

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Municipal Council Meeting- Minutes

Tuesday, November 18, 2025

7:30pm

Council Chambers

Municipal Administration Building

285 Beech Hill Road

Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

Councillors Present:

Warden Nicholas MacInnis

Deputy Warden John Dunbar

Councillor Mary MacLellan

Councillor Adam Baden-Clay

Councillor Richelle MacLaughlin (by Zoom)

Councillor Shawn Brophy

Councillor Gary Mattie

Councillor Harris McNamara

Councillor Sterling Garvie

Regrets:

Councillor Wayne Melanson

Staff Present:

Shirlyn Donovan, CAO

John Bain, Director, EDPC

Beth Schumacher, Municipal Clerk

Also Present:

Matt Draper, XFM

Gallery (in person and online)

Corey LeBlanc (by Zoom)

Call to Order- Warden MacInnis

Warden MacInnis called the meeting to order at 7:38pm.

Approval of Agenda

Warden MacInnis called for approval of the Council meeting agenda.

Min # 2025-136

Moved and Seconded

That the agenda be approved as presented.

Motion Carried

Approval of the October 14, 2025 Municipal Council Minutes

Warden MacInnis called for any errors or omissions in the minutes of October 14, 2025.

Hearing none, the minutes were considered accepted as presented.

Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

Statutory Public Hearings

Mrs. Donovan reviewed the Public Hearings Protocols for the benefit of the gallery and Council.

An Application to Rezone a Portion of PID01231182 at 720 Walsh Post Road, in Fairmont, from Rural General to Tourist Commercial

Mr. Bain provided Council with a presentation of the proposal for the rezoning of a portion of a parcel on Walsh Post Road, in the community of Fairmont, to facilitate the development of a facility with five (5) tourist cabins. Mr. Bain noted that five is the maximum number of cabins permitted in the zone, and any growth to add more cabins would require the developer to obtain a Development Agreement. Maps and photographs of the site to provide context was shared.

Mr. Bain reviewed the organizations that were circulated to comment on the proposal. No concerns were raised with the proposal. Mrs. Bain noted that staff and the Planning Advisory Committee are both recommending approval of the proposed rezoning. The obligations to advertise the public hearing and how they were met were shared, and Mr. Bain noted that no written submissions against or in favour of the application were received.

A question was asked regarding whether any of the cabins are required to be accessible. Mr. Bain noted that the cabins would be obligated to meet the Building Code. A question was asked about the intended purpose of the cottages, and Mr. Bain noted that they are intended for short-term rentals.

The floor was then opened for any persons who were interested in speaking against the proposal. Two individuals, Patrick Neary and Angela Neary identified that they were present to speak against the proposal. No parties identified that they were present to speak in favour of the proposal.

Mr. Patrick Neary noted that his property was abutting the location where the cabins are proposed. He has concerns with the proposed use, particularly if for hunting, where he uses his property for firewood and cuts wood in the wooded area. Members of Council asked questions about the proximity of the cabins to the property line, the use of Mr. Neary's property, whether there was a fence between the properties, and what kind of tourism the zoning would permit.

Ms. Angela Neary spoke against the proposed rezoning, expressing her concerns with the use within the wooded area with the wildfire risk. She noted that she lives at an adjacent property, and expressed concern with noise, traffic, and loss of property value. She noted that while the Walsh Post Road was reviewed in the staff analysis and deemed sufficient, many of the residents along this roadway utilize the Fairmont Road,

which is full of potholes. Concerns were expressed with the lack of details about the proposed tourist use, and the potential for other uses in the Tourist-Commercial zone to be developed on the site. Questions were asked by Council regarding the distance between the proposed cabins and the adjacent property lines, and the area of the proposed rezoning.

Mrs. Neary spoke from the gallery and asked about how the property being subdivided would affect her property value. Warden MacInnis noted that was not a criterion for consideration for a rezoning.

Councillor MacLellan asked it was known why the location was selected for tourist cottages. Councillor MacLaughlin asked Mr. Bain if Council has the ability to request a business plan with respect to the proposed development. Mrs. Donovan noted that the policy does not facilitate the authority to request details beyond confirming that the use fits in the Tourist-Commercial zone. A concern was raised with making a decision without information, and options were discussed.

Deputy Warden Dunbar proposed that a decision on the matter be tabled, and that further information be requested from the applicant. Mr. Bain cautioned Council making a decision based on information beyond the planning criteria or requesting information beyond what is in the planning by-law. He also noted concern that a decision based on who the units would be rented to could be the subject of a human rights complaint or result in an appeal of the decision. Several members of Council noted that it would be beneficial to have a representative of the applicant in attendance to answer questions about the proposal.

Min # 2025-137

Moved and Seconded

That Council table a decision on the proposed rezoning of PID01231182 on Walsh Post Road from Rural General (RG-1) to Tourist commercial (TC-1), and request that additional details regarding the proposed tourist cabin use and the accessibility of the cabins.

Motion Carried.

Staff noted that an addendum report will be prepared, and the item will be rescheduled for the December 9, 2025 Council meeting. A question was asked of Mr. Bain about how the public hearings are advertised. Mr. Bain shared that the hearings are advertised on the municipal and EDPC website, as well as in the Reporter, and notices are mailed to adjacent property owners. A suggestion was made to discuss planning advertising methods at a future meeting.

An Application to Amend the Antigonish County Land Use By-law to Update the Setback Requirements for Utility-Scale Wind Turbines in Accordance with New Provincial Regulations.

Mr. Bain spoke to a proposal to amend the Antigonish County Wind Turbine Land Use By-law, initiated by an application by EverWind to amend the document. Mr. Bain noted that in March 2025, the Province of Nova Scotia made changes regarding wind turbine setbacks. Mr. Bain reviewed the existing regulations in the by-law, and the recommendation that is being made to amend the by-law.

Warden MacInnis asked for anyone in attendance looking to speak in favour or opposed to the proposal.

Mark Stewart spoke in favour of the proposed amendment and noted that the changes are to bring the by-law in alignment with the provincial guidelines. He noted that the Environmental Assessment process for turbines is rigorous and would address many of the concerns raised by Council.

Tyler DeGier was in attendance to answer any questions and was in favour of the proposal as well.

Members of Council noted a concern with proposed amendment to reduce the setback from a watercourse to only 60 metres. Mr. DeGier provided further details regarding setbacks from watercourses and answered follow-up questions from Council regarding how construction areas are reinstated to avoid run-off into watercourses.

Min # 2025-138

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council give Second Reading and approve the proposed amendments to the County of Antigonish Wind Turbine By-law to establish setback requirements for utility-scale wind turbines of four (4) times the turbine height, unless a greater distance is needed to ensure exterior sound levels do not exceed 40 decibels, to amend the minimum setbacks from watercourses and public highways to 60 metres, and to clarify that a "highway" is any street accepted and maintained by the Province or Municipality as a public thoroughfare.

Motion Carried.

An Application to Enter Into a Development Agreement to permit Grouped Quadplexes on a Single Lot, to be Registered Against Four New Parcels from PID10132611 and Grouped Dwellings on a Single Lot (to be Consolidated) for PIDs 10137099, 10137115, and 10137131, Antigonish Landing

Mr. Bain presented on the proposed changes necessitated by a change in the CMHC funding formula available to the developer. Mr. Bain provided an overview of the proposal and plans that identified the PIDs, with one plan subdividing a large parcel into

four lots, and the other involving parcels being consolidated. Mr. Bain reviewed the possible motion before Council for consideration.

Questions from Council included a request for clarification that the proposed amendment is not a change in what is being developed based on how it was rezoned a year ago in terms of total units, but is only a change in how those units are distributed over lots.

Min # 2025-139

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council enter into a Development Agreement permitting Grouped Quadplexes on four (4) Single Lots to be Subdivided Out on PID 10132611 as shown on the subdivision plan in Appendix C of the proposed Development Agreement, specifically as follows:

- a. Proposed subdivided lot shown as "PID 2" where eight (8) dwelling units constructed as two (2) quadplexes will be permitted on the single lot; and
- b. Proposed subdivided lot shown as "PID 3" where twelve (12) dwelling units constructed as three (3) quadplexes will be permitted on the single lot; and
- c. Proposed subdivided lot shown as "PID 4" where sixteen (16) dwelling units constructed as four (4) quadplexes will be permitted on the single lot; and
- d. Proposed subdivided lot shown as "PID 5" where sixteen (16) dwelling units constructed as four (4) quadplexes will be permitted on the single lot; and

That Municipal Council enter into a Development Agreements for Grouped Dwellings on a Single Lot (to be Consolidated) for PID #10137099, PID #10137115 and PID #10137131 Antigonish Landing, Antigonish County.

Motion Carried.

Delegations

There were no scheduled delegations.

Correspondence

Mrs. Donovan spoke to the letter from PVSC and the changes that were a part of the recently passed Municipal Modernization Act. She spoke to the municipality's current practice and noted that staff is looking at other municipalities across the province before coming forward with any changes to the municipality's policy.

Mrs. Donovan spoke to the letter from Sean Fraser regarding the Bail Reform Act. Members of Council noted that it was good to see that concerns raised by Council were addressed in the letter.

Mrs. Donovan spoke to a letter received from new Minister of Municipal Affairs introducing themselves.

Mrs. Donovan spoke to a letter from the Pictou Antigonish Regional Library (PARL), which the municipality was copied on, from the PARL Chair. The letter reiterated the importance of library funding, and asked that the review committee recommendation be accepted to commit to a consistent funding formula. Councillor MacLellan spoke to Eric Stackhouse from the library, and he is very concerned about funding for the library and the impacts it will have on the staffing and hours at the facility. Mrs. Donovan noted that library funding is an agenda item at the Joint Council meeting tomorrow evening.

Committee Reports

October 28, 2025 Asset Management Committee Report

Min # 2025-140

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council approve the purchase of two new 250 gallon fibreglass fuel tanks for the Havre Boucher Sewer Treatment Plant for \$9,828.77 plus HST from MacGillivray Fuels.

Motion Carried

Min # 2025-141

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council add the installation of a sidewalk and crosswalk for Applesed Drive to the Capital List.

Motion Carried

Min # 2025-142

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council direct staff to request that Nova Scotia Power inspect, and adjust as required, the current streetlight at the intersection of Lower North Grant Road and Route 245 in North Grant, for the purpose of better illuminating the intersection, and if this proves insufficient, that Council approves the installation of a new streetlight at that location.

Motion Carried

Min # 2025-143

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council send a letter to the Nova Scotia Department of Public Works, copied to Minister Thompson and Minister Tilley, requesting to have West Arm Branch Road in Tracadie gravelled.

Motion Carried

October 28, 2025 Committee of the Whole Report

Min # 2025-144

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council sends a letter to the Department of Natural Resources regarding the road at the Cape George Lighthouse.

Motion Carried

Min # 2025-145

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council pay the balance of \$8400 to the Eastern Nova Scotia Exhibition for their cost to truck in water at the 2025 ENSE.

Motion Carried

Min # 2025-146

Moved and Seconded

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: Sarah Palmer, Brian Culliton, Muhammad Haroon, Lorne Boudreau, Glenn McInnis, Jade Bloom, and Hanna Wenzel.

Motion Carried

Min # 2025-147

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council sends a letter to Minister Tilley expressing their support of consideration of an access to the new collaborative care clinic on Sears Ross Road from Trunk 4.

Motion Carried

Min # 2025-148

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council approve the reallocation of the community partnership grant for the Heatherton Community Centre for roof repairs to the building.

Motion Carried

November 18, 2025 Committee of the Whole Report

Min # 2025-149

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council approve the signing of the Order for Winter Parking Regulations for 2025-2026, setting out the period from December 1, 2025 to April 15, 2026 as the time in which Winter Parking Regulations will be in effect on roads/streets under the jurisdiction of the County of Antigonish.

Motion Carried

Min # 2025-150

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council directs recreation staff to liaise with PFN office staff for a recreation outing to support the community of Paqtnkek.

Motion Carried

Min # 2025-151

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council send a letter to the Premier, copied to NSFM and the other municipalities in the province, regarding concerns with cell phone coverage in the community.

Motion Carried

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

- Deputy Warden Dunbar provided a summary of the NSFM fall conference in early November in Halifax. He felt that overall, the conference went well and noted that the by-law changes that were proposed were not successful. He attended boundary review meetings in Heatherton and Tracadie, as well as the Heritage Committee meeting.
- Councillor Mattie will be attending the ACTS AGM, as has attended several boundary review sessions.
- Councillor McNamara attended the boundary review meeting in Havre Boucher, as well as meetings for the RK.
- Councillor Garvie attended the Housing Forum. He will be attending the Arena Board and ERSEM meetings later this month.
- Councillor Brophy attended Museum Board meeting, as well as an RK committee meeting.

- Warden MacInnis attended NSFM conference and attended the 4H Rooted Gala. He also attended boundary review meetings in St. Josephs, Heatherton, and St. Andrews.

Motions

There were no motions.

Miscellaneous Business

There was no miscellaneous business.

Adjournment

Min # 2025-152

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council meeting adjourn at 9:04 pm.

Motion Carried



Warden Nicholas MacInnis



Shirlyn Donovan, CAO