

**Finance Committee Meeting
April 17, 2026
Minutes**

Present: Mayor Derek Amalfa, Deputy Mayor Craig Hillen, Councillor Anna Chetwynd, Councillor Candace Malik, Councillor Kevin Chetwynd, Town Clerk/Treasurer, June Harding, and Recording Secretary Jill Cassibo

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Amalfa at 1:07 p.m.

2. Silence of Electronic Devices

All electronic devices were silenced at this time.

3. Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

4. Review of 2026/2027 Budget

Mayor Amalfa began by noting that Council will only be going through the updated portions of the budget. The shared service with the Municipality of the District of Shelburne for Fire Services provided to them is up by \$8800.00 and the Celebrate Canada Grant was \$18,000.00 this year. Tax calculation could go down due to appeals, one for sure that we are already aware of that is going down by \$58,000.00 in assessed value. Mayor Amalfa asked if the Town is made aware of who has appealed their assessments and Ms. Harding said yes, this information is made available on a secure website. When a property changes in value the Town Clerk/Treasurer is notified and the changes are made in our system.

Councillor Malik questioned Ms. Harding if Ocean Escape already had their assessment as it may increase due to the purchase price of the property or applied for the reduction.

Ms. Harding stated that she has added a bit to the General Government Mileage budget due to the number of meetings she has been attending outside of the office.

In an earlier meeting the Town Clerk/Treasurer was asked to approach our auditor to determine what the cost would be to have audits done of our Fire Department and our Medical First responders books. Ms. Harding did ask the auditor about auditing the books for the Fire Department and the MFR. Jennifer Thomas, the auditor stated that for most Departments they do a compilation. If the books are in good order the compilation could cost anywhere from \$1500 to \$3500. Ms. Harding was not given a quote for a full audit (assets included). Councillor A. Chetwynd stated that the MFR books were in good order and that she would have no problem letting the rest of Council see them, which would be no additional cost to the Town. Deputy Mayor Hillen stated again that this should be done yearly and that we should look at everything, assets are assets. Councillor A. Chetwynd said that the MFR assets come from fundraising, donations and supplies from EHS. With the Fire Department, some of those assets belong to the Fire Association. Councillor K. Chetwynd asked what Deputy Mayor Hillen was looking for and Deputy Mayor Hillen responded there was no information specifying what exactly the compilation entailed. That was a question that needed clarification. Secondly as initially requested by council for an audit we (council) did not receive a quote as to what an audit would cost and what exactly that entailed. We only received the cost of a compilation.

A compilation may suffice but considering an audit has not been completed for these departments in years it may require a baseline starting point. Deputy Mayor Hillen has indicated several times that these two departments are assets of the Town of Lockeport. As assets, the taxpayers have a right to know what revenues are being generated through donations, budgets, other sources and accounts and expenses or purchases for the service and the community. As the Town and every elected council member representing the constituency we are tasked with being responsible to ask these questions, ensuring financial governance practices are in order (not suggesting they are not), and funding is

appropriate based on the Emergency Fire Service/MFR contract agreed to between the Town and the Volunteer Fire Association. This is only independently verified through an annual audit or compilation as every other town department is.

Ms. Harding will talk to Jennifer again to get a full understanding of what the compilation entails. Councillor K. Chetwynd offered any Councillor/Mayor a tour of the Fire Department. Councillor A. Chetwynd relayed that it would take the auditor a long time to go over every asset and questioned what the purpose was for this added expense. The MFR was brought in to mirror the FD and donations made to the Town are used to purchase items such as the MFR truck, and defibrillators. The defibrillator has ended up saving a life as the report could be emailed directly to the patient's cardiologist. Councillor A. Chetwynd stated that the donations do not belong to the Town for budget purposes. Donations are often Memorial Donations intended to be used by the services to help improve and sustain them. The FD used donation money to buy a forest pump and hoses and asked again the underlying reason for the audit. Councillor Malik stated that it is for transparency and health of the Town.

Currently the MFR and FD trucks as well as the buildings are covered under the Town's annual audit.

Snow removal costs went up this year due to the amount of snow we had and having Mark Williams remove it from Town. We also went over budget in salt expense.

Street paving – the Town is not in the position to take out another loan, so the streets will be completed with cold patch. Public works used fifteen bags of cold patch to fix the areas in front of 401 Brighton Road, and that looks fantastic.

Councillor A. Chetwynd stated that there is a grant on the ACOA website for roadwork, which the Town would have to contribute money towards.

Ms. Harding will investigate this as well as finding out if the Town of Shelburne received a grant to do the resurfacing of roads they did last year.

Sewer Plant – CBCL Engineering's original design for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade had the discharge location incorrect so it must be repositioned at CBCL's expense. Ms. Harding has received a release form

which CBCL is asking her to sign so she sent it to Don Harding, LLC, to look over. He advised Ms. Harding to not sign any Release until the job was done and to ask for a Contract stating that CBCL's Insurance Company will reimburse the Town of Lockeport for any invoices associated to the relocation project at the sewer plant site. The Town will pay for Lindsay Construction to do the repair and then the Town will be reimbursed from CBCL. Ms. Harding has been told that the Town will be reimbursed by CBCL rather than their Insurance Company for a more rapid turnover. The Public Works Supervisor will inquire about having the washroom repaired at the sewer plant site while the workmen are there.

Medical Centre – Mayor Amalfa and Ms. Harding had a meeting with Melanie Mooney and Leslie Oliver, Nova Scotia Health and reported that they were told that once every two weeks for blood collection does not seem to be enough and we would like to see someone here every week. The Nurse Practitioner will be off for the next three months.

The Town has applied and has been accepted for three summer students, through Canada Summer Jobs. MYM can budget for one or two of the students. Ms. Harding, Councillor A. Chetwynd, and Connie Lamm will get together to discuss the plans. Councillor Malik asked about July 1st having been offered the option to pay for one and was told that a student could be a huge help to Emily during the July 1st process. Councillor Malik will take the information back to the July 1st Committee when the plans are done. Ms. Harding noted that if we do not have students or a student at the Beach Centre, the Beach Centre will have to be on restricted hours. Emily cannot work seven days a week. Councillor Malik asked when the Town would start advertising and Ms. Harding replied that when the job descriptions are complete, the advertisement will go out. Councillor A. Chetwynd remarked that the MYM is closely monitoring how the Town spends the money from that Grant with all the cuts the government has put into place. Money needs to be spent related to movement and day camps do not count, it is to work with the more sedentary people.

Playpark – the final inspection was completed and paid for by the Playpark donations for this year. There is currently a porta potty at the playpark and Deputy Mayor Hillen again about the need to rent a porta-potty (expensive)

when we have public washrooms available. Deputy Mayor Hillen recognizes and agree with concerns from other councillors leaving the washrooms open 24/7 but feel a compromise of at least open during the day (0800-4pm) during summer months would be an appropriate request for consideration. Councillor A. Chetwynd does not have a problem with opening the washrooms during the day but there needs to be a discussion about who will be responsible for opening and closing the washrooms. Councillor A. Chetwynd also stated that the Recreation Department tried to do everything as cost efficient as possible to save money with programming this past year.

(A) Grants to Organizations

It was suggested the breakdown would be:

MPAL - \$1000.00

Shelburne County Arena - \$1000.00

Bursaries to the High School - \$600.00

Kids Fair Play - \$500.00

Lockeport Cemetery Committee - \$500.00

There was a discussion about the Shelburne County Arts Council. Deputy Mayor Hillen stated that there are many residents that are involved with the Arts Council and they helped with the design of the interpretative signs. They also will be promoted at the next Sea Catch Festival in February 2027. Councillor K. Chetwynd suggested that we could let them use our venues at no charge as an In-Kind contribution. Organizations have until April 30, 2026, to apply to the Town for grants.

Deputy Mayor Hillen also suggested the possibility of charging a toonie for entry to the beach bashes and asked why the taxpayers of the Town are absorbing the cost.

(B)The budget for the Recreation Committee and Heritage and Tourism Committee budgets were incorporated into the annual budget. The Heritage and Tourism Committee would like to initiate the replacement of the directory sign that is across from the soccer field with something new.

5. Tax Revenues and Rates

There was a discussion on tax rates as well as introducing user fees instead of increasing the tax rate so that everyone is paying the same. No decisions were made.

6. Review of Town Asset List

Mayor Amalfa will compile a spreadsheet for Town Assets.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 3:37 p.m.

Next meeting is scheduled for May 8, 2026, at 1:00 p.m.

Mayor Derek Amalfa

Town Clerk/Treasurer June Harding

04172026min.