

Public Engagement Session – Royal Canadian Legion 4:30 pm

Draft Notes

Monday, March 23, 2026

In attendance

See list of participants attached.

1. Communications Survey

The results of the recent Communications survey were shown in the attached PowerPoint presentation. The following is a record of the comments made on the survey results.

2. Comments on Communications Survey Results

2.1 “I’m delighted to see the results of the survey. How we improve the content on the website, how we can drill down and get the information we need. It is good to know what vehicles are available and that improvements to the website are planned.”

2.2 “When there is a concern about something, how does that concern get documented?”

2.3 “As a resident, I am confused when I go to the website, do I look under “Resident” or do I go to Town Hall on the website? In an emergency, is there a process? The Gardens was left out during the water emergency.”

- Suggestions: check with REMO to see if the Gardens is listed on the call list
- Texts message phone tree
- Database
- Registration with Alertable
- Get all business signed up for Alertable
- “Point form summaries of council meetings on social media or Facebook would be helpful.”

2.4 “For the website, better keyword search functionality, would prefer that electronic briefing packages for council & CoW sessions be archived & available on website for more than a few days.”

2.5 “ As a resident, I am confused when I go to the website, do I look under “Resident” or do I go to Town Hall on the website? In an emergency, is there a process? The Gardens was left out during the water emergency.”

2.6 “Use Facebook more to alert followers to potentially high interest items or a council/CoW agenda – ie. Follow example set by Active Living Coordinator.”

2.7 “Would rather get meeting minutes with “find” – not text within a pdf.”

2.8 “High interest topics need to be highlighted.”

2.9 “Ability to navigate the website/categories (resident vs Town Hall).”

2.10 “Refining communications once new strategy is in place.”

2.11 “Emergency plan for communications, Alertable, Facebook push notifications (eg. Water crisis), sign-up for text alerts, REMO plan – phone chain.”

2.12 “Skim Meeting minutes vs watching live streaming. Brief summaries of meeting minutes, how to appeal to the younger generation (under 18). Alerts re high interest topics for council meetings.”

2.13 “Stats are useful to enhance experience”.

3. Statistics on Livestreaming of Council and CoW Meetings

A summary of the statistics were presented as well as pros and cons of livestream as documented from comments received prior to the session .

(see PowerPoint presentation attached)

4. Comments on Livestreaming

4.1 “I watch them. If I miss them, I can go back and look if I am concerned about something.”

4.2 “Watching debates is really important. Stats don’t matter when talking about something. It’s about principles of transparency & accessibility. Why would you limit anyone’s access for people regarding decisions?”

- 4.3 Live streaming is not a requirement (not mandated), minutes are.”
- 4.4 “I would be ok without it.”
- 4.5 “Video might affect how people perform in meetings.”
- 4.6 “Performative disappears after the first 10 minutes of a meeting.”
- 4.7 “Most AI stuff is created from photos”.
- 4.8 “The toothpaste is out of the tube.”
- 4.9 “We should never go back.”
- 4.10 “What could we do to mitigate the negatives? There are some levels of privacy that can be used.”
- 4.11 “There is no expectation of privacy for an elected official.”
- 4.12 “Livestreaming and Facebook are not the same thing.”
- 4.13 “Other municipal units are on Eastlink Channel 10 – we have more controls being on You Tube.”
- 4.14 “The IDEA¹ Committee should be consulted on this subject accessibility).”
- 4.15 “For people with a hearing impairment, word definition is important and written packages need to be retained longer.”
- 4.16 “There is more that e could done to be more transparent than using livestreaming. For a mother with two children, could do more to communicate without livestreaming.”
- 4.17 “We need to use as many ways as possible.”
- 4.18 “ Concerned about succession. Would some people stay away from running because of livestreaming?”
- 4.19 “People expect livestreaming.”
- 4.20 “There are folks who behave badly. I know that occurs. Archiving is not the answer.”
- 4.21 “It’s not in diminishing our communication options.”

¹ Inclusiveness, Diversity. Equity and Accessibility

4.22 “I watch them. If I miss them, I can go back and look if I am concerned about anything.”

5. Libraries

Concern was expressed over the lack of library funding. “What is the structure?” There is concern that the library system is collapsing and that the Town library might get dragged into this. Councillor MacDonald, the Town’s representative on the AVRL² board, explained the situation:

- With respect to the Annapolis Royal Library, there are three organizations in the system: AVRL, the Town and the Friends of the Library.
- The Province has not increased its committed share of funding for the libraries over the years and there is no additional money for libraries in the recently approved provincial budget.
- Neither the Province nor the Annapolis Valley Regional Library have taken into account the capital costs borne by municipal units in their calculations. These vary significantly from one library to another.
- As a result, municipalities were asked to increase their share of contributions by 50%.
- Although the Town has done so, at least for this year, other municipalities have decided to do the same, contribute a reduced amount, or zero.
- AVRL received a very large bequest for the Annapolis Royal Library that has been invested by AVRL.

One individual asked what the money that went to the 12 closing libraries would be used for.

6. Suggested Topics for Future Engagement Sessions

The session wrapped up at about 6:00 pm. The following topics were suggested for future sessions:

- Police Service
- Public Works
- Tidal power
- Water

² Annapolis Valley Regional Library Board

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