

Strategic Planning Meeting

May 8, 2026

10:00 am

Minutes

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

Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Amalfa at 10:02 a.m.

Silence of Electronic Devices

All electronic devices were silenced at this time.

Approval of Agenda

05-08-26-01

It was duly moved and seconded that Council approve the agenda for the Strategic Planning Meeting for May 8, 2026. Motion Passed.

1. Opening and Session Overview

- Purpose of the session

The purpose of this strategic planning session is to build a shared understanding of Lockeport's current financial, infrastructure, and staffing realities, and to begin identifying the criteria Council will use to evaluate future governance options."

- Review of meeting outcomes

2. Current State Overview

- Financial outlook

Mayor Amalfa showed the actual Revenues and Expenditures from 2022 – 2025 and the budget for 2026. He also reviewed projections for 2027 – 2030. Councillor Malik stated that we need to increase the revenues. Councillor A. Chetwynd suggested selling properties that can not be used for revenue. Deputy Mayor Hillen stated the current model of taxes is not working as it is now. Deputy Mayor Hillen also asked if what is in the current 5 – year Capital Plan needs to be completed by 2027. Councillor Malik pointed out that this Council has worked on projects from this report and that a Capital Plan may be needed as a wish list for the Town.

- Infrastructure and asset overview
 - There was a discussion regarding the Annex building at the high school.
 - There have been no decisions made yet on what will take place at Roods Head Park, but it is possible that Make Your Move staff may work on trail clean ups.
 - Council reviewed the Lockeport Municipal Asset Priority Overview document and the following motion was made:

05-07-26-02

It was duly moved and seconded that Council direct staff to identify what Town of Lockeport properties could be used to consolidate services in, and any that could be sold because of this. Motion Passed

- Staffing capacity and organizational considerations

Ms. Harding went over her report stating that two employees of the Town are at retirement age and one employee will be eligible within three years.

3. Council Discussion: What Matters Most

- Identification of priorities and non-negotiables

Deputy Mayor Hillen talked about the difference between amalgamation and dissolution and what that means for the Town. If the Town were to dissolve, Council or the residents of the Town would not have a say in anything that happens. Any decisions from there would be made by the Province of Nova Scotia and the Nova Scotia Utility Review Board.

Deputy Mayor Hillen also talked about tax rates and the fact that everyone is getting the same services but not paying the same amount because of the way the CAP works. Deputy Mayor Hillen suggested that user fees might correct this problem.

Councillor K. Chetwynd stated that as long as, if the Town did go to a user fee model, when the taxes get decreased, that the user fees are consistent with what taxpayers are paying now, to start and then gradually the user fees can increase.

Councillor K. Chetwynd also stated that his non-negotiables are the MFR and Sewer, Councillor K. Chetwynd said that the Volunteer Fire Department in Lockeport would remain here as it is bigger than Little Harbour and Jordan's Fire Department and our Department is centralized.

Councillor Malik would like appropriate representation at the table for Amalgamation, and she also sees a gap in the current tax model. Councillor Malik stated her non-negotiables are the MFR and the schools.

Councillor A. Chetwynd stated that slight increases in user fees may work. Also, the user fees could go into a reserve account to pay for the upkeep of those services. Cost of everything is rising.

- Key considerations for future governance decisions

Council feels it would be essential to keep Committees intact as one of the main components for the Town's identity, as well as keeping the Visitor Information Centre/Museum.

4. Next Steps and Direction

- Identification of information gaps
- Next steps and responsibilities

The next steps are to look at what the Town can sell, different models for taxes/user fees and ways to create revenue for the Town.

05-08-26-03

There being no further business, it was duly moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Time 11:38 a.m. Motion Passed.

Mayor Derek Amalfa

Town Clerk/Treasurer June Harding