

Noise / Fireworks By-law to get First Reading

By Maurice Rees

Colchester Council is entering into serious discussions, which may prove to be more contentious than the dog / kennel by-law discussions in 2019. The topic of a "Noise / fireworks By-law" is back on the agenda.

At the Council Committee meeting held on August 13, 2020 Councillor Boutillier raised concerns of increased noise complaints in his district. A specific case involving frequent use of fireworks was discussed. Council directed staff to explore considerations of how the concerns might be addressed.

At its February 11 committee meeting council approved the recommendation the draft Noise By-law be advanced to First Reading at the next Council meeting, with amendments as discussed at February 11th committee meeting

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At the Council Committee meeting on November 12, 2020, several considerations were reviewed. After a conversation with Colchester RCMP Staff Sgt. Curtis MacKinnon, it was determined that the most common legislation used by the detachment to enforce noise complaints was not effective:

During Council's discussions, fireworks were noted as being a safety concern when the fire index is high. At the conclusion of the November 12, 2020 meeting, Council Committee directed staff to draft both a Noise By-law and a Fireworks By-law for consideration.

In updating council Devin Trefry noted as part of the review process, staff met with the RCMP and one of the issues raised was the difficulties



of enforcing noise complaints under the criminal code as it relates to mischief. The RCMP felt that a noise by-law would help with enforcement.

On the safety concerns related to fireworks, staff determined that during a provincial fire ban or high fire index, it is illegal to detonate fireworks. As a result, staff felt a fireworks by-law may not be necessary as the noise concerns could be addressed through the noise by-law.

Several other municipal by-laws were reviewed as part of the process. Staff felt Cumberland County's By-law was a good template and this was used to develop the initial framework for the draft by-law for Colchester.

The list of exemptions with the by-law are straight forward, addressing lawfully operating commercial businesses, noise in response to emergencies, government related work, construction, as well as some recreation activities. Trefry noted the draft Noise By-law as presented, was reviewed by the RCMP who were pleased with the draft and felt it was an effective start.

Referring to liability, Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor, confirmed that there is a provision in the Municipal Government

Act, Section 513(c) indicating the Municipality is not liable if acting in good faith. In response to the point on exemptions for organized recreational activities, those exemptions would be for activities on municipal or public park areas, arenas, etc. Additionally, these types of functions would have time restrictions as outlined in the draft by-law.

The original presentation to February 11th stated this By-law shall not apply to or prohibit: (a) the emission of sound, including fireworks, in connection with any organized traditional, festive, or religious activity celebrating: (i) Canada Day; (ii) New Year's Eve; (iii) recognized religious holidays; or (iv) recognized traditional community celebrations and the emission of sound in connection with calls to worship, ringing of bells at places of religious worship.

After extensive discussion, changes were suggested to state recreational activities on private property would not be exempt automatically, rather would be required to apply for an exemption.

First reading of the modified by-law draft will be held at council's meeting on February 25th.

RCMP Stunting Statistics for January, 2021

Each month the RCMP released statistics on stunting charges. In January 2021, Nova Scotia RCMP charged 15 drivers with stunting.

Of particular note during the month, on January 23 at 7:35 p.m., Kings District RCMP stopped a vehicle travelling 157 km/h in a 100 km/h zone on Hwy. 101 in Grand Pre. This was the second stunting offence for the driver which resulted in a fine of \$5,872.50. Other stunting charges in the province include, one driver travelling at 193 km/h in 110 km/h zone on Hwy. 103 in Shelburne; a driver travelling at 160 km/h in a 100 km/h

zone on Hwy. 101 near Yarmouth; a driver travelling 107 km/h in a 50 km/h zone on Hwy. 107 in Guys-

borough and a driver travelling 171 km/h in a 110 km/h zone on Hwy. 103 in Tantallon.

Stunting is defined as any person who operates a motor vehicle on a highway in a race, in a contest, while performing a stunt or on a bet or wager. Anyone driving a motor vehicle 50 Km/hr or more, over a speed limit, may be charged with stunting.

The fine for stunting in Nova Scotia is \$2,422.50 for a first offence, six points on your license and an immediate seven day roadside license suspension.



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Low Income Assistance Program

By Maurice Rees

Tom Taggart presented his opinion, which persuaded the remainder of Colchester councillors to approve changing the Low income assistance program to one reduction amount regardless of income level or number of people in the residence. The action was taken at council's committee meeting on February 11th.

A reduction of \$534.60 will be given to property owners listed in the low income categories. Council's previous policy (2019/2020) with three categories was: Single Less than \$26,406 income received a credit of \$321.00; two peo-

ple Less than \$34,877 received \$427.00 and 3 or more people less than \$41,852 would notice a reduction of \$533.00 on their property tax bills.

The annual income thresholds and rebates would have been adjusted by the CPI rate as used by the Property Valuation Services Corporation. The top category for 2021/2022 would have increased to: 3 or more people Less than \$41,978 income would receive a credit of \$534.60.

In speaking on the matter Taggart stated there is only one house and I think we should help the elderly more. I think for elderly we should

help them more. Councillor Cooper said Covid has changed things, as many people do not have friends and family around to do things, so the onus falls on them.

In reply to a question from Councillor MacKenzie, Scott Fraser said 750 rebate recipients would cost about \$75,000 more up from \$325,000 to approximately \$400,000. The motion passed 6/4. Taggart, who had to leave the meeting momentarily was not in attendance to vote and his vote was calculated as a negative vote.

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Help Nominate Tom Taggart

Fellow residents of Cumberland Colchester, I am asking for your support in becoming the Conservative Party Candidate to run for MP in the next Federal Election. I have spent my entire adult life living in and working to better the rural communities of our riding. As a Municipal Councillor of 12 years, I have a proven track record of working with community leaders and government officials in these efforts. Since announcing this last week, I have received tremendous support, I need your help to turn this support into a nomination victory. Only members of the Conservative Party of Canada can vote. I ask you to sign up and support me.

If you can help, please call or text 902-899-7768

or email electtomtaggart@gmail.com

Authorized by Official Agent for Tom Taggart

