

Strong mayor powers create changes to Shelburne Council's budget timeline

Written By PAULA BROWN

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Shelburne Town Council has approved amendments to the budget process schedule for 2026 in response to strong mayor powers.

During their meeting on Monday (July 28), the Shelburne Town Council received a report from Carey Holmes, director of financial services, regarding the 2026 strong mayor budget schedule and recommended changes to the legislated timeline.

"The budget schedule is similar to previous years; we just had to amend it a bit to get in the legislative changes that allow for amendments to the budget," explained Holmes. "For the most part, with this term of council, it will seem very similar."

The Town of Shelburne was one of 169 additional municipalities announced in April by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to have been granted strong mayor powers from the provincial government. The strong mayor powers went into effect on May 1.

As part of the strong mayor powers, the duties of proposing and adopting the yearly budget for the municipality were assigned to the town's mayor.

Under the legislation, once the mayor has proposed the budget, known as the "Mayor's Budget", council has 30 days to pass a resolution amending the drafted budget. The mayor then has 10 days after the council amendment to veto the changes suggested by the councillors and is required to provide written reasoning for the veto to each member of council and the Town Clerk. After notification of the veto, council has 15 days to override the decision with a 2/3 vote, or the budget passes.

Back in May, Shelburne Mayor Wade Mills passed a directive which authorized the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and the director of financial services to prepare and present the proposed 2026 budget to council.

In her report to council, Holmes recommended shortening the council amendment period to 15 days, the mayoral veto period to 2 days and the council override period to 6 days. The Town of Shelburne's amendments to the budgeting schedule would take the timeline from 55 days to 23 days.

Holmes said the regular Shelburne Town Council meeting scheduled for Oct. 27 will have a presentation of the Mayor's Budget.

Under Holmes' timeline suggestions, Shelburne Town Council would have from Oct. 28 to Nov. 11 to provide amendments. From there, the mayoral veto period will run from Nov. 12 to Nov. 13 and the council override period from Nov. 14 to Nov. 19.

"Anything can get pushed out. We may not have the budget ready by October, but this gives us a timeline to go through and hopefully have the budget adopted before the February deadline," said Holmes.

Holmes also noted to council that the Municipal Grant Funding process will also see changes.

Typically, groups and organizations looking to receive grant funding from the Town of Shelburne will present their case to the whole of council during the first meeting in September. Changes to the process will now see these applicants present to the grant funding committee only.

"The grant committee will then supply their recommendations to finance and we will incorporate those into the first draft budget that council will see in October," said Holmes.

Under strong mayor powers, the town mayor has until Feb. 1, 2026 to present a proposed budget for the year, or it defaults to a budget process voted by council.