



January 30, 2025

Minister John Lohr
Department of Municipal Affairs
14th Floor North, Maritime Centre
1505 Barrington Street, P.O. Box 216
Halifax, NS B3J 2M4

Dear Minister Lohr:

This letter is to indicate the Municipality of East Hants' support of the Municipality of Chester's letter to the Minister dated January 17, 2025 seeking the further clarification regarding Clause 14(2) of the Model Code of Conduct for Municipalities, which states:

A Council member must not give special consideration, treatment or advantage to an organization or group due to the Council member, or person closely connected to the Council member, being involved with the organization or group.

This clause raises questions from our Municipality regarding the permissible extent of involvement or membership that Council members may have with local organizations such as fire departments or other community groups, as well as the practical implications for their role in municipal decision making. The implications of this requirement are significant, particularly in small communities where Council members often play vital roles in local organizations. Those connections are often integral to maintaining relationships with the community and supporting the growth and development of our municipality. The restriction on membership or involvement with local organizations could discourage Council members from maintaining the valuable connections in our communities.

In conclusion, excluding Council members from such discussions could inadvertently limit their ability to fulfill their duties as elected officials and to advocate for the needs of their communities. We are in agreement with the Municipality of Chester - while the principles of transparency, fairness, and avoiding improper influence are essential, we are also requesting further clarification on the

definition of "involvement" and the scope of recusal required under the clause to ensure proper interpretation and application of Clause 14(2).

We appreciate the province's continued commitment to ensuring the accountability and integrity among our elected officials and fully support the principles underlying the Code of Conduct. However, greater clarity on this clause will help ensure its application and prevent the unintended barriers to community engagement by elected officials.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your guidance and request your response at your office's earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Eleanor Roulston

Warden

cc. (via email) Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (info@nsfm.ca)
Municipality of Chester (council@chester.ca)
MLA John A. MacDonald (mlahantseast@gmail.com)
MLA Melissa Sheehy-Richard (melissa.mlaoffice@gmail.com)
MLA Brad Johns (mlabradjohns@gmail.com)