

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Tuesday March 11, 2025, following Asset Management Committee
Council Chambers
Municipal Administration Building
285 Beech Hill Road
Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

Present were: Warden Nicholas MacInnis
Deputy Warden John Dunbar
Councillor Mary MacLellan
Councillor Richelle MacLaughlin
Councillor Shawn Brophy
Councillor Wayne Melanson
Councillor Gary Mattie
Councillor Harris McNamara
Councillor Sterling Garvie

Regrets: Councillor Adam Baden-Clay

Staff Present: Shirlyn Donovan, CAO
Beth Schumacher, Deputy Clerk
Megan MacInnis, Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Tammy Feltmate, Director of Sustainable Communities

Others Present: Gallery (in person and by Zoom)
Jonathan MacKenzie, Antigonish Sno Dogs
Jeremy Landry, Antigonish Sno Dogs

Call to Order – Chairman, Warden Nicholas MacInnis

The meeting of the Committee of the Whole was called to order by the Chair, Warden MacInnis, at 5:34pm.

Approval of Agenda

Warden MacInnis called for any additions or deletions to the agenda. Ms. Schumacher asked for an addition to the agenda: By-law Enforcement Officer Appointments for SPCA Inspectors.

Moved and Seconded

That the agenda be approved as amended.

Motion Carried

In-Camera Business

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee move into an in-camera session to discuss the Acquisition, Sale, Lease, and Security of Municipal Property at 5:35pm.

Motion Carried

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee adjourns the in-camera session at 6:07pm.

Motion Carried

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council approves leasing a five-acre section of PID 10073716 to the Antigonish Area Fire & Rescue Training Centre Committee for a ten-year term, for the creation of the Training Centre and allow the Antigonish Area Fire & Rescue Training Centre Committee to mark out and clearcut this section of land by the end of March utilizing ACOA funds.

Motion Carried

Approval of February 26, 2025 Committee of the Whole Minutes

Warden MacInnis called for any errors or omissions in the Committee of the Whole minutes of February 26, 2025. Hearing none, the minutes were considered approved.

Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

Delegations

Antigonish Sno Dogs

Mr. MacKenzie presented on behalf of the Antigonish Sno Dogs regarding a request being presented to Council asking for funding support in the amount of \$50,000 for the purchase of a snow grooming machine for trails in the community. Mr.

MacKenzie noted that the machine being considered costs approximately \$475,000, and fundraising efforts by the club have raised nearly \$85,000 in committed funds to date. Funding is also being requested from the Town, Province, and Federal Governments.

Mr. MacKenzie then provided an overview of the economic and tourism benefits of the snowmobiling industry and club in the community and throughout the province. Inclusion and outreach efforts in the community were reviewed as well. The floor was then opened for questions from the Committee. Members of Council thanked Mr. MacKenzie for his presentation and thanked those from the club who were attending in the gallery as well. Questions were asked about what areas in the

community that the snow groomer could service, and discussion regarding trail organization in the community followed. A question was also asked about operator training, and where the snow groomer would be stored.

Warden MacInnis thanked Mr. MacKenzie, Mr. Landry, and the SnoDogs members in the gallery for their attendance at the meeting.

Continuing Business

Gateway Signage on Secondary Highways

Ms. MacInnis provided a follow-up to the presentation made at the meeting in late February regarding the revised designs for the secondary highway signage. The options for including the five historical languages initially proposed, the potential for exclusion of other groups, and consultation with representatives from the Heritage Museum was reviewed. Discussion followed. Consensus to proceed with the option listing English, French, and Mi'kmaq was provided.

New Business

Mayfest Request for Volunteers

Ms. Schumacher shared that the organizers of the Mayfest event, planned for May 10, 2025, reached out to request if members of Council would consider volunteering at the event. Those councillors who were interested in helping were asked to contact Ms. Schumacher by Tuesday, February 25th.

Policy Review Guidance Request

Ms. Schumacher reviewed a memo in the agenda package outlining the active policies of the municipality, prepared following Council's identification of policy review as a priority for the term. She asked members of the committee for their feedback on how to prioritize the policies for review, to provide some guidance to staff as they prepare the policy to outline the process for reviewing policies.

Feedback from the committee including specific mention of certain policies, such as the public participation policy, but stressed the desire to look at all of the policies. The committee felt that staff may know best what policies need to be prioritized, and stressed their interest in having councillors involved when reviewing and engaged in the process. Discussion followed. The suggestion to have policy review as a standing item on the Committee of the Whole agenda starting in April was supported by a consensus of the committee.

Provincial Bill 24 Discussion

Mrs. Donovan reviewed the correspondence in the file regarding the proposed Bill 24 put forward in the Provincial Legislature. Of concern is the potential financial impact on municipalities, and the NSFMM has been working to collectively represent municipalities in the province on the matter. Mrs. Donovan is suggesting drafting a

letter from the municipality to a number of provincial Ministers, with the correspondence copied to the NSFM for their efforts. Discussion followed.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council send a letter to Minister Thompson, Minister Morrow, Minister Tilley, Premier Tim Houston and NSFM regarding their concerns over Bill 24.

Motion Carried

Discussion Regarding Noxious Weeds Along Municipal Roadways

Councillor Brophy shared that he received a call from a resident from Trotters Lane regarding concerns about noxious weeds in the ditches along the roadway. He noted that he wants to look into options for spraying.

Staff provided some information about the weeds in question, and noted that at this time, weed control is not a part of public works maintenance routine. Information from provincial departments regarding identification and safety was suggested.

By-law Enforcement Officer Appointments – SPCA Inspectors

Ms. Schumacher spoke to a request received earlier in the week from the Chief Inspector with the SPCA for the appointment of three of their new staff members as By-law Officers for the purpose of enforcing the By-law Respecting the Responsible Ownership of Dogs.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council appoint the following SPCA staff members as By-law Enforcement Officers for the Municipality of the County of Antigonish for the purpose of enforcing the By-law Respecting the Responsible Ownership of Dogs: Jillian Videnova, Haley Doyle, and Earl Lattie.

Motion Carried

Community Events

- Councillor MacLaughlin noted that a dance will be taking place in St. Josephs this weekend for St. Patrick's Day. Lochaber Community Centre holds breakfasts on the 2nd Sunday of the month.
- Councillor Garvie shared that the Antigonish Highland Games is advertising that they will be offering free day passes this year to promote the games and encourage attendance.
- Councillor Melanson noted that the new fitness room has opened in the Pomquet Community Centre.
- Councillor McNamara shared that March Break activities are happening every day this week in the Havre Boucher Community Centre.

- Councillor Mattie noted that both furnaces down in the Monastery Community Centre

Additions to the Agenda

There were no additions to the agenda.

Adjournment

Moved

That the Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned at 7:32pm.

Motion Carried

Warden Nicholas MacInnis

Shirlyn Donovan, CAO

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