

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Municipal Council Meeting- Minutes

Tuesday February 11, 2025

Following the Committee of the Whole Meeting

Council Chambers

Municipal Administration Building

285 Beech Hill Road

Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

Councillors Present:

Warden Nicholas MacInnis

Deputy Warden John Dunbar (by Zoom)

Councillor Mary MacLellan

Councillor Adam Baden-Clay (by Zoom)

Councillor Richelle MacLaughlin (by Zoom)

Councillor Shawn Brophy

Councillor Wayne Melanson

Councillor Gary Mattie

Councillor Harris McNamara

Councillor Sterling Garvie

Regrets:

None

Staff Present:

Shirlyn Donovan, CAO

Megan MacInnis, Strategic Initiatives
Coordinator

Beth Schumacher, Deputy Clerk

Allison Duggan, Director of Finance

Others Present:

Gallery (in person and by Zoom)

Matt Draper, XFM

Hugh MacKay, RCNS

Connie DeCoffe, AROYH

Speireag Hendra, AROYH

Jacob Abbott, AROYH

Call to Order- Warden MacInnis

Warden MacInnis called the meeting to order at 7:39pm

Approval of Agenda

Warden MacInnis called for approval of the Council meeting agenda. One addition was made under correspondence: letter from the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Min # 2025-021

Moved and Seconded

That the agenda be approved as amended.

Motion Carried

Approval of the January 14, 2025 Municipal Council Minutes

Warden MacInnis called for any errors or omissions in the minutes of January 14, 2025, included in the agenda package. Hearing none, the minutes were considered approved.

Approval of the January 28, 2025 Municipal Council Minutes

Warden MacInnis called for any errors or omissions in the minutes of January 14, 2025, included in the agenda package. Hearing none, the minutes were considered approved.

Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

Delegations

Hugh MacKay – Rural Communities Foundation

Mr. MacKay provided Municipal Council with a review of the different programs that the Rural Communities Foundation undertakes, with focus on the Dave Gunning Zero Hunger Fund. The fund provides support for “Free Stores” in rural Nova Scotia schools, providing food for students to take home for their families, if they are struggling to provide adequate nutrition.

Mr. MacKay acknowledged the \$2000 Community Partnership Grant provided by Antigonish County last year. He noted that two schools in Antigonish, Dr. John Hugh Gillis High School and the school in Pomquet, received grants from the Dave Gunning Zero Hunger Fund.

Mr. MacKay asked Municipal Council for their help with providing individual and corporate awareness and support for the fundraising campaign for the fund for 2025. He also asked for consideration of donations and will be making an application to the Community Partnership Grants program. He also suggested supporting a Dave Gunning Zero Hunger fundraising concert in the community.

The floor was then opened for questions from Council. Members of Municipal Council expressed their support for the Zero Hunger Fund. In response to a question, Mr. MacKay shared a list of some communities and organizations that he has provided presentations to in addition to Antigonish County.

Warden MacInnis thanked Mr. MacKay for his presentation.

A Roof Over Your Head

Ms. Hendra introduced her colleagues, Mr. Abbott and Ms. DeCoffe, and provided Municipal Council with an overview of their organization. Crisis/ emergency management, eviction prevention, and poverty alleviation were noted as the focus of the organization. Since April 1, 2024, 205 clients through 65 files have been supported by the organization, with 62 of those individuals (19 files) being in Antigonish County. A rise in number of those experiencing homelessness is on the rise in the community. Information about the availability of shelters, transitional housing, and the spectrum of housing was reviewed.

Some options for housing types that are being used in other communities was shared for information. These included a pallet village in CBRM. Other organizations in the province providing housing support were also reviewed.

A number of requests were made of Municipal Council, being:

- That Antigonish County recognizes housing as a human right;
- That the County set a target of to eliminate homelessness in the community by 2030;
- That the County establishes a taskforce comprised of local government, corporate, and housing and poverty focussed organizations to work together towards achieving that target including the establishment of emergency and transitional housing
- That Municipal Council provide representation on the AROYH Board of Directors.

The floor was then opened to Municipal Council for questions. Questions were asked regarding file composition (families or individuals) and about the different examples that were shared in the presentation.

Min # 2025-022

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council recognizes housing as a human right.

Motion Deferred to the March 11, 2025 Municipal Council Meeting

Through discussion on the proposed motion, staff identified that any motions on the requests put forward wait until after Council holds their strategic priorities setting exercise at the end of the month, and that the requests for municipal representation be made in writing for review and consideration. Concern was also raised regarding the proposed motion potentially creating a legal obligation, and recognition given that housing is a provincial obligation. The vote on the motion was deferred to the next regular Council meeting.

Staff was directed to look at what municipal land might be suitable for a pallet village. A question was asked of the presenters about how many of the AROYH clients would

benefit from a pallet home development, and Ms. Hendra provided an overview of how a small development could help those living in the most dire conditions. The pallet homes elsewhere in the province are owned by Community Services, but finding land and infrastructure is the biggest challenge. A question was raised about staffing of a shelter space, and Ms. Hendra noted the Department of Community Services has funding for staffing. Warden MacInnis committed to contact the AROYH team to arrange a meeting with himself and Mrs. Donovan to continue the conversation and thanked the presenters for their time.

Correspondence

Municipality of Chester – Feedback on Code of Conduct

Mrs. Donovan has reached out to Chester to see if they have received any response from their letter to the Minister, and once staff receive that clarity, they will report back to Council.

Minister of Emergency Management

Mrs. Donovan flagged in the letter the direction given for municipalities to provide a local 24-hour phone service for listed services during an emergency, and discussed concerns with the expectations on municipalities, where the municipality currently doesn't have a 24-hour general emergency number and the nature of the emergencies being listed.

Minister of Municipal Affairs

Mrs. Donovan reviewed a letter requesting that the Municipality show their support for mineral exploration. Staff is recommending that the request be considered as an agenda item at a future meeting.

Committee Reports

January 31, 2025 Asset Management Committee e-Poll Report

Min # 2025-023

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council award the tender for a Tandem Axle Open Top Walking Floor Trailer Including a Hydraulic Flip Open Tarp from Deloupe Inc. for a price of \$164,000 plus HST.

Motion Carried

February 11, 2025 Committee of the Whole Report

Min # 2025-024

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council approves a contribution of \$100,000 to the St. FX University bid for the 2030 Special Olympics Summer Games.

Motion Carried

Min # 2025-025

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council approve selling the 2009 International Dewatering Truck 7000 Series that was deemed surplus to Ron Chisholm for the bid price of \$61,220.00.

Motion Carried

Min # 2025-026

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council award the tender for the proposed communications strategy to Forward Creative at a cost of \$29,825 (plus HST).

Motion Carried

Reports from Individual Council Members on Outside Boards, Conferences, and Community Activities

Councillor Mattie shared that there is a Valentines Dance planned in Monastery.

Councillor McNamara shared that there are upcoming RK MacDonald Board meetings on February 18 (executive) and February 22 (Board).

Councillor Garvie noted that there is an Eastern Regional Solid Waste Management meeting on the 27th, Arena Board meeting on March 4th.

Councillor MacLaughlin noted that PARC met January 16th and February 6th.

Councillor Brophy noted he will also be attending the RK MacDonald meetings, and that the Museum Board meeting was cancelled for February due to RK meetings.

Warden MacInnis shared that he attended a session of the Antigonish Regional EMO Advisory Committee. He also shared that Addie Overmars from Dunmore was accepted to the Shad Canada program to attend a university in Canada for the month of July in STEM. This program is only open to 1000 students in Canada.

Min # 2025-027

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council congratulate Miss Overmars on her achievement in being awarded a place in the 2025 Shad Canada program.

Motion Carried

Deputy Warden Dunbar shared that he is currently at the FCM Sustainability Conference in Fredericton. He also attended the NSFM Board of Directors meeting as the regional representative.

Motions

There were no motions.

Miscellaneous Business

Warden MacInnis noted that the regular Asset Management and Committee of the Whole meetings scheduled for February 25th were being rescheduled to take place on Wednesday February 26th due to the Council priority setting. Following discussion, staff was asked to look at rescheduling the Asset Management and Committee of the Whole meetings.

Adjournment

Min # 2025-028

Moved

That the Council meeting adjourns at 9:35 pm.

Motion Carried

Warden Nicholas MacInnis

Shirlyn Donovan, CAO