COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

MINUTES

Monday, October 27, 2025, 6:00 PM

Members Present:	Mayor Rob Campbell Councillor Jason Gallant Councillor Phyllis Bannister Councillor Sarah Colwell Councillor John-Wiebe Dykstra Deputy Mayor Nathan O'Blenis Councillor Stephanie Thorne
Staff Present:	Austin Henderson, CAO Dianne Ayles, Clerk/Treasurer Trevor Douthwright, Manager of Infrastructure and Public Works Scott Landry, Assistant Clerk

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1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved by: Councillor Bannister
Seconded by: Councillor Thorne

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. NEW BUSINESS

There were seven items for New Business this meeting.

1. Presentation - Road Condition Assessment - Total Pave

Presenter Coady Cameron of Total Pave took Council through the Needs Study his company prepared for Salisbury. Using PCI (Pavement Condition Index) and IRI (International Roughness Index) assessment indicators, Total Pave prepared a five-year plan of various levels of recommended reinvestment, ranging from one to three per cent annually, for the network of roads that are under the Town's jurisdiction. It was noted that the focus is not simply on the traditional worst-first model, but also on providing consistent maintenance to keep roads from falling into a desperate state of disrepair, and prioritizing the most critical routes. Total Pave recommends two per cent of annual reinvestment, minimum, for Salisbury, in order to at least stabilize the overall health of the network and prevent rapid decline. It is also recommended the Town consider either pausing its pursuit of Provincial Municipal Highway Program (PMHP) projects in order to focus on local streets, or instead reduce its PMHP program cost-share from the current 20 per cent.

After lengthy discussion, Council was ready to move on the recommendation. It was noted that the New Brunswick Government's Property Assessment Freeze has put the Town in a position where it would be unable to meet the year-one funding allocation for streets regardless of the recommended level of five-year reinvestment.

Moved by: Councillor Colwell
Seconded by: Deputy Mayor O'Blenis

THAT Salisbury Town Council direct staff to implement the recommendations in the *Salisbury Road Needs Study*, and target a 2% re-investment rate over the next five (5) years, prioritizing municipal streets specifically, while also recognizing that in light of the property assessment freeze in 2026, this will not be possible for the first year of the plan.

Motion Carried

2. Rezoning Introduction, Homestead Road, PID # 01052695

Plan360 Presenter Guilhem Francez provided Council with a brief on a redesignation and rezoning application to permit a light industrial use, being a shopping cart refurbishment and general maintenance service for grocery stores, which would have eight employees in a 5,000 square foot work area. The site, a vacant property on Homestead Road that housed a service station back in the 1980s, is considered by Plan360 to be a suitable candidate for rezoning for this intended purpose based on its size,

accessibility, natural and to-be built buffers to minimize the impact on neighbours, and that it complies with Federal and Provincial regulations.

Under the Community Planning Act, Council was faced with the option to either pass a resolution to begin the public engagement phase of the process to rezone the property from Rural to Industrial, or deny this application.

Moved by: Councillor Bannister
Seconded by: Councillor Dykstra

THAT Council proceed with the rezoning application.

On the Question, there was some discussion, based on a rezoning denied in March, of the optics of Council continuing to address one-off rezoning requests prior to establishing a long-term planning vision for the Town. It was, however, noted that Council did not decide to forego new requests. It was further pointed out that each rezoning matter is unique and must be addressed on its own merit.

Motion Carried

Since this will be the first rezoning process to take place since Council adopted a new Enhanced Notification policy, a sign will be erected at the site in question notifying the public of the public hearing to be held in January, 2026.

Moved by: Councillor Thorne
Seconded by: Councillor Colwell

THAT a recess be held. (6:57 PM)

Motion Carried

RECESS

Moved by: Councillor Gallant
Seconded by: Councillor Thorne

THAT the meeting resume. (7:01 PM)

Motion Carried

3. Presentation - 2026 Town Budget

CAO updated Council on the draft Budget and five-year Capital Plan, both having been adjusted for new information.

The Town tax base was confirmed to have risen by 2.7 per cent year-over-year, meeting the Provincial average. The equalization grant from the New Brunswick government was confirmed to have decreased to $76,993.

There is new money in the form of Capital Renewal Funding, part of fiscal reform for municipalities starting in 2026, amounting to just shy of $160,000 for Salisbury, but the proposal is to carry this over to 2027. Staff are still waiting for numbers for policing; fire service cost-sharing; insurance, subject to Council award in November; and debentures, which remain estimates at this point. The goal remains to hold the property tax rates to 2025 levels, and the current drafted tax rates are $1.1599 for "inside," that is, Ward 3, and $0.6354 for "outside," i.e. Wards 1, 2 and 4. The downside to this is limited flexibility for projects and no transfers to reserves. Maintaining service levels will be the status quo. It was noted Salisbury's tax rates have remained competitive and were among the lowest in comparison with neighbouring municipalities.

The draft five-year Capital Plan includes, for 2026, the Sunrise/Twilight subdivision phase-one, storm sewer and sidewalk on River Road (Route 112), solar panels on the new fire hall, municipal facility upgrade, phase three of the ongoing replacement of SCBA equipment for the fire department, trail extensions for Riverbend and the wetlands, and extensions on Eagleridge Drive and Dundee Drive. Salisbury's 2026 debt ratio is expected to be eight per cent, including the new fire hall, which would be below the 10-to-15 per cent maximum preferred by municipal auditors.

Meantime, the proposed utility budget includes a Ward 3 sewer rate of $400, unchanged from 2025. It was noted that there are 16 new sewer units among the approximate 1,100 units in the former village ward, of which 75 units are institutional.

Moved by: Deputy Mayor O'Blenis
Seconded by: Councillor Dykstra

THAT Council approve the 2026 Operating, Utility, and Capital budgets in-principle for ratification at an upcoming Council Meeting and direct Administration to increase advocacy for a favourable response under the Active Transportation Fund in hopes of re-allocating a currently planned operating to capital contribution.

Motion Carried

4. Fundy Biosphere Region, OECM Designation Proposal

Item 4.4 was a conservation agreement for two parcels of Town-owned land, following up on unanimous direction from Council from the May 26, 2025, Committee of the Whole meeting at which the Executive Director of the non-profit Fundy Biosphere Region (FBR) presented to Town Council on the "Other Effective Based Conservation Measures" (OECM) process. OECM focuses on lands that are used for other purposes than strictly conservation, but are considered environmentally-sensitive, requiring

some level of protection. The provided FBR conservation recommendation report touched on three potential sites for Salisbury: the Highland Park wetlands, the wetlands at the Wastewater Treatment Facility, and the Town's Powers Pit Road property, which was the site of the long-ago decommissioned landfill. It has since been determined that the Powers Pit Road site does not meet eligibility at the present time. The Highland Park site is deemed eligible as-is, while the treatment facility will require a monitoring plan, which is being worked on in collaboration with FBR.

Moved by: Councillor Bannister
Seconded by: Councillor Colwell

THAT Council approve the Conservation Agreement between the Town of Salisbury and the Province of New Brunswick (Department of Natural Resources) in principle along with the associated management plan for the Wastewater Treatment Facility, and direct Administration to bring forth the agreement for formal ratification at an upcoming Council meeting.

On the Question, it was clarified that the Highland Park site is the park's bottom level, so it would not impact on future plans for the park. As for the wastewater treatment site, the area considered for conservation, next to the river, would not impact on any future site expansion. It was also noted that formal conservation designations such as this can be helpful when seeking funding.

Motion Carried

5. Levels of Service

Presented to Council for input was a document that defines and benchmarks existing municipal services, taking infrastructure, resources and capacity into consideration, identifying a standard Level of Service expectation with accountability targets that can be communicated. As examples, it was noted that garbage collection and snow-clearing are two of the most significant services. CAO added that creating Levels of Service standards is also beneficial in that they can be used to quantify the impacts of budgetary decisions.

Moved by: Councillor Dykstra
Seconded by: Councillor Bannister

THAT Council approve the levels of service as-presented in principle, and direct Administration to finalize the outlined levels to be integrated into a formal Levels of Service Policy for ratification at an upcoming Regular Council Meeting.

On the Question, Council suggested using a type of scorecard to measure the effectiveness of the many public events hosted by the Town, measuring value versus effort, for example, and if events depend on

volunteer involvement in order to take place. Among the events mentioned were the Block Parties, Community Days, and the various workshops that are held each year. Event parking was discussed, including accessible parking and access for seniors.

Motion Carried

6. Draft What-We-Heard Report – Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Consultation re: Sunrise/Twilight Subdivision

CAO provided Council with a draft report on concerns that were raised during the public consultation phase of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) taking place in advance of developing an extended Sunrise/Twilight subdivision. Outreach was extensive, via mail and email, online newsletter, website and social media, and direct contact was made with certain stakeholders and with any residents who requested meetings.

Feedback was generally in opposition; however, the vast majority of the opposition was not because of the environmental components, which was the purpose of this EIA. Opposition from residents touched on traffic, road conditions and residential density, the impact on private water supplies and on the sewer system, not wanting housing or not wanting affordable housing, concerns about sensitive flora (eg. Lady Slippers), a perceived negative impact on property values, taxpayers and quality of life, i.e. Salisbury's small town feel.

Responses, explained by the CAO, include the fact that the focus here is on Town-owned land originally earmarked for a second access to Hilltop subdivision, that it was always designated for future housing and is within the Town's serviceable boundary for sewer, there are existing funding opportunities available to the Town to pursue it, and there is the overall return of it addressing a housing need in the community, also noting the involvement of partner groups such as the Lions Villa.

Should the proposal eventually proceed, it would involve a land-use change which would launch a public consultation process, including a public hearing.

Moved by: Councillor Gallant
Seconded by: Councillor Thorne

THAT Council accept the draft “What we Heard” Report for the proposed Sunrise/Twilight Subdivision (the Town’s proposed undertaking registered under the *Environmental Impact Assessment Act)* in principle, and direct Administration to formally submit the final report upon completion of the public consultation period on October 31, integrating any further input received prior to submission.

On the Question, a comment from Councillor Colwell touched on how important this proposed development is to the Lions Villa. Deputy Mayor O'Blenis commented that the pending results of the water study should be interesting given the very dry conditions when the study was conducted. Councillor Bannister credited Administration for the extensive public engagement.

Motion Carried

7. Regional Service Commission - Verbal Update

Mayor Campbell provided Council with a brief update on matters related to Southeast Regional Service Commission, touching on a widely-attended recent session held at Moncton's Avenir Centre. The board's Governance Committee continues its work, on which Mayor Campbell will be reporting back to Council in the future. He added that the Province's Local Governance department is currently conducting a review of RSCs.

5. CLOSED SESSION

No Closed Session held this meeting.

6. MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS' STATEMENTS/INQUIRIES

Pumpkin Walk - Mayor Campbell said the Halloween Pumpkin Walk was one of the best yet, thanking staff. CAO to relay that praise, while also noting the community partnerships that help make this event such a well-attended success.

Budget - Deputy Mayor O'Blenis thanked staff for their hard work on the draft budget, noting that it is a challenging time for such preparations.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: Councillor Thorne
Seconded by: Councillor Bannister

THAT the meeting be adjourned. (8:47 PM)

Motion Carried

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Chair

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Clerk