

# ST. JOHN'S

## **Minutes of Committee of the Whole - City Council**

**Council Chambers, 4th Floor, City Hall**

**February 17, 2026, 3:00 p.m.**

**Present:** Deputy Mayor Ron Ellsworth  
Councillor Kate Cadigan  
Councillor Lynn Hammond  
Councillor Sandy Hickman  
Councillor Nikita Ryall  
Councillor Jill Bruce  
Councillor Greg Noseworthy  
Councillor Tom Davis  
Councillor Donnie Earle

**Regrets:** Mayor Danny Breen  
Councillor Brenda Halley

**Staff:** Derek Coffey, City Manager  
Tanya Haywood, Deputy City Manager of Community Services  
Jason Sinyard, Deputy City Manager of Planning, Engineering & Regulatory Services  
Cheryl Mullett, City Solicitor  
Ken O'Brien, Chief Municipal Planner  
Theresa Walsh, City Clerk  
Jackie O'Brien, Manager of Corporate Communications  
Jennifer Squires, Legislative Assistant

**Others** Lindsay Church, Planner III, Urban Design and Heritage  
Ann-Marie Cashin, Planner III  
Kirk Rogers, Manager, Archives and Records Management  
Amer Afridi, Manager, Transportation Engineering

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**1. City of St. John's Heritage Strategic Plan 2026-2036**

Recommendation

**Moved By** Councillor Davis

**Seconded By** Councillor Ryall

That Council endorse the St. John's Heritage Strategic Plan 2026-2036 and use it as a guiding document for actions to be completed over the next ten years.

For (9): Deputy Mayor Ellsworth, Councillor Cadigan, Councillor Hammond, Councillor Hickman, Councillor Ryall, Councillor Bruce, Councillor Noseworthy, Councillor Davis, and Councillor Earle

**MOTION CARRIED (9 to 0)**

**2. 2025 General Municipal Election Report**

Councillor Bruce presented an overview of the 2025 Municipal General Election Report, noting concerns related to vote-by-mail participation, low voter turnout, and overall civic engagement. In response to a request from Councillor Hickman for clarification on the recommendation, the City Clerk explained that the sole recommendation at this stage is to establish a staff-led Election Reform Working Group. The purpose of this group would be to strengthen and modernize the City's electoral processes by drawing on feedback, lessons learned, and operational experience.

Councillor Hickman expressed his support for the creation of the working group, adding that residents appear to be moving away from vote by mail and reiterating his concerns regarding the accuracy of the voters list.

Councillor Noseworthy highlighted that declining turnout among younger voters is a province-wide issue and suggested that there would be benefit in collaborating with other jurisdictions to address the issue. Members of Council agreed with the concerns raised, noting that improving voter turnout will require greater efforts to promote civic engagement.

Recommendation

**Moved By** Councillor Bruce

**Seconded By** Councillor Hickman

That Council accept the 2025 Municipal General Election Report and approve the recommendation contained therein.

For (9): Deputy Mayor Ellsworth, Councillor Cadigan, Councillor Hammond, Councillor Hickman, Councillor Ryall, Councillor Bruce, Councillor Noseworthy, Councillor Davis, and Councillor Earle

**MOTION CARRIED (9 to 0)**

**3. 366-374 Empire Avenue – REZ2600001**

Members of Council expressed support for the proposed development on Empire Avenue. Councillor Davis noted the increased density the apartment building would bring and asked whether it would be included in the ongoing Traffic Study for the area. Staff advised that the study is underway and that the proposed number of units would not impact the traffic impact study.

Recommendation

**Moved By** Councillor Davis

**Seconded By** Councillor Hammond

That Council consider rezoning 366-374 Empire Avenue from the Residential 3 (R3) Zone to the Apartment 1 (A1) Zone for a Cluster Development. Further, that Council approve the attached land use report (LUR) terms of reference for 366-374 Empire Avenue and upon receiving a satisfactory LUR, that the application be advertised and referred to a public meeting chaired by an independent facilitator.

For (9): Deputy Mayor Ellsworth, Councillor Cadigan, Councillor Hammond, Councillor Hickman, Councillor Ryall, Councillor Bruce, Councillor Noseworthy, Councillor Davis, and Councillor Earle

**MOTION CARRIED (9 to 0)**