

Agenda
Regular Monthly Meeting
In-Person & Virtual Meeting via Zoom
27 Pleasant Street, Chester
Zoom ID: 935 442 9176 -- Password: 301715
Wednesday, February 8, 2023, at 7:00 pm

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1. **Call to Order**
2. **Public Forum**
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 - c) 2023/24 Preliminary Budget Review
10. **Commissioner Roundtable**
11. **Adjournment**

Next Regular Meeting – March 8th, 2023 – 7:00 pm



Minutes

Regular Monthly Meeting

In-Person at 27 Pleasant Street

Zoom ID: 935 442 9176 Password: 301715

Wednesday, January 11, 2023 – 7:00 pm

Attendance: Nancy Hatch, Commission Chair; Laura Mulrooney, Commissioner; Geraldine Pauley, Commission Vice-Chair; Randall O'Malley, Commissioner; Jeff Conrad, Interim Clerk/Treasurer; Maxine Veinot, Recording Secretary

Regrets: Nil

Public Gallery: Chester Fire Deputy Chief Conron

1.0 Call to Order

Chair Hatch called the January 11, 2023, Regular Monthly meeting of the Village of Chester Commission to order at 7:04 pm.

2.0 Public Forum

3.0 Review/Approval of Agenda/Additions to Agenda

Clerk/Treasurer had an addition of 7a Correspondence.

Chair Hatch had an addition of 7b Reminder.

Motion #23-001: Commissioner Mulrooney moved; Commissioner Pauley seconded:

The approval of the agenda with the additions of 7a and 7b.

Unanimously Carried

4.0 Report of the Chief, Chester Volunteer Fire Department

Chief Stevens was unable to attend; Deputy Chief Conron gave the report. CVFD has wrapped up a busy year, responding to a total volume of 274 callouts. This is a significant increase over the previous year's volume, both with regards to a moderate increase in fire and emergency related responses, but also a significant increase in medical responses due to our change in our medical dispatch level. We are thankful for, and proud of, the support we receive from the village commission, municipality, and residents of our coverage area, and of our members who have put in many long hours for training, meetings, and callouts - often at the expense of time spent with their family and loved ones.

The chief and several captains attended a final inspection for the new tanker (551) this past weekend and the new #551 is expected to be delivered on Monday, January 16th. There are no issues of concern to report, and it has been noted that the tanker is very impressive, both operationally and visually. Training on the new apparatus will take place on Monday after delivery, and we hope to have an official unveiling for the public in the very near future.

Fundraising for the replacement of 511- the 2002 Utility Truck, is almost complete, and we hope to have an announcement in that regard within the next few weeks to a month. It is very heartwarming to see how significantly the community will support a good cause.

5.0 Review/Approval of Minutes

a) Regular Meeting: Wednesday, December 14, 2022

MOTION #23-002: Commissioner O'Malley moved; Commissioner Mulrooney seconded:

The approval of the Minutes of December 14, 2022, Regular Monthly meeting as presented.

Unanimously Carried

b) Special Meeting: Wednesday, December 19, 2022

MOTION #23-003: Commissioner Mulrooney moved; Commissioner O'Malley seconded:

The approval of the Minutes of December 19, 2022, Special meeting as presented.

Unanimously Carried

6.0 Business Arising

Nil

7.0 Correspondence

a) Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad reported on correspondence received from Dave Foley, village resident, re 'Fit-up' costs for new fire truck and why the Village did not tender for these items.

Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad responded to the correspondence stating that he followed the Provinces Procurement policy and inadvertently, thought that the Village's policy was the same as the Province's. It is not, and C/T Conrad apologized that he made the error in the purchasing process/tender needs. The commissioners were made aware of the error and will strive to follow the policy as stated, in the future.

b) Chair Hatch reminded Commissioners of the Association of Nova Scotia Villages meeting January 20, 2023. The meeting is in Truro and via zoom.

- c) Commissioner Mulrooney offered to get a sympathy card for the family of the Deputy Chief in Tidnish, NS, and it be signed by the Village and Fire Department. Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad will get an address to send the card.

8.0 Reports

a) Clerk Treasurer

- As directed by the Commission, the Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia were notified that we would extend our website hosting contract at the silver level for an additional year.
- The office lease has been renewed for three years and the landlord agreed to change the insurance clauses as requested by the Village insurance agent, and also agreed to insert a right of renewal clause as suggested by Village legal counsel. Insurance confirmation has been requested, and the draft lease has been signed by the Village and is awaiting signature by the landlord.
- As directed by the Commission, the service agreement was reviewed by the Village legal counsel and he suggested a minor change in wording related to WCB coverage, and that the agreement should specify more clearly how the cost of tools is to be covered. MoDC is working on those changes and do not anticipate any issue.
- Following discussion with the Village Insurance broker, they offered to obtain comments on the draft abuse prevention policy from the Insurance company, prior to sending it to the Village legal counsel. Those comments are still pending. Exploration of possible training resources has continued. The Abuse policy will be brought to the February meeting for approval.
- Met with staff at MoDC to open discussions regarding possible free Wi-Fi in the downtown shopping area of the Village as a possible tourism attraction effort. MoDC would like to gather information regarding interest, support, possible use, and costs before proceeding. Discussion was held regarding ways to undertake a small study on the topic, with agreement to continue to pursue the topic.
- Met with the officers of the CVFD and held a budget management and planning session. There was broad discussion of how budgets get set, the impacts on area rates, and setting priorities. Agreed to continue shared work on managing the fourth quarter of 22/23 while also starting to build a 23/24 budget submission that reflects the interests of the fire service.
- The electrical installation that controls the lights on Water Street has been repaired, two inspections done by NS Power, and the lights were working as of this morning, January 11, 2023.

- Wreaths were taken down this week.
- The Lido flooded with rain and ocean water in the storm prior to Christmas, but there was no obvious damage caused. The pool was drained Christmas Eve day in case of a cold snap and possible freezing.
- The Village Office was closed from December 23 to January 3, and staff appreciated the Commission providing this opportunity to enjoy time with family and friends.

Commissioner O'Malley questioned where the Fire Agreement stands. Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad stated that work continues on this issue. It may be time/advantageous for a joint meeting to be held with MoDC Council

b) Financial

<> Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad reported that the November bank statement was reconciled and at the bank balance was \$215,402.59 for the end of November.

<> The Village is in good fiscal position for the time of year, with the final quarterly revenue payment from MoDC expected in early February 2023, and the final year-end reconciliation payment in early March.

<> As approved motions, funds in the amount of \$710,085.90 (\$617,466 purchase price plus \$92,619.90 HST) have been withdrawn from the Vehicle Reserve and held in the chequing account in anticipation of final payment for the 2022 Freightliner M2-112 Conventional Cab Tanker for CVFD. Payment will be made by wire transfer, pending final approval by DVFD, during an onsite inspection. Deliver is expected mid-January.

<> On-line review shows since December 1st, deposits of \$713,740.33 and expenses of \$42,959.23 for the balance on December 5, 2022 of \$886,183.69

<> The third quarter financial update is on the agenda for discussion.

<> 2023/2024 preliminary budget should be ready for a first discussion at the February 8th, 2023 meeting.

c) Committees

Nil

9.0 New/Other Business

a) Art Center request for tax exemption

There is a tax exemption policy that was written several years ago and needs to be updated and this has not been done yet. Our Health Centre recently was granted a tax exemption, and now the Chester Art Centre has made a request.

The Commissioners discussed the request, and the By-law, and agrees that the By-Law needs to be updated, with timelines and other information.

MOTION #23-004: Commissioner Pauley moved; Commissioner Mulrooney seconded:

That before the Commission considers any further applications of non-profits for tax exemptions, the Commission develop a by-law that considers implications of all such requests, and the applications include annual budgets.

Commissioners Pauley and Mulrooney **withdrew Motion #23-004.**

MOTION #24-005: Commissioner Pauley moved; Commissioner Mulrooney seconded:

To defer any decisions on applications for non-profit tax exemptions until the by-law is developed within the next three months.

Unanimously Carried

- b) Disposal of Fire Truck 551 – Tanker
Interim Clerk/Treasurer stated that with the arrival of the new tanker next week, the surplus vehicle needs to be disposed of and Conrad reviewed the options of disposal. Unlike procurement, there is no Provincial disposal process for Municipal units.

The Municipal Finance requires that any funds realized from the sale must be placed in a capital reserve and spent on capital assets.

The Village is not registered to collect HST, and until the annual threshold of more than \$50,000 is met, the Village is not required to collect.

Under the Code of Conduct and Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, Commissioners and staff of the Village would not be eligible to bid.

Discussion was held on selling it at an auction and/or offering to other Fire Departments, Search and Rescue, private business for watering, etc.

MOTION #23-006: Commissioner Pauley moved; Commissioner O'Malley seconded:

That the Village move forward with the disposal of Fire Tanker 551 through a sealed bid tender process, with the decision on final sale to be approved by the Commission. The process should include an "as is, where is" provision, and the provision to accept less than the highest bid. Sealed bids are to be received for thirty (30) days after the date of advertisement.

Unanimously Carried

- c) **3rd Quarter Financial Review**
Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad reviewed the 3rd Quarter financial report and explained several items that were at 100% as they were one-time costs, but for the full budget year.

Notes were included in the report to answer possible questions. Most categories are at 75% spent. Commissioners expressed their appreciation of the 'notes' included in the report.

- d) **Obtaining Specialized Recruitment Services**

MOTION #23-007: Commissioner Mulrooney moved; Commissioner Pauley seconded:

That the Village send a Statement of Work to at least three companies, potentially five companies, on the provincial standing offer for executive search requesting quotes to assist the Village with recruiting a Clerk/Treasurer, and that quotes to be brought to the Commission for evaluation and decision.

Unanimously Carried

10.0 Commission Roundtable

- a) Commissioner Mulrooney asked if there could be something put in the window of the office letting the public know that there is an AED machine in the office. Interim Clerk/Treasurer will have this posted.
- b) Commissioner Pauley asked if the Commission could have 'note paper' created. Jim Barkhouse has stated the Village could use his pictures. Commissioner Pauley will look into this and get costings.

11.0 Adjournment

MOTION #22-008: Commissioner O'Malley moved the meeting adjourn at 8:20 pm.

Next Regular Meeting – February 8th, 2023 – 7:00 pm

Commission Chair
Nancy Hatch

Commission Vice Chair
Geraldine Pauley



Minutes
Special Meeting – In Camera
In-Person at 27 Pleasant Street
Thursday, January 19, 2023 – 2:00 pm

Attendance: Nancy Hatch, Commission Chair; Laura Mulrooney, Commissioner; Geraldine Pauley, Commission Vice-Chair; Randall O’Malley, Commissioner; Jeff Conrad, Interim Clerk/Treasurer

Regrets: Nil

Public Gallery: None

1. Call to Order

- a. Chair Hatch called the January 19, 2022, Special Meeting of the Village of Chester Commission to order at 2:00 pm. There being only one item to discuss, contract negotiations, the meeting moved immediately to In-Camera

2. 2.0 New/Other Business

- a. Intermunicipal Fire Services Agreement
- b. No motions were made.

3. 3.0 Adjournment

- a. Commissioner Mulrooney moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:45 pm

Commission Chair

Commission Vice Chair

Request for Decision

Topic: Purchase of Village Stationery	Date: February 8, 2023
	Proposed By: Jeff Conrad, Interim Clerk/Treasurer
Issue Summary: A suggestion has been made to purchase a small supply of Village branded stationery.	
Background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When required, the Village sends letters on letterhead either electronically or printed and produced in house on regular letter paper • On occasion there may be an occasion that a higher quality letterhead would be appropriate, for example to express condolences, appreciation, or congratulations on a significant event, etc. • Local printing companies were contacted, and the following prices were obtained; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Company A – 500 pages, with the Village logo in colour and business information (address, phone, etc.) in black \$240 +HST ○ Company B – 500 pages, with the Village logo in colour and business information (address, phone, etc.) in black, \$150 +HST with file ready copy, \$25 fee to set up the file • For comparison purposes, a quote was also sought on what a blank greeting card with a photograph on the cover would cost <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 500 cards (1/2 of a 8.5 x 11 cardstock, folded) with envelopes, photo cover printed in colour, and Village Commission identification lines printed on back in B&W, \$305 +HST 	
Options: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Do not purchase stationery 2) Purchase from one of the suppliers noted 3) Defer and seek additional quotes 	
Considerations: <u>Financial Impacts:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal <u>Policy Impacts:</u>	
Recommendation: 2) Purchase from supplier B	
Potential Motion: That the Village place an order for 500 sheets of printed stationery with the Village logo in colour.	

**Village of Chester Commission
Clerk/Treasurer Activity Report
February 8, 2023**

- MoDC has advised that approval of the maintenance service agreement is proceeding through the system, but is still pending final approval.
- The Village insurance company and lawyer have reviewed the draft abuse prevention policy and advised it meets the criteria and they do not see any concerns. The policy has been separated from the associated resources so that the resource information can be updated without requiring a review of the full policy.
- Met with the CVFD and developed a first draft 2023/24 budget.
- The electrical installation that controls the lights on Water Street has been repaired and power is back on. One light did not work on start up, and two more have stopped working since then. Black and MacDonald will check and see what the issue is, it may be just issues with the bulbs which were not lit for over a year.
- Applied for a summer grant from federal government to hire lifeguards and a policy assistant.
- Wreaths are down.
- Continued meetings and discussions with MoDC on implementation of fire agreement
- The Lido flooded with rain and ocean water in the storm January 26 and was drained January 31 in anticipation of coming very low temperatures.
- Participated in the Association of Nova Scotia Villages video call on January 20th along with several commissioners. The main topic was the upcoming draft of a Code of Conduct for Municipal Units, particularly with regard to penalties and investigations.
- Participated in the South Shore Region Association of Nova Scotia Administrators meeting. Primary discussion was around year-end financial requirements and then an activity roundtable by participants.
- Participated, along with the Commission Chair, in a video call put on by St.FX University regarding Asset Based Community Development.
- Commissioner Mulrooney obtained a sympathy card for the family of the Deputy Chief of the Tidnish Fire Department and it was signed by the Village Commission and the CVFD

- Consulted with the Village lawyer and NS Municipal Affairs regarding the disposal process for the surplus fire truck. Worked with CVFD to start building the information package to accompany the public Request for Proposal.
- Circulated the Statement of Work for recruiting services to four companies and received proposals from all four. Developed scoring grids to assess the proposals.
- Was contacted by a law firm representing an individual who was hurt and fell on a village sidewalk. Currently working with the insurance company, adjuster, and lawyer to manage the process.
- Posted a sign in the window of the Village Office regarding an AED being on site, and also registered with OHC who is developing a county-wide map of AED locations.

Jeff Conrad
Interim Clerk/Treasurer

Date

Village of Chester Commission

Clerk/Treasurer Financial Report

February 8, 2023

- The December bank statement is reconciled and at the end of the statement the bank account balance was 885,586.49
- The Village is in good fiscal position for this time of the year, with the final quarterly revenue payment from MoDC expected in early February 2023, and the final year end reconciliation payment in early March
- On-line review shows that since December 30 there have been bank deposits of 14,352.49 and expenses of 745,210.10 for a bank balance on February 1, 2023 of 154,728.88
- The 2023/2024 preliminary budget is on the agenda for discussion at this meeting.

Jeff Conrad

Interim Clerk/Treasurer

Date

Municipality: Chester
 Polling District: Village of Chester
 Polling Station No.: Chester Legion, 14 Union Street
 Election for: Village Commissioner Date: January 18, 2023

- 1. __200__ Number of blank ballots received from Returning Officer
 - 2. __0__ Add number of ballots from advance poll (if any)
 - 3. *__200__ **TOTAL BALLOTS TO BE ACCOUNTED FOR**
 - 4. __0__ Number of ballots taken from polling station (if any)
 - 5. __110__ Number of unused ballots
 - 6. __0__ Number of cancelled ballots (ones not placed in ballot box)
 - 7. __0__ Number of rejected ballots (rejected during counting)
 - 8. __90__ Number of ballot papers counted and accepted
 - 9. __0__ Number of ballot papers missing (if any)
 - 10. *__200__ **TOTAL BALLOTS ACCOUNTED FOR**
- *Note: Lines 3 and 10 must balance**

Ballots Cast For

Name of Candidate	Number of Ballots Counted
Tom Mulrooney	22
Carol Nauss	68

Number of names on the final list of electors used at the polling station, plus electors sworn in at the polling station and added to the list (if any) 980

Dated at Chester this 19 day of January , 2023 .
 Approved: We certify that the above statement is correct

Original signed by Jeff Conrad
 Deputy Returning Officer

Original Signed by Maxine Veinot
 Poll Clerk

SPEC MTG/ ELECTION EXPENSES 2023

APM #5460
Election #5496

Nomination &	04-Jun	\$390.02
Special Mtg	11-Jun	\$390.02
advertising		
Printer's Corner	17-Jun	\$316.25
Canada Post	17-Jun	\$327.18
ELECTION	Hall rental	\$200.00
	Poll Workers	\$0.00
		\$53.20
		\$15.00
		\$22.50

\$1,714.17

Village of Chester
Special Meeting/By-Election Process
January 18, 2023

Process Overview

- Advertising was done on Village Website, Facebook page, and email distribution lists
- Posters were placed at the Village Office, Post Office, and two major grocery store bulletin boards
- Ads were placed in the Lighthouse Now newspaper the two weeks preceding the Election date
- A card sized notice was printed and circulated through Canada Post to mailbox routes and PO boxes that included Village residents
 - Canada Post has no mechanism to deliver mail only to Village residents, can only identify routes that include a portion of the Village geographic area
- Provision was made for a “Candidates Corner” posting on the Village website (only one candidate participated)

- More people attended the meeting (90) than the hall was set up for (50), which led to some scrambling to add chairs at the last minute
- In prominent places in the hall (side tables, registration table, etc.) posters were placed with voting directions and a letter-sized poster of the ballot
- Large maps of the Village boundaries showing house numbers were on hand so that people could verify where they lived if there was any question regarding eligibility
- Prior to voting the returning officer offered about 5 minutes of remarks, outlining the process to be followed, showing the ballot and the layout, and explaining the rules of a polling station
- Each candidate was offered 5 minutes to speak. Each made remarks but neither took the full five minutes
- Prior to locking, the audience was shown the empty ballot boxes

- The hall was set up in a u-shape layout. There was a table on one side with two workers that each had an electors list, and confirmed eligibility to vote, provided ballots (printed at the Village Office), and responded to questions
- There were two confidential voting booths (tables with cardboard partitions) across the back
- On the third side there were two tables, each with a ballot box and a returning clerk who initialed the ballot and deposited it in the sealed box.

- Two scrutineers not affiliated with the Village or either candidate were identified from those present, and asked to sit at the counting table
- About 25 people stayed to witness the counting
- Following the last person in the line voting, the Returning Officer called three times for any additional voters present to come forward. When none were identifying, the voting was declared closed, the locks on the ballot boxes were cut
- The Returning Officer and two scrutineers sat at one table, and two poll clerks sat at another table with premade tally sheets
- Each ballot was reviewed by the Returning Officer, the name read aloud so that it could be heard by the poll clerks and the people present, then handed to the scrutineers for review
- Once counting was completed, the tally numbers of the two poll clerks were compared to ensure they were the same
- The winning candidate name was read aloud

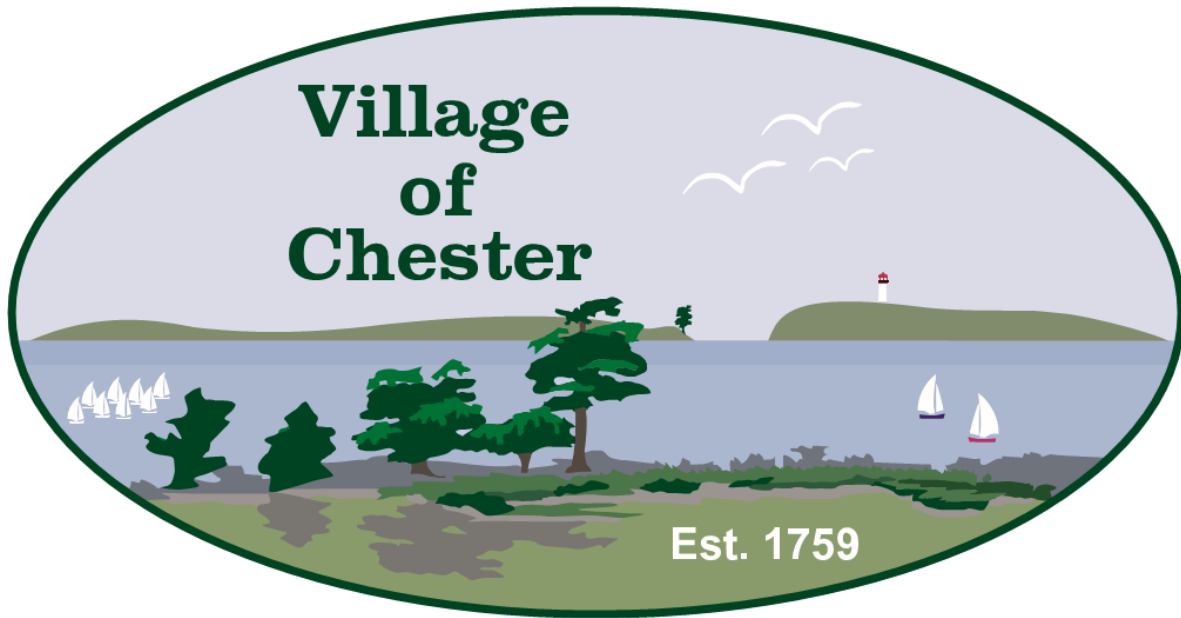
Comments

No written comments were received regarding the process. Staff and Commissioners heard a variety of comments through phone calls, conversations, and at the special meeting including;

- There were a variety of questions clarifying the process, that this was a special meeting and not an election, and how the voting would work
- We were lucky with the weather
- The Candidates Corner should have been more prominent on the website
- The Canada Post notice should have included the candidate names
- There was no provision for proxy voting
- The election should have been earlier in the day
- The election should have been for a set period, like two hours (there is no provision for this. It is either a special meeting with a vote, or a full by-election)
- It was good to know in advance who was running (i.e. not just nominations from the floor)
- The process at the meeting was smooth and efficient
- People shouldn't have had to sit through the opening remarks, they should just be able to show up and vote when they got to the hall at 7:00
- There should have been a way to tell people when the last vote was going to be, so they could just come at the end
- Concerns about spacing of the seating and wearing of masks (Covid related concerns)
- The opening remarks by the Returning Officer were helpful and informative

Request for Decision

Topic: Approval of Village Abuse Prevention Policy	Date: February 8, 2023
	Proposed By: Jeff Conrad, Interim Clerk/Treasurer
Issue Summary: The Village's insurance company has requested that the Village create an abuse prevention policy.	
Background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A draft policy was considered at the December 14, 2022 Commission meeting • Direction was provided to amend the policy and submit to the Village legal counsel for review • Minor amendments have been made to the policy as suggested • A Resource Guide has been developed to accompany the policy which includes a link to free basic online training • The Policy has been reviewed by the Village Insurance company (Intact Public Entities) and by the Village lawyer. Both have advised it meets the suggested criteria, and neither have suggested any amendments 	
Options: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reject the policy and provide the Clerk Treasurer with direction on how to proceed. 2. Approve the policy as submitted 	
Considerations: <u>Financial Impacts:</u> Risk mitigation against future claims against the Village. <u>Policy Impacts:</u> Creates a framework to manage abuse prevention within Village operations.	
Recommendation: 2) Approve the policy as submitted	
Potential Motion: That the Abuse Prevention Policy be approved and adopted by the Village for implementation starting immediately.	



Abuse Prevention Policy

January 2023

The Village of Chester prohibits and does not condone any form of harassment nor physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, or psychological abuse of any staff member or participant in a service offered by the Village.

Definitions

Harassment is defined as but not limited to any unwanted physical or verbal conduct that offends or humiliates, including gender-based harassment. It can be a single incident or several incidents over time. It includes threats, intimidation, displays of racism, sexism, unnecessary physical contact, suggestive remarks or gestures, offensive pictures or jokes. Harassment will be considered to have taken place if a reasonable person ought to have known that the behavior was unwelcome.

Physical abuse is defined but not limited to the use of intentional force that can result in physical harm or injury to an individual. It can take the form of slapping, hitting, punching, shaking, pulling, pushing, throwing, kicking, biting, choking, strangling, or the abusive use of restraints.

Sexual abuse is defined as when a person, without their consent, is used by another person for their own sexual stimulation or gratification and includes but not limited to any unwanted touching, fondling, observations for sexual gratification, penetration or attempted penetration, verbal or written propositions or innuendos, exhibitionism or exploitation for profit including pornography.

Emotional abuse is defined but not limited to a chronic attack on an individual's self esteem. It can take the form of name calling, threatening, ridiculing, berating, intimidation, isolating, hazing, habitual scapegoat, and blaming.

Verbal abuse is defined as but not limited to humiliating remarks, name calling, swearing at, taunting, teasing, continual put downs.

Psychological abuse is defined as but not limited to communication of an abusive nature, sarcasm, exploitive behavior, intimidation, manipulation, and insensitivity to race, sexual preference or family dynamics.

Application

This policy applies to all elected officials, staff, volunteers, contractors, and partner organizations utilizing Village facilities.

Prevention procedures

Prior to being hired all staff will provide a resume, cover letter, and participate in a documented interview process. References will be checked for all staff prior to being hired.

All staff of the Village who are required to deal with vulnerable individuals (e.g. lifeguards, crossing guards, washroom attendants) are required to have a satisfactory

Child Abuse Registry check and Criminal Records check prior to being hired by the Village. This is an annual requirement for Lifeguards, even if they are returning staff.

A renewed child abuse registry check will be required from staff every three years.

Staff who deal with vulnerable individuals are required to advise the Village if they become the subject of an abuse allegation or investigation from any source, not just related to their employment with the Village.

All staff and volunteers are encouraged whenever possible to interact with vulnerable persons in an open, observable, and transparent location and manner. This would include for example not being alone with a vulnerable person in a location such as a washroom, change room, or living space. If there is a need to be alone, or no other possibility, (e.g. first aid or the person is distressed) make sure that another worker, or program participant knows where you are and why. If no other staff or participants are present, try to move to a space where you are visible by the public. For more information, see the Resources for Abuse Prevention material maintained by the Village.

No staff member or volunteer may use their position with the Village to arrange for meetings with vulnerable persons outside of the workplace. This includes invitations to a person's home, a social event, or other non-work-related activity.

Staff will not take photos of participants unless those participants have confirmed their willingness for their picture to be taken and used for a specific purpose.

Contractors and partners of the Village are expected to establish their own Abuse Prevention Policies and to have their own insurance policies that cover their staff. These policies will be made available to the Village on request.

When interacting with Staff, Volunteers, and clients of the Village, partners and contractors will act in an appropriate manner that respects the policy intent.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Clerk/Treasurer of the Village of Chester has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

Each person who has reviewed and is aware of the Village's Abuse Prevention Policy have a role to play. Commissioners, staff, and volunteers are expected to:

- Ensure that the policy is being put into practice (for example by reminding other individuals of the requirements);
- Keep a record of any concerns expressed about child protection issues;
- Bring any vulnerable persons concerns to the notice of the Village Clerk/Treasurer and/or contact 911 if necessary;
- Ensure that children, youth, and vulnerable persons are given appropriate supervision and care

Responsibility for any media enquiries related to incidents identified under this policy will be the Chair of the Village Commission or the Clerk/Treasurer and will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

Incident Reporting

In spite of the best efforts abuse allegations may be reported. It is important to remember that abuse allegations may not be reported specifically about occurrences with Village staff or at Village locations. Vulnerable persons may feel comfortable enough to report allegations that are happening in other situations.

Allegations may be reported to any member of the Village staff or volunteer. If approached, it is important to:

- Listen to the participants if they request to talk to you in private about something or indicate they need to tell you something
- Look at them directly and do not promise to keep any secrets before you know what they are, but always let the participant know if, and why, you are going to tell anyone
- Take whatever is said to you seriously and help the participants to feel safe sharing their own feelings. Take notes of exactly what is said to you avoiding assumptions and conjecture
- It is not the role of the worker to investigate any allegations (this would contaminate evidence if a situation went to court). Any disclosure by a participant must be reported to the Clerk/Treasurer, and/or Family and Children Services, and/or the Police depending on the severity of the situation.
- Following the allegation, speak immediately to a supervisor. If the allegation is against the Supervisor, speak to someone else in authority such as a Village Commissioner
- Fill out an appropriate incident report. Try to write down exactly what the young person or child said. Avoid assumptions and stick to just the facts

Things to say or do:

- 'What you are telling me is very important'
- 'This is not your fault'
- 'I am sorry that this has happened/is happening'
- 'You were right to tell someone'
- 'What you are telling me should not be happening to you and I will find out the best way to help you'
-

Things *not* to say or do:

- Do not ask leading questions – Why? How? What?
- Do not say ‘Are you sure?’
- Do not show your own emotions e.g. shock/disbelief
- Do not make false promises

What you should not do

- Staff or volunteers should not begin investigating the matter themselves.
- Do not discuss the matter with anyone except the correct people in authority.
- Do not form your own opinions and decide to do nothing.

Protocol following Report

Where a reported incident involves a vulnerable person the report will be forwarded to the appropriate legal entity to respond.

Children - Everyone has a duty to immediately report even a suspicion of abuse to a child 18 or younger. You can report the abuse anonymously. If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, contact the child welfare agency in the area where the child lives. It's best if you contact the agency by phone or in person. In the Chester area this is the Lunenburg District Office, Child Welfare, Provincial Building, 99 High Street, Bridgewater, 902-543-4554. After regular business hours, call 1-866-922-2434 if you believe a child is in immediate danger. Social workers in child welfare agencies assess reports of alleged child abuse and neglect to determine an appropriate response.

Seniors - If the allegation is of abuse of a senior, it may be reported to police via 911 or to a local police department. If the allegation is not of a criminal nature, the Nova Scotia Senior Abuse Information and Referral Line can provide information about senior abuse or to talk about a situation of abuse. This is not a crisis line. The Department of Seniors cannot investigate, but it can tell you about resources in your community. 1-877-833-3377 toll-free in Nova Scotia.

Staff or Volunteers – If the allegation is that a staff member or volunteer is the person subject to abuse, the Clerk/Treasurer will consult with the Chair of the Commission, the Village lawyer, and other experts as required to develop an investigation process appropriate to the allegation.

Disciplinary Procedures

Employees and Officers of the Village against whom a complaint of employment related abuse is substantiated, or a conviction in a court of law for other situations, may be disciplined up to and including dismissal.

A progressive discipline policy shall apply as deemed appropriate by the Clerk/Treasurer or Village Commission.

- A verbal warning may be issued in the case of a first offence of a less substantive nature
- A written letter of warning in the case of a second offence may be issued and remain on the employee file for a period of five years

- A period of unpaid leave for up to two weeks may be imposed in the case of serious offences or repeated offences.
- A change of duties, work location, or a work arrangement (e.g. remote work location) may be imposed during an investigation, or on a permanent basis following the outcome of an investigation
- The Village may proceed with dismissal for any offence deemed by the Commission to warrant such action.

In the case of a report of abuse of a vulnerable person by a village staff person or volunteer, that person shall be removed from all interaction with vulnerable persons until the investigation is concluded.

A person who makes a complaint of abuse, whether under this policy or otherwise, should not be penalized for doing so. For the purposes of this policy, retaliation against an individual for having filed a complaint or taken any other step under this policy will not be tolerated and will be treated as a disciplinary offence. The person may have their privileges or employment reviewed up to and including termination.

The making of false, frivolous or malicious allegations of abuse by another person will likewise be treated as a disciplinary offence. The person may have their privileges or employment reviewed up to and including termination.

Confidentiality

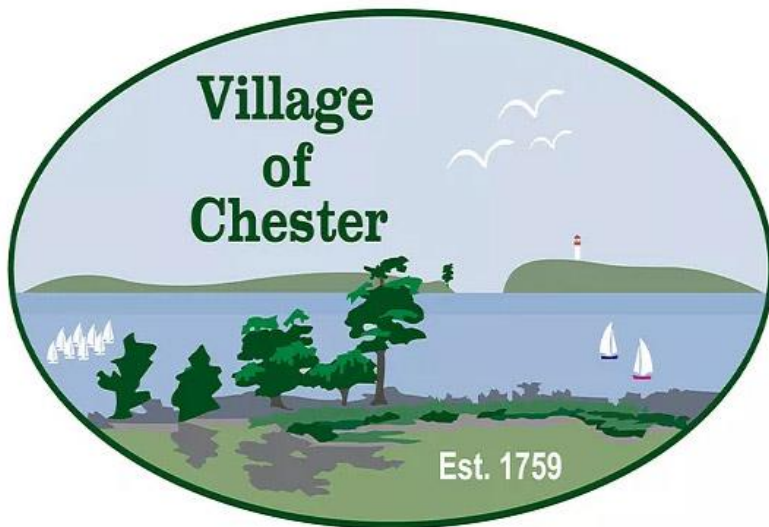
The Village understands and appreciates that it is difficult to come forward with a complaint of abuse and recognizes that there may be an interest of the complainant and other parties in keeping the matter confidential.

To protect the interests of the complainant, the person complained against, and others who may report abuse or be involved in an investigation, the Village shall endeavour to maintain confidentiality throughout the investigative process to the extent practical and appropriate under the circumstances and will request that all parties involved do likewise.

All records of complaints, including the contents of meetings, interviews, results of investigative and other relevant material will be kept confidential by the Village except where disclosure is required by a disciplinary or other remedial process or by order of a court or tribunal of competent jurisdiction. The Nova Scotia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy policy shall apply.

Further Information

For more information, see the Resources for Abuse Prevention material maintained by the Village.



Abuse Prevention Policy

Employee Attestation

I acknowledge that I have received and read the abuse prevention policy and/or have had it explained to me. I understand that it is my responsibility to abide by all the rules contained in this policy and to report any incidents of abuse as set forth in this policy.

I understand that this acknowledgement will be retained on my personnel file indefinitely.

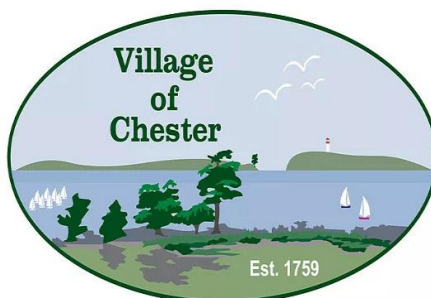
Employee name: _____

Employee position: _____

Signature of Employee: _____

Date: _____

Village Representative: _____



Abuse Prevention Policy Report Form

Staff Member or Volunteer who received the Complaint

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Position: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Name of Individual with complaint/concern

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Address: _____

Position (student, swimmer, staff, etc.): _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Age (approximate if not known): _____

Witness (to the event or the report)

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Position: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Reporting:

Has the event already been reported to another agency (Police, Family and Children's Services, etc.)?

Yes: _____

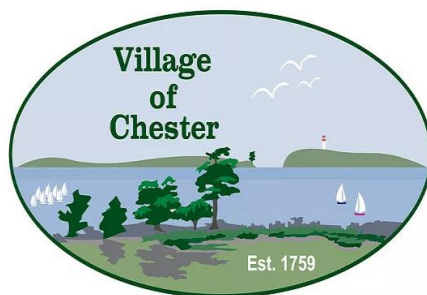
No: _____

Agency: _____

Contact Person: _____

Contact Information: _____

Details of the Incident/Report (use additional pages or back if required):



Resources for Abuse Prevention

January 2023

Important contact numbers:Police Services

Emergency: 9-1-1

Non-Emergency Chester RCMP Detachment: 902-275-3583

Family and Children's Services

Lunenburg District Office, Child Welfare; 902-543-4554

After hours, 1-866-922-2434

Social workers in child welfare agencies assess reports of alleged child abuse and neglect to determine an appropriate response.

Seniors

If the allegation is not of a criminal nature, the Nova Scotia Senior Abuse Information and Referral Line can provide information about senior abuse or to talk about a situation of abuse. This is not a crisis line. The Department of Seniors cannot investigate, but it can tell you about resources in your community. 1-877-833-3377 toll-free in Nova Scotia.

Village Office

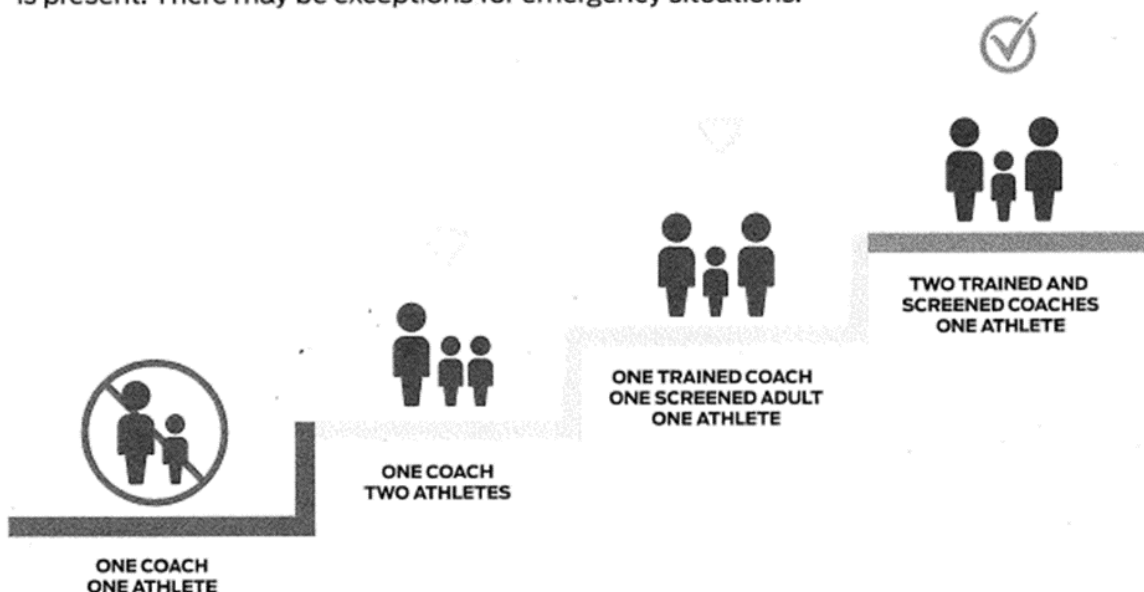
Reception: 902-275-4482

Clerk/Treasurer: 902-275-4994

Staff or Volunteers – If the allegation is that a staff member or volunteer is the person subject to abuse, the Clerk/Treasurer will consult with the Chair of the Commission, the Village lawyer, and other experts as required to develop an investigation process appropriate to the allegation.

RULE OF TWO

The goal of the **Rule of Two** is to ensure all interactions and communications are open, observable and justifiable. Its purpose is to protect participants (especially minors) and coaches in potentially vulnerable situations by ensuring more than one adult is present. There may be exceptions for emergency situations.



GOOD RULE OF TWO IMPLEMENTATION PRACTICES

- The coach is never alone and out of sight with a participant without another screened coach or screened adult (parent or volunteer) present.
- Allow training environment to be open to observation.
- Ensure a participant rides in a coach's vehicle with another adult present.
- Consider the gender of the participant(s) when selecting the screened coaches and volunteers who are present.
- Eliminate one-to-one electronic messaging. Ensure that all communications are sent to the group and/or include parents.

Learn more: coach.ca/responsiblecoaching



Coaching Association of Canada
Association canadienne des entraîneurs

Additional resource/research information:

Nova Scotia Community Services

<https://novascotia.ca/coms/families/index.html>

Nova Scotia Children and Family Services Act

<https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/children%20and%20family%20services.pdf>

<https://novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/cfsregs.htm>

Nova Scotia Child Abuse Registry

<https://beta.novascotia.ca/apply-child-abuse-register-search>

Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission

<https://humanrights.novascotia.ca/>

Nova Scotia Human Rights Act

<https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/human%20rights.pdf>

Nova Scotia Municipal Government Act

<https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/municipal%20government.pdf>

Training Resources:

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety – free online video on violence in the workplace prevention

https://www.ccohs.ca/products/courses/violence_awareness/