

Monthly Report

Corporate Services

October 2018

CORPORATE SERVICES – Staff are beginning to develop plans for the upcoming capital and operational budgets. We are working with the contractor to complete the internal control report that began earlier this calendar year. In addition, each area will be starting a review of their policies over the next few months in anticipation of making recommendations to Council for changes and/or updates.

FINANCIAL – The Audited Financial Statements for 2017/18 and the 2018/19 first quarter report were presented to the Audit Committee on September 18. All required reports for the province (Statement of Estimates (SOE) A and B, the Financial Information Return (FIR) and the Capital Investment Plan (CIP) have been submitted. The Financial Statements submissions to Department of Municipal Affairs (DMA)/Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB) and the NSUARB annual filing requirements for the Town of Amherst Water Utility are completed. Other than payroll, the YMCA has been transitioned. Second quarter reports will be completed and presented to the audit committee in November. We are currently working on planning for our Capital and Operating Budgets. We plan to bring a “high priority” list to Council in December with final budget approval in March 2019.

2018 DECEMBER TAX SALE – We currently have nine accounts being prepared for tax sale. Notices are posted on the properties. These accounts are being prepared for a tax sale to be held on December 11, 2018 at 10 am.

2018/19 TAX REDUCTION POLICY – During the 2018/19 budget Council approved an amendment to the Tax Reduction Policy 03800-02. An increase to \$450 for household income of less than \$25,000. Applications are available on the Town of Amherst website or in person at Town Hall. An application was mailed out to residents having received tax reduction in prior years. We have received 68 applications as of September 28, of which 63 received the reduction. 2 still have prior year balance (once that has been cleared then reduction can be applied). 1 is in question due to name not matching tax account, 1 didn't qualify as it was over the threshold and 1 was a duplicate.

2018 ASSESSMENT APPEALS – Assessments were mailed out mid-January by PVCS. The appeal deadline was February 15, 2018 at midnight. As of October 1, 2018 there were 72 appeals, 52 complete, 5 outstanding, 15 withdrawn.

	# of Accounts Appealing	Total Assessment Value Being Appealed	Appeal Completed as of Oct 1/18	Pending as of Oct 1/18	Withdrawn as of Oct 1/18	Outstanding Appeals as of Oct 1/18	Appeals Successful as of Oct 1/18	Loss of Assessment Value	Amount of Revenue Reduction	Nova Scotia Assessment Appeal Tribunal Status
Residential/Resource	54	12,851,500	39	0	13	1	26	\$ 1,305,600	\$ 21,346	0
Commercial	18	29,687,400	13	0	2	4	6	\$ 1,033,500	\$ 45,836	1
TOTAL	72	\$42,538,900	52	0	15	5	32	\$ 2,339,100	\$ 67,182	1

WATER / SEWER COLLECTIONS – Disconnection letters were sent September 26 with a payment deadline of Friday, October 12. Disconnections will take place over the next month. The second quarter water / sewer bills will be sent out in October, with a due date of November 30. Sewer accounts are being reviewed to determine any accounts that may require a lien on the property.

PROCUREMENT – September was a month that included large amounts of “after close” work related to procurement. This includes letters, contracts and contract maintenance, performance paperwork renewals (WCB, General Liability insurance, NSCSA reviews), notifying/conversing with vendors, working with user departments to review priority status for accuracy and working on both annual operational procurements (such as snow clearing and salt hauling). Procurement is looking at utilizing multi-year contracts for operational procurements where possible.

Procurement stats for the month of September (as of September 30) are as follows:

	May (revised)	June	July	August	Sept
Capital					
Anticipated Procurement from Capital Budget: 40-44					
Scopes for capital received in the month	6 (4 rec, 2 ops)	12	4	7	2
All procurement:					
Total new scopes of work received in month	11	20	6	14	6
Released to the public in the month	10	12	7	12	7
Closed during the month	8	9	10	11	7
Awarded by par/council during the month	6	7	11	9	4
Open at the end of month (released month a, closed month b)	4	7	4	3	5

INFORMATION SERVICES (IS) – Live streaming was completed for Council for September. IS are working towards doing live streaming for October COW. Planning is ongoing for next year’s capital and operational budgets including funding for greening of networks and computers. IS are investigating options for customer service platforms to aid with service standards and tracking of calls and issues. Work is being done on the Town’s Records Management system and future plans for utilizing existing systems to ensure proper record retention and destruction. Replacement of computers and other hardware is expected over the next few months (greening asset plan).

HUMAN RESOURCES – Shawn Canton has returned to the Corporate Services Department.