**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**Monday, August 11, 2025, 6:00 PM**

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| Members Present: | Mayor Rob Campbell<br>Councillor Phyllis Bannister<br>Councillor Sarah Colwell<br>Councillor John-Wiebe Dykstra<br>Deputy Mayor Nathan O'Blenis<br>Councillor Stephanie Thorne<br>Councillor Jason Gallant |
| Staff Present: | Austin Henderson, CAO<br>Dianne Ayles, Clerk/Treasurer<br>Scott Landry, Assistant Clerk |

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

## 2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Mayor Campbell explained that RCMP Sgt. Guillaume Bélanger is unable to appear for Item 6.1 due to operational demands related to the wildfire situation in the Maple Hills/Irishtown area.

**Moved by:** Deputy Mayor O'Blenis
**Seconded by:** Councillor Gallant

THAT the Agenda be adopted.

**Motion Carried**

## 3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

Mayor Campbell noted that Conflict of Interest Declaration forms are on the Council Table should any councillor need to fill one out to submit to the Clerk.

## 4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Formally approved meeting minutes are kept in physical form in the Clerk's Office, as well as posted on the Town of Salisbury official website.

4.1 Regular Council Meeting - July 14, 2025

**Moved by:** Councillor Gallant
**Seconded by:** Councillor Bannister

THAT the Minutes for the Regular Council Meeting held July 14, 2025, be adopted.

**Motion Carried**

## 5. CONSENT AGENDA

There were three items on the Consent Agenda.

**Moved by:** Councillor Thorne
**Seconded by:** Deputy Mayor O'Blenis

THAT Council adopt the Consent Agenda of August 11, 2025.

**Motion Carried**

5.1 Southeast Regional Service Commission (SERSC)/Plan360 - Development and Building Permits List, July 2025

A Southeast Regional Service Commission Development and Building Permit report lists seven permits issued in Salisbury by Plan360 in July, 2025, with a total estimated project value of $17,167,160. Included are permits to the Government of Canada for a new institutional building on Silver Fox Drive, as well as for three single unit dwellings.

5.2 SERSC/Plan360 - Salisbury Permit Review Infographic from 2024 Annual Report

Excerpt from the Southeast Regional Service Commission's 2024 Annual Report shows in Salisbury there were 77 permits issued last year carrying a total construction value of $19,030,843, 92 per cent of which were for residential projects. There were 23 new homes built in Salisbury in 2024.

5.3 Elections NB - Kimberly A. Poffenroth, Chief Electoral Officer - Letter Acknowledging Ward 4 Vacancy

Letter received from Elections NB Chief Electoral Officer Kim Poffenroth acknowledges the vacancy in Salisbury Ward 4 and confirms that, citing

subsection 51(4) of the Local Governance Act, there will not be a by-election to fill the seat given the fact there is less than 12 months until the next general municipal election, which is set for May 11, 2026.

## 6. PUBLIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENTATIONS

There was one item under Public and Administrative presentations.

6.1 RCMP Presentation - Sgt. Guillaume Bélanger, Caledonia Region Detachment

Sgt. Guillaume Bélanger of the Caledonia Region Detachment was scheduled to make a verbal presentation to Council; however, he had to cancel on the day of the meeting due to shifting operational priorities in response to the wildfire in the Irishtown area.

## 7. REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES AND PRIVATE MEETINGS

No reports or recommendations from committees and private meetings.

## 8. REPORTS FROM ADMINISTRATION

There were five items under Reports from Administration this meeting.

Councillor Dykstra joined the meeting at 6:08 PM.

8.1 Finances - Q2 Update

Clerk provided Council with section-by-section financial updates for the year's Second Quarter.

At the halfway point, the Operational Budget anticipated revenue is at 46.8 per cent, while budgeted expenses are at 43 per cent. Looking ahead, it can be expected that the Q3 numbers will be impacted by Summer hires, Summer camps, the operation of Salisbury Lions Pool, and capital projects.

The Utility (sewer) Budget update was also presented in detail. Overall expenses in this account are at 43.5 per cent at the middle point of the year. $534,823.95 was invoiced in January for 1,172.5 sewer units. As of June 30, the Town received $430,228.74 in total payments, with $130,450.26 outstanding. There are 21 judgment accounts on nine properties.

CAO weighed in on projections for year-end, based on current numbers, adding that projections are on target with no red flags, also noting the positive news to date regarding building permit values. $77,000 was received from building permits by the end of June, plus another $133,415 in July alone. Building permit revenue is projected to finish 2025 at $215,000 compared to the $67,000 that is budgeted.

Questions and comments -

Councillor Thorne expressed displeasure, and was joined by the rest of Council, over unpaid sewer invoices, mostly repeat cases. The discussion touched on the possibility of disconnections in these cases.

Deputy Mayor O'Blenis asked how sewer income could be at 115 per cent. Clerk responded that it's due to payments coming in, in some cases from accounts that were in arrears carrying significant interest.

Discussion went back to disconnection, to which CAO explained that there is a detailed process for that, and staff will meet later in the week on the topic of delinquent accounts and report back to Council.

8.2 Salisbury Lions Pool - Season Opening Challenges

CAO updated Council on unbudgeted emergency pool expenses incurred, also offering the reminder, for the public record, that the Town does not own the pool, but operates it through a long-term lease agreement with Salisbury Lions Club. During June, an estimated 100 hours of staff time, as well as outside assistance, was required to fix a series of problems with the pool that saw unforeseen large leaks result in the overnight losses of full loads of water from previous days. The frequency of issues was described as a domino effect. The pool opening, budgeted at $15,000, wound up costing the Town $37,650 and was half-a-month behind schedule. Going forward, it is recommended that a third party expert be brought in to identify what is needed for the pool, given the fact there are still more than the usual leaks and that maintaining the water level is an ongoing challenge. Prior to engaging in the long-term lease with the Lions Club, a surface level engineering inspection of the pool was carried out, but in was non-invasive in nature.

CAO explanation also touched on the fact there had to be some refunds for swim lessons, totalling close to $4,000, since sessions had to be reduced from two to one due to the loss of two-and-a-half weeks of instructional time.

Mayor Campbell praised the hard work of staff to get the pool open, noting it is an important community asset that families use.

Deputy Mayor O'Blenis asked if there is enough time for investigation and subsequent repairs before pool-opening in 2026. CAO replied that it depends on what is found in the geotechnical analysis of the ground conditions under the concrete and around the pool, noting there may be surprises given the age of the asset. However, CAO is confident in the amount of time available, saying they have three months this Fall, as well as next April and May.

Councillor Thorne said they will eventually need projections of what a new pool would cost compared with what work is ultimately needed on the current pool, following upcoming investigations.

8.3 Grant Requests

There were two grant requests for Council's consideration.

8.3.a John Kaine

For Council's consideration, John Kaine has applied for a grant of $12,143.83 to help build a ramp at his home for his son who has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair. To date this fiscal year, $46,400 has been committed and/or disbursed under the Town's Grant Policy, leaving only $3,600 remaining of the $50,000 budgeted.

Clerk was asked what Council has done in the past. She replied that in the couple cases she is aware of, the requests were instead supported by service groups or associations, such as the Salisbury Firemen's Association in one example.

Councillor Colwell said she would have supported this request over some of the previous requests that had already been approved.

**Moved by:** Councillor Gallant
**Seconded by:** Councillor Thorne

THAT Council not approve a grant at this time.

**Motion Carried**

Councillor Colwell voted against the motion.

8.3.b Eagles Soccer Club

The Eagles soccer club applied for a one-time grant of $1,000, citing an additional $3,500 in equipment costs this Summer. Among the factors was this year's introduction of an under-9 program.

It was pointed out that there is $500 remaining in the Town's budget-line for soccer. The Town maintains the soccer field under an existing reciprocal agreement between the club and the Town.

**Moved by:** Councillor Bannister
**Seconded by:** Councillor Colwell

THAT Council donate the remaining $500 from the soccer budget for 2025 to the Eagles Soccer Club to help with additional costs for equipment.

On the Question, Councillor Colwell commented how important it is for organizations such as this to be able to budget carefully to ensure that demand can be supported. She noted, and Mayor Campbell agreed, that this is a new club that is still in the early stages of learning how to operate.

Mayor Campbell added that it's a great problem to have in that the soccer program is so popular.

**Motion Carried**

8.4 Fiscal Reform Regulations - Input Letter

CAO explained that the New Brunswick government has put out a call for input on its two draft regulations regarding the Province's annual disbursements to local governments, better known as fiscal reform for municipalities, which is the final stage of Local Governance Reform. There are two streams of funding -- one for capital, the other for equalization. The deadline for Council to respond to the call for input is August 21. CAO suggests asking the Province to provide additional information to make for more effective calculations, given the fact the current formulas in the draft regulations are quite complicated. He also said the proposed formula, based on tax room, does not appear to help Salisbury with regards to receiving any equalization funding.

CAO also said the Province anticipates being able to announce its fiscal reform plans at the AMANB (municipal administrators) conference in September and at the Union of the Municipalities of New Brunswick annual conference in October.

**Moved by:** Councillor Dykstra
**Seconded by:** Councillor Thorne

THAT Council forward the input as-drafted for the Capital Renewal Funding Regulation and Fiscal Capacity Funding Regulations under the Community Funding Act, as part of Fiscal Reform.

On the Question, Councillor Dykstra asked if this means the high-tax areas, like the cities, will receive more funding. CAO said not necessarily, but municipalities with limited ability to increase taxes; that is, those with already higher rates, will be helped more through equalization. Councillor Dykstra said fiscal responsibility will essentially be penalized.

It was clarified for Deputy Mayor O'Blenis that the Town will not lose money in this process, but may not gain money either. That is, funding does not go from the so-called "haves" to the "have-nots" as it is a Provincial budgeted amount that is dispersed.

**Motion Carried**

## 9. BY-LAWS

No by-laws addressed this meeting.

## 10. CLOSED SESSION

There were eight items for discussion in Closed Session.

**Moved by:** Councillor Gallant
**Seconded by:** Councillor Bannister

THAT Council enter into a Closed Session. (6:51 PM)

**Motion Carried**

10.1 Land (68(1)(d) Local Governance Act)

10.2 Contractual (68(1)(c) Local Governance Act)

10.3 Land (68(1)(d) Local Governance Act)

10.4 Land (68(1)(d) Local Governance Act)

10.5 Land (68(1)(d) Local Governance Act)

10.6 Financial (68(1)(c) Local Governance Act)

10.7 Confidential-GNB (68(1)(e) Local Governance Act)

10.8 Personnel (68(1)(j) Local Governance Act)

## 11. MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS' STATEMENTS/INQUIRIES

*Meeting returned from Closed Session at 9:17 following a motion to return (2025-169), moved by Councillor Gallant and seconded by Councillor Thorne.*

Wildfire Risk - Mayor Campbell briefly commented on the current wildfire risk affecting New Brunswick, thanking firefighters and urging everyone to stay out of the woods.

Block Parties - Councillors expressed thanks to staff for the Block Parties held this Summer in the four Wards.

## 12. NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS

No Notices of Motions or Resolutions this meeting.

## 13. ADJOURNMENT

**Moved by:** Councillor Thorne
**Seconded by:** Deputy Mayor O'Blenis

THAT the meeting be adjourned. (9:19 PM)

**Motion Carried**

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Chair

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Clerk