

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AGENDA

Tuesday, September 24, 2024, Following Asset Management
Council Chambers
Municipal Administration Building
285 Beech Hill Road
Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

1. Call to Order – Chair, Warden Owen McCarron
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of September 10, 2024 Committee of the Whole Minutes
4. Business Arising from the Minutes
5. Delegations
 - a. There are no scheduled delegations.
6. Continuing Business
 - a. Strategic Priorities Review
7. New Business
 - a. Discussion about Dog Control and Responsible Ownership of Dogs By-law
8. Community Events

This item provides Councillors with an opportunity to briefly bring to the attention of Council events that are taking place in their communities.
9. Reports from Inter-Municipal Boards, Committees and Commissions
 - a. Antigonish Heritage Museum Board
 - b. Antigonish Arena Association
 - c. Eastern District Planning Commission
 - d. Eastern Regional Solid Waste Management Committee
 - e. Pictou Antigonish Regional Library
 - f. RK MacDonald Nursing Home
 - g. County Paqtnkek Joint Steering Committee
 - i. Community Navigation & Physician Retention Services Association
10. Additions to the Agenda
11. In-Camera Items
 - a. Contract Negotiations
12. Adjournment

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES CHART (amended October 2022)

COUNCIL PRIORITIES	
<p><u>NOW</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WATER UTILITY DEVELOPMENT <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Expansion & Renew Aging Infrastructure b. Securing Long-Term Source Water c. Long-Term Financial Plan 2. DEVELOP & IMPLEMENT AN EVENTS & TOURISM PLAN 3. CONNECTIVITY – CELLULAR AND BROADBAND 4. RENEWABLE ENERGY 5. NEXT GEN SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT 	
<p><u>NEXT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN: Update & Implementation • ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN: Implementation • COMMUNITY HUBS: Plan & Implementation 	<p><u>ADVOCACY/PARTNERSHIPS</u></p> <p><i>Connectivity Funding (Prov & Feds)</i> <i>TIR Service Provision (Prov)</i> <i>Long-Term Care Facility Funding (Prov)</i> <i>Aging In Place Program (Prov)</i> <i>Accessible/Affordable Housing</i></p>
ADMINISTRATION	FINANCE
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CELLULAR & BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY 2. EVENTS & TOURISM 3. ASSET MANAGEMENT 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING: Plan & Implementation - Ongoing
PUBLIC WORKS	RECREATION
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WATER UTILITY DEVELOPMENT 2. NEXT GEN SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION 2. COMMUNITY HUBS
SUSTAINABILITY	PLANNING
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. RENEWABLE ENERGY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LCC • COMMUNITY SOLAR PROJECT 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MANDATORY MINIMUM PLANNING: Development & Implementation 2. EASTERN ANTIGONISH PLANNING STRATEGY & BYLAW: Complete Review

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 10, 2024, 5:30pm
Council Chambers
Municipal Administration Building
285 Beech Hill Road
Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

Present were: Warden Owen McCarron
Deputy Warden Bill MacFarlane
Councillor Mary MacLellan
Councillor Donnie MacDonald
Councillor Shawn Brophy
Councillor Remi Deveau
Councillor John Dunbar
Councillor Gary Mattie
Councillor Harris McNamara

Regrets: Councillor Hugh Stewart

Staff Present: Shirlyn Donovan, Interim CAO
Beth Schumacher, Deputy Clerk
Marlene Melanson, Director of Recreation (by Zoom)

Others Present: Gallery (in person and on Zoom)

Call to Order – Chairman, Warden Owen McCarron

The meeting of the Committee of the Whole was called to order by the Chair, Warden McCarron, at 5:32 pm.

In-Camera Items

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee of the Whole adjourn to an in-camera session to discuss the Acquisition, Sale, Lease, and Security of Municipal Property and Contract Negotiations at 5:32 pm.

Motion Carried

Moved and Seconded

That the in-camera session adjourns at 6:14 pm.

Motion Carried

Approval of Agenda

Warden McCarron called for any additions or deletions to the agenda. The following addition was made: Leave of Absence for Councillor Stewart.

Councillor McNamara requested an addition for discussion regarding a proposal to defer the selection of the new CAO until after the election, and to discuss whether the new council should look to choose an interim warden.

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee add an item to the agenda for a discussion regarding a proposal to defer the selection of the new CAO until after the election, and to discuss whether the new council should look to choose an interim warden.

**Motion Defeated
(3 in favour, 6 against)**

Moved and Seconded

That the agenda be approved as amended.

Motion Carried

Approval of July 2, 2024 Committee of the Whole Minutes

Warden McCarron called for any errors or omissions in the Committee of the Whole minutes of July 2, 2024.

Moved and Seconded

That the minutes of July 2, 2024 be approved as presented.

Motion Carried

Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

Delegations

Remi Maillet – Keating Court and Nova Landing Landscaping Buffer

Mr. Maillet spoke to the Committee, as a resident of Keating Court, regarding a request to consider a retaining wall and landscaping buffer between the residences on Keating Court and the commercial development underway on Nova Landing. He outlined several concerns, including privacy, as well as personal and property safety. Mr. Maillet asked

for a timeline for the resident concerns to be addressed and whether the developer had been contacted to request this enhanced buffering be included in the development.

Warden McCarron then opened the floor for questions from the Committee. Questions were asked about the estimated length of fencing required to run the stretch of concern, opportunities when consultation with residents took place, and landscaping vs. fencing for buffering. Discussion regarding the possibility of negotiating with the developer through the Planning Department followed.

Antigonish Affordable Housing

Colleen Cameron presented on behalf of the Antigonish Affordable Housing Society regarding the Antigonish Housing Crisis. She provided an overview of the projects done to date in the community by AAHS, being Riverside, Appleseed, and Appleseed Ph. 2. The next project on the horizon for AAHS is Sugarloaf, utilizing a donation of 20 hectares of land on Highway 337, and proposed to be developed in phases. Potential servicing and road development to support the project was reviewed, and opportunities for funding were summarized.

Warden McCarron then opened the floor to comments and questions from the Committee. Councillor MacDonald thanked Colleen and Bruce for their work on the project and asked whether information about the proposed public roadway would impact the project. Discussion followed. Around 56 units of housing are estimated to be included in the first phase of the proposed development. A question was asked about how many of the proposed units would be accessible.

Warden McCarron acknowledged the contribution of the land from the Hendricks Davie family and noted that discussions are underway with the CACL for potential cost-sharing for sewer servicing of the site. Additional opportunities for other funding for the project will continue to be monitored to find ways to try to support affordable housing in the community. The volunteers from AAHS were thanked on behalf of Municipal Council by the Warden.

Continuing Business

Connectivity Update

Mrs. Donovan provided an update on the cellular and broadband advocacy projects that are currently underway. Numbers of addresses that remain to be connected were reviewed. Thanks were extended to Build Nova Scotia for their attention to the project to see the community reach 100% coverage. Information about cellular tower upgrades that are expected in upcoming years were reviewed. Members of the Committee thanked staff for their assistance in advocating for the project in the community and assisting with communicating progress to Council and the public.

New Business

Arisaig Floor Curling Funding Request

Mrs. Donovan spoke to a request from the Arisaig Floor Curling group asking for consideration of funding for replacement bearings. The timing of this purchase is outside of the intake period for the Community Partnership Grants and Recreation Microgrants programs and falls after the post-election cut-off date for Special District Grants. Councillor MacLellan provided some additional information about the program held at the community centre. Discussion followed.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council approves funding in the amount of \$507.15 for 16 sets of replacement bearings for the Arisaig Floor Curling group.

Motion Carried

(8 in favour, 1 opposed)

Dangerous and Unsightly Premises By-law Discussion

Mr. Bain introduced a concern raised by Councillor Brophy regarding the condition of undeveloped lots in residential subdivisions, particularly with respect to the lawn maintenance of those properties. Mr. Bain noted that the Dangerous and Unsightly Premises By-law does have language that speaks to the condition of properties and shared that a property of concern has been raised with the owner and the grass was mown. Councillor Brophy shared his concern with the complaints needing to be lodged continually where this concern is raised each year, and the length of time that is required to bring unsightly properties into compliance.

Councillor Brophy would like to see standards in place for vacant properties in residential neighbourhoods, and timelines for bringing properties into compliance once a complaint is received. Councillor Mattie raised a concern where vacant properties in his district remain vacant and unaddressed because of a hesitancy of neighbours to lodge a complaint against their neighbours. Mr. Bain acknowledged the challenge with the complaints-driven process for enforcement of the by-law, and shared examples from neighbouring communities regarding repeat offences. Staff was directed to explore examples from other communities and bring the findings to PAC.

Road Name Change – Brochan Lane

Ms. Schumacher reviewed a recommendation from the Civic Addressing Coordinator to rename a private roadway in Malignant Cove to Brochan Lane.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council renames the private laneway off Highway 337 in Malignant Cove to Brochan Lane.

Motion Carried

Kennel Licensing By-law

Ms. Schumacher reviewed the proposed by-law regarding the creation of a permit process for commercial dog care facilities and kennels. She explained that the proposed by-law is intended to work with updates to the Municipal Planning Strategies and Land Use By-law updates that were considered and recommended to move forward by the Planning Advisory Committee at their meeting earlier in the month. Sections of the proposed by-law were highlighted for the Committee's benefit, specifically the requirements for insulation and maintenance of soundproofing measures for any permit issued to remain valid. The floor was opened for questions from the Committee and topics discussed included the possibility for rezonings and grandfathering of legal non-conforming uses.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council gives first reading to the By-law Respecting Commercial Dog Care and Kennel Facilities, and schedules second reading of the proposed by-law at a future Municipal Council meeting.

Motion Carried

Staff Reports

Mrs. Donovan highlighted several details from the staff report, noting updates regarding staff training, project updates, and upcoming events.

Community Events

- Councillor Deveau shared that on August 16 Acadian Day events were held at Chez Deslauriers.
- Councillor Dunbar noted that the AGR softball tournament was held at the Heatherton and Area Community Centre and expressed his congratulations to the Heatherton Warriors.
- Councillor Brophy had attended the Eastern Nova Scotia Exhibition and felt that it was very well run and attended. He recommended sending a congratulations letter to the Eastern Nova Scotia Exhibition organizers for their work done to organize and run this event in the community.

- Councillor McNamara shared that Havre Boucher had a break-in earlier in the month, and the RCMP will be holding a meeting at the fire hall with the community later in September. He also noted that a community fashion show is coming up.
- Councillor Mattie shared some information about the Tracadie Fire Hall Classic Car Show attendance statistics and gave his congratulations to the event organizers on a successful event. He also noted that the Merlin Church had their annual mass this summer and it went well.
- Councillor MacLellan informed the Committee that Arisaig won a Community Spirit Award and are planning on September 14th to receive the award and have a community event with food and entertainment. She noted that twelve community volunteer groups gave presentations for that award.
- Councillor MacDonald had nothing to report.
- Deputy Warden MacFarlane will be attending the Spirit Award event in Arisaig on the 14th on behalf of the Warden.
- Warden McCarron share that the Kings United Church anniversary took place in Loch Katrine. He also attended Emancipation Day and India Independence Day events over the summer. He also noted the U13 Boys Softball Canadian Championships, where the Eastern 2.0 Bombers won the gold medal, as well as the Eastern Nova Scotia Exhibition. Earlier in the month he joined a walkabout event with the St. FX University President to welcome to new students to the community.

Additions to the Agenda

Leave of Absence for Councillor Stewart

Mrs. Donovan noted that Councillor Stewart would be missing tonight's Council meeting due to medical reasons and will require a leave of absence from Council.

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee recommends that Municipal Council provide a leave of absence to Councillor Stewart for the September 10, 2024 Council Meeting for medical reasons.

Motion Carried

Adjournment

Moved

That the Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned at 7:45pm.

Motion Carried

Warden Owen McCarron

Shirlyn Donovan, Interim CAO

Joan Haliburton

█ Village Lane
Southside Harbour, NS B2G 2L4
(902) █
█

September 2, 2024

Remi Deveau

Councillor, District 5
Antigonish County Council
(902) 902-870-2866
rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

Dear Remi,

I am writing this letter as a follow up to our phone conversation last month.

It has been almost one year since my September 2023 cycling incident. While cycling in Pomquet , on our way home, I was attacked by a dog on Monks Head Road. The dog was not tied, nor was there any fence around the property. The dog came flying out onto the road running directly into my bike's front tire, causing me to crash. The homeowner was in the yard but unfortunately did not call the dog to prevent the accident.

I spent the rest of the day in Emerg at St. Martha's Hospital. I suffered major trauma, involving a complex broken arm and shoulder injury, a concussion, stitches above my eye, and multiple lacerations and contusions on my arm and leg. I required orthopedic surgery with Dr. T. Boudreau to repair the arm and shoulder and insert a metal plate.

Recovery has been painful, slow and long with intensive Physiotherapy treatments twice weekly and daily rehab exercises for almost one year.

We reported the incident to the Dog Control Officer, Pam Bowers, and asked that she follow up with the dog owners. We contacted Warden Owen McCarron and reported the incident and asked that he follow up by including a feature on the Dog Control & Regulations By-Laws in the next issue of Community Connect, which he did. We hoped to raise awareness and provide education to dog owners in the county about their responsibilities for their dog and fellow resident's safety.

Yesterday we were cycling on the road near Cameron Lake where we met two people walking with their unleashed dog. We stopped our bikes and asked that they hold and leash their dog. He replied “No, it is friendly”. The dog came directly to me and licked my leg. Unfortunately, I am still traumatized by dogs and did not find this acceptable. This is an example of dog owners not respecting the County By-Laws and fellow resident’s boundaries and safety. We have spoken with many people over the last year and heard countless stories of people being afraid to go for a walk, run or cycle on our county roads for fear of dogs.

We want Antigonish County to be a safe community for people and their pets while continuing to promote healthy outdoor activities and living. Throughout my professional career as a Pharmacist, I encouraged many of my patients to go for a walk to help improve their health. Activity is beneficial for so many chronic diseases and general well being. It is unacceptable that people need to be concerned about a dog leaving their yard and hurting them.

We feel it is time to make a change regarding dog control in our county. The by-laws must be followed and enforced. We feel more can be done to help this situation. Here are a few recommendations :

- Create a dog registry. All dogs and owners should be registered with Animal Control so you can contact them.
- All dog owners should be supplied with the Animal Control By-Laws and be made aware of their responsibilities.
- All dog owners must provide a safe area for their dog that restrains them from leaving the property unleashed.
- The Animal Control Officer must follow up with an inspection and ensure all dog owners have met the requirements of the by-laws.
- It is important to note these by-laws are for the safety of people and the dogs.

We want to prevent another accident and anyone else from suffering from an incident involving uncontrolled dogs. We hope you will give serious consideration to our recommendations to make our community safer for everyone and continue to promote healthy living activities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Joan Haliburton

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

MEMO FOR INFORMATION

TO: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
FROM: SHIRLYN DONOVAN, CAO & SENIOR STAFF
SUBJECT: **Strategic Priorities Update**
DATE: SEPTEMBER 24, 2024

ADMINISTRATION

Cellular and Broadband

Broadband Connectivity

The projects in Antigonish County are starting to wrap up. As of September 2024, the Antigonish scope expansion projects have 410 of 989 civic addresses remaining to get access. Cable placement is currently in progress and these addresses are expected to be connected in the coming weeks. As of August 2024, Monastery has 53 of 1306 addresses remaining. Railroad crossings are still to be complete and a collection of small areas with easement items are being reviewed, to finalize the overall project.

This has been several years in the making and it is very nice to see these projects coming to completed. We want to extend thanks to Build Nova Scotia for their attention to this project.

Cellular Connectivity

In 2022, Build Nova Scotia conducted a comprehensive Cell Gap Study for the Government of Nova Scotia to assess cell service levels and identify critical gaps across the province. Using desktop analysis and drive testing, the study validated cellular connectivity strength and provided a clear understanding of the scope of the cellular gaps.

The findings revealed over 20,000 unserved civic addresses and 1,010 kilometres of unserved primary roads.

An RFP was issued in November of 2023 for service providers to use existing infrastructure to enhance current cellular connectivity. On July 31, 2024, Rogers was selected to upgrade infrastructure at 27 existing sites and connect them to the Rogers 5G network.

Through an additional investment of \$18.6 million, the Province plans to add 27 new provincially owned telecommunication towers, which will be connected to a network provider later.

Enhanced cellular infrastructure will also help Nova Scotia keep pace with technology and population growth while improving safety in rural communities. The first 27 site locations with existing usable infrastructure were chosen based on areas with the most unserved civic addresses and primary roads. An additional 27 sites have now been selected, and initial engineering studies show they can provide improved coverage for the largest remaining unserved areas.

The goals of the Cellular Program are to reach:

99% coverage for basic voice call service where Nova Scotians live, work, learn, and travel on primary roads. Basic voice call service provides clear audio calls.

95% coverage for standard-definition service where Nova Scotians live, work, learn, and travel on primary roads. Standard definition service provides quality audio or video transmission for emails, internet browsing, and social media.

85% coverage for high-definition service where Nova Scotians live, work, learn, and travel on primary roads. High-definition services provide high-quality audio or video transmission for emails, internet browsing, social media use, video conferencing, and movie streaming.

New towers will be constructed in Arisaig, Malignant Cove and North Lochaber.

Timeline for new builds: Initial site upgrades are underway, with the first locations operational by the spring 2025. Most sites are anticipated to be connected to the network by the end of 2026.

Events and Tourism

A Tourism Strategy was commissioned in partnership with the Town of Antigonish, Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation, StFX University, DEANS, and the Antigonish Chamber of Commerce. The Strategy was completed and endorsed by Town Council and County Council with the exception of a marketing levy. An advisory committee will be formed this fall and a session will be held with Mary Tulle to determine next steps for implementing the strategy. The Town of Antigonish is collecting revenue through the marketing levy and the County has put money in the budget so we have some funding to get some initiatives off the ground this year which will include a new tourism website.

Asset Management

An application has been made to the federal Housing Accelerator Fund to fund the completion of a detailed Asset Management Plan, which will provide the information required to guide future investments in municipal infrastructure to support housing growth. This will build on work completed to date in collaboration with the Province and AIM Network. Denise Dunn, the Housing Accelerator Fund Coordinator will lead this initiative along with staff.

Capital projects in recent years include:

- Curb, gutter and sidewalks Vincents Way (Completed)
- Curb, gutter and sidewalks Townsend Street (Completed)
- Repaving Appleseed Drive (Completed)
- Curb and gutter Keating Court (Ongoing – projected to be completed this fall)
- Repaving various J-Class Roads (Completed)
- Lanark Waterline Extension (Completed)
- St. Joseph’s Waterline Extension and Water Tank (Ongoing – projected to be completed this fall)
- Sewer Extension Highway 337 (Tender awarded – projected to be completed this fall)

FINANCE

The Municipality has successfully secured funding for multiple infrastructure priorities since 2020.

Over \$20 million was secured through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program for the Antigonish AT Corridor and Net-Zero Community Buildings. The County also secured just under \$3.5 million through the ICIP for water system expansions in Lanark and St. Josephs.

Approximately \$720,000 has been secured through the J-Class Road Cost Sharing program for various roads since 2020, approximately \$745,000 through the Sustainable Services Growth Fund, and \$25,000 was secured through the provincial Beatification & Streetscapes program for the Antigonish County Court House.

The Municipality was also able to secure \$50,000 towards the purchase and installation of a generator for the Municipal Administration Centre from the Nova Scotia Community Generators Fund.

The Municipality of the County of Antigonish receive \$373,000 from the ACOA Fiona Relief Fund to perform facility upgrades and purchase readiness supplies to ensure effective provision of four emergency centres:

- The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 59, Antigonish
- The Heatherton Development & Cultural Wellness Centre, Heatherton
- Antigonish Town Hall, Antigonish
- The County Office, Beech Hill

The Municipality received \$1.9 millions from the Housing Accelerator Fund and has hired a coordinator to implement the action items.

Community Accessibility was applied for April 2021 to install a universal accessible washroom and \$13,400 was received.

The County has also been successful with numerous grants from the provincial Municipal Innovation Program, which supports innovation and municipal cooperation rather than capital, including:

- \$175,000 for Strait-IT Start-Up
- \$375,000 for Plan Eastern Nova
- \$150,000 for Town and County of Antigonish Exploration of Consolidation

In June of 2024, the Municipality received \$127,540 from the Municipal Capital Growth Fund for a waterline extension for Appleseed II and the Highway 337 sewer extension.

PUBLIC WORKS

Water Utility Development

The following water utility expansion and renewal projects have been completed since 2020:

- South River Road Waterline Replacement
- Trunk 7 Waterline Replacement
- St. Andrews Waterline Extension
- Trunk 7 & Trunk 4 Water Service Replacement & Relocation
- West River Waterline Relocation
- St. Joseph's Water System Expansion
- Lanark Waterline Extension

In 2021 each of the County's water systems was amalgamated into the Antigonish County Water Utility and new rates were approved by the UARB. The amalgamation of the utilities and establishment of new rates put all water systems on a more sustainable footing.

Also in early 2021, the Town and County Councils approved a protocol for a collaborative approach to exploring and securing long-term source water.

Next Generation Solid Waste Management

Little work has been done on this priority area.

RECREATION

Active Transportation

Phases 1 & 2 of the project (James St./Trunk 4 intersection to Church St/Trunk 4 intersection) have been successfully completed, resulting in a 1.5km multiuse path. Phase 3A of the project, the construction of the Church St. roundabout which was slated to be completed this year has been postponed to 2025.

Staff is currently working on a streetscaping project for the corridor which will see wayfinding signs, interpretive signage, landscaping, and amenities such as benches and waste receptacles placed along the corridor. The services of a consultant have been engaged for the design phase of this project and a final report is expected any day. The Municipality was successful in receiving a beautification grant to assist with cost and installation of the streetscaping project, along with some community identification and beautification signs.

Community Hubs

This past fall 2023, the Rec department revisited the Hubs project, resumed conversations, and reconnected with our communities. The Make Your Move Antigonish (MYMA) initiative was also integrated to the Hubs discussion as MYMA is a great way to support and encourage recreation and movement within communities.

The recreation department hosted several meetings throughout the Antigonish County where discussions were centered on the following goals to guide the conversations:

1. Identify ways to increase movement, recreational opportunities, and social connections within your community.
2. Discuss support and resources for preexisting activities.
3. Improve communication between the Municipality and Community Hubs.

The information gathered from the discussions was organized into three categories: "Current Activities," "Support Strategies," and "Communication Challenges." This data was then consolidated into two primary focus areas: Communication and Supportive Environments, with a series of short-, medium-, and long-term goals. A summary of the data was presented to council in April of 2024.

Recreation staff are currently working on an implementation plan aimed at achieving the goals identified.

SUSTAINABILITY

Community Buildings, Net Zero Project is nearing completion. At this time insulation installation, final inspections and commissioning of 3 locations and roof repair, solar installation and then commissioning of 1 location. Total budget for the project is \$1,497,012, we are expecting costs to be around \$1,206,893 with a project savings of \$190,119. Part of this is from redesigning solar systems to save space and time, and changing plan to a roof design, while supporting community group to secure funds for a new roof, rearranging our expectations and schedule to ensure best life cycle value. Also of note when and where possible by hiring smaller

firms or ensuring smaller local firms were sub contractors on components of the project we were able to save money and majority stay in the community. Project will be complete by December 31, 2024, instead of March 2027.

Community building volunteers have been great, supportive of the project and engaged in all elements.

Solar Energy- Awaiting the energy report, evaluation on the two solar systems owned by the County onsite at the 261 and 285 Beech Hill Rd locations. This delay is due to final repairs needing completion on the field system. Repairs should be complete by October 10th on the final panels. Then we will proceed to report on production since installation vs projected production.

Energy Management Plan, review to take place fall of 2024, with support of Efficiency NS. At this time all lights have been retrofitted, new appliances are energy star, or solar powered where possible. Generator is installed, this is EMO and energy plan related. Our Building automation system is set for optimizing efficiency, it will need upgrades in the coming 3 yrs to stay relevant. This is an area for research Winter 2024.

Accessibility Plan is underway, training to occur at municipal building in Oct 2024, re accessible communications. Accessible washroom to be completed fall of 2024, after 3 delays based on astronomical pricing estimates and lack of responses to tender call. New simpler design developed in partnership with Chair Councillor Mattie and just waiting on final drawings from Engineer for release of RFP. On accessibility it is also of note that since the last update Councillor Mattie was also the recipient of the Andre McConnell Award as part of the Mel Hebb Hourglass Action Award for Access Awareness Week, chosen and presented by Nova Scotia Partnership for Access Awareness Nova Scotia (PAANS) committee. To recognize an individual who, has gone above and beyond their duties as a provincial, municipal, or federal public servant and has demonstrated:

1. A Commitment to person centered service - always putting the needs and concerns of persons with disabilities first; and
2. True dedication to supporting persons with disabilities to fully participate in their communities.

Upcoming Office of Equity and Anti-racism if the lead on the mandate from the province that all municipalities in Nova Scotia have a Equity, Antiracism, Diversity and Inclusion Plan in developed before April 01, 2025. Planning for this is underway and the components that can be worked on in partnership will be done with colleagues at the Town and other neighboring municipalities as needs and opportunities arise. This will compliment the Accessibility Plan and the first review of the Accessibility Plan is due at the same time. Director of Sustainable Communities is developing an outline of the plan for both and working with accessibility committee this fall to start the review.

Current and Future Opportunities being explored:

Currently looking at funding options (Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund managed by NSFIM) for a round 2 of our Net Zero Project to include fire depts, fire halls and search and rescue buildings- update, still working on eligibility for certain buildings with new funds released.

Flood and Draught Resilience, and Education and Capacity Building to include emergency and disaster response and resilience; this area will get some development over the winter 2024-25..

PLANNING**Mandatory Minimum Planning**

Plan Antigonish Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw has been approved by Council and is waiting for Ministerial Approval which is anticipated this fall.