 4.4** The following list represents the duties and responsibilities of the Audit Committee. However, the Committee may be assigned such other matters as determined by Council to be the duties of the Audit Committee.

Financial Statements

- Review audited financial statements in depth with management and the external auditor. If satisfied they fairly present the financial position and results of operations, and recommend approval by Council.
- Review any potential changes in accounting principles and practices.

Audit

- Procure the audit in accordance with the requirements on procurement.
- The scope of the audit should include fair basic financial statements, individual funds, and component units. The audit contract should stipulate that the auditor conforms to generally accepted auditing standards found in the CPA Handbook. Enter into multiyear agreements with independent auditors (at least five years). Undergo a full competitive process in selecting the independent auditor. The auditor's ability to perform a quality audit should be the principal decision-making factor.
- Recommend to Council the change of the municipal auditor if management questions the competence of the incumbent and the committee confirms the view. The recommendation to appoint a new auditor would follow an adequate inquiry into the auditor's competence and reputation.

- At an initial meeting, the Committee should discuss the roles and responsibilities of the auditor and the Committee, as well as the auditing procedure to avoid misunderstandings at a later date. Committee members should be educated regarding their role and responsibilities.
- Review the auditors' risk assessments and overall audit plans.
- Discuss the extent, timing and completion of the audit including the level of materiality to be used.
- Review estimated and final audit fee.
- Promote cooperation between management and the auditor. Review the problems and restrictions encountered by the auditor and degree of cooperation received.
- Discuss whether a letter of engagement and/or a letter of representation exist as part of the audit file.
- Oversee the resolution of audit findings.
- Assess the auditors' performance.

System of Internal Control

- Discuss with the auditor the internal control systems and any recommendations for improvements; obtain and review a management letter; obtain management response to the recommendations from prior years.
- Monitor processes for management's identification and control of key corporate financial and regulatory risk.
- Inquire into any activities or transactions that may be illegal, questionable, or unethical, and into the municipality's control procedures that ensure such activities are being guarded against.
- Monitor compliance with the corporate code of conduct and regulatory requirements.
- Review the overall reasonableness of CAO and Council member expenses.
- Review adequacy of staffing in relation to both number and competence for accounting and financial responsibilities.

PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Approved: Month DD, YYYY

1.0 Purpose/Mandate

The Purpose of this Terms of R is to establish policies and procedures for the effective operation of the Planning Advisory Committee.

This Policy applies to all members appointed to the Town of Berwick's Planning Advisory Committee, Council, and Planning Services.

2.0 Composition

2.1 Total number of committee members

2.1.1 There shall be a total of seven (7) voting members.

2.2 Requirements/expertise

2.2.1 Three (3) members of Town Council

2.2.2 Four (4) members at large who must be residents of the Town

2.2.3 Where no resident of the Town applies, Council may appoint a member at large that resides in the surrounding area

2.3 Quorum

2.3.1 The standard measure for quorum shall be 50% plus 1 of the total number of committee members unless otherwise defined in this policy.

3.0 Frequency of Meetings

3.1 The committee will meet monthly except for the month of August, unless the committee determines a meeting is not required.

3.2 Special meetings may be called by the Chair as required.

4.0 Duties, Responsibilities, Applicable Legislative Requirements

4.1 The Committee has the following responsibilities:

4.1.1 Review and provide recommendations to Council concerning all land-use planning matters

4.1.2 To act as and carry out the purposes of a Planning Advisory Committee as prescribed under the *Municipal Government Act*

- 4.1.3** To follow the Town's Public Participation Program
- 4.2** Guiding Legislation: Nova Scotia *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*
- 4.3** Definitions
 - 4.3.1** Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) means the Chief Administrative Officer for the Town of Berwick.
 - 4.3.2** Council means the Council of the Town of Berwick.
 - 4.3.3** PAC means the Planning Advisory Committee.

DRAFT

Department: Community Development
Date: October 3rd, 2024

Council Priorities

- **Rainforth Park Playground Consultation:** Will move forward with second phase of consultation following the Municipal Election, targeting those who expressed a level of dissatisfaction with the current playground.
- **Centennial Park Implementation:** Public Works has installed a temporary building. See Public Works report for more information. Staff will continue to apply for grants to construct a new space.
- **Attracting Small Businesses:** With staff transitioning with Valley REN, we will host a lunch and learn in November.
- **Increased Programming/Programming for all ages:** Current and upcoming program offerings include table tennis, pickleball, line dancing, playgroup, after-school drop-in, tai-chi, and drop-in adult basketball

Key highlights

- The Fitness Centre is now opening at 6am for a two-month trial period.
- Town of Berwick community info/welcome package has been created and is available for distribution.
- Quotes are being gathered for the fencing upgrades in Rainforth Park.
- The Heritage Station Park sign was installed.
- The new programs offered in the after-school program time period are being pushed to January when we will re-advertise due to lack of registration.
- Partnerships: a Berwick Memory Café will start December 3rd at the Community Room in the KMCC.
- Pricing for holiday decor is underway.
- The Centennial Clock has arrived; Public Works are making plans for installation.
- The Community Connections Expo on September 18th had 30 community groups in attendance, which was well received by the groups in attendance. The Town provided a free hotdog BBQ.
- The Snack & Chat "Meet the Candidates" event was put together by the CD department and successfully took place on October 2, 2024.
- Volunteer Recognition will take place October 11th in the form of a "Coffee & Kudos" drop-in event at the Berwick Volunteer Fire Department Hall, from 8 AM to 10 AM. Park plaques will be displayed and presented then installed after.
- Design and decoration of Gala Days parade float were completed, with the float winning "First Place: Judge's Choice"
- The Department will be working as a team of two for six weeks as our Active Living Coordinator is on leave.

Committee of the Whole Monthly Report



-
- Gaga Ball pit has been installed in Rainforth Park
 - Creating and implementing standard safety forms to use cross departmentally
 - Attended Valley Recreation, AMANS Leadership Session, as well as Valley REN Tourism meeting
 - Free After School drop-in program for grades 3-7 will begin Wednesday October 23rd.

Next Month Priorities:

- Town's Gateway
- Grant applications to support programming and upcoming events, through 2025
- Consider options for combined Accessibility Advisory Committee and Equity and Anti-Racism Committee to develop an Action Plan for Equity and Anti-Racism
- Finalize Code of Conduct for program participants

Department: Public Works
Date: September 2024

Council Priorities

Finalize Asset Management: Ongoing.

- 3 Oct - Director of Finance, Director of Public Works (DPW), COA met with Matt Delorme, AIM Network to discuss AM coordination and next FY priorities.
- Next Steps:
 - DPW to receive training on GIS mapping Software from AIM Network.
 - Receive cost proposal for Cartegraph AM Software from Applied Geologics.
 - Update AM plan to account for 2024 paving work and vector / CCTV work and findings.

Storm Water Management: Ongoing.

- 26 Sept – Open ditch that separates Gala Dr from Beckwith cleaned out after heavy rainfall; new silt dam added to reduce the severity of sediment run off to the ditch.
- Next Steps:
 - Begin drafting the scope of work for the Stormwater Management Plan Engineering RFP; to be drafted in October.

WWTP Upgrades – Aeration & Blowers: Ongoing.

- 9 Sept – Dillon Engineering onsite to discuss tender preparation and work scope.
- 16 Sept – Public Works (PW), Berwick Electric, and Dillon Engineering met via teams to discuss power service requirements for new blowers.
- Next Steps:
 - Detailed design and Issued for Tender (IFT) package ongoing; IFT package to be received in late October.

WWTP Filter Upgrades: Ongoing.

- *12 Jul – Pre-Selection Tender closed; no bids received on account of challenges relating to a single technology package achieving 10/10 effluent limits with such a high influent loading.*
- 16 Aug – DPW and WWTO discussed way forward with Dillon Engineering.
- 20 Sept – Formal proposal received from APS and Veolia for an Actiflo ballasted clarifier with a disk filter as tertiary filtration for Berwick WWT.
- 24 Sept – Meeting with PW, WWTO, Dillon Engineering, APS, and Veolia to discuss applicability of the Actiflo (ballasted clarifier) as tertiary filtration.
- 24 Sept – Meeting with PW, WWTO, EPS, and Aqua-Aerobics to discuss applicability of disk filtration as tertiary filtration.
- 27 Sept – AWS onsite for sampling and testing to assess applicability of dissolved air flotation (DAF) as tertiary filtration.

- 1 Oct – Meeting with PW, WWTO, Nulatic, and WaterIQ to assess applicability of high precision ultrasound targeting for Algae to work in conjunction with tertiary filtration.
- Next Steps:
 - Detailed design review ongoing with TOB and Dillon Engineering.

Sidewalk Upgrades – Maple Avenue: Ongoing.

- 10 Sept – Presentation to Council with 3 options for upgrades; received direction to proceed with assessing Option 2 (formal sidewalk and curb).
- 23 Sept – Proposal received from CBCL to perform design work for Maple Avenue drainage improvements and street/sidewalk renewal. Review of proposal ongoing.
- Next Steps:
 - Review CBCL proposal with Engineering.
 - Review CCTV footage for Foster St, Maple Ave and work current condition into the AM plan.
 - Report to council.

Key Highlights

Operations:

- Mowing, groundskeeping, vegetation management.
- Paving work 90% complete.
- Vactor flushing, linear asset inspection 80% complete.
 - CCTV'ed Maple Ave, Foster St, Main St.
 - Located and raised manholes to support vactor / CCTV operations.
 - Main St, Commercial St flushing work completed.
- 11 Jul Flood (post-work)
 - Awaiting a cost proposal for replacement covers for storm culverts and storm catch basin in vicinity of Main Street for improved safety and maintenance accessibility. Cost proposal to inform next FY budget.
 - Awaiting PW / BEC Shop reinstatement work; tentative completion Dec 1st.
- Post-Gala Days clean-up, tear-down.
- Tender for Public Sale of Surplus Equipment completed.
- Tender for Cleaning Services for Town Buildings completed.
- BEC Maintenance – grinding / grubbing at the Factorydale Dam.
- Solar Garden:
 - Safety Briefing and Site Log implemented for site workers or visitors.
 - Sign installed on main gate with safety considerations.
 - Gate locks changed to be site-specific for controlled-access.
- WW Treatment:
 - UV Light Equipment repairs completed in early August; invoice reconciliation.

- Federal mandates have been completed; with acknowledgement of Jeff Borden's commitment and hard work.
- WW Collection:
 - No updates.

Capital (e.g. not already mentioned):

- Centennial Park Building
 - Low-cost temporary building constructed to house plumbing and electrical needs for Rainforth Park and the ball field.
 - Building to be painted, insulated; plumbing and electrical to be moved; existing building to be demolished by end of calendar year.
- Sidewalk replacement along Union Street completed; along Main Street completed.
- Crosswalk flashing lights: parts received in August, September; install ongoing.
- New vehicle Ford F150 XLT Hybrid delivered 4th October. Requires fleet management device install, undercoating, and branding prior to use (ongoing).
- Fleet Management devices (GPS) received; installs ongoing.
- Accessible Customer Service: design review ongoing. Final design 90% complete. Preparation for Tender for Construction ongoing in October.

Next Month Priorities:

- Winter vehicle preparation (sidewalks machines, plow trucks).
- Warm stack grounds equipment if time permits (may defer to early spring).
- Complete paving repairs.
- Complete vector work
 - Pump stations cleaning
 - Storm lines, sewer gravity flushing
 - Manhole basin repair on E. Main St (east on Willow Ave)
- Paint / insulate the temporary Centennial Park Utility Shed.
- Vegetation management along sidewalks, mowing, groundskeeping.
- Manhole replacements (3-4) on Commercial Street.
- Continue to implement GPS Fleet Management in Town vehicles.
- Solar Garden preventative maintenance plan progression.
- Stormwater Management Plan progression.
 - Engage with select residents on Main St re: Storm ditch north of Main Street that flows to the Cornwallis River.
 - Awaiting a cost proposal for replacement covers for storm culverts and storm catch basin in vicinity of Main Street for improved safety and maintenance accessibility. Cost proposal to inform next FY budget.
- Maple Ave sidewalk progression.
- WWTP upgrades progression.

Department: Finance
Date: September 2024

Council Priorities

- **Finalize Asset Management:**
 - **Bi-Weekly Meetings with Atlantic Infrastructure Management Network**
– Reviewing and updating level of service priorities and reviewing latest forecasting tool for high level risk assets.
 - **Cartegraph Scoping** – Please refer to Director of Public Works report.

Key Highlights

Berwick Electric Commission (BEC)

- **Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Smart Meter Project & Funding:**
Saint John Energy (SJE) provided direction and support to Alternative Resource Energy Authority (AREA) for a grant application on behalf of BEC, Town of Mahone Bay (TOMB) and Riverport Electric (RELC), to support our AMI Smart Meter Project. As SJE was successful in receiving this grant funding for five projects, including AMI Smart Meters, SJE's support was incredibly valuable to the success of our grant application, which is now at the due diligence budget stage.
BEC had a virtual meeting with SJE to discuss next steps as we await final confirmation of funding from National Resources Canada (NRCan).
The Maritime Municipal Electric Utility Alliance (MMEUA), which Meg Hodges was instrumental in developing in early 2024, will be hosted in Saint John, NB on October 10th and 11th where SJE will present detailed information on the process they have completed to date, how we may partner through shared services and what functionalities may be provided for our AMI Smart Meter project. This is a fantastic opportunity to gain knowledge from the tremendous efforts SJE has undertaken and lead us into the defining the scope of our project to ensure it is successfully managed and executed, coming in on time and on budget.
- **Insurance Claim-Factorydale Generator:** A partial payment of \$170,756.53 has been received. The examiner has sent in a payment request for the final payment, yet no amount has been confirmed.
- **Insurance Claim-Factorydale Turbine:** Hysovent, our Owner's Engineer, has completed phase 1 and presented the root cause analysis and three options for the next steps to the Commission. Option 1 is to replace the turbine with the like system which will have the same energy output. Option 2 is to replace the whole unit (generator and turbine) which will produce more than double the energy output. Option 3 is to decommission the site. Staff will be providing a recommendation for

Option 2 for the Commission's consideration at the next meeting.

- **Insurance Claim-Bezanson Substation:** The insurance claim work is now complete, and we are awaiting additional invoices to submit to the insurance adjuster to finalize the claim.
- **Flow Through Formula:** The application for the revised flow through formula has been submitted to the UARB. The advertisement has been placed in this week's paper. Next steps are as follows:
 - Information Requests (IRs) from Board Staff to MEUs: Friday, October 4, 2024
 - Notices of Intervention: Wednesday, October 16, 2024
 - Responses to IRs from MEUs: Friday, October 18, 2024
 - Evidence by Intervenors and Board Counsel Consultants (if any): Friday, November 1, 2024
 - Filing of Letters of Comment by the Public: Friday, November 8, 2024
 - MEUs Rebuttal Evidence: Friday, November 15, 2024
 - Oral Arguments (9:00 AM) (All parties) (if no hearing is required): Wednesday, November 20, 2024

Town of Berwick

- **2023/24 Audit:** The auditors were on-site during the week of August 20th, and there was no correspondence for several weeks after. On September 3rd, we received a request to defer our audit meeting as the auditor was waiting for information from AREA. We started receiving more inquiries from the auditor and provided the information as soon as requested. The auditor advised on September 25th that they are still working through AREA's audit, and AREA's finance resource was not available to provide additional information requested until the week of October 1st. As of October 1st, several more exchanges of information occurred from the Town to the auditor. As the Town's financial statements include AREA within the consolidation, we cannot provide a draft for approval, until the AREA financial statements are completed. Unfortunately, this delay has caused us to miss the September 30th deadline, for submission of the financial statements and completion of the Financial Information Return report required by the province. Our finance staff, particularly our accountant, has been working incredibly hard and putting in hours far beyond their regular work week for months, in attempt to get caught up and meet this deadline. I would like to acknowledge our Accountant for their commendable effort and value they provide in bringing our finances to an improved current state. Our financial consultant has also been critical and invaluable through this process as well.
- **Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia (AMANS):** The Accountant and I attended the annual Fall conference and, as always, gained valuable information from the sessions we attended and gained valuable connections and relationships in with individuals in municipalities across NS. Notable topics included the trends and forecasts with Property Valuation Service Corporation (PVSC), forecasts for interest rates, proposed Public Sector Accounting Standards (PSAS)

changes to the financial statement presentation, dealing with abuse within the municipal environment and excellent human resource sessions.

- **Microsoft Dynamics Great Plains:** We have received notice that our financial system will become obsolete in September 2029. With this information, we have paused moving forward with the purchase order module and will be working with our municipal neighbours to scope a new financial system and ensure other software and modules we have been researching, including the asset management and work order tools, will be best suited from cost, efficiency, functionality and integration perspectives.
- **Town Payments:** To minimize risk of fraud and enhance our internal controls, we are transitioning to primarily electronic payments to vendors. Effective November 1st, cheques will only be processed once per month. Electronic payments will be processed on a weekly basis as we do in our current practice. With electronic payments, vendors receive funds within 3-5 business days, directly into their account, and there are excellent security parameters in place within our banking platform. Cheque fraud is increasing, and we will be working to move to all electronic payments to minimize this increasing risk.
- **Insurance Claim- Public Works/BEC Shop:** Remediation continues at the shop, relating to the flood damage which occurred. Our adjuster is sourcing a contractor to repair the facility, and our hope is that it is completed by the end of the calendar year.
- **Report a Concern:** 9 complaints were received during the month of September. All have been resolved. The nature of complaints include:

Type	Volume
PW- Dumping at KMCC (same complainant)	3
PW- Crosswalk Light Cottage & Commercial	1
Bylaw- Unsightly Premises	2
BEC- Power Outage	1
PW- Street signage Orchard St. & Gravenstein Dr.	1
PW- Tree on Sidewalk	1

- **E-billing Campaign:** We launched an e-billing campaign to entice residents to become paperless. During the month of September, we had 15 people sign up. For every sign-up and referral, the individual will receive an entry for a monthly draw for a \$25 gift card to a local merchant.
- **Phone System:** Microsoft Teams is in place, and we have officially ported our numbers from Mainland. This project is now complete.
- **Video Security System:** IT will present options to the management team this week

and an implementation schedule will be developed.

- **Key Fob Systems:** Carol's Place now has key fobs. Town Hall is scheduled to be converted to the fob system within the next couple weeks.
- **Computer Deployment:** Two computers are left to be deployed within our 24/25 replacement schedule.

Next Month Priorities:

- **23/24 Audit Draft Financial Statements**
- **Audit Committee Meeting**
- **Financial Information Return**
- **Berwick Electric Commission meeting**
- **Asset Management Bi-Weekly Meetings with Atlantic Infrastructure Management**
- **Preparing 25/26 budget worksheets**
- **Council orientation**

Committee of the Whole Monthly Report



Department: CAO and Administration
Date: August 2024

Council Priorities

- **2024 Municipal Election:**
 - Staff are working with Mayor-elect on an orientation schedule and contents. The plan is to share the calendar of dates with the candidates prior to the election to assist with planning.
 - Advance polls open October 10.
- **Committees of Council Review:** A draft Committees of Council Policy is prepared for Council's consideration. The Policy provides common standards of operation, guidelines for membership appointments, expectations for reporting to Council and Terms of Reference for the Audit Committee and Planning Advisory Committee.
- **Communications Plan:**
 - See Finance Department update for information on Mass Text Alert System and Communications Plan.

BEC Priorities

- **BEC Succession Plan:**
 - The CAO is working with Mahone Bay's CAO on a plan of action to complete the deliverables of the Municipal Innovation Program funding.
- **Meter Reading:**
 - BEC approved a tender to contract meter reading. The company started with commercial reads for September.
 - PLT's are assisting with the transition and working out any kinks in the system.

Key Highlights

Berwick Electric

- Provided feedback to AREA regarding due diligence filing for next phase in a Smart Meter funding application. The Town's Director of Finance is leading this project for BEC and providing key leadership for the project and connections with our maritime partners and Nova Scotia Municipal Electric Utilities. See Finance Department report for key initiatives led by the Director and next steps.
- BEC met on October 1 to receive the phase 1 comprehensive report from Hysovent

regarding the Factorydale turbine. See Finance Department report for more information.

- Berwick Electric approved an application to the Utility and Review Board to update the Flow Through formula. The application has been received. See Finance report for details on next steps.
- Berwick Electric is completing work at Eden Valley to move power poles to allow for a new livestock shelter they are constructing. BEC will be compensated for the work completed.
- BEC will be working with Nova Scotia Power on October 6th to replace the revenue meter that was temporarily replaced when the previous one broke down at the main substation. BEC will be replacing a critical power pole support at this location during the downtime as well.

Town

- AREA held a Board meeting on September 20 in Ellershouse. The Board received a new update on Riverport Electric. Another meeting has been set for October 16 prior to the election to tie up some on-going business prior to a new Board.
- The CAO and Executive Assistant attended the 2024 Fall Association of Municipal Administrators Conference September 23 to 26. The program was excellent and provided valuable connections and insight. Notable sessions included: Cultivating Spaces of Belonging, Navigating Stakeholder Outrage and Abuse, Criss Communication and Public Relations, Fostering Vibrant Communities, updates on provincial programs, and opportunities to connect with peers regarding their council orientation and transition plans.
- Met with Valley REN and municipal staff to review their 2024-2028 Strategic Plan for presentation to the Liaison and Oversight Committee. The LOC met on October 2 and reviewed the Strategic Plan.
- Planning, Engineering/Public Works and CAO are working on a service agreement with the County of Kings for winter maintenance of Kathleen Court as part of the proposed development within the Town's boundary.
- Attended the Police Services Advisory Committee on September 17.
- Attended a Fire Services Sub Committee meeting with the Mayor and Councillor Lutz at the Fire Hall on October 4. The Committee received an update on the two capital projects, and building maintenance changes in partnership with the Town.
- The Kent Field Estates Appeal has been granted without a hearing. Based on new information and flooding which occurred in the vicinity of the site during the significant rain event in July and determined that additional review of flooding in the area should be considered before Council can satisfy the intent of the MPS and

permit the proposed residential development. There are no immediate actions required for this file.

- The Town has completed the requirement pursuant to the Ministerial Direction that was issued in February by Environment Canada regarding the wastewater treatment plant effluent. The Town received notice on September 11 that the requirements of the Direction have been met and regular sampling can resume.

Next Month Priorities:

- Smart Meter and Maritime Municipal Electric Utilities Alliance meeting
- Council Orientation Development and Implementation
- AREA Support

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

KPPT Thanks the Community for Support and Announces Stability to Resume Full Service

Annapolis Valley, NS — [October 1, 2024] — Following the recent fire that severely impacted its operations, Kings Point-to-Point Transit (KPPT) extends heartfelt thanks to the community for its outpouring of support. The nonprofit charitable organization, which provides essential accessible transportation services to the Annapolis Valley, is grateful to everyone who stepped up in the wake of this unfortunate event.

KPPT is especially thankful to VANSDA/Community Inc., Centerstage Theatre, PeopleWorx, and the many Valley residents who shared social media posts and helped spread the word about the service disruption. Their generosity and rapid response have made a significant difference.

As part of this effort, KPPT is pleased to announce that it has secured a stable, though temporary, operating space at Centerstage Theatre. Although not open to the public, this space will allow the staff to restore communications including being open to new bookings.

“This temporary space is a blessing, but there is still a lot of work to do,” said Kathleen Hull, Executive Director of KPPT. “As we take the necessary time to prepare for returning to full service, we must also focus on finding a permanent home, replacing all of our lost technology, and supporting our staff through the traumatic experience caused by the fire.”

KPPT remains committed to serving the Valley community and, despite these challenges, is determined to restore full service as quickly as possible. The organization encourages the community to remain patient during this transition period.

KPPT also reminds the community that, as a registered charity, they welcome any donations. Contributions can be made through <https://my.charitableimpact.com/charities/kings-point-to-point-transit-society> or by contacting the organization directly at accounting@kppt.ca.

“We are deeply grateful for the support we’ve received and are optimistic about the road ahead. The strength of our community gives us hope as we work to rebuild and continue our mission,” added Hull.

About Kings Point-To-Point Transit Society: KPPT has been a vital service in the Annapolis Valley for over 25 years, providing accessible transportation services to those in need. As a cornerstone of the community, KPPT ensures that individuals who require assistance with transportation can continue to access critical services and maintain their independence.

For Media Inquiries, Contact:
Chris Goddard
Board Chair of Kings Point To Point Transit
councillor.goddard@berwick.ca

Town of Berwick
Committee of the Whole Reports

Hall of Fame -The Hall of Fame group met in Sept to begin preparing for the upcoming event. The 2025 event has been scheduled for June 14/2025. Barry Corbin has graciously assumed the role of chair.

KMCC Governance Board – The Board met on Sept 25 for its quarterly meeting. The internet upgrade has resulted in a \$35 a month saving on the Eastlink bill. The arena had a major fault with the fire pump and had to have it replaced at a cost of \$50,000 which they took from the Rink Revitalization Fund. The sliding doors and safety rails may not get done. They had hoped it would be paid for by insurance but the insurance company blamed it on a power surge which was not covered. The annual meeting for the BDCA will be Oct 17/24. While the arena, curling club and Lions are all considering future capital requirements they are anxiously awaiting the results and further discussion on the asset management planning. The next meeting is Dec 18/24.

Economic Growth

Activities in this area focus on supporting new, emerging, and existing businesses; growing strategic sectors for our regional economy, and fostering innovation.

Business Development: BusinessNOW Program and BRE Supports

- As part of our BusinessNOW core service, we served 32 businesses directly between June and September. Support requests were primarily focused on physical location, support navigation and referrals, business planning, and funding.
- Initiated as a pilot to increase access to BusinessNOW in our catchment area, our Economic Development Officer (EDO) launched Satellite 'Open Office Hours' beginning in June in each of our municipalities. This pilot was trialed throughout the summer. While we did have businesses engage in this way, the up-take was minimal and preference for face-to-face either at our regional office or a site-visit at the business' location/community continues to be preferred by businesses. To increase awareness of our services regionally, we are finalizing an advertising and promotions plan of our core services and pro-actively increasing attendance at business networking events across our catchment.
- Our Senior Economic Development Officer (SEDO) and our EDO continued to engage in preparations for Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) diagnostics (surveying) and have been focused on analyzing new data points to support advanced reporting metrics. To support these activities in the area of labour market/workforce data, we transitioned the role of our Workforce Development Coordinator into a Regional Workforce Analyst position – the aim is to provide more accurate reporting of regional workforce-related data to support business growth in the Annapolis Valley. Our Business Development Branch continues to engage municipal staff in BRE discussions to improve direct access to our CRM/reporting.
- Valley REN continues to collaborate with the Valley Business Hub on regular business networking events, including the recent Back to Business event on Sept. 10th.
- Continuing to partner with Wolfville Farmers' Market to host a business incubator table for all BusinessNOW clients to provide them a space to showcase their products/services – while not heavily used during the summer, we are booking steadily for the end of September and into October.

Land and Asset Database – Guru Site Selector Tool

- Guru session with GIS WebTech held in September with municipal staff – reviewing capabilities and roles/responsibilities with municipalities/Valley REN.
- Guru promotional material (value proposition) developed and being finalized.
- Soil layers added – now reviewing new workforce layers.
- As an evergreen tool, layers will continue to be added and updates will be made to ensure the tool is as accurate and responsive as possible – we have scheduled a meeting this October with Lightcast to look at securing Canadian workforce data.
- The recommendation to create an Advisory Committee to better support the tool was supported by the Board and put forward as an action item to tackle this fall; a draft terms of reference has been completed.
- Reminder: the tool is available online at: <https://www.valleyren.ca/siteselector/>

Sector Development: Tourism

- Hiring and on-boarding of Tourism Strategy Manager has been completed – Genevieve Allen Hearn, a well-known community leader with a significant background in festival management and community development is a fantastic fit for the role.
- Promotion and introductions of new Tourism Strategy Manager to increase engagement in the community is underway.

- 2nd Annapolis Valley Tourism Network event hosted Sept. 25th -- continues to bring tourism stakeholders together in support of the regional tourism strategy plan.
- Development of transitional tourism website underway – two wireframe meetings were held over the summer (August and September).
- A Tourism Communications Plan is under development and will be integrated into Valley REN’s Communications Plan until a Destination Management Organization is formed; tourism team will create a segmented newsletter for tourism operators and update the Valley REN website/socials (audience will be Tourism Operators – we are not yet targeting visitors).
- An **Accelerated Market Readiness** (AMR) program will be launched this Fall. We are currently vetting Consultants for the program, and hope to have all participating Operators selected by December 2024
- Municipal Innovation Program (MIP) funding secured with Town of Berwick as the proponent (this supports facilitated marketing levy sessions over the next 6 months).
- Updated Committee Terms of Reference completed for the Transitional Implementation Working Committee (TIWC).
- Project page on website updated to engage community and stakeholders in project progress.

Sector Development: Agri-food Tech

- Phase 3 Global Scan of Accelerators and Incubator Models Report completed.
- Overview and update on project progress created, placed on website, and promoted (including direct emails/meetings with stakeholders).
- Engaged in additional meetings with partners, including: Grape Growers of Nova Scotia, Ignite Atlantic, NS Dept. of Ag. to schedule a fall meeting with the Deputy Minister, a follow-up meeting with Leigh Huestis at Acadia re. agri-food tech partnership and next steps for the project, and municipal staff (CAO/EDO updates).
- Planning for an internal stakeholder session in late October to engage key partners in next steps with suggested recommendations following the third report and partner commitments thus far.

Sector Development: Manufacturing

- Continued engagement with Pictou and Bridgewater in follow-up from the International Michelin Cities Conference (INMC) to plan for collaborative engagement between three plants/regions – have requested meeting in the Fall.
- Confirmation that the Continuous Improvement application with the Dept. of Economic Development was not approved – currently looking at alternate options for funding, given continued interest from business in this space.
- Continued engagement with Canadian Manufacturers’ and Exporters’ Institute of Operational Excellence.

Population Growth

Activities in this area focus on fostering the development of welcoming, inclusive communities and workplaces; and attracting talent to the region.

Immigration and Settlement Navigation

- Several targets have been met or exceeded as it relates to working with employers who have submitted immigration applications (15), employers following up about immigration programs (114) and supporting newcomer employees (75).
- 100% of all targets for outreach and connections for the year already and in some cases have also resulted in BusinessNOW meetings/engagement.
- Final planning and promotion underway for the Immigration and Community Fair on October 26th – this is the first immigration and settlement event of this size and scope to take place in the region.
- Valley REN booth staffed for the Kentville Multicultural Festival.
- September virtual programming for Welcome Week hosted.

- Additional information sessions on regional immigration and settlement services to increase awareness of program and supports for business.
- Continued development and oversight on community-led Welcome Networks across our catchment (events hosted throughout the summer and into August).

Valley Connector Program

- The program has already met more than half of our annual target for matched Connectors and Connectees.
- Currently working with Acadia's LaunchBox on a new Build a Business program – Connectees are participating.
- Since August, our Coordinator participated in the following events to promote the program: Middleton & Area Welcome Expo, Kentville Multicultural Festival, 14 Wing Welcome (Program was represented by Kathleen), Back to Business Hub Networking, Acadia University Presentation, Coffee & Chat (Immigration, Settlement, & Employment) and Berwick Community Expo.

Workforce Development

- Workforce Development Coordinator role (contract position) was renewed with a revised focus on regional workforce analysis (securing data, analysing data, identifying trends/opportunities/barriers and providing more regular reports to partners) – new title is Regional Workforce Analyst.
- Planning is in place to bring together Workforce Alliance to revisit mission and review collaborative opportunities going forward.

Regional Growth

Activities in this area focus on leading and facilitating regional collaboration to advance economic development opportunities and communicate results.

Communications and Regional Marketing

- A formal Communications Plan is currently being finalized (delayed slightly due to staff medical leave), but will be ready the end of September – this will support a concerted effort by Valley REN to increase awareness of our services and initiatives to support regional economic development.
- Council presentations were made in June and July to Wolfville, Middleton, and Kings County. Additional Council presentations are scheduled following the election – no additional sessions were held during August and September.
- Working with CAOs on scheduling longer information sessions with new Councils for the New Year following their training.
- Monthly/regular meetings being held with provincial and municipal staff (particularly with CAOs, Deputy CAO, and EDOs).
- Strategic Plan review session with municipal staff and First Nation partners took place on September 16th.
- New animated slide-decks and project webpages updated and promoted as communications tools to increase newsletter viewership.
- Website audit – recommendations received and will be implemented in September/October.
- Monthly newsletters distributed to all partners.
- Exploring production quotes for Valley REN video content to promote our services/impact and media partnerships – increased awareness of what we do regionally.
- Media pitches to Saltwire and The Grapevine to highlight the Awaken program – was featured in The Grapevine.
- Attended multiple partner/community events, including: 14 Wing Greenwood Change of Command; Business Succession Webinar with the Province; Grape Growers Association tours, West Hants Economic Development Stakeholder Session; i-Valley Digital Twinning Demo; Build NS Update Session on Cell/Broadband plans, continued meetings with the Dept. of Agriculture, Acadia University, Invest Nova Scotia, ACOA, and the Association of Industry Sector Councils.

Annual General Meeting

- The 2023-2024 AGM took place on June 19th at Bent Ridge Winery in Windsor Forks. This event also highlighted our 10th anniversary milestone. We had approximately 70 attendees. The Annual Report was presented at the event (this document is available on our website).

Strategic Plan

- Following an engagement session with municipal and First Nation staff, an updated draft Strategic Plan has been developed for review with the Board, the Province, and LOC; the current Business Plan has also been updated slightly to reflect the proposed Plan.