MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Municipal Council Meeting- Minutes

Tuesday, January 13, 2026
7:30pm
Council Chambers
Municipal Administration Building
285 Beech Hill Road
Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

Councillors Present:
Deputy Warden John Dunbar
Councillor Mary MacLellan (by Zoom)
Councillor Adam Baden-Clay
Councillor Richelle MacLaughlin (by Zoom)
Councillor Shawn Brophy
Councillor Wayne Melanson
Councillor Gary Mattie
Councillor Sterling Garvie

Regrets:
Warden Nicholas MacInnis
Councillor Harris McNamara

Staff Present:
Shirlyn Donovan, CAO
Allison Duggan, CFO
Tammy Feltmate, Director of Sustainable Communities
Beth Schumacher, Municipal Clerk
Meg MacInnis, Strategic Initiatives Coordinator

Also Present:
Corey LeBlanc (by Zoom)
Gallery (in person and online)
Dr. Andrea Terry, St. FX Art Gallery

Call to Order- Deputy Warden Dunbar

Warden MacInnis called the meeting to order at 7:49pm.

Approval of Agenda

Deputy Warden Dubar called for approval of the Council meeting agenda. An addition was requested, being an opportunity to recognize Matt MacPherson's 1000th NHL game as a Linesman.

Min # 2026-001
Moved and Seconded

That the agenda be approved as amended.

Motion Carried

Consideration of the December 9, 2025 Municipal Council Minutes

Deputy Warden Dunbar called for any errors or omissions in the minutes of December 9, 2025. Hearing none, the minutes were considered accepted as presented.

Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

Delegations

Dr. Andrea Terry – St. FX Art Gallery

Dr. Terry provided members of Council with an overview of the events taking place at the St. FX Art Gallery as they prepare for their 50th anniversary. An exhibit to feature the artwork of 50 local artists is being planned, with a call for artist submissions expected in January 2026 for the juried exhibition. She shared information about the old exhibition space on campus, and noted that in the fall of 2020, the gallery's newest exhibition space opened in Mulroney Hall. Details regarding the 50th anniversary show, including timelines and budget, were shared. Dr. Terry noted that the Art Gallery would be making application to the Community Partnership Grants program for financial support with this show.

The floor was then opened for questions from Council. Questions were asked about accessibility of the gallery, the anticipated participation of artists for submissions, how local artists will be notified of the submission opportunity, and where the staffing rates in the budget are determined and whether the wage could be brought up to an hourly rate that is aligned with a living wage. Several members of Council expressed their interest in attending the show and appreciated the show featuring local talent.

Correspondence

Letter from Lin Smith Regarding Library Funding

Mrs. Donovan spoke to the letter that was included in agenda package that was received from a resident concerned about the library funding issue and expressing their support for the facility and the library having adequate funding moving forward.

Letter from Friends of the Antigonish Library (FOAL)

Mrs. Donovan spoke to the information included in the submission from FOAL, includes copies of community testimonials and budget details. Staff noted that a request for additional funding is expected if there is not a change to the provincial funding formula. Deputy Warden Dunbar shared that at the Antigonish Library will be holding a room dedication for Councillor Mary MacLellan on January 26th. Councillor Mattie shared that there were services offered at the library to members of the community that goes above and beyond borrowing books. A suggestion was made to send a copy of the correspondence that the Municipality had sent to the Premier to

the other parties in the province and copying the provincial government to let them know that those concerns are being raised with the municipality.

Letter from Minister Tilley in response to West Arm Branch Road in Tracadie

Mrs. Donovan reviewed the letter that was received in response to a letter expressing concern with the West Arm Branch Road in Tracadie, and the desire for more gravel on that roadway. Staff was asked to reach out to the local supervisor to invite their team to meet with the Asset Management Committee at an upcoming meeting. Discussion followed.

Committee Reports

December 18, 2025 Committee of the Whole e-Poll Report

Min # 2026-002
Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council approves an unbudgeted donation of $1,000 to Santa for Seniors, to enable them to provide grocery support to a number of seniors' households in the County of Antigonish.

Motion Carried

January 13, 2026 Committee of the Whole Report

Min # 2026-003
Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council approve the audited financial statements for 2024/2025 financial year.

Motion Carried

Min # 2026-004
Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council send a letter to Build Nova Scotia thanking them for the meeting regarding cellular service in the Municipality, and to request that the eastern part of the county be included in the phase two of the cellular network project to improve service coverage in that area, and to request exploration of further methods to address safety concerns resulting from the reduced cellular network, copied to Ministers Tilley, Thompson, and Morrow.

Motion Carried

Min # 2026-005
Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council provide a letter of support to Antigonish Affordable Housing for their application Build Canada Homes Funding Program.

Motion Carried

Min # 2026-006
Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council a letter to Premier Houston regarding the Nova Scotia Power rate increase request, asking for consideration of a five-year rate freeze and to investigate Nova Scotia Power being returned to public ownership, copied to NSFM and all municipalities in the province.

Motion Carried

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

- Councillor Brophy shared that the Museum Board is looking to fill positions on the museum board and further discussed the Peace by Chocolate signage. He noted that the RK MacDonald Board will be meeting later in the month.
- Councillor Baden-Clay will be attending the Eastern District Planning Commission Board meeting on January 15th. Antigonish Affordable Housing Board and Governance Committee met earlier this month is working on itemizing the paths conducted by each committee in the society to look at structure and responsibilities as they move towards their new build at Sugarloaf. He noted that new volunteers came out to that meeting. The Antigonish Regional Emergency Management committee had a meeting last week, and there was a lot of discussion about alternate routes to the hospital in the event of construction or emergencies.
- Councillor MacLaughlin reported that the Helping Healthcare Antigonish organization met in December and will meet again in March. A review of the year was held, where it was noted that good work is being done to keep doctors in the community and promote healthcare families coming to the community.
- Councillor Garvie provided a summary from Eastern Regional Solid Waste Management. A part-time educator has been hired, and the budget notifications have been sent out to all participating units.
- Councillor Melanson has a Police Advisory Committee meeting on January 15th.
- Councillor Mattie attended the New Year Levee.
- Councillor MacLellan attended the New Year Levee and had a library meeting earlier in the month discussing the budget concerns and the impacts on programming.
- Deputy Warden Dunbar attended the New Year Levee. He noted that the Arena Board last met in November and will be meeting in February.

Additions to the Agenda

Councillor Mattie shared with Council that Matt MacPherson, who is a linesman NHL and from Antigonish County, recently officiated at his 1000th NHL game. Councillor Mattie shared his congratulations to him and acknowledged his family going to Boston to support him at that game where he was recognized. He asked for something to be sent from the Municipality to recognize this achievement.

Min # 2026-007
Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council send a letter of congratulations to Matt MacPherson on his 1000th game as a Linesman with the NHL.

Motion Carried

Motions

There were no motions.

Miscellaneous Business

There was no miscellaneous business.

Adjournment

Min # 2026-008
Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council meeting adjourn at 8:42 pm.

Motion Carried

Deputy Warden John Dunbar

Shirlyn Donovan, CAO