

MINUTES OF MEETING

GRAND FALLS-WINDSOR TOWN COUNCIL

HELD IN THE TOWN HALL

7:00 P.M., TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2023

PRESENT: Mayor: Barry Manuel  
Deputy Mayor: Mike Browne  
Councillors: Amy Coady, Holly Dwyer, Bob Hiscock,  
Andrew Little, Dave Noel  
Staff: Darren Finn, Chief Administrative Officer  
Steve Gosse, Director of Corporate Services\Town  
Clerk  
Robyn Hannaford, Communications Officer

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. and asked for any errors or omissions to the Minutes of Meeting #585 of Tuesday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Motion  
Coady\Hiscock

Be it resolved that the Minutes of Meeting #585 of Tuesday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023 would be adopted as circulated. This motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

None

DISBURSEMENT REPORT

Councillor Dwyer presented the Disbursement Report in the amount of \$1,181,212.69.

Motion

Dwyer\Little

Be it resolved that the Disbursement Report in the amount of \$1,181,212.69 would be received as presented. This motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

### COMMITTEE REPORT

#### Committee of the Whole

The following report was presented by Deputy Mayor Browne.

#### Grand Falls-Windsor Healthcare Coalition Terms of Reference & Committee Appointments

The Committee reviewed an updated draft of the Grand Falls-Windsor Healthcare Coalition's Terms of Reference for 2024 and recommends it be supported by Council.

As well, the Committee recommends that Council confirm the appointments of Cyril Farrell, Reg Hamilton, Denise Spencer, Marg Power, and Ellen Foley as Grand Falls-Windsor Healthcare Coalition Members and that staff write letters of confirmation on behalf of Council.

#### 2024-2025 Council Meeting Schedule

The Committee reviewed a proposed 2024-2025 Meeting Schedule for Council.

The Committee recommends that staff make the changes discussed and the schedule be adopted.

#### Community Services

The Committee reviewed Festival Reports from 2023. The cost of the Salmon Festival was \$50,135, net of revenue generated; the cost of the Culinary Festival was \$3,553, net of the revenue generated; and the Poutine Festival earned \$5,227, net of expenses incurred.

The financial summary for all these Festivals were considered to be on budget and Council was pleased with the results.

### Rezoning Request – 222 Grenfell Heights

The Committee reviewed submissions from residents opposed to the rezoning of 222 Grenfell Heights to allow a third apartment in vacant commercial space. The request is to change the zone from Commercial Neighborhood to RM-1 (Residential Low & Medium Density Multi-Unit Residential) zone.

The Committee recommends the rezoning request process proceed.

### Fire Department Incident Summary

The Committee reviewed the Fire Department Incident Report for the period ending November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The report summarized one hundred and sixty-five (165) incident responses.

The Committee members were pleased with the detailed Incident Summary Report and acknowledged that it reflects a busy year for the Fire Department. Council extends its thanks and appreciation for the dedication and professionalism shown by all members of the Fire Department.

### Exploits Search and Rescue Team Donation Request

The Committee reviewed correspondence from Exploits Search and Rescue soliciting a donation towards the purchase of a new vehicle that will be used primarily for ice rescue and equipment transport.

The Committee is very much interested in supporting this request and recommends that staff contact Exploits Search and Rescue leadership to discuss their financial need and report back to the Committee.

### Grand Falls House Foundation

The Committee reviewed correspondence from the Grand Falls House Foundation requesting financial support towards the redevelopment of the Grand Falls House in 2024.

The Committee recommends that the requests be considered during the budget process and that staff follow up with the Foundation Executive after that time.

### Disbursement Report

The Committee reviewed the Disbursement Report for the period ending December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, in the amount of \$1,181,212.69.

The Committee recommends this report be received by Council.

### Labour Report

The Committee reviewed the Labour Report for the period ending week forty-eight (48) showing a current surplus of \$300,690 from within a total budget of \$3,740,719.

The Committee thanked staff for their responsible management of the labour budget and recommended that management continue to monitor it as the year ends in three (3) weeks.

### Taxation Receivables Analysis

The Committee reviewed the Taxation Receivables Analysis Report for the period ending November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Total current receivables are \$2,638,987 in comparison to \$2,544,618 as the same period in 2022. This is an increase of \$94,369.

The Committee recommends that staff continue with their efforts to collect receivables and continue to report progress to the Committee.

### Water Quality Report

The Committee hosted staff from Allnorth Consultants Ltd. to discuss concern about discolored water reports from some residential areas in Grand Falls-Windsor. Allnorth have been reviewing areas identified by staff and consider themselves approximately seventy percent (70%) complete in their work and analysis.

The Committee expects a final report in the first quarter of 2024 and will meet again with Allnorth Consultants Ltd. at that time.

### Budget – 2024

The Committee discussed Budget requirements for 2024 and recommends staff make final changes to the budget based on discussions and finalize the budget to be presented at the Council meeting on December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

I move the recommendations and report of this Committee.

Motion

Browne\Dwyer

Be it resolved that these recommendations and report would be adopted as circulated. This motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

Councillor Coady advised the meeting with the consultants that provided the water quality results was very informative, they provided us with improvement recommendations and possible suggestions that may improve discoloured water down the road. They have been working closely with our Water and Sewer Supervisor and Public Works Manager who has been a tremendous help, because not only is discoloured water stressful for residents, but it is also for staff trying to fix the problem and figure out the issue. We realize residents are frustrated, but we are committed to finding resolutions and solutions to the problem.

Mayor Manuel wanted to thank the Healthcare Coalition for all the work they have done, and for deciding to return to the Committee for another year. He thanked the Chair of the Committee for all the hard work he has done and the commitment he has. We budget \$50,000 for the Salmon Festival each year and we have for the past several years hit that target so great job by all staff involved. He also wanted to say Merry Christmas to the Fire Department and Exploits Search and Rescue who we rely so heavily on, especially in emergency situations.

### NOTICE OF MOTION

Councillor Dwyer made a motion to remove the grant proposed by Corduroy Brook Enhancement Association from the 2024 Budget.

Motion

Dwyer\Little

Be it resolved that the grant proposed by Corduroy Brook Enhancement Association be removed and voted on separately. This motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

Councillor Dwyer made a motion to remove the Grand Falls Golf Club grant from the 2024 Budget.

Motion

Dwyer\Coady

Be it resolved that the grant proposed by the Grand Falls Golf Club be removed and voted on separately. This motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

Mayor Manuel excused himself from the meeting at this time due to a perceived conflict of interest.

Councillor Dwyer moved that the grant proposed by Corduroy Brook Enhancement Association during Budget deliberations in the amount of \$40,000 be approved for 2024.

Motion

Dwyer\Hiscock

Be it resolved that the grant proposed by the Corduroy Brook Enhancement Association be approved as presented. This motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

Mayor Manuel returned to the meeting at this time.

Deputy Mayor Browne excused himself from the meeting at this time due to a perceived conflict of interest.

Councillor Dwyer moved that the grant proposed by Grand Falls Golf Club during Budget deliberations in the amount of \$27,000 be approved for 2024.

Motion

Dwyer\Little

Be it resolved that the grant proposed by the Grand Falls Golf Club be approved as presented. This motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

Councillor Dwyer noted for clarification \$25,000 is for Operating Grant and \$2,000 is for the Junior Golf Program.

Deputy Mayor Browne returned to the meeting at this time.

### BUDGET – 2024

Councillor Dwyer presented the 2024 Budget: -

As Chair of the Corporate Services Committee, it is my pleasure to present the 2024 Municipal Operating Budget for the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor.

The late Mr. Gordon Pinsent once said that the qualities and values of an earlier time are still deep within the people of Grand Falls-Windsor. Those values and qualities are kept front of mind for Councillors and staff of the Town when providing municipal services to our residents and businesses. As Councillors, we take pride in representing you, the residents, and ensuring you have a voice. Our staff take great pride in the work they complete, and it is evident in the quality of

services delivered. These services include snow clearing, garbage collection, fire and enforcement protection, road maintenance, and water and sewer services. Our Community Services Department continues to plan inclusive events for our citizens to enjoy and feel connected. Your quality of life is a measure of our success; here, citizens and visitors of all ages and background can access beautifully maintained parks, playgrounds, and trails and have access to many recreation amenities, both indoor and outdoor. These are just some of the reasons Grand Falls-Windsor is the community of choice for citizens and prospective residents. The inflationary pressures being by all citizens also have an impact on the services provided to the residents and businesses of Grand Falls-Windsor. Completing the same amount of work as prior years, or running the same events, costs more money, which puts pressure on our Budget. Council continues to do their best to limit the taxation burden for residents, while still trying to balance the need for growth and Capital investment.

With that said, there will be no change to the Residential or Commercial Property Tax Mil Rates in 2024. We have scrutinized our Budget to ensure it contains only the expenses necessary to provide the level of service that the residents of this Town have come to expect and deserve. What remains in the Budget is the result of hours of deliberation which has led to a fiscally responsible Budget. Some taxpayers may still see a higher bill in 2024 caused by assessments of properties in Grand Falls-Windsor increasing by an average of about seven percent (7%); this additional revenue was factored into the decision to leave the mil rates the same for 2024.

### Council Priorities

#### Housing and Land Development

An emerging critical issue facing communities throughout the country is a lack of housing, and a lack of affordable housing. Here in this community, we are not immune to this issue, and we will work within our municipal scope to alleviate housing concerns. Staff have already been meeting with local developers about expansion and how the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor can help. We have recently submitted an application to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation for a Housing Accelerator Fund; our application is for funding that is intended to stimulate an addition two hundred and eighty (280) living units in several areas of Town. This funding will allow Grand Falls-Windsor to further plan and invest in infrastructure as a first step for these local developments.

With Marathon Gold starting their operations, and other future possible developments on the horizon, such as wind energy projects, local housing needs will continue to grow, particularly in Grand Falls-Windsor, the regional hub.

With funding in place, the Town can help stimulate the right type of construction with proper planning and long-term goals in mind. It will create opportunities for affordable housing and some higher density living in addition to the traditional single-family dwellings.

### Accessibility

In 2024, accessibility will be a focus of Council. We are committed to our role in creating an accessible community and removing barriers for everyone, especially those with perceived disabilities, whether those needs are functional, technical, or emotional. Comprehensive planning and community engagement will be paramount to ensure our facilities and events provided equitable access to everyone, promotion usability and inclusivity.

Through the implementation of an Accessibility Plan Advisory Committee, Council intends to undertake measures that align with the Province's recent Accessibility Act, and work to better understand challenges and meet the needs that exist within our community. As accessibility legislation continues to grow and evolve, the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor will remain vigilant in using high-quality tools and consulting to improve community accessibility and to strive for a barrier-free environment for citizens. Some of the accessibility measures already in place to-date include accessible equipment in our playgrounds, designated parking for those with disabilities at Town facilities, accessible seating in the Joe Byrne Memorial Stadium, a new notification platform with accessibility features, the PRIDE crosswalk on High Street, and the Seven Feathers crosswalk next to the Demasduit Regional Museum, among many others.

In the upcoming year, we have budgeted \$60,000 for a wheelchair lift for the Town Hall, and \$50,000 for an accessible kayak launch at Gorge Park. We also plan to add a ramp to the gazebo in Gorge Park and upgrade the paved walkway at Church Road Park to accommodate citizens with mobility issues.

### Water Infrastructure

In 2024, the Town will continue to upgrade our water distribution system and further evaluate the need for improvements at the Water Treatment Plant. Aging water infrastructure is widely known as the most common water challenge faced by Newfoundland communities, and our municipal water infrastructure is no different, therefore we have an ongoing need for significant investment and



improvement. We understand that residents expect clean drinking water, and it is one of Council's top priorities to ensure we meet that expectation. We have recently hired a consultant to help evaluate some areas with water distribution issues and we will continue to work with them in 2024 to ensure solutions are found and the corresponding work planned. We have budgeted Capital Fund towards water and sewer projects totaling \$4.6 million that will help improve infrastructure in 2024. As the administrator for the Water Supply and Water Treatment Plant, the Town ensures it has experienced and skilled Water Treatment Operators, whose primary responsibility is to produce quality water that meets all the Canadian Drinking Water Standards. Additionally, we are continually reengaged with the Exploits Regional Water Supply Committee, which is comprised of representatives from four (4) other Exploits Region communities, planning future Capital investments that will be needed at the Water Treatment Plant.

### Facilities and Wellness

Council recognizes that social wellness initiatives bring people together in a positive way and create community among citizens. In 2024, we plan to seek the Government's support and to start the trails portion of Phase II of the Gorge Park development which will offer residents and tourists another option to experience the great outdoors of Central Newfoundland. Phase II will continue over the next five (5) years to include a suspension bridge across the Exploits River and a cantilevered lookout off one of the trails.

Council also continues to evaluate the option of a new Community Centre and have allocated funds towards the design of detailed specifications. Final approval on the Centre will still depend on funding opportunities from the Government and other stakeholders' input, which will take place in 2024.

Finally, we continue to support the Grand Falls-Windsor Community Healthcare Coalition Committee who continue to study, research, and investigate the plans from the Health Accord and the Provincial Government. The Committee works tirelessly to advocate for the healthcare needs of our citizens and continues to ensure that Grand Falls-Windsor remains at the forefront of discussion related to healthcare.

### Revenue

Revenue for 2024 will total \$22.2 million: as always, the majority (approximately 87%) of this amount represents taxation. Grand Falls-Windsor continues to grow, as evidenced by the value of permits issued in 2023; there was

over \$11 million in commercial construction value generated, and approximately \$5 million in residential construction value. As we head towards 2024 with an added focus on housing initiatives and commercial development, we hope to exceed these amounts in the coming years.

Some businesses will notice a small change to their mil rate this year as we continue to reconfigure the “General” business tax category to more appropriately group and tax businesses. Other than this, all other business taxes remain the same for 2024. The 2024 Schedule of Rates and Fees, which includes all rental fees, permit fees, and tax rate, is now available on our website at [www.grandfallswindsor.com](http://www.grandfallswindsor.com).

### Expenditures

Total Expenditures for the 2024 Operating Budget are projected to be \$22.2 million, a 4.7% increase over the 2023 Budget. Almost half of these expenses relate to the Public Works and Development Department, which takes care of most of the services that residents enjoy every day, such as snow clearing, water supply and distribution, sewage collection and disposal, garbage collection and disposal in addition to maintenance on parks and green spaces. Costs within this Department have increased by over \$800,000 which is mainly due to the rising costs of water chemicals, the increased maintenance of parks and facilities, and the increased cost of garbage disposal.

Finally, we have reduced the operating surplus (otherwise known as Capital Out of Revenue) for 2024 in comparison to previous years to ensure the impact of these increased costs on residents is minimized. That number is only \$434,739 for 2024, which means we will have less of an operating surplus to apply against our Capital Expenditures.

### Community Requests

Community groups remain an integral part of our Town and bring value to the lives of our citizens in many different ways. Some of the groups that rely on support from Council are the YMCA, Corduroy Brook Enhancement Association, Grand Falls Golf Course, Heritage Centre, Community Garden, Community Kitchen, Curling Club and other sporting groups such as Grand Falls-Windsor Minor Baseball and the Exploits Soccer Association. There is also continued support for the Lionel Kelland Hospice as 2024 marks the final year of the Town’s three (3) year commitment, totaling \$75,000, as it gets set to open its doors. There is also funding for the Grand Falls House Foundation as the group continues to work towards redeveloping the property and area into a tourist destination.

Council also supports the arts community in many ways, including through the return of the now bi-annual Art Procurement, support for the Kiwanis Music Festival and funding allocated for the addition of murals to be completed throughout the Town in 2024.

### Capital Expenditures in 2024

We have invested significantly over the past number of years in our infrastructure and equipment, and that will continue into 2024. Our total amount of Capital spending projected is just under \$11.7 million, with anticipated funding from various Government agencies expected to cover approximately \$6.5 million of that total. The total investment is expected to grow in our Five-Year Plan as we continue to plan for significant projects such as a Community Centre and Gorge Park Phase II development. Work planned for 2024 includes:-

- Continued investment into our equipment replacement strategy which started in 2019. The plan regularly requires changes as we evaluate equipment that is scheduled to be replaced. On the list for 2024 is an excavator, high pressure vacuum truck and an ice re-surfacer for Windsor Stadium.
- Several accessibility improvements, including a wheelchair lift for the Town Hall and an accessible kayak floating dock.
- Fire Hall Training Smokehouse
- Electric vehicle charging stations.
- Funding allocated to start the detailed specification design on a possible new Community Centre. There are still plenty of steps to complete prior to this, including applying for funding and receiving input from the community; however, we wanted to include an amount in our Capital for the start of this project.
- Commencement of Phase II of the Gorge Park development. The first stage will be trail development around Gorge Park which will take place over 2024 and 2025.
- Engineering design for the Grand Falls House Foundation regarding the required work on the house and property.
- Continuation of downtown water, sewer and storm sewer projects in addition to additional funding for more projects to replace the infrastructure throughout the Town.
- Street Paving Program

Mr. Mayor, Council and residents of Grand Falls-Windsor, I present to you

the 2024 Municipal Operating Budget. We have taken great strides to minimize the impacts on our residents and to ensure our operations remain effective and comprehensive. We have created a Budget that is fiscally responsible and ensures that we are able to achieve the service goals that residents of Grand Falls-Windsor have come to expect and deserve. Gordon Pinsent also used the say about Grand Falls-Windsor, “this Town is not just grand, it’s great” and we aim to keep it that way.

I move the adoption of the 2024 Municipal Operating Budget.

Motion

Dwyer\Browne

Be it resolved that the 2024 Municipal Operating Budget be adopted as circulated. This motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

Deputy Mayor Browne said any time we can maintain our services and offer improvement for the next fiscal year and not have a tax increase shows that we are doing ok. The reason we can do this is because our debt ratio is low compared to other municipalities of similar size. Some highlights from the Budget are \$4.6 million in water and sewer infrastructure which is badly needed in our Town as our aging infrastructure needs to be replaced, Phase II of Gorge Park that will have new and improved trails that he is sure will be enjoyed by many. It has been a tough year for housing and people trying to find somewhere to live so it is nice to see that improvements for that are in the Budget. One of the main reasons he is happy that there is no tax increase is because the cost of food alone has skyrocketed and is having a very negative impact on our citizens, especially our senior citizens. \$250,000 for a new excavator, \$730,000 for the new high pressure vacuum truck, \$150,000 for firefighters to have a new training facility\smoke house, and \$200,000 for a new Zamboni are all good news. This is a great Budget; people can expect to see the same services and improved services over the next fiscal year and that is why I am voting in favour of the Budget.

Councillor Little noted there are a lot of exciting things in the Budget, a lot of discussion about Gorge Park trails, a new Community Centre, the refurbishing of the Grand Falls House and grounds, new Aquatec, new Zamboni, lots of great things and the fact that we are able to do them without tax increases is remarkable and something we are very proud of.

Councillor Hiscock thanked the Chief Administrative Officer, Director of Corporate Services\Town Clerk and Manager of Finance for all their hard work, because preparing this Budget took a lot of time and many hours were spent going over this to bring it where it is today. We were all on the same page that we did not

want to take away any of our services and we did not want a tax increase. I vote in favour of this Budget.

Councillor Noel thanked all staff involved in the Budget preparation, in particular, our Director of Corporate Services\Town Clerk who directed us in many ways to save some money. With everything increasing in price these days, it is nice to be able to present this with no increases.

Councillor Coady thanked our Director of Corporate Services\Town Clerk for preparing the Budget, and also our Communications Officer who prepared the document so beautifully that people can not only enjoy what is in the document but also the esthetics of the document as well. A \$22.2 million dollar Budget is very difficult to prepare and a balanced Budget without a tax increase. Yes, we did get some additional revenue from the assessment increase, but staff spent hours line by line reviewing and trying to figure out where we need to cut or maintain to make sure we can do the things we need to do. It is not lost on us that while the taxes have not increased, everything in the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor has increased for our operations so it will be a very difficult year for Council and staff in moving ahead this year and maintain what we have with the amount of money we have budgeted with our expected revenue. It is difficult for us, the same as it is difficult for our residents and business community with the increases that they are facing, so we will do our best maintaining our services. We will do what we can to make our infrastructure last with our Asset Management Plan that is being finalized. Any additional funding that we can get, like the Housing Accelerator Fund improving infrastructure which will initiate more housing starts, which in the long term will generate additional revenue to the Town. We will be diligent in making this Budget work, we are doing very well in comparison to other municipalities across the Province from a revenue and expenses perspective. Neighbouring communities with less population and a higher budget to maintain that community, this speaks volumes in how we manage our budgets, our departments, our infrastructure and our equipment. I fully support tonight's Budget.

Councillor Dwyer commented obviously we are very happy to report that there is no increase in the residential and commercial tax mil rate, we all worked very hard to make sure we could maintain that. As a community our expenses increased just like the average citizens' expenses increased, we see it in the millions of dollars. When our paving or other anticipated expenses are thirty percent (30%) more than what's expected, then we must make some changes and re-think. We are very proud of what we have been able to accomplish and proud to say that Grand Falls-Windsor is still the lowest among comparable communities in terms of taxation per average household, which is very important for us. Obviously, this Town is very well run, we are a lean organization, and our citizen tax dollars account for eighty-seven percent (87%) of our revenue and are put to

good use. Sincerely thank you to the Directors, Chief Administrative Officer, Management and fellow Councillors. While we do not always agree around the Boardroom table our discussions and debates are necessary and healthy and she appreciated all. She stated that she loves this community, and our Town is second to none and we plan to keep it that way.

Mayor Manuel advised that he too supports this Budget wholeheartedly, he knows that all the time put in is part of the process. We go through each Department looking for savings, and lots of times go back to the Directors to find more savings, which is not always easy on a Department. It would have been very easy for us to have a tax increase because we know inflations has hit municipalities just as hard or harder than the regular individual. What it really comes down to is that we recognize the impact on our citizens, and it has not been an easy year for people, costs have increased in food, electricity, etc., so we really wanted to make sure we were not putting any extra burden on the taxpayers with an increase to the mil rate. The mil rate in Grand Falls-Windsor may be higher than in some other communities, but it is deceiving because you are not comparing apples to apples. When you look at the average taxation, Grand Falls-Windsor remains the lowest average taxation in the Province with comparable communities and we are very proud of that. It is difficult and it will be a tough year for staff to continue to live up to that commitment that we want to remain where we are with regard to the things that we are doing. All these quality-of life initiatives that we have been introducing to the community such as the events, programs and focus on accessibility in 2024 are all great things for the community. When we look around Town there are tons of improvements that need to be made and, in some cases, replacements are necessary, but the reality remains that when you look at infrastructure costs it becomes so important to prioritize what we are going to replace and where we are going because we just cannot do it all at one time. Even if we had a billion dollars, he still is not sure we would be able to do everything that we would like to do. Housing was mentioned in the Budget and it is an issue that was discussed a lot this year because Council have been working on ways to improve the situation and the Accelerator Fund is a way to boost that. We have identified land within the community that can be developed, and Council is in favour of tiny homes, multi-units and such developments, but Council are not developers, and in many cases, we rely on the private sector to do the developing. We hope with these programs offered by the Provincial and Federal Government that we can get more help and the developers can too. We are also looking at ways to subsidize developers so that we can make it easier for them to build that much needed housing. We have revised our Commercial Business Policy and Land Policy in sales that results in a forty percent (40%) reduction in cost to someone that wants to buy commercial property in Grand Falls-Windsor. We have also

changed zoning in Town to allow some areas to have multi-unit developments. He thanked Council, Directors and staff of all Departments for all the hours they have put in, we are pleased with the presentation of this and hope that residents are too, and we look forward to a prosperous 2024.

### OTHER BUSINESS

Councillor Dwyer commented that Gordon Pinsent passed away this year, so we wanted to include him in our Budget speech. She wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous Christmas and New Year. Please drink responsibly and don't drink and drive.

Deputy Mayor Browne sent condolences to the Mercer family on the passing of Vera Mercer. Ms. Mercer is our Director of Community Services mother, so on behalf of Council and staff sincere condolences to him as it is never easy losing a loved one, especially this time of the year. He attended the Special Olympics Christmas Party, which was a great event, he congratulated all involved in taking care of our Special Olympians. He also attended the seniors movie at the Classic Theater, which was well attended and enjoyed. He thanked the owners and staff for accommodating them. The people of Grand Falls-Windsor are very kind, so he wanted to remind everyone that if you can reach out to someone in need to please do so. Lastly, he wished Merry Christmas to all staff, fellow Councillors and all residents of Grand Falls-Windsor.

Councillor Coady said she attended a reading of a Christmas Carol by the Northcliffe Drama Club, and an Exploits Valley High teacher Scott Simms played Scrooge and nailed it. It was very entertaining. That is a reading they do every year at the Memorial United Church, and they raise money for the Grand Falls-Windsor, Bishop's Falls Community Food Bank. This year they raised four hundred dollars (\$400) in donations at the door and the Drama Club matched that amount in memory of a member of the Club who passed away this year, Terry Brown. Mary Kelly spoke at the end about preparing the hampers this year, last year they prepared three hundred and twenty-eight (328) hampers, and this year they prepared over four hundred (400) hampers, so you can see how the need has arisen. She attended the Off the Cuff Community Chorus Concert at the Memorial United Church; it was a great job with beautiful song selection. Hats off to all the teachers that did their Christmas Concerts this year with all the children as she can image it is a hard job but enjoyed by parents. University students are home, the Town is buzzing, and you can feel the Christmas spirit in the air, and she wanted to wish everyone a Merry Christmas from her, and her family and she wishes everyone a healthy and prosperous 2024.

Councillor Noel stated we have some upcoming weather activity heading our way so he asked that residents clean up around the house and make sure drains are cleared from any obstructions, and baton down anything that may be loose as a storm with high winds is expected. It was great to attend the Special Olympics Christmas Party, hats off to all involved in making all those smiles. Through the Town and the High School they are collecting data on areas in Town that have less than adequate cell phone coverage, he asked that if anyone has a home or knows of an area where calls are dropped to call either a Councillor or the Chief Administrative Officer at 709-489-0407 to report because we would like to push this as a community and to have less than adequate cell phone coverage is a disservice to the Town. He wished everyone a very Merry Christmas and advised that the Mall was very chaotic today and asked for everyone to please be patient and kind.

Councillor Hiscock noted in November the Fire Department had their Fire Prevention Week, and they had a contest at the local Primary and Elementary Schools to design an escape plan for their homes. The prize was a ride in the fire truck followed by lunch at the Fire Station. Congratulations to the winners who were London Holloway (Grade 5, Sprucewood Academy); Katherine Peddle (Grade 2, Woodland Primary); and Peyton Watson (Grade 1, Forest Park Primary). It was a great day and well enjoyed, so “Thank You” to our Fire Chief and staff for making that happen. We have three (3) Grand Falls-Windsor residents as we speak flying out to a six (6) month deployment. He wanted to recognize Hunter Thompson, Sam Gardner and Nick Rice and he asked everyone to keep them in their prayers along with all the people in uniform. On behalf of himself and his wife, a Merry Christmas to one and all.

Councillor Little noted the Dinner Theatre had their Christmas Show and the producer said it was probably the most successful show that they have ever had. He is very excited about next summer’s shows and is already thinking of ideas for them. Merry Christmas to everyone, including Council and staff and thanks to Rogers Cable for coming out all year long to provide their service.

Mayor Manuel said on Sunday Badger Diner went above and beyond and made a stuffed chicken breast dinner with all the fixings, coffee\tea, and dessert for as many seniors up to one hundred (100) that could get there. “Thank You” to the owner and all the staff for doing that. All the Christmas lights are up around Town, and he wanted to thank residents who put lights up and added to the beauty of the Town. This was the year we lost Gordon Pinsent, and he was a man that will always be cherished, and it was very nice for him to be included in the Budget speech. He mentioned that if you don’t have a family doctor to go to Patient Connect and put your name down to be put on the list to see the Family Care Team. Christmas time for many is the tradition of World Junior Hockey Championships,



and his cousin Gary Furlong's son Jake is on Team Canada, so we will have some representation from Grand Falls-Windsor. Lastly, he thanked Rogers for volunteering their time to provide their service and he wished staff and residents a Merry Christmas on behalf of himself and his family.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion

Coady\Noel

Be it resolved that the meeting of the Grand Falls-Windsor Town Council would be adjourned until the next regular scheduled meeting of Tuesday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024. This motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:09 P.M.

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Barry Manuel  
Mayor

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Darren Finn  
Chief Administrative Officer