

Town of Eastport

December Special



Happy Winter! It's the season of frosty mornings and toasty mugs of hot chocolate; what's not to like? Regardless if you are a fan of the cold and snow or not, while your hands maybe cold, let your hearts be warm. Enjoy the season for the beauty it brings, stay safe and stay warm.



In November, Council hosted a Senior Soup Supper and the turnout was fabulous. By all accounts the food, entertainment and comradery were excellent! Many attendees took the time to fill out surveys and leave valuable feedback, which we will employ throughout 2024 and the coming years to ensure we are doing all we can to make life in Eastport satisfactory for seniors.

Town of Eastport Council Office Christmas Hours:

Closed:

December 25, 26 & 27th

Open:

December 28 & 29th 9-4

Closed:

January 1st

Beginning in January, the Town of Eastport Regular Council meetings will be held twice per month on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month.

Meetings start at 7pm, are held at the Council Office and members of the public are welcome to attend!

If anyone wishes to address Council regarding any matter, you must provide notice to the Town office by noon of the Friday preceding the meeting.



Merry & Bright Christmas Lights Contest!

From December 1st until December 20th if you take a picture of your outdoor Christmas decorations lit up Merry & Bright, email it to kim.powell@eastport.ca or townclerk@eastport.ca and you'll be entered to win a prize! We'll also display your Christmas displays on our Facebook page. Come on folks, let's light Eastport up for the holidays!

Rumor has it, residents enjoyed our Fall Quarterly - we're so happy to hear that! Our goal is to ensure content of the Newsletter is informative, inclusive and relevant. To make sure it reaches all residents, we're creating an email list. We understand we're living in an age of technology where many younger generations (and some older) prefer to receive information electronically. Perhaps you've got a No-Bulk Mail/Flyers order in place at the post office, or you're mailing address is not local, although you own property in Eastport.

Whatever the reason, if you would like to receive the Newsletter electronically, please call the office at 709-677-2161 or email townclerk@eastport.ca

As Christmas season approaches and a new year is on the horizon, it's a perfect time for Councilors to express our appreciation to Town Staff and all residents for your support throughout 2023. Thank you to all who give time and effort as volunteers, you are appreciated more than you know. Thank you to the Eastport Peninsula Volunteer Fire Department members who give so freely of your time to keep us all safe, you truly are selfless in what you do!

Christmas is a season of goodwill, a time when we look outward, to do something for others. In Eastport, we believe that happens throughout the year, not just at the holidays. It's this sense of community and togetherness that we hope will take us into 2024. Christmas means different things for different people, and regardless of how you celebrate we hope you take a moment to stop, to rest, to reflect on the good moments of 2023.

In the spirit of Christmas, we extend wishes to each and everyone of our residents for a festive season filled with peace & joy. May the New Year bring blessings of health & happiness to one and all.



There's lots of fun to be had in Eastport during December! Here are the highlights of what's happening!

Community Badminton is held each Monday of the month (except holidays) at Holy Cross School from 6:30 - 8pm (Age 12+)

December 5th, The Beaches 50+ Club will be hosting a **Bakesale and Afternoon Tea** at the SUF Hall from 1-3pm

December 10th, SUF Hall is hosting a **Children's Christmas Party** from 2pm-5pm

Don't miss the annual **Santa Claus Parade** on **December 17th** starting at 1pm

At 7pm on **December 17th**, the **Eastpen Players Christmas Pageant** at Holy Cross Church

Boxing Day Dance at the Royal Canadian Legion on **December 26th** (must be 19+)

COUNCIL & STAFF

Mayor:

Arthur Crisby

Deputy Mayor:

Monica Bull

Councilors:

Roger Bull

thesailorsinn@gmail.com

David Decker

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Benjamin Patey

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Kimberly Powell

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Shannon Powell

Town Clerk / Manager:

Chantal Lynch

townclerk@eastport.ca

Part-Time Clerical Assistant:

Chelsea Harris

(Casual / Call-In

Clerical Assistant)

Denise Hickey

Public Works Supervisor:

Marvin Bull

Public Works Employees:

Harvey Senior

Geoffrey Heffern

(Casual / Call-In Maintenance)

Stephen Durdle

Ches Crisby

Janitorial:

Sheila Dyke

Office:

709-677-2161 (P)

709-677-2144 (F)

website:

www.eastport.ca

Cluing up 2023!

Nearing the end of 2023, councilors and staff are diligently working to ensure our checklist for the year is complete. It's been a year of ups and downs for the Town. We've had difficult moments with our aging underground water mains, causing rotating water shut-offs during the summer months. There's been projects anticipated, such as rink resurfacing which didn't get started. We've had businesses around town close up shop. On the other hand, we've had new residential developments, which means more people deciding to call Eastport home. There's been businesses sold, which leave us anticipating what new ventures will come. And life post COVID seems to be normalizing.

We've been upfront in telling you the Town is going through a process of playing catch up with our annual audits. It's anticipated that by the end of January 2024 we'll be caught up. Then, we will be in a position to receive funding for capital works projects, along with other privileges currently on hold - this is great news for Eastport! As we bring 2023 to a close, Council would like to reassure residents of the commitment to be accountable and transparent, as well as being dedicated to making changes to enhance services for residents.

Budget 2024 - What's in store for Eastport!

It's no secret, paying taxes is not something any of us like to do! However, tax revenue comprises the majority of the Town's revenue - simply put, without taxes the Town can't operate. The Town of Eastport works on a Service Based Budget, meaning our budget is built around the services we provide. Building a budget this way allows Council to be more focused and provides a more transparent view of where money is allocated and spent.

Budget 2024 is built around the idea of boosting spending to tackle water, sewer and road infrastructure. To generate the required revenue, the tough decision had to be made; there will be increases to **some** taxes/fees. Properties paying the Minimum Tax Rate and Vacant Land Tax will both see a \$50 increase in 2024. Residential and Commercial properties will see an increase of \$40 each in both Water and Sewer fees (which will be the first increase since 2008 at which time it went up by \$10 each). Rounding off the increases is \$100 to the Business Tax and Air B and B fees.

Although Central Waste Management has announced a 3.8% increase in tipping fees, the Town of Eastport will not be passing that on to our residents, there will be **NO** increase in Garbage Waste Collection Fees in 2024. The Town of Eastport will also keep the low mil-rate of 5.75 (R) and 7.75 (C), one of, if not the lowest in the area.

Council has taken a "let's get it done" approach. There's lots of work to be done in Eastport and now's the time to start. We can not rebuild our foundation and begin new infrastructure without the money to do it. The cost of everything has been steadily increasing, and this has been the primary factor in our budget.

We must recognize that it is not financially possible to make advancements in all areas of services each year; rather council must annually identify and prioritize such items. An important resource for Council to have is a current strategic Town Plan. This document will provide guidance in coordinated and affordable advancement of our goals and objectives. Planning and Development, one of the seven pillars of the Municipal budget has been allocated \$25,000 for the renewal process of Eastport's Town Plan.

Councils focus is on the future of Eastport. Budget 2024 is inclusive! We're ensuring improvements in recreation with a focus on cultural, recreation and social activities for all ages and abilities. Infrastructure needs are being addressed; by assessing the needs and finding a way forward with septic concerns through a Waste Water study, concentrating on road improvements, upgrading water and sewer mains, and planning for a more efficient Public Works and Maintenance department equipped with the capability to make timely repairs with less out-sourcing.

We're excited! We know changes are needed, and we are working diligently to plan for and ensure the changes happen. Moving into 2024 and beyond, we look forward to working to serve all our residents needs.

What Spending Looks Like in 2024:

General Government: \$369,142.98	Protective Services: \$80,750.00
Transportation Services: \$126,947.79	Environmental Health: \$132,088.00
Planning & Development: \$25,000.00	Recreation & Cultural Services: \$43,500.00
Fiscal Services: \$297,740.50	

Shared Services

The Towns of Eastport, Happy Adventure and Salvage have had another successful year with our Shared Services program. Our public works and maintenance employees work as a team in each of the three communities, ensuring their safety while on the job. It's also enabled them to work efficiently and effectively in the day-to-day operations of the three towns. We look forward to continuing this program as we step into 2024.

