



Amalgamation Steering Committee Meeting

March 4, 2026 | 5:00 pm

Municipality of Shelburne | 414 Woodlawn Drive

AGENDA

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Amalgamation Steering Committee Meeting
February 4, 2026 | 2:30 pm
Municipality of Shelburne | 414 Woodlawn Drive | Room 114

Those in Attendance:

Mayor Derek Amalfa, Chair TOL
Warden Penny Smith, Vice Chair MDS
Mayor Stan Jacklin, TOS
Deputy Mayor Craig Hillen, TOL
Deputy Warden Heidi Wagner, MDS
Councillor Terese Cruz, TOS
June Harding, Clerk TOL
Warren MacLeod, CAO MDS
Sarah Mattatall, CAO TOS
Nicole Blades, Recording Secretary MDS
Members of the Public

1. Call to Order

Mayor Derek Amalfa, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

2.1. February 4, 2026

*Being duly moved and seconded, the agenda for February 4, 2026 was approved.
Motion carried.*

3. Approval of Minutes

3.1. December 3, 2025

*Being duly moved and seconded, the minutes for December 3, 2025 were approved.
Motion carried.*

4. New Business

4.1. Cost Sharing Moving Forward

With budget deliberations approaching, all three units require estimated costs related to amalgamation to bring forward for consideration. For purposes of submitting a funding application to the Province, the administrators of all three units presented an estimated \$550,000 to be shared amongst the units.

Potential cost sharing percentages were presented to the committee. These percentages are based on the prior years assessment values for each unit with the

Municipality being 76.24%, the Town of Shelburne being 17.43%, and the Town of Lockeport being 6.33%.

A discussion was held regarding the importance of securing provincial funding to support the amalgamation process. Clarification was provided that amalgamation is not proceeding at this time; the current action is solely to apply for funding assistance, with any decision on amalgamation to be made at a later date.

Being duly moved and seconded, be it resolved that the Amalgamation Steering Committee write a letter to MLA Nolan Young requesting the Province to pay the total costs for the studies required in order to move forward with the amalgamation process. Motion carried.

Being duly moved and seconded, be it resolved that the Amalgamation Steering Committee approve the percentages as presented and take the recommendations to respective Councils to review to move forward in the Municipal reform process. Motion carried.

Being duly moved and seconded, be it resolved that the Amalgamation Steering Committee approve the budget amounts as presented and move forward with submitting the funding application. Motion carried.

4.2. Website FAQs

The Municipality is housing an Amalgamation page that shares all content for the Committee on their website.

A discussion was held and it was agreed that an FAQ document should be created and would be a great resource to the public.

It was noted that Windsor/West Hants and Queens County still have their FAQ page from their amalgamation process available online for viewing.

It was unanimously agreed that all FAQs be forwarded to Chair Amalfa and he will work with administration on creating and updating the content to be shared on the Amalgamation page on the Municipality's website.

4.3. Pros & Cons Discussion from Workshop

On February 3, 2026, the Councils of all three units had an amalgamation workshop with Kevin Latimer. Kevin is the former Managing Partner of Cox & Palmer, Halifax and was appointed by the Province of Nova Scotia to act as Transition Coordinator for the Windsor / West Hants municipal consolidation project (2018-2020).

A discussion was held and each committee member provided feedback on the workshop.

It was noted the workshop summary will be available for viewing on the Amalgamation webpage hosted on the Municipality's website.

4.4. Public Engagement Strategy

A discussion was held regarding the importance of public engagement and input during this process, and all residents are encouraged to contact members of the Committee to share any feedback they wish to have considered regarding amalgamation.

A discussion was held regarding future education sessions with municipalities that have had a successful amalgamation/consolidation application, such as Windsor and West Hants. It was noted that a presentation from their representatives would be informative and beneficial for both the Committee and the public.

A discussion was also held regarding a session with Chrystal Fuller and Brian Smith who led the public engagement with the Antigonish amalgamation process. CAO MacLeod will explore costs to have Ms. Fuller present to the Committee.

Being duly moved and seconded, be it resolved that the Amalgamation Steering Committee approve CAO Warren MacLeod to invite members of the Windsor/West Hants Consolidation to present on their experience and to explore costs for Chrystal Fuller and Brian Smith to present to the Committee. Motion carried.

5. Next Steps

5.1. Discussion on further need for additional education sessions

A discussion was held regarding the amalgamation of Queens County and its reported success. Administration was directed to explore whether individuals involved in the process, which occurred approximately 29 years ago, may still be available to provide insight.

It was noted that placing an ad in the local paper may be beneficial to getting more public input. Administration will explore costs.

6. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:57pm. The next Amalgamation Steering Committee meeting will be held on March 4, 2026.

Nicole Blades, Executive Assistant MDS
Recording Secretary

Mayor Derek Amalfa, Chair

Warden Penny Smith, Vice Chair

Date



West Hants

something inspiring awaits

Windsor / West Hants Consolidation

West Hants Regional Municipality
Mark Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer





Consolidation Overview





- Introductions
Who is in the room?
- Session Expectations?



West Hants

Something
inspiring awaits.



Hantsport

Something
inspiring awaits.



Windsor

something
inspiring awaits



Governance

- Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act – Bill No 55
 - Coordinating Committee Selection
 - Coordinating Committee Chair Selection
 - Coordinating Committee Transition Budget
- Coordinating Committee vs. Windsor and / or West Hants Councils
 - Authority during consolidation period
 - Reference Bill No 55
- Council Size and Boundary Review
 - Election Process – April 1, 2020
- Public Engagement
- Communications
 - Consolidation Branding “Stronger Together”
- Principles of Consolidation



Governance

- Guiding Principles (x8) for Consolidation
 1. **Boundaries** – When looking at boundaries, ensure equitable representation for both urban and rural communities for the new council. It is essential that the culture and identities of both the urban and rural communities are retained in the new consolidated community.
 2. **Taxation**– When developing a taxation model for the consolidated community, the existing tax system should serve as a base. Business as usual, services as usual. The electoral boundaries should not impact taxation.
 3. **Debt** – When addressing debt from the former communities, area rates should be used to ensure the repayment of the debt is paid in the spirit it was incurred.
 4. **Administrative Structure** – When developing the blended administrative structure of the consolidated community, all efforts should be taken to ensure there is no job loss as a result of the consolidation. Any planned efficiencies should strive to be achieved through attrition and maintaining corporate knowledge should be prioritized.



Governance

- Guiding Principles (x8) for Consolidation
5. **Regional Service Strategy** – An overall strategy for regional service delivery and regional infrastructure prioritization should be informed by an inventory of existing assets.
 6. **Regional Planning** – Regional planning should be a priority for the consolidated community to ensure that the strengths of the urban and rural communities are being leveraged appropriately.
 7. **Public Engagement** – A Public Engagement Plan should focus on transparency and provide diverse ways to inform and engage the public and stakeholders.
 8. **Decisions** – All pertinent decisions should be reviewed with the lens of looking for economic development growth and opportunities.



Governance

- Coordinating Committee
 - Administrative Responsibilities / CC Workplan
 - CAO Search
 - HR Review
 - Staff Interview and Assessment
 - Organizational Chart
 - HR Manual and Policies
 - Job Descriptions and Job Postings
 - Compensation Review
 - Union Negotiations
 - Dalhousie University “Management Without Borders”
 - Developed Performance Indicators



Administration

- Committees of Council
- Reporting to Council
 - Communications / Departmental Reports
- Staffing
 - Cultural Changes
- Contracts and Agreements
- Municipal Complex Site
 - Surplus buildings
- Community Engagement
- Branding
- Name of Municipality
 - Caution – RCMP Agreement Impacts



Finance

- Budgets
 - Coordinating Committee
 - Town of Windsor
 - West Hants
 - West Hants Regional Municipality
 - CRA – Defining the Coordinating Committee (MGA)
- Consolidation Funding
- Post Consolidation Operating Funding
- Post Consolidation Infrastructure Funding



Finance cont.

Approved General Rated 2021-2022

Legislative	CAO Office	Correctional Services	Fire Protection	By-law Enforcement	Financial Services Office
Windsor Township	Courthouse	Planning and Development Office	New Debt Servicing	Transportation Services Admin (PWS)	Regional Housing Authority
Landfill	Waste Diversion	Community Development (less Cem.)	Education	Regional Libraries	Windsor Library
	Hantsport Library	100 King Street – Office Building	76 Morison Drive – Office Building		



Finance cont.

Area Rate Services 2021-2022

West Hants	Windsor	Hantsport
Debt Servicing (Historic)	Debt Servicing (Historic)	Debt Servicing (Historic)
West Hants Water Utility Fee	Windsor Water Utility Fee	HMCC
Police Protection (70%)	Police Protection (30%)	West Hants Area Rate Added
Transportation Services (Snow & Ice Control, Road Maintenance)	Transportation Services (Snow & Ice Control, Road Maintenance, Street Lights)	Transportation Services (Snow & Ice Control, Road Maintenance, Street Lights)
Waste Collection	Waste Collection Maplewood Cemetery	Riverbank Cemetery



Information Technology

- Office 365
- Records Management Systems
- Financial Software
- Book King (Recreation Booking Software)
- Water Meter Readers
- Security Cameras
- In-House vs. Contract Services
- VCFN vs. Private Service Provider



Policing

- RCMP Services
 - Contract awareness MPSA vs PPSA.
 - Financial Reporting
 - Fleet and Asset Transfer
 - Caution: Municipal Name Change



Fire Services

- Fire Service Review (Four Departments / Six Stations)
 - Report and Recommendations
 - Protective Service Manager
 - Fleet Overview
 - Apparatus Unification
 - Policies, Procedures, Honorariums and Training
 - Standardized Financial Reporting and Budgeting



REMO / EMO

- EMO vs REMO
 - ~~IMSA~~
 - Update EMO Plan

Planning and Development

- Planning Advisory Committee / Heritage Advisory Committee
 - ~~Area Advisory Committees~~
 - ~~Windsor~~
 - ~~Hantsport~~
- MPSs and LUBs
 - Hantsport
 - West Hants
 - Windsor
- Regional Strategy and By-laws



Public Works

- Asset Management
 - Infrastructure Assessment
 - Asset Management Software
- Water Utility
 - Treatment Plants and Distribution Systems
 - Staff Cross Training
 - Fees and Administration
- Sewer Services
 - Treatment Plants and Collection Systems
 - Staff Cross Training
 - Fees and Administration



Public Works

- Fleet Management
- Unionized Workforce
 - Centralized Depot
- Snow Removal
- Jurisdictional Awareness
- Waste Management
 - Collection
 - GFL Landfill

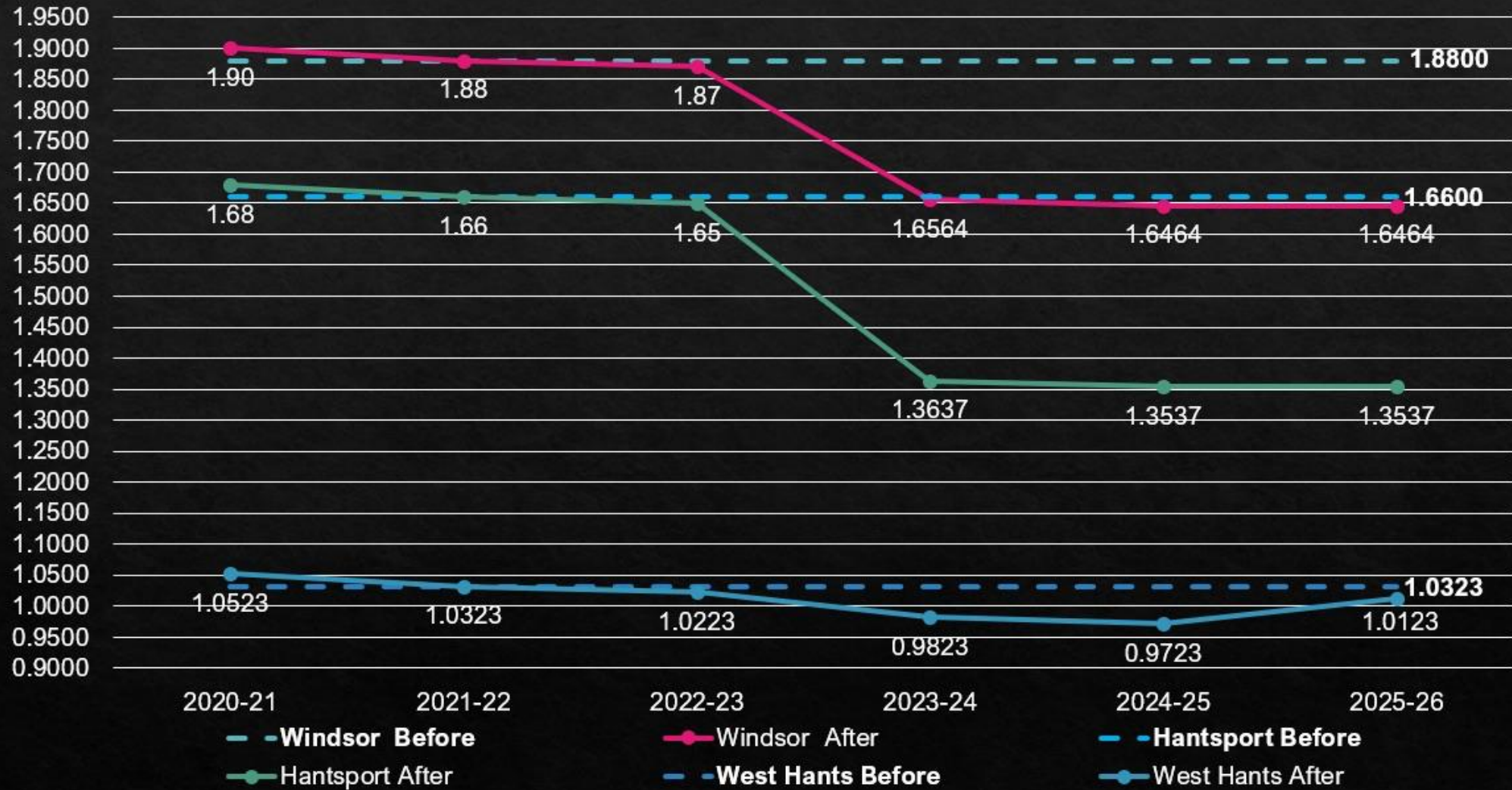


Community Development

- Diverse Department
 - Recreation
 - Facilities – New Sports Complex / Rental Rates /
 - Programs
 - Trails and Green Spaces – Beautification
 - Active Transportation
 - Economic Development
 - Cemeteries
 - Boat Launches
 - Grants



Six Year Tax Rate Comparison



Questions



West Hants
something inspiring awaits

Mark Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer
902-670-4255
mphillips@westhants.ca

Amalgamation FAQ's

1. What is being considered?

The three municipal units — the Municipality of the District of Shelburne (MODS), the Town of Shelburne (TOS), and the Town of Lockeport (TOL) — are **exploring the possibility of amalgamation into a single municipal unit.**

No final decision has been made. This is an **exploration phase only.**

2. Is this a consolidation like Windsor–West Hants?

No.

This process would be an amalgamation through the Nova Scotia Regulatory & Appeals Board (NSRAB) under the *Municipal Government Act*, not a provincially directed consolidation.

This means:

- The initiative comes from the municipalities themselves
- NSRAB reviews the application and evidence
- The Province is notified and may participate, but does not direct the outcome

Please see further FAQs below on how the NSRAB process works.

3. Why are the municipalities exploring amalgamation?

Communities across Nova Scotia are facing:

- Rising service delivery costs
- Infrastructure pressures
- Staffing and recruitment challenges
- Increasing regulatory complexity

Amalgamation is being explored to determine whether a single municipal government could deliver services more efficiently, equitably, and sustainably than three separate units.

Exploring amalgamation does **not** mean it is the preferred outcome — it means the municipalities are asking the question.

Process & Decision-Making

4. Who decides whether amalgamation happens?

Ultimately:

- Each municipal council must decide whether to apply for amalgamation
- NSRAB reviews the application, evidence, and public input
- NSRAB makes a recommendation
- The Province enacts any required legislation if approved

This is a multi-step, public process, not a single vote behind closed doors

5. Is public engagement required?

While the Municipal Government Act does not legally require public engagement before applying, NSRAB has strongly recommended that municipalities engage the public early and meaningfully.

Public feedback:

- Forms part of the evidence before NSRAB
- Helps identify issues that must be studied
- Can influence how (or whether) an application proceeds

Additional details on public engagement sessions are being considered, check back here for updates and specific dates

6. Will there be a plebiscite?

A plebiscite is **not required** under Nova Scotia law.

If held:

- It is **non-binding**
- NSRAB treats it as **one piece of evidence**, not a decision

Past experience in Nova Scotia (including Antigonish and Pictou County) shows that plebiscites can be **highly divisive** and may not resolve underlying concerns

No decision has been made on whether a plebiscite will occur.

7. How much will amalgamation cost?

The three Municipalities have agreed to a cost sharing split based on comparative assessment values. The assessment values and corresponding percentage cost splits are identified below:

- Town of Shelburne: 17.43% (\$128,873,500)
- Town of Lockeport: 6.33% (\$46,814,425)
- Municipality of the District of Shelburne: 76.24% (\$563,589,700)

Based on the presentation by the NSRAB to the amalgamation committee on December 3rd, 2025, the CAO's obtained high level cost estimates for the reports and activities that the NSRAB would require. These estimates are:

- Facilitation & Engagement ~\$75,000 (Estimate provided by Chrystal Fuller, previous engagement facilitator for the Antigonish Consolidation efforts)
 - \$5,000 - Planning out Next Steps presentation by Chrystal Fuller, Brian Smith & Kevin Latimer
 - \$20,000 - Coming up with an engagement plan
 - \$40,000 - \$50,000 - Conducting the public engagement & generating a "What we Heard Report"
 - Note Antigonish spent \$180,000 on public engagement with 26 events
- Financial Report ~\$200,000 - \$250,000 (Estimate provided by Grant Thornton)
- Human Resources Report ~\$72,000 - \$85,000 (Estimate provided by Davie Pier)
- Boundary Report ~\$3,500 (Estimate provided by C&D Community Design)
- Legal Costs ~\$100,000 (This is a guess by the CAO's, but they qualify this estimate by saying that they feel it could be significantly higher based on the Windsor West Hants final costs)

These cost estimates come to a total of ~\$474,000 - \$547,000. It is possible that this estimate is low based on the final costs of the Windsor West Hants consolidation which were approximately \$1,500,000. It is also possible that the amalgamation committee may want to split the financial report into two parts, the first part being a tax strategy report that would identify the various taxation strategies that could be considered in the event amalgamation went forward.

8. Who will pay for the amalgamation?

In a meeting held between the MODS Council and Minister John A. MacDonald (Minister of Municipal Affairs) towards the end of 2025, it was asked if the Province would provide funding towards the possible amalgamation of MODS, TOS & TOL. It was pointed out that the Province previously provided Windsor West Hants \$1,000,000 towards their consolidation costs (a different process than amalgamation). The Minister's response was that the three units would have to apply to the Provincial "Municipal Innovation Program (MIP)" for funding.

Upon investigation, it is determined that MIP is an impractical funding mechanism for an amalgamation process of this magnitude. The program's total annual allocation is approximately \$578,000, funding is limited to 50–75% of eligible project costs, and the program is consistently oversubscribed. Even under the most favourable circumstances, MIP funding would leave a significant and unsustainable financial burden on small municipal units already operating within tight fiscal constraints. In practical terms, the current funding framework presents a material barrier to informed, responsible decision-making. Without full provincial support for the studies required by NSRAB, the municipalities—and ultimately

their residents—are being asked to assume costs that are disproportionate to their tax base and capacity. This risks undermining the very objective of encouraging thoughtful, evidence-based regional governance discussions.

Given the lack of meaningful commitment by the Province to support the three Municipalities investigating amalgamation, the Chair person of the Amalgamation Committee, Mayor Derek Amalfa, sent MLA Nolan Young a letter on February 5th inviting Mr. Young to attend the March 4th amalgamation committee meeting to discuss the funding challenges.

It should be noted that the three Councils will consider applying for MIP funding before the final deadline date of March 31st, 2026 and that should funding be awarded that the amalgamation committee would not commit to spending any funds until all three Councils agree to move forward with spending funds.

Taxes & Finances

9. Will taxes go up?

At this stage, **no changes to tax rates are proposed or assumed.**

Any amalgamation application would need to include:

- Financial information
- Transition costs
- Long-term sustainability analysis

In other Nova Scotia amalgamations, **tax rates did not automatically increase as a result of amalgamation alone**, but outcomes depend on local decisions and service levels.

As mentioned in the amalgamation cost FAQ, it is possible that the amalgamation committee may want to split the financial report into two parts, with the first part being a tax strategy report. Such a report would investigate the various taxation options that could be considered in the event amalgamation went forward. Early discussions with Windsor West Hants have revealed that they are engaging in a tax strategy over time with the goal of one day achieving taxation harmony across residents.

10. Will rural residents subsidize towns (or vice versa)?

Amalgamation does **not automatically equalize taxes or services.**

Under Nova Scotia law:

- Different tax rates can continue based on services received
- Area-based rates and service exchanges can be maintained

Any changes would require:

- Council decisions
- Public notice
- Formal approval processes

Services & Operations

11. Will services change immediately?

No.

If amalgamation were approved:

- A **transition period** would follow
- Existing services would continue during transition
- Changes would be phased, studied, and publicly communicated

There is **no “day-one” service disruption.**

12. What about policing, fire, and emergency services?

These are **critical issues** that must be resolved *before* any amalgamation is approved.

Specifically:

- Policing costs require approval from the Minister of Justice
- Fire service structures are typically maintained
- NSRAB expects these matters to be clearly addressed in an application

13. Will the schools in Lockeport be closed?

There have been questions about whether municipal amalgamation could result in the closure of schools in Lockeport.

School operations and decisions regarding school openings or closures are not under municipal authority. While municipalities contribute funding to the Province, public education in Nova Scotia is administered by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) and delivered regionally by the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education (TCRCE).

As education governance is entirely separate from municipal government, school operations would not be affected by amalgamation. Neither EECD nor TCRCE is involved in the amalgamation process.

Residents seeking additional information or reassurance are encouraged to contact the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education or their local MLA, Nolan Young.

14. Will municipal offices close?

No decisions have been made.

Office locations, service counters, and staffing models would be examined during a transition phase, with an emphasis on:

- Accessibility
- Service continuity
- Operational efficiency

Governance & Representation

15. Will my community lose its voice?

Representation is a **central concern** in any amalgamation.

If amalgamation proceeds:

- New electoral boundaries would be established
- Representation must meet provincial standards
- Community identity and local input remain key considerations

Loss of representation was one of the strongest concerns raised in Antigonish, and is well-documented as an issue that must be addressed explicitly

16. What will the new municipality be called?

No name has been proposed.

Naming would occur **only if amalgamation is approved**, typically through council decision with public input.

Lessons from Antigonish & Other Communities

17. What can we learn from the Antigonish experience?

Key lessons include:

- The importance of **clear, honest FAQs**

- Acknowledging **both benefits and risks**
- Avoiding the perception that decisions are “already made”
- Explaining *why* amalgamation is being explored, not just *how*

These FAQs are designed specifically to address those gaps.

Establishment of ‘guiding principles’ that helped shape discussions

18. Where can I get more information or provide input?

Information will be shared through:

- Municipal websites
- Public meetings and engagement sessions
- Residents can make enquiries by sending the Amalgamation Committee Chairperson a direct email to amalgamationchair@temp.g23.ca

Opportunities for feedback will be communicated publicly and in advance.

Final Clarification

19. Is amalgamation a “done deal”?

No.

Exploring amalgamation means:

- Asking questions
- Studying impacts
- Hearing from the public

A decision will only occur **after evidence, engagement, and formal review.**

Nova Scotia Regulatory & Appeals Board (NSRAB)

20. What is NSRAB?

The Nova Scotia Regulatory & Appeals Board (NSRAB) is an independent, quasi-judicial tribunal.

It is **not** part of:

- Municipal councils

- The Department of Municipal Affairs
- The provincial Cabinet

Its role is to **review evidence, hear from the public and affected parties, and decide whether an amalgamation or dissolution is in the public interest**, based on provincial law.

21. Why is NSRAB involved in municipal amalgamation?

Under the Municipal Government Act (MGA), municipalities that wish to amalgamate must apply to NSRAB.

NSRAB’s job is to decide whether the proposed amalgamation is:

“in the best interests of the inhabitants of the area, taking into account the financial and social implications.”

This legal test applies to amalgamations across Nova Scotia

22. What are the main stages of the NSRAB process?

In plain language, the NSRAB process has five main stages, typically taking 9–10 months:

1. Application is filed
2. Preliminary Hearing
3. Studies and reports are prepared
4. Hearing on the Merits (main hearing)
5. Board decision and final order

Each step is public and documented.

23. Step 1: What happens when an application is filed?

An application is filed by:

- The municipalities themselves **or**
- A sufficient number of electors (at least 10% or 100 electors, whichever is greater)

Once filed:

- The Province is notified
- The application is posted publicly on the NSRAB website
- The process formally begins

24. Step 2: What is a Preliminary Hearing?

The Preliminary Hearing is a procedural hearing — not a decision on amalgamation.

At this hearing, NSRAB decides:

- Who can formally participate (municipalities, Province, intervenors, public)
- What studies and evidence must be prepared
- Who pays for those studies
- Timelines for filing evidence
- When the main hearing will occur

This ensures the process is **structured, transparent, and fair** before major work begins

25. Who can participate in the NSRAB process?

NSRAB must hear from:

- The applicant(s)
- Affected municipal units
- The Minister of Municipal Affairs
- Any member of the public or organization approved as a Formal Intervenor

In addition, **members of the public may speak at designated public sessions** during the main hearing.

26. Step 3: What kinds of studies are required?

The studies required are determined by NSRAB at the Preliminary Hearing and often include:

- Financial impacts (including 5-year projections)
- Policing arrangements and costs
- Roads and streets responsibilities
- Fire and emergency services
- Infrastructure and capital costs
- Water and wastewater systems
- Recreation and community services

- Equalization and service exchange impacts

NSRAB can also require:

“any other evidence that the Board may direct”
under the Municipal Government Act

27. Step 4: What is the Hearing on the Merits?

This is the main public hearing, usually held in the region affected and often lasting several days.

During this hearing:

- Municipalities present their case
- Study authors explain their findings
- Formal intervenors participate
- The Province participates
- Witnesses can be cross-examined
- There is an evening session specifically for public input

All evidence becomes part of the public record

28. Does public opinion matter in the NSRAB process?

Yes.

Public input is:

- Entered into the record
- Considered alongside studies and expert evidence
- A key part of assessing “social implications”

A plebiscite, if held, is non-binding, but may be considered as part of the overall evidence.

29. Step 5: How does NSRAB make its decision?

After the Hearing on the Merits:

- NSRAB deliberates independently
- A written decision is issued (typically within 60 days)

- A Final Order is issued

The Board may:

- Approve amalgamation
- Dismiss the application
- Approve amalgamation with conditions

30. If amalgamation is approved, what does NSRAB decide?

If approved, NSRAB's order can address:

- The effective date of amalgamation
- Number of councillors
- Polling district boundaries
- Transfer of assets and liabilities
- Transitional governance rules
- Treatment of boards and commissions
- Financial transition controls

NSRAB may also issue follow-up directions if needed.

31. Do existing by-laws and planning rules change automatically?

No.

Existing:

- By-laws
- Planning policies
- Zoning rules

Continue in force until formally changed by the new council, following public processes required by law

32. Who has the final say?

- **NSRAB** determines whether amalgamation is approved
- **The Province** passes any required legislation

- **The new municipal council**, if created, governs going forward

This is not a political decision made behind closed doors — it is a structured, evidence-based public process.

From: [Amalgamation Chair](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Comment on Feb 4th meeting

Thank you, [REDACTED].

I appreciate your patience as we work through this process. I will ensure that your question is brought forward for discussion, and I apologize that it was not addressed at the last meeting.

Please don't hesitate to reach out at any time. I value your engagement, collaboration, and interest in this work, and appreciate you taking the time to follow up.

Kind regards,
Derek

Hello,

I'm addressing this to the Chair of the Amalgamation Steering Committee, though I'm unsure who that is, as the committee's webpage does not identify the chair.

While listening to the meeting recording, I noted that at approximately the 22:45 mark you were asked whether any questions had been received from the public. You responded that you had received one email.

I want to bring to your attention that a public question was also submitted through the website shelburnevoice.ca, where it received support from 27 community members. This question was formally brought to the Municipality of the District of Shelburne and discussed at a council meeting. The fact that it was not forwarded to your committee, and therefore has not been addressed, is concerning.

For clarity and fairness to the public, I am restating the question here:

Based on the information you currently have, what problem are you trying to solve with amalgamation?

I look forward to your response.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Amalgamation Chair](#)
Subject: Critique of Terms of Reference – Amalgamation Steering Committee

Hello Again Derek,

This email serves to outline several key deficiencies in the **Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Amalgamation Steering Committee**. While the document establishes a procedural framework for the Committee's operation, it lacks a **clear and compelling problem statement** to justify the exploration of municipal amalgamation.

The primary deficiencies are as follows:

- **Absence of a "Why":** The document focuses heavily on the "how" - defining membership, voting, and meeting protocols - but fails to articulate the **underlying issues or pressures** (such as financial instability or service inefficiencies) that necessitated the Committee's establishment.
- **Vague Objectives:** Section 3 lists broad areas for exploration, such as "financial impacts" and "service delivery," but presents them as **topics for study rather than responses to specific problems**. Without a defined problem, these objectives lack necessary context.
- **Lack of Baseline Data:** There is no description of the **current state or "status quo"** of the Municipal Units. A ToR should define the gap between the current reality and the desired future state to provide the Committee with a clear sense of direction.

Outside Information: In standard policy development, a Terms of Reference is typically supported by a "Problem Statement" or "Business Case" that clearly identifies the challenges being addressed. In the current document, the **lack of a stated "crisis" or specific inefficiency** leads to the perception of the committee as a purely bureaucratic exercise.

I recommend revising the ToR to include a formal **Statement of Purpose** that explicitly defines the problems the three Municipal Units hope to solve through this collaborative analysis.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

--

[REDACTED]

From: [Amalgamation Chair](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Amalgamation

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for taking the time to write and share your questions regarding the ongoing amalgamation discussions. I appreciate residents reaching out to better understand the process.

At this time, discussions between the Municipality of the District of Shelburne, the Town of Shelburne, and the Town of Lockeport remain exploratory in nature, and no decisions have been made regarding amalgamation. Amalgamation discussions have occurred periodically over many years among the municipal units. Prior to my taking office, Lockeport Council passed a motion to participate in exploratory discussions with the neighbouring municipalities.

The purpose of the current work is to better understand potential impacts, challenges, and opportunities before any decisions would be considered by the respective Councils. Many of the questions you have raised including; taxation, services, staffing, representation, and public input, are among the key topics currently being examined by the Amalgamation Steering Committee.

To help address common questions, the Steering Committee has developed a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), which speak directly to many of the concerns you have outlined. The draft FAQs will be reviewed at the Committee's meeting this Wednesday. Following that review, the information will be posted and updated on the amalgamation information website: <https://www.municipalityofshelburne.ca/amalgamation-steering-committee/>

You may also view the draft FAQs within the March 4 meeting agenda package currently available on the site. Once approved, the finalized version will be published and updated as the process continues.

Please feel free to share this information with others who may have similar questions or concerns. Thank you again for your interest and engagement as this process moves forward.

Sincerely,
Mayor Derek Amalfa
Chair, Amalgamation Steering Committee

Dear Chair Person,

I'm writing as a concerned citizen of the municipality.

One question I've had from the very beginning, is WHY amalgamation is on the table? And if it's not known WHY, then my next question is, WHO put you at the table? What problems currently exist, that needs fixing?

Can you guarantee that if amalgamation happens, there will be ZERO tax increase for at least the next 3 years at least?

If amalgamation advances to future stages, will the citizens who is affected, have a chance to vote (plebiscite) ?

Is there a possibility that areas/districts may receive fewer services?

When amalgamation happens, usually that means fewer staff. Will this be the case if amalgamation occurs? Will that savings trickle down to us, the taxpayers?

Another concern that I have, is that IF amalgamation happens, the needs of our municipality may no longer be represented. Will there be a means whereby each district will still have a voice and a say?

Thank you for your time in addressing my concerns.

I am asking for a reply within 7 business days in response to these questions.

Thank you

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