

Present: Mayor Campbell
Councillor Garden
Councillor Land
Councillor Jonah
Councillor Coates
Councillor Elderkin - Virtual
Councillor Ward-Russell

Staff Present Sean Wallace – Chief Administrative Officer
Kim Beers – Director, Legislative Services/Clerk
Ian Barrett – Director, Operations
Jillian Hutchinson - Treasurer

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Campbell called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

IT WAS MOVED by *Councillor Elderkin* and **SECONDED** by *Councillor Jonah* THAT the agenda be adopted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED (unanimously)

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

None declared.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Chris Bowron – Subdividing property

Mr. Bowron presented a proposal to subdivide his land at 41 Foster Road in Alma. The intent is to create a new lot from existing property while maintaining access via an existing 20-foot-wide right-of-way.

Mr. Bowron requested Council for guidance on how to proceed with obtaining the necessary variance. Mr. Sean Wallace advised that he would contact Plan 360 and get back to him.

Sean McGrath

Mr. McGrath stated the importance of balanced governance that respects the rural contribution, especially ahead of budget deliberations. Mr. McGrath encouraged Council to maintain awareness of these dynamics in all decision-making processes.

Mr. McGrath passed Councillors documents for review.

Councillor Land asked Mr. McGrath if there was a specific ask, per Mr. McGrath, no he advised that residents in rural areas or LSDs are often overlooked due to their minimal reliance on municipal services. Mr. McGrath noted that while they contribute through separate taxes (e.g., for road maintenance), they have few service needs and thus may be "easily forgotten" in broader municipal planning. Mr. McGrath encouraged Council to reconsider this mindset and recognize the presence and contributions of low-need rural communities.

David Knickle

Mr. Knickle thanked Council for their efforts, especially in navigating the complexities following municipal amalgamation. Mr. Knickle focused on two key areas of concern ahead of upcoming budget deliberations:

1. Fair taxation and service equity for Local Service District (LSD) residents, and
2. Clarification around shared service costs, particularly related to public works assets.

INFORMATION ITEMS

The following reports were presented to Council as information items only:

[Development Activity Report – Plan 360 -July](#)

[Development Activity Report – Plan 360 - August](#)

[Maritime By-Law Enforcement Services Report July](#)

[Maritime By-Law Enforcement Services Report August](#)

Councillor Ward-Russell requested additional information pertaining to the Maritime By-Law Enforcement Services reports: Next steps and addresses.

Ms. Beers advised that specific addresses or locations cannot be disclosed in public reports due to privacy concerns. While general reference to actions (such as clean-ups) may be included, location details using PID numbers are only shared when a clean-up is recommended.

Mr. Wallace advised that SERSC is looking at By-Law enforcement as a shared service offering. More information to come.

E6 Financial Update

Mr. Wallace advised that he is meeting with e6 financial services tomorrow to discuss software options.

Councillor Elderkin addressed a concern raised by Mr. Knickle, who was unsure about the status of financial reporting. It was clarified that the full financial package received by Council is also

publicly available and uploaded to the municipal website. The intention was to ensure that both Council and the public have access to the same information.

Councillor Ward-Russell asked when the 2023 audit was submitted.

Mr. Wallace indicated approx. two weeks ago, and the standard processing time is typically 4–6 weeks, and the response from the auditor appears to be about one week behind schedule. Once the 2023 E6 is finalized, work on the 2024 financials will begin immediately. All necessary data for 2024 will already be prepared, allowing for a smooth transition. Weekly check-ins with the auditor are being conducted to monitor progress.

Councillor Ward-Russell advised that Council was firm last year about the importance of having finalized financials before beginning budget preparation. Without knowing the previous year's surplus or deficit, it is challenging to develop an accurate budget. **Councillor Ward-Russell** advised that having both 2023 and 2024 financials approved would support a more effective and informed 2026 budget process.

Mr. Wallace advised that the 2023 financial report will significantly aid the budgeting process but acknowledged that the 2024 report also represents a substantial portion of the financial picture needed for accurate planning.

Councillor Land asked whether the 2024 financial report will be completed by Christmas or if the E6 process might allow an earlier review of what is possible before then.

Mr. Wallace advised that a meeting with e6 is scheduled for tomorrow and will obtain a confirmed timeline. An update on the 2024 audit date will be provided after that meeting. Mr. Wallace advised that the internal budget preparations are currently underway, but without the finalized financial numbers, the process lacks key information. The provincial assessment numbers are expected to be received next week, which will assist in finalizing the budget.

Councillor Elderkin advised that she has confidence in the administration team's understanding of the urgency to complete the 2023 and 2024 financial audits and acknowledged the progress made so far and look forward to having these audits finalized, allowing the council to move forward with the 2026 budget planning.

Councillor Garden asked what the plans are to integrate new accounting software and when the new system would be set up.

Mr. Wallace advised that the software would serve as a comprehensive "one-stop shop," covering general ledger, human resources, asset management, and more. Training sessions will be provided to senior staff to ensure smooth adoption. Mr. Wallace advised he hopes this will be

in place in 2026.

[AMANB certification](#)

Mayor Campbell congratulated Ms. Hutchinson on receiving her Level 1 Certificate from the AMANB.

COUNCIL DIRECTION REQUESTS

[Riverside-Albert Utility Transfer - Operating Reserve to Operating Fund](#)

Councillor Ward-Russell asked about the timing why this is happening now.

Ms. Hutchinson advised that the delay was intentional, and acknowledged that it is becoming increasingly necessary, so preparations are being made accordingly.

[Application for Financing](#)

[Travel and Expense Policy for Elected Officials](#)

Councillor Garden asked staff to explain why the mayor is required to approve expenses instead of staff, seeking to better understand the rationale behind this approval procedure.

Ms. Beers advised that the mayor functions similarly to a supervisor who approves expenses. Since council reports to the mayor, it is appropriate for the mayor to have the authority to approve council expenses, maintaining proper oversight and authority structure.

Councillor Garden suggested revising the wording for expense claims from "municipal business" to "representing the municipality" to better encompass day-to-day expenses such as mileage or attending community events. This change would more accurately reflect the smaller, routine costs incurred in the role of a councilor.

Councillor Ward-Russell inquired whether the expense policy under discussion was initiated by the council itself.

Ms. Beers advised that a Travel and Expense Policy for elected officials is a standard policy.

Councillor Ward-Russell advised that a council approved motion was made in 2023 to reimburse mileage, and it is functioning effectively.

Councillor Ward-Russell expressed concern about the practicality of the policy requiring prior approval from the mayor for expenses, how to handle routine or smaller items. **Councillor Ward-**

Russell suggested the process may need clearer guidelines to distinguish between minor and major expenditures.

Councillor Ward-Russell the current use of national joint federal rates for mileage, noting inconsistencies where only mileage rates are adopted but meal rates differ significantly.

Councillor Ward-Russell suggested it would be clearer and more consistent to adopt provincial rates entirely, as these are more appropriate and standardized across municipalities.

Mayor Campbell advised that the current meal allowance rates are too low, noting that it is challenging to cover typical dining costs, such as meals in hotel restaurants.

Councillor Land asked about the meaning of "lowest reasonable cost" as the basis for lodging.

Mayor Campbell advised that judgment should be used to ensure that costs are comparable and not unreasonably far away just to save a small amount (e.g., \$20). The focus is on practicality and fairness.

Councillor Elderkin asked whether the current policy requiring monthly expense reporting could be adjusted to a quarterly basis.

Ms. Beers agreed to review internally and provide an update at the next regular meeting.

Councillor Elderkin asked how the reported expenses will be communicated to taxpayers, whether the expenses will continue to be presented as a lump sum or if they will be broken down and categorized by wards for greater transparency.

Ms. Beers advised that currently, expenditures are reported by ward in the budget formats. In the ideal scenario, once audits are completed, an annual general report will be published providing detailed breakdowns of attendance at meetings and associated expenses, enhancing transparency for taxpayers.

Councillor Elderkin advised that from a councilor's perspective, maintaining transparency regarding expenses and their purposes is important to ensure accountability and public trust.

Councillor Ward-Russell suggested changing the wording in section 3.5 regarding cell phones from "council shall fix" to "council may fix," reflecting the past agreement that council members are responsible for their own cell phones.

Councillor Jonah raised a concern about the current hospitality section requiring mayoral approval for any expense over \$50, which limits informal business opportunities such as taking someone out for a meal. The suggestion was made to consider a small annual hospitality budget, like the Village of Hillsborough's \$350 yearly allowance, to enable reasonable business hospitality without the need for constant approval.

Mr. Wallace advised that the \$50 hospitality rate is quite low and recommended creating a more flexible spending limit that can be adapted based on the situation and potential benefits.

[Maritime By-Law Services 2026 Contract](#)

Councillor Garden asked whether the contracted services, originally focused on unsightly and/or dangerous premises would also cover the inspection, documentation, and enforcement of other municipal bylaws.

Ms. Beers clarified that expanding the bylaw enforcement services to include additional municipal bylaws beyond unsightly and/or dangerous premises is possible, but it would require increasing the contracted hours, potentially from 16 to 24 or even 36 hours per week, to accommodate the broader scope.

Mayor Campbell advised that there are efforts to collaborate with other municipalities, on a shared bylaw enforcement model through the Southeast Regional Service Commission. The goal is to reduce costs by pooling resources with Maritime Bylaw Enforcement. This flexible model would allow municipalities to adjust scheduled days as needed. While the current labor contract expires December 31, the group is exploring options to either renew or restructure the agreement as part of this broader shared services initiative.

Councillor Ward-Russell expressed the need to delay committing to any bylaw enforcement contracts for 2026 until budget discussions are complete. While acknowledging that contractors are seeking early commitments, potential additional funds, and ongoing negotiations with the Southeast Regional Service Commission must be considered first. The distinction between needs and wants was highlighted, and the current 16-hour service level was noted. Further analysis is required to evaluate the cost and benefits of expanding hours versus pursuing a shared services model.

Mr. Wallace added that one of the goals is to gather solid figures ahead of budget planning to reduce reliance on estimates. Since a contract with the bylaw enforcement provider is anticipated for the new year, having accurate cost projections now will support more precise pre-budget preparation and decision-making.

[PMHP 2028-2030 Plan](#)

Councillor Ward-Russell asked regarding the cost and effectiveness of updates made through our engineering partner Englobe. The question focused on whether past recommendations and priorities set by council (e.g., from the 2024 plan and upcoming 2025 plan) are being actively implemented, or if they are simply being postponed year after year. There was concern that proposed work might just be recorded without being acted upon, and that the final decisions may rest with the province, rather than reflecting council's input.

Mr. Barrett advised that yes, the province decides which municipal projects receive funding. Currently, the municipality offers a 5% contribution on applications, but increasing this to 10% might improve the chances of approval, though it would mean higher costs locally. While the province is listening, project prioritization remains unclear. Going forward, there is an intent to focus more on detailed asset management to better demonstrate project urgency. It is noted that delayed projects only worsen over time, reinforcing the need for timely support and clearer funding applications.

Councillor Ward-Russell asked what it is costing us to prepare this document.

Mr. Barrett advised he will have to get back to her with that information.

Councillor Jonah exited the meeting at 5:22 pm and returned at 5:25 pm.

Mr. Wallace advised that a government relations program is being considered to improve lobbying efforts for priority projects. The idea is to develop a targeted list of projects that require advocacy. It's noted that other New Brunswick communities have seen success by ensuring their mayors maintain direct engagement with key ministers. This approach is now being pursued to keep the municipality front and center in the minds of decision-makers and improve the chances of project funding and approval.

ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

Refer to the following reports:

[Chief Administrative Officer](#)

Councillor Ward-Russell thanked Mr. Wallace for the regular Friday reports and thanked staff for arranging an upcoming meeting with the RCMP, noting it is important to understand their presence in the community given the significant cost of their services. Additionally, **Councillor Ward-Russell** commented on the National Firefighters Memorial Day, suggesting that both volunteer and full-time firefighters (e.g., in Riverview) be acknowledged, not just volunteers.

Councillor Garden asked about the status of the Level Two Water Operator job posting, whether the position is still necessary. It was noted that previously, there were three separate operators for water and wastewater across three utilities.

Mr. Wallace advised that the Level Two Water Operator posting has expired and initially identified one candidate who chose to remain in their current role. However, an upcoming proposal will be presented to Council outlining a long-term strategy for managing the water systems. This plan focuses on sustainability and securing a steady pipeline of water operators for decades to come. The information will be shared soon and is expected to be very well received.

Councillor Garden suggests that staff and operations review the security of the water supply sites, such as implementing gated access or improved locking mechanisms, to prevent unauthorized access.

Mr. Wallace advised that that water security has already been reviewed, and improvements are planned. The budget proposal will include funding for enhanced security measures like internet-connected cameras to monitor water facilities.

[Director, Legislative Services](#)

Councillor Ward-Russell asked why the gateway sign has been delayed.

Ms. Beers advised due to staff changes, originally managed by one person who left, and now a new staff member has taken over. The goal is to have it installed before winter. Administration will request a timeline for completion.

Councillor Ward-Russell raised concerns about the use of Hillsborough Fire Department fundraising funds for the purchase of a rescue truck. Councillor Ward-Russell advised that a large purchase should have come from the department's budget and not fundraising dollars.

Councillor Jonah advised that the previous vehicle (number 9 truck), was also purchased by the Hillsborough Fire Department using fundraising funds. They managed to purchase themselves to upgrade to a better vehicle.

Councillor Elderkin expressed appreciation for the Hillsborough Fire Department's successful acquisition of the truck, highlighting their hard work in fundraising and the positive community impact when funds visibly return as assets. It was noted that while the council maintains these assets, the community supports fundraising because they see tangible benefits. A concern was raised about the council's role in being notified about such purchases, whether that should happen before or after the fact, since the assets eventually become council property.

Mr. Wallace clarified that the current by-law states the fire department reports directly to council, and the clerk is only mentioned as the recipient of budget estimates from the chiefs. The CAO is not currently included in the bylaw. There is a 2007 policy addressing some interaction, but bylaws take precedence over policies. To improve collaboration and communication between the fire department and council (including the CAO and treasurer), a bylaw rewrite would be necessary.

Councillor Elderkin acknowledged that the fire department by-law and related policies have not been updated for some time, partly due to other priorities. While not urgent, there is an importance of clarifying and understanding council's role and involvement with the three active

volunteer firefighter groups moving forward.

Director of Operations

Mr. Barrett provided an update to his report: Snow Blower: The new snow blower is at the Moncton dealer for a final check and will be delivered before the first snowfall.

Pool Season: It was a highly successful year with significantly more swimming lessons delivered, thanks to having four fully qualified lifeguards. Their dedication made a big difference, and discussions are underway about creating a pipeline through the school to ensure lifeguard availability in the future.

Riverside-Albert Water Treatment Plant: Chlorine panel upgrades were completed last week and are operational, with adjustments underway. The remaining ventilation and flooring work should be completed by the end of October.

Greensboro Lagoon Project: A public meeting is being scheduled after addressing comments on the drawings. Coordination is now underway with confirmation received just this evening.

Alma Gazebo: The old gazebo has been removed, and work is progressing on the replacement. Ground preparation is complete, and the slab is scheduled to be poured on September 26, with precautions planned to protect the fresh concrete.

Councillor Land asked for an update of the Hillsborough Water Exploration project and if there is a timeline of completion.

Mr. Barrett advised that a renewed proposal has been received covering the remaining steps of the project, with amended prices included. The earlier requirements, such as the EIA letter and hydrological surveys, are nearly complete. The updated proposal will be brought to Council for approval, and negotiations with the landowner are ongoing and progressing well. Discussions with the engineers confirm that the EIA process is lengthy, involving extensive back-and-forth with government departments. Although it appears stalled, this is a normal stage of the process. Once the necessary approvals are secured and the landowner agreement is finalized, the project will be ready to proceed.

Mr. Wallace added that they had met with the landowners, and they agreed to all the stipulations. So, it is just a matter of signing a contract.

Mr. Barrett advised that the test well drilling is anticipated to begin early next year.

Councillor Garden asked whether the Greensboro lagoon project would be completed before the Municipality assumes responsibility for the infrastructure. This includes holding public meetings and addressing rate adjustments, which are expected to increase significantly from the current \$50 per year. Concerns were expressed about the Municipality taking over without these issues being resolved, to avoid inheriting potential challenges.

Mr. Barrett advised that a rate study is underway to determine sustainable utility fees. The goal is to set rates that prevent the need for sudden increases or financial shortfalls. With the new asset, costs and lifespan are known, allowing expenses for repairs and replacement to be built into the budget from the outset, ensuring long-term financial stability.

Councillor Jonah asked for information regarding an email received over the weekend that reported that Hillsborough is currently on a backup water system due to low levels, with the main well shut off.

Mr. Barrett advised that this was the first time hearing this. While water levels are naturally lower at this time of year compared to periods of heavier rainfall, the municipality remains in a good position compared to last year. Some variability is occurring due to seasonal drawdown, but no significant issues have been identified.

Mr. Wallace advised that follow-up on the backup water system email confirmed the situation was not serious. A 35-minute system flush was carried out, after which everything returned to normal. The issue was not urgent or detrimental.

Councillor Land advised he has received calls from residents about a new business in town and whether its water usage is being properly monitored to track flow levels.

Mr. Barrett advised yes, the water usage is being monitored and remains below the agreed limit. The owner has been cooperative, already reducing production slightly to support water levels. They have committed further cutbacks if requested, ensuring the municipality will not need to restrict their operations.

Councillor Land asked how often staff check the usage.

Mr. Barrett advised that an update was missed last week, but the intent is to provide these updates on a weekly basis going forward.

Mayor Campbell asked how long Fundy National Park will be providing water to Alma.

Mr. Barrett advised that the current agreement runs until the end of October. The agreement was extended last year due to delays, and again this year. The expanded area has been critical in

supporting ongoing water supply, though it has caused reduced water pressure in some homes. These impacts are being monitored and managed.

Mayor Campbell advised that during a visit to the Albert County exhibition grounds, it was noted that organizers had already arranged water totes on site to support conservation efforts. Their proactive measures were commended, especially given the high usage associated with serving approximately 800 meals on Saturday. Appreciation was expressed for their responsible approach and contribution as good community partners.

Councillor Ward-Russell expressed appreciation to the Director of Operations for following up on the Greensboro Lagoon issue. Residents have been seeking answers for some time, and it was noted that they will be reassured to hear that a public meeting is being planned.

[Treasurer Report](#)

[Alma Utility](#)

[Hillsborough Utility](#)

[Riverside-Albert Utility](#)

[Fundy Albert General Operating](#)

Councillor Ward-Russell asked regarding a report table, a possible error where two columns were both labeled “91 days plus” for June 2025. Clarification was sought as to whether one of the columns should instead be marked “August 2025.”

Ms. Hutchinson advised yes, it should be the last column.

Councillor Garden raised concern about significant utility arrears: over \$100,000 for the Alma utility and over \$200,000 for the Hillsborough utility. While staff currently make phone calls and send letters, questions were asked about whether different processes or stronger measures are needed to recover these funds. The outstanding amounts pose a major financial impact, especially since borrowing is not an option and utilities must fund ongoing repairs, maintenance, and projects.

Ms. Hutchinson clarified that the arrears columns in the report **are not cumulative**, but reflect time-based categories (e.g., 61–90 days, 91+ days). The figures show changes month to month, with this case covering two months due to no August committee meeting. The only enforcement option available is disconnection after proper notice, as utility charges remain tied to the property with an automatic lien. Residents often wait until the end of the quarter to pay, which also affects the numbers.

Councillor Ward-Russell asked what the collections are.

Ms. Hutchinson clarified that the “collections” figures in the report represent accounts either sent to collections or disconnected. Even when service is disconnected, charges continue to accrue quarterly, so balances keep accumulating until paid.

Councillor Ward-Russell asked what the process is for disconnecting services.

Ms. Hutchinson advised that the process for overdue utility accounts involves sending a warning after two unpaid quarters. If there is no response by the deadline, a disconnection notice is issued, and service is shut off. A payment arrangement form is also available for residents, clearly stating that failure to follow the agreed plan will result in disconnecting without further notice.

Councillor Land exited the meeting at 6:04 pm and returned at 6:08 pm

MAYOR AND COUNCILLOR STATEMENTS AND INQUIRIES

Councillor Garden advised that Fundy National Park reported a successful 2025 summer season despite fire bans and trail closures. From May–August, the park welcomed over 230,800 visitors, a 5% increase from 2024. Camping saw growth, with front-country use up 5% and backcountry up nearly 8%. Visitor center contacts rose by 20%, and events like the annual Fundy Star Party drew strong participation.

The Canada Strong Pass program ended September 2, with regular entry and camping fees reinstated. Several facilities closed for the season, while fall programming continues with stargazing, wildlife features, and cultural exhibitions until mid-October. Seasonal highlights also include the Fundy 75 for 75 Challenge and Thanksgiving weekend events.

Additionally, appreciation was expressed for the Albert County Exhibition, recognizing its long history and the efforts of directors and volunteers in making the event a success.

Councillor Jonah has nothing to report.

Councillor Coates advised he has concerns about traffic and signage issues. At Salem Road near the covered bridge, an NB Power truck was seen using a route unsuitable for heavy vehicles, highlighting the need for proper signage restricting trucks over 10 tons. Additionally, roadwork on the main route to Alma has caused confusion, with increased traffic, trucks, trailers, and motorhomes, being redirected through Osburn Corner. Residents have requested clearer signage to prevent misdirection.

Councillor Ward-Russell attended a recent Regional Service Commission meeting, the 2026 budget was approved. Discussions included potential shared service partnerships between municipalities in areas such as water management, enforcement services and engineering.

Concerns were raised about the lack of approved audits for 2023 and 2024 while moving ahead with the 2026 budget, emphasizing the need for timely audits. It was also suggested that the municipality consider a zero-tax rate increase, given residents have already faced significant

property assessment increases since 2023.

Additional financial questions were flagged for follow-up, including the true cost of student employment versus grant funding received, and whether the installation of a ductless heat pump at the Visitor Information Center, approved in the January 2025 budget, has been completed.

Ms. Beers confirmed that the ductless heat pump for the Visitor Information Center has not been installed. Due to not receiving funding for VIC students this year, the choice was made to hire two part-time staff in order to keep the center open. Also, an unbudgeted bathroom repair was also completed. Plans are to pursue additional student funding or budget adjustments next year.

Councillor Ward-Russell advised that if Council approved and budgeted for the Visitor Information Center heat pump, staff should have reported back when plans changed. The funds were redirected to student staffing instead, and Council should be informed when such adjustments occur.

Councillor Land asked whether there is money left in the budget to install a heat pump at the Visitor Information Centre this year.

Ms. Hutchinson will look at the projections and Mr. Barrett advised that NB Power has conducted walkthroughs, including at the Visitor Information Center. They will be providing a list of potential upgrades that may qualify for assistance programs.

Councillor Land advised the Golf Club Roadwork is progressing well, with significant excavation already underway. A question was raised about Legion Street regarding the patch over the water line trench, specifically whether it was an additional cost and how much the municipality paid for it.

Mr. Barrett advised that the total project cost came in higher than expected due to unforeseen issues that required digging a larger section of road than originally planned, resulting in increased expenses.

Councillor Land advised that one of the project quotes included asphalt, but the final contract did not reflect this item.

Mr. Barrett acknowledged that the procurement processes need to be tightened. Responsibility was accepted for earlier oversights, noting it was one of the first projects handled, and improvements have been made through experience over the past year.

Councillor Land advised that the Albert County Exhibition had strong participation this year, with higher numbers across the board. Directors and volunteers were commended for their

efforts, with hopes that the event was financially successful.

Councillor Elderkin provided her report:

Volunteer Fire Departments – Appreciation was expressed for the dedication, training, and responsiveness of local volunteer firefighters, noting their sacrifice and vital role in community safety.

Albert County Exhibition – Strong attendance and enthusiasm this year were highlighted. The event, running continuously for 112 years, was commended along with the leadership of Terry Steeves and the many volunteers involved.

Public Safety – At a meeting with provincial ministers, it was noted that municipalities across NB share similar challenges, particularly with policing presence. Fundy Albert has benefited from strong responses during major incidents.

Roadwork – Recognition was given to the significant provincial roadwork investments in the municipality this year. While construction causes daily inconvenience, it is positive to see funds being spent locally.

Tourism – The Albert County Tourism Association is already preparing for Christmas in the Country (Dec. 6–7) after record-breaking attendance last year. Plans include improving VIC presence in Alma, hosting member workshops, and exploring a Barn Quilt Trail project in partnership with the museum. Concerns were raised that Hillsborough's Artisan Village was less active this year, with a call to strengthen promotion and vendor participation for next year.

Public Works – Thanks were extended to Ian and the public works team for their strong maintenance efforts over the summer. While lawn mowing was less frequent, flower displays were beautiful, with improved watering methods noted and appreciated by residents.

Mayor Campbell advised that he and **Councillor Elderkin** participated in the Albert County Exhibition parade, continuing a long-standing tradition. The municipality worked with the food bank to support its relocation into the Riverside Albert recreation center, where it is now settled. Meetings have been held with the Hillsborough Railway Museum regarding their trackway lease, with discussions ongoing. At the Southeast Regional Service Commission, efforts on shared services continue, with hopes of achieving cost savings. Finally, appreciation was expressed for the past 21 days of working with Sean Wallace.

PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND INQUIRIES

Mr. Sean McGrath advised that communities like Coverdale and other LSDs have been disproportionately impacted since amalgamation, and this needs stronger recognition during budget deliberations. Concerns remain about shared services allocations and the importance of having accurate financials for 2023–2024 finalized before making budget decisions. In the past, council lacked clarity on whether finances showed a surplus or deficit, which limited informed decision-making. Moving forward, timely financials are essential to ensure proper debate and fair rate-setting.

CLOSED SESSION

None

ADJOURNMENT

IT WAS MOVED by ***Councillor Land*** **THAT** the meeting be adjourned at 6:30 pm.

Mayor

Clerk