

# **MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF ANTIGONISH**

## **Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday April 22, 2025, Following Asset Management  
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 (by Zoom)  
Councillor Sterling Garvie

**Regrets:**

Councillor Adam Baden-Clay

**Staff Present:**

Shirlyn Donovan, CAO  
Beth Schumacher, Deputy Clerk  
Allison Duggan, Director of Finance  
Tammy Feltmate, Director of Sustainable Communities  
Meg MacInnis, Strategic Initiatives Coordinator  
Denise Dunn, HAF Coordinator

**Others Present:**

Kathleen Robertsson, ABC for Kids  
Betty Rose Landry, ABC for Kids  
Richie Connors, Antigonish Community Transit  
Gallery (in person and by Zoom)

### **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 7:24pm.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Warden MacInnis called for any additions or deletions to the agenda.

Moved and Seconded

That the agenda be approved as presented.

**Motion Carried**

### **Approval of April 8, 2025 Committee of the Whole Minutes**

Warden MacInnis called for any errors or omissions in the Committee of the Whole minutes of April 8, 2025. Hearing none, the minutes were considered approved.

### **Business Arising from the Minutes**

There was no business arising from the minutes.

### **Delegations**

#### **ABC for Kids Society**

Ms. Robertsson and Ms. Landry made a presentation to the committee to share information regarding the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program and how it has been providing books to children in the community. They shared that over 14,000 books have been delivered to 880 children since the program was launched locally in April 2023.

A request was made for continued and increased support from the committee, to keep the program running and to allow more families to be reached. Member of the committee were encouraged to spread the word about the program throughout their districts. Members of the committee thanked the presenters and shared their own examples of the positive feedback that they have heard about the program in the community.

#### **Antigonish Community Transit**

Mr. Connors provided members of the committee with an overview of the operations of Antigonish Community Transit, with information about ridership numbers, fleet management, and the importance of the service in the community. Questions from the committee included questions about maintenance of the fleet, the dial-a-ride service and bookings for medical appointments in Halifax and Sydney, and the increased visibility of the service in the community. Mr. Connors was also asked about the staff compliment at ACTs, and whether staffing was a concern. Warden MacInnis thanked Mr. Connors for his presentation.

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## **Continuing Business**

### **Tourism Strategy Updates**

Ms. MacInnis reviewed the information shared at the April 8<sup>th</sup> Committee of the Whole meeting regarding the Antigonish Tourism Strategy. As requested by the Committee, a list of members was provided, and a copy of the draft partnership agreement were included in the agenda package for the committee's information.

Questions of clarification were asked regarding clauses in the proposed partnership agreement, and how success would be measured for the initiative. Staff was encouraged to work with the tourism association to get more representation from county operators. Ms. MacInnis was thanked for her work.

#### **Moved and Seconded**

That the Committee recommends that Municipal Council approve the proposed increase to the tourism strategy budget to \$70,000 annually for a period of four years; endorse the partnership agreement with the Antigonish Tourism Association; and authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to execute the agreement on behalf of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish.

**Motion Carried**

### **Code of Conduct Investigator Selection**

Ms. MacInnis provided an overview of the work done by staff to re-evaluate the list of solicitors pre-qualified by AMANS. Staff is recommending Charles A. Thompson, Partner at Burchell MacDougall LLP out of Truro, be retained as the municipality's investigator for complaints received under the Municipal Code of Conduct for Elected Officials.

#### **Moved and Seconded**

That the Committee recommends that Municipal Council appoint Charles Thompson of Burchell MacDougall LLP as their investigator under subsection 23C(1) of the Municipal Government Act to receive and investigate complaints received under the Municipal Code of Conduct for Elected Officials.

**Motion Carried**

### **Climate Action Plan**

Ms. Feltmate provided the committee with an overview of her review of the proposal for the preparation of a climate action plan that was presented to the committee by Mr. MacAllister earlier in the year. She highlighted components to be covered in the project, opportunities for partnerships in the community, the alignment of the project with Canada's National Adaption Strategy, and the focus of the project to recognize,

identify, and consult with under-represented communities. Staff feels that the project would be a worthwhile investment.

Members of the committee asked questions about participating municipalities in other provinces, federal planning for climate change, and the role of neighbouring municipalities if initiatives have an impact across municipal boundaries. Concerns were raised about demands on the community for consultation, staff time for the project and training, and the overlaps of the project with the jurisdiction over elements that could be identified in the plan. Discussion followed.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council supports an application to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Local Leadership for Climate Adaption, Climate-Ready Plans and Processes. This proposed work over the course of 18 months would increase the County's climate resilience, support Emergency Management Planning, and help to identify actions for communities in the County to build resilience in their own neighbourhoods. The support would include in-kind contributions in the amounts of \$18,500 of staff time and \$13,000 for engagement session and communications support.

**Motion defeated.**  
**(2 in favour, 7 opposed)**

## **New Business**

### **Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) Initiatives Review**

Ms. Dunn provided the committee with an update on the work being done on the eight initiatives that were identified for the fund, with particular focus on the support being provided to Antigonish Community Transit. A question was asked regarding how long the program runs until. Ms. Dunn noted that the program runs until 2027. Discussion followed regarding specific work being carried out for the different HAF initiatives. Members of the committee asked to be kept informed of work taking place, particularly if it is in their districts.

Councillor McNamara left the meeting at 9:27pm.

### **PARL Request for Funding**

Mrs. Donovan shared a letter that was received from the Pictou Antigonish Regional Library, for an increase in funding from their municipal partners to cover minimum wage increase and cost of living. Consensus was given to proceed with the increase as requested when preparing the 2025/2026 municipal budget.

## **Community Events**

- Councillor Mattie shared that there is a dance in Tracadie on April 26<sup>th</sup>

- Councillor MacLaughlin shared that there will be a yard sale in St. Josephs at the Community Centre.
- Councillor Brophy shared that the Lions Club is hosting a breakfast on Sunday April 27<sup>th</sup>

### **Reports from Inter-Municipal Boards, Committees, and Commissions**

#### Heritage Museum

- The next meeting is scheduled for May 5th.

#### Antigonish Arena Association

- Met last week – meeting again in August.

#### Eastern District Planning Commission

- No representatives were present.

#### Eastern Regional Solid Waste Management

- Meeting on the 24th

#### Pictou Antigonish Regional Library

- No meetings.

#### RK MacDonald Nursing Home

- The Board will be meeting on Thursday evening.

#### County Paqtnkek Joint Steering Committee

- Nothing to report. Warden MacInnis has reached out to Chief Julian.

#### Community Navigation & Physician Retention Services Association

- Nothing to report.

#### PARC

- Nothing to report.

#### ACALA

- Next meeting will be on next Wednesday.

#### ACTS

- Had a meeting earlier this month, where there was detailed discussion about a new vehicle that had a component break off its frame. The vehicle will be returned to the factory, and the fleet is down a vehicle.

#### AREMO

- Meeting is May

**Additions to the Agenda**

There were no additions to the agenda.

**In-Camera Items**

There were no in-camera items.

**Adjournment**

Warden MacInnis reviewed the list of Councillors attending the Chamber of Commerce President's Dinner on May 13<sup>th</sup>. The May meetings are being rescheduled to Wednesday May 14<sup>th</sup> to accommodate Councillors attendance at the Chamber dinner on the 13<sup>th</sup>.

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned at 9:36pm.

**Motion Carried**

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Warden Nicholas MacInnis

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Shirlyn Donovan, CAO