



P.O. Box 8, Colinet, NL, A0B 1M0
Tel: 709-521-2300; Email: TownofColinet.nl@gmail.com

**Town Council Meeting Minutes
May 6, 2025
Town Hall**

IN ATTENDANCE:

V. Joan Nolan, Mayor
Gerard Linehan, Deputy Mayor
Loretta Nash, Councillor
Paula Linehan, Councillor
Brenda Pike, Town Clerk

Absent: Don Corrigan, Councillor

Six members of the public were present.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting is called to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA: MAY 6, 2025

Motion #2025-28: Loretta Nash; Gerard Linehan

Adopt the Agenda of May 6, 2025.

All in Favor; None Opposed

Motion Carried

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES: APRIL 8, 2025

Motion #2025-29: Gerard Linehan; Loretta Nash

Adopt the Minutes of April 8, 2025.

All in Favor; None Opposed

Motion Carried

4. FINANCE

a. Monthly Financial Report

Motion #2025-30: Gerard Linehan; Don Corrigan

Adopt the financial report for the month ending April 30, 2025.

All in Favor; None Opposed

Motion Carried

5. NEW BUSINESS

a) Reports

i) Town Clerk Report

- The Clerk contacted Bell, as per Council's direction, and cancelled the fax line. The monthly invoice will now be \$84.95 plus hst (vs. \$207.95 plus hst).
- Municipal Inspection: Jennifer Brown was at the office on April 22 for a municipal inspection. Jennifer was very pleased with the financial and document recordkeeping. She will be forwarding a report to Council over the next few weeks. (See agenda for results of concerns about the tax process for 2025).
- The letter to residents re vacant land and business taxes has been mailed. There hasn't been any response. Mr. Bernard Downey has volunteered to sit with Council or the Clerk and identify vacant land in the town.
- The 911 mapping has been completed. A finalized copy will be sent to the Council once everything is confirmed.
- The webpage is now online. The MUN student (Joey Shea) who was working on it finished his work term and handed it over to the Clerk mid-April. The Clerk has been working on it for the last two weeks and is happy to note that formatting, photos and the initial information requested to be included by Council has now all been entered. The webpage can be found at townofcolinet.com. Council should do a review before it is made public as it is online now. The Clerk will post the web address on Facebook and include it in the June newsletter.
- The Clerk wishes to thank the MUN Rural Outreach Program for working with her to get the 911 mapping complete and for their assistance with the web page. The Clerk will send a formal thank you to the supervisor of the program thanking them for their involvement and support with these two projects, on behalf of Council. Both of these projects were very time-consuming for the Clerk. Thankfully, moving forward, they will only involve updates from time to time.
- The Clerk contacted Brian Scammell, Auditor, and he is hoping to get a start on the 2023 audit late next week. Once the 2023 audit is complete, we will have to send out a request for quotes for the 2024 audit. Hopefully, we will be caught up by the end of 2025.

- The Clerk had a zoom meeting with RBC (Darrell Durdle). They are offering their financial support for any capital works projects which the Town may be considering – loans.
- There are two birthday parties booked in the Town Hall for June 21 and 22 at 12:00 noon until 5:00 p.m.
- Permits issued:
 - Gerard and Linda Corrigan – greenhouse (April)
 - Don Corrigan – shingles (May)
 - Herb Spurrell – shingles (May)
- Maintenance worker hire: the Clerk asked if she should post the job ad for this summer. Council directed the Clerk to post the ad for 10 hours a week at \$20 per hour from June 2 to September 5, with the duties according to last year's posting.
- Community Advisory Council is on May 12 at 1:00. Option to attend virtually. The Clerk enquired if any Council members could attend. Mayor Nolan advised she may be available to attend virtually with the Clerk at the town office.

ii) Infrastructure Committee

Nothing to Report

iii) Administration/Human Resources

a. Building By-Law

Council advised they had reviewed the by-law and were confident it covers all requirements under the new legislation.

There was discussion with the public attendees of how Government has requirements for mandatory by-laws under the new Towns and Local Service Districts Act, one of which is the Building By-Law. It was clarified that in the event of an emergency (eg. septic tank issues) work could proceed and the property owner would then follow up with Council for the applicable permit.

Under the new legislation, a permit application will need to be completed which will then be considered by Council at the next public meeting.

Motion #2025-31: Loretta Nash; Paula Linehan

Council accepts and approves the Building By-Law for the Municipality of Colinet, as presented, effective May 6, 2025.

All in Favor; None Opposed

Motion Carried

b. Age Friendly Communities Grant

Council decided not to apply for funding under the Age Friendly Communities Grant until a plan for an Age Friendly Community is completed, as the deadline for a plan and an application is within one week. Discussions followed re possible projects which could fall under such a plan, such as re-paving of the basketball court to accommodate multiple activities; a walking track around the playground; a picnic area; floating wharves or other structures to accommodate small crafts, kayakers, etc.

As a result of this discussion and input from public attendees, Council will look into funding for small craft structures, etc. Brandon Cabot (public attendee) noted that he is aware of other communities who have received provincial funding to construct small craft wharves and he may be able to work with Council on this initiative.

iv) Property Tax Update

Due to questions and concerns from property owners in the town, the Clerk provided an update on property tax values based on information received from the Director of Municipal Affairs, Chris Stamp, and the Town's Municipal Affairs Representative, Jennifer Brown, on April 22. As the Town adopted its budget, including its tax structure in 2024, the budget and property tax figures cannot be changed for 2025. (In addition, if Council had decided to make any changes, they would have to be made before April 30). The adopted budget included a property tax mil rate of 4.5%, with a minimum property tax of \$500.00. The budget was approved by the Dept. of Municipal Affairs.

Moving forward, the new legislation does not accommodate a minimum property tax rate. The Town will have to adopt either a mil rate or a combination of a base amount plus a mil rate. This doesn't necessarily mean there will be a significant increase or decrease in taxes, as revenue from taxes will have to bring in approximately \$58,000 annually to meet the budget requirements. It was noted that some taxpayers are now paying in excess of a 7% mil rate if they are paying the minimum amount, as the \$500 minimum is higher than they would have to pay with a 4.5% mil rate. (Eg. Someone with a property valued at \$80,000 would pay only \$360 at a 4.5% mil rate. Collecting \$500 from this same property owner means they are paying a mil rate of 6.3%).

Public attendee, Darlene Didham, expressed concern over the high cost of annual assessments, which result in property owners paying higher taxes. Mayor Nolan explained that the Town has to pay in excess of \$4,000 annually for assessments to the Municipal Assessment Agency. In addition, the high cost of annual audits (over \$11,000 in 2024) and snow clearing (\$19,000 for 5 months) result in the Town having to cover these funds from revenue from taxes.

Mayor Nolan assured everyone that she and the Clerk are already working with the numbers for next year to ensure everyone is treated fairly. However, property taxes are necessary revenue for the town and property owners must be taxed based on assessed property values. This doesn't allow Council any room for diversion from requirements under provincial legislation. Council recognizes that some property owners are paying high taxes and will work on the figures for next year to ensure everyone is treated fairly, based on their property assessments, while also meeting legislative requirements.

b) Fire Department

- Councillor Gerard Linehan advised the Fire Department is pleased to have a new member, Darryl Downey.
- The bunker gear donated by Mount Carmel Fire Department has been received.
- Councillor Linehan updated Council on a call they had received for a car fire. He noted that an ambulance was dispatched from Whitbourne. Because of lack of cell service, the ambulance ended up getting lost. Fortunately, the Fire crew had dealt with the fire and an ambulance was not required. It was noted that this could have been a different event if an ambulance was required due to the delay caused by EMS personnel not being able to reach the Fire Department.
- The lack of a requirement for a "working" 911 service was discussed. Mayor Nolan advised she will follow up with MNL regarding discussions around cell service and 911 availability as Colinet was not considered when funding was made available to several towns for upgrading their cell service.
- Councillor Linehan advised that the Fire Department is in need of equipment, especially helmets. An application has been submitted to Fire Services for helmets, as well as an application for funding of \$100,000 for a used fire truck. The Clerk will contact Sherry Gambin-Walsh to enquire on the status of these applications.

c) Correspondence: Update on Municipal Assessment Agency

Council acknowledged and tabled correspondence which provides an update from the Municipal Assessment Agency.

d) Community Clean Up

A community clean up will be held during the week of June 1-7. Residents will be requested to collect litter around their properties and neighboring properties in the Town throughout the week, and bring it to the rear of the Town Hall for transport to the Eastern Waste facility in St. Joseph's on June 7. People will also be encouraged to collect garbage in other areas of the town where it may have collected over the winter, eg. playground, etc. The Town will provide bags and gloves.

Information on the community clean-up will be posted to Facebook and at the store.

6. ROUND TABLE

- a. Public attendee, Darlene Didham, brought to Council's attention the plants that are similar to Hogweed (Angelica) in the bridge area which are an eyesore for the area. They are growing everywhere in the Town now and are not very esthetically pleasing for residents and visitors to the Town. Council will include the cleaning up of those areas in the work schedule of the Maintenance Worker.
- b. Public attendee, Brandon Cabot, offered his assistance to the Fire Department when he re-locates to Colinet. He has been involved with fire departments elsewhere and may be of assistance in securing funding and equipment.
- b. Mayor Nolan enquired as to the status of the Active Living Grant application for funding for a Community Garden. The Clerk advised there hasn't been any response to date.
- c. Mayor Nolan advised public attendees of the need for committee members, if there is any interest in helping out.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for June 3, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion #2025-32: Paula Linehan; Gerard Linehan

The meeting is adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

All in Favor; None opposed

Motion Carried