

# MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF KINGS

## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ELECTED MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS

This Code of Conduct establishes guidelines for the ethical interpersonal conduct of Members of Council. The Council is answerable to the community through democratic process and this Code assists in providing for the good government of the Municipality of the County of Kings.

### STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Members of Council shall uphold the law and at all times:

- (a) seek to advance the common good of the municipality as a whole while conscientiously representing the communities they serve;
- (b) perform the functions of office truly, faithfully, and impartially to the best of their knowledge and ability in accordance with the core values of
  - Integrity** – giving the municipality’s interests absolute priority over private individual interests;
  - Honesty** – being truthful and open;
  - Objectivity** – making decisions based on a careful and fair analysis of the facts;
  - Accountability** – being accountable to each other and the public for decisions taken; and,
  - Leadership** – confronting challenges and providing direction on the issues of the day;
- (c) uphold this Code as a means of promoting the standards of behaviour expected of Members of Council and enhancing the credibility and integrity of Council in the broader community.

### COUNCIL MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

**Conduct to be Observed:** Members of Council are agents of the public whose primary objective is to address the needs of the citizens. As such, they are entrusted with upholding and adhering to the by-laws of the municipality as well as all applicable provincial and federal laws. As public servants, Members of Council must observe a high standard of morality in the conduct of their official duties and faithfully fulfill the responsibilities of their offices, regardless of their personal or financial interests.

**Dedicated Service:** All Members of Council shall faithfully work towards developing programs to address the needs of the citizens in the course of their duties. Each shall strive to perform at a level which is expected of those who work in the public’s interest.

**Respect for Decision-Making Process:** All Members of Council recognize the responsibility of the Mayor to accurately communicate the decisions of the Council, even if they disagree with such decisions, such that respect for the decision-making processes of Council is fostered.

**Conduct at Meetings:** Members of Council shall respect the chair, colleagues, staff, and members of the public present during Council meetings or other proceedings of the municipality. Meetings shall provide an environment for transparent and healthy debate on matters requiring decision-making.

**Release of Confidential Information Prohibited:** No Member of Council shall disclose or release to any member of the public any confidential information acquired by virtue of his/her office, in either oral or written form except when required by law or authorized by the municipality to do so; nor shall Members of Council use confidential information for personal or private gain, or for the gain of relatives or any person or corporation.

**Gifts and Benefits:** No Member of Council shall show favouritism or bias toward any vendor, contractor, or others doing business with the municipality. Members of Council are prohibited from accepting gifts or favours from any vendor, contractor, or others doing business with the municipality personally, or through a family member or friend, which could give rise to a reasonable suspicion of influence to show favour or disadvantage to any individual or organization.

**Use of Public Property:** No Member of Council shall request the use of municipal-owned vehicles, equipment, materials, or property for personal convenience or profit, except where such privileges are granted to the general public. Members of Council shall ensure that the business of the municipality is conducted with efficiency and shall avoid waste, abuse, and extravagance in the provision or use of municipal resources.

**Financial Integrity:** Members of Council shall make decisions that reflect the prudent stewardship of public funds with a focus on accountability and transparency. Members of Council shall act in accordance with FIN-05-008: Business Expense Policy, and FIN-05-020: Hospitality Policy.

**Obligations to Citizens:** No Member of Council shall grant any special consideration, treatment, or advantage to any citizen or group of citizens beyond that which is accorded to all citizens.

**Interpersonal Behaviour:** Members of Council shall treat every person, including other Members of Council, corporate employees, individuals providing services on a contract for service, and the public with dignity, understanding, and respect and ensure that their work environment is free from discrimination, bullying, and harassment.

**Community Representation:** Members of Council shall observe a high standard of professionalism when representing the municipality and in their dealings with members of the broader community.

### GOOD GOVERNANCE

Members of Council accept that effective governance of the municipality is critical to ensuring that decisions are taken in the best interests of all stakeholders and to enable the municipality to function as a good corporate citizen.

### GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIPS

Members of Council recognize the importance of working constructively with other levels of government and organizations in Nova Scotia and beyond to achieve the goals of the municipality.

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST AVOIDANCE

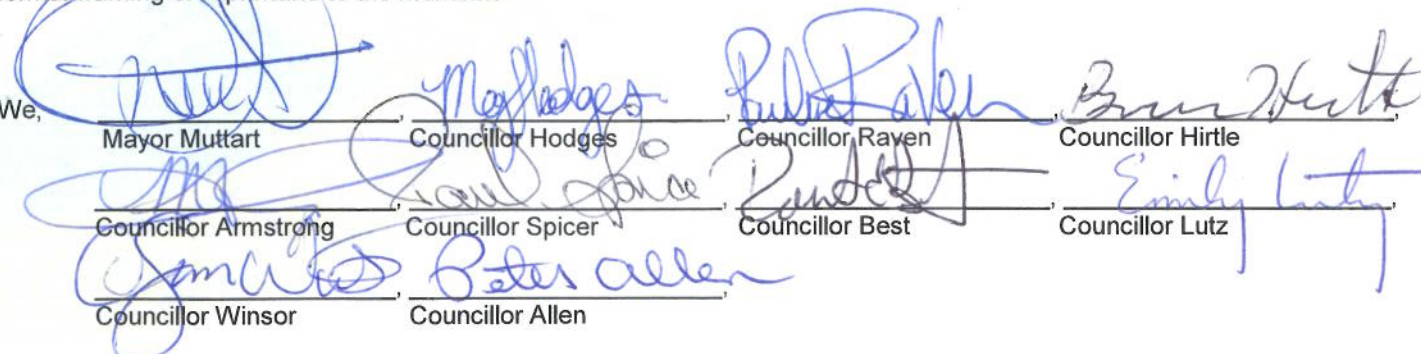
Members of Council are committed to making decisions impartially and in the best interests of the municipality and recognize the importance of fully observing the requirements of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, R.S.N.S. 1989, c. 299 with regard to the disclosure and avoidance of conflicts of interest.

### REPORTING BREACHES

Persons who have reason to believe that this Code has been breached in any way are encouraged to bring their concerns forward. No adverse action shall be taken against any Member of Council or municipal employee who, acting in good faith, brings forward such information.

### CORRECTIVE ACTION

Any reported violation of the Code will be subject to investigation by the Council. Violation of this Code by a Member of Council may constitute a cause for corrective action. If an investigation finds a Member has breached a provision of the Code, Council may impose corrective action commensurate with the nature and severity of the breach, which may include a formal warning or reprimand to the Member.

We, 

declare that, as Members of the Council of the Municipality of the County of Kings, we acknowledge and support this Code of Conduct for Elected Municipal Officials.

Declared this 1<sup>st</sup> day of November 2016 and 4<sup>th</sup> day of December 2018.