MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Special Municipal Council Meeting- Minutes

Monday, June 1, 2026
6:00pm
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 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, Municipal Clerk
Tammy Feltmate, Director of Public Works (Acting) and Sustainable Communities
John Bain, Director, EDPC

Also Present:
Corey LeBlanc (by Zoom)
Gallery (in person and online)

Call to Order- Warden MacInnis

Warden MacInnis called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Approval of Agenda

Warden MacInnis called for approval of the Council meeting agenda.

Min # 2026-74
Moved and Seconded

That the agenda be approved as presented.

Motion Carried

Consideration of the May 26, 2026 Municipal Council Minutes

Warden MacInnis called for any errors or omissions in the minutes of May 26, 2026. 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 read the Statutory Hearing Protocol for the benefit of those in attendance.

Development Agreement and Rezoning – Church Street Extension

Mr. Bain provided the committee with a review of the proposal under consideration for a development agreement and rezoning application. He reviewed the context of the site, reviewed the background of the proposal and existing policy and zoning, and reviewed the preliminary site plan. He noted that in the development agreement as negotiated, the parking between the proposed building and the Church Street Extension has been removed and a provision included to prohibit the storage of garbage disposal units in that area. He spoke to the different criteria that were considered in accordance with the policy requirements, noting changes to the building based on feedback about water pressure in the area. He also spoke to the feedback from the Department of Transportation regarding access to and from the site, being a restriction allowing only one access for the residential development and future commercial development onto Church Street Extension.

He then reviewed the policy enabling the consideration of rezoning of the corner parcel to Local Commercial (C-1) in areas designated residential, noting the criteria that must be met. Mr. Bain reviewed the dates and methods for notifying the public of the hearing, and provided staff's recommendation to approve the proposed development agreement and rezoning.

The floor was then opened to questions from Council. A question was asked about water capacity in the area, once the RK MacDonald development comes online. Mr. Bain noted that the response from the engineer would have considered the RK building currently under construction, and noted that they had indicated that the water and sewer were adequate and modifications were made to the design to address fire pressure. A question was asked of whether there was a response in writing from the Town's engineer confirming the water and sewer capacity. A question was asked about whether the town will supply water to a development like this if they cannot supply enough water/pressure to this area.

A concern was raised about the proposed height and size of the building, and a question was asked about what building heights in the community. A concern was raised with the comparison of commercial uses across Trunk 4 in the Town, and concerns about the ambiguity of the proposed development on the corner of Trunk 4 and Church Street Extension. A secondary exit from the site, for safety reasons, was raised. A question was asked about whether the County could ask the provincial Department of Public Works (DPW) about the proposed secondary egress from the

site. A concern was raised about approving the proposal without knowing whether the secondary access would be approved.

The Warden then called for parties looking to speak against or in favour of the proposal.

Individuals Speaking Against the Proposal

Katie Edwards

Ms. Edwards spoke to her family's connection to the area, noting that her parents had purchased a property on the street in the 1970s. She noted that in late 2025, residents in the neighbourhood expressed concern with the increase of density in the area when the RK MacDonald construction began. Concern with the size of the proposed development, and the ongoing construction impact of on the community. While the Levy Leathers building is zoned commercial, it generates very little traffic. Concerns with traffic flow with the roundabout, particularly for traffic entering/existing the furniture store and Dairy Queen sites on either side. Interest was expressed in learning more about the water/sewer services and their capacity in the area, and the access concerns with secondary access for both this site and the RK. Ms. Edwards noted that while in close proximity to the site, she did not receive direct notice of this proposal.

Phonse Gillis

Mr. Gillis spoke to the work done on the application before notification was provided to the residents in the Church Street Extension area. He referenced the letter that had been sent by residents on the street last year expressing concerns with the increase of density. He noted that the site under consideration is different from other spaces in the community where multi-unit buildings have been developed in that it is smaller. Concerns with the proposed reduction in parking was referenced, the proposal is different from anything else in the area, and does not compare to the other commercial developments in the area. A request was made to table the proposal, to give the community an opportunity to work with planning staff and Council to discuss the options for the redevelopment of this site. The tax base on the street and concerns regarding water restrictions in the community were voiced. Many residents felt that they were only informed of the proposal on May 30th.

Residents Speaking in Favour of the Proposal

Elizabeth Doucette

Ms. Doucette expressed her support for the infill development that is proposed to increase housing stock in the community, citing the 2023 housing needs assessment and citing figures from that development. She felt that the proposal is a justifiable number of units for the lot size, is adjacent to a commercial node that has been traditionally located at the intersection, and the proposal could be seen as a

mixed-use development. She spoke to the way that the building could create a buffer between the former highway and the existing residences, and provided her thoughts on pedestrian and vehicular traffic from the development.

The floor was then opened back to Council for discussion. A question was asked about whether the units are affordable, and it was noted that they are market, but that the volume of units on the market is a factor in unit pricing. Councillor MacLellan suggested that the motion be tabled for further discussion of the matters that were raised by the residents at the meeting.

Min # 2026-75
Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council table the motion to approve:

1) a proposal for the Municipality of the County of Antigonish to enter into a Development Agreement for a 60-unit Residential Apartment building at the corner of Church Street Extension and Highway 4, (PID 01248673 and 01286475), West River, Antigonish County; in accordance with Council's Policy L-2.12 to consider approval of multiple unit dwellings within the Residential Designation in the West River Antigonish Harbour Municipal Planning Strategy according to the development agreement provisions of the *Municipal Government Act*

2) and further that the West River Antigonish Harbour Land Use By-law be amended by rezoning Lot 2 on the proposed development plan from the Residential (R-1) Zone to the Local Commercial (C-1) Zone in accordance with Council's Policy L-2.15 to consider rezonings to the Local Commercial (C-1) Zone in areas designated Residential in the West River Antigonish Harbour Municipal Planning Strategy.

Motion Carried

<u>Rezoning Application – Eigg Mountain Wind Inc.</u>

Mr. Bain spoke to the application from Eigg Mountain Wind Group for rezone twenty-four (24) portions of eighteen parcels of land in the north-west corner of the County for twenty-two (22) wind turbines and two reserve locations. Mr. Bain reviewed designation and zoning of the proposed lots, and noted that variances have been considered for several of the sites. He noted that the proposal is subject to a provincial Environmental Impact Assessment (approved in April 2026), and spoke to the staff site visit to the various sites. He explained how the wind turbine zoning relates to the other land use zoning in the affected Land Use by-laws.

Mr. Bain then spoke to the criteria in the Municipal Planning Strategy that must be considered when looking at proposal. He showed a series of slides that showed each of the proposed locations of the turbines with drone images overlain on LiDAR imagery showing the different setback areas relative to property lines and other features, with site pictures for locations where access was obtained.

Mr. Bain reviewed the remaining planning strategy policies, he referenced the Environmental Impact Assessment that was considered by the province. He listed the different stakeholders that were consulted as the policy criteria was evaluated. When reviewing setbacks, he reviewed all of the different setback requirements and gave both the setback requirement and what the proposed setbacks were proposed to be.

A review of the different variances that were considered for the proposed were reviewed, with the different variance tests listed in section 235(3) of the MGA explained for Council's benefit. Mr. Bain continued to review the different criteria for consideration for the rezoning, and how many of those elements were considered in the Environmental Impact Assessment.

Mr. Bain reviewed the notification requirements, and noted that no written submissions were received. Staff is recommending approval of the proposed rezonings.

The floor was then opened for questions from Council. Clarification on residents expressing opposition to the proposal, and a question about where the turbines go in the rezoned areas, were requested. All of the proposed sites are privately owned and under lease. Councillor Brophy noted that he has been contacted by residents that are not in favour of the proposal, and the access roads and the ability for these roads to be used for recreational purposes in the winter was noted. Mr. Bain cited that Council's consideration is the criteria and implementation policy as noted in the municipal planning strategy.

Warden MacInnis then asked for parties that wanted to speak in favour or against the proposal to identify themselves.

Residents Speaking Against the Proposal

Jonathan MacKenzie

Mr. MacKenzie spoke to his concern with the development being proposed in an ecologically significant area. He asked for Council to get clarification from the Dept of Ed about NS Public Safety Guidelines if schools are using the protected area for education. He noted that he leads winter activities, and spoke to the terms and conditions and the feedback that he has for public use. He noted that he supports his neighbours and their investment in the development, but he feels that there the project should be moved to be more central to the community, on crown land, for more centralized benefit to the area. He spoke to his concerns about socio-economic value of the proposal.

Al Muir

Mr. Muir expressed his concerns with the provincial environmental impact assessment process, and the county's written submission to the province in favour of the project. He spoke to the mainland moose and other environmental concerns

with the proposed location, feeling that the rezoning would permit an industrial use in the residential area used by the mainland moose.

A question was asked about how camera placement used by Mr. Muir compared to the locations used in the Environmental Impact Assessment. He spoke to how he positioned his camera location based on wildlife traffic patterns based on their experience with the area.

Warden MacInnis clarified that the County of Antigonish did not make a submission regarding the Environmental Impact Assessment.

Jeremy Landry

Mr. Landry spoke to how he feels that the proposed development is not the right development for the environmental area, with concerns about scale and compatibility. He questioned the long-term plan for the area, and how this development fits into that. He also spoke about the economic interests that parties speaking to the proposal may have, and feels that Council's role is not just to facilitate development, but to facilitate good development. He also asked about the variances identified in the presentation by staff.

Residents Speaking for The Proposed Development

John Teasdale

Mr. Teasdale spoke to his support for green energy in the community, highlighting his experience in the sector over several decades. He noted his family connections and familiarity with the Eigg Mountain area. He feels that there are not as many moose in that area as represented, and spoke to high potential of the area as a wind energy source resource. He spoke to the spacing of turbines in other locations in the world, and how the spacing between turbines differs in those locations.

Peter Richie

Mr. Richie felt that many of the points that he wanted to make were already covered by the previous presenters. He spoke to how the turbines are on private property, and the developer has negotiated the leases with those property owners and that is a matter between those parties. He was relieved that individuals opposed to the project were not opposed to green energy, and while he is also concerned about the wellbeing of the mainland moose, he doesn't feel that it's the turbines but instead industrial forestry, hunting, and motorized vehicles in those environmental areas. He expressed his concern with the clearcut that recently took place near Vincent Lake. He feels that the Council's criteria is met, and the forum of criticizing the technology and process is with the province.

Marcie MacQuarrie

Mr. MacQuarrie expressed his thanks, and noted that he is in support of the project, noting it is a large investment in the area. He spoke to the project in terms of its

green energy benefits and economic benefits to the community. He feels that the developer is a responsible company, and cited the community benefit fund and how it will benefit the communities around the development, including through bursaries. The tax revenue to the community that is expected was also noted. He noted that the developer is committed and has experience. He felt that the new access roads will provide enhanced access for forest fire fighting. He asks that Council consider approval of the proposal.

Andrea Crosman

Ms. Crosman introduced herself, her involvement in the project, and provided some background on RES and their experience with energy projects. Examples of other projects in Nova Scotia were shared. The community partnership working on the benefits for the community groups was mentioned. She spoke to the human impact that the project entails, including several employees of the company being able to move back to the community from Alberta to work on this project.

A question was asked about the cost per megawatt of these turbines. Ms. Cosman didn't know the cost of the power of the project itself, but can follow-up with the average of the winning projects from the tender.

Mike Murphy

Mr. Murphy introduced himself and shared his connection to the community. He spoke to the community engagement throughout the project, and noted the annual community benefit fund. He spoke to the engagement done with the SnoDogs and other outdoor recreation groups to look at address safety and access concerns.

Nicole MacDonald

Ms. MacDonald introduced herself, being from CBCL, having undertaken the Environmental Impact Assessment, and having done this, being a neutral party to the proposal. She provided information about her education, and spoke to the purpose of the assessment process and its purpose and review process. She spoke specifically to the concerns raised earlier in the evening about the mainland moose and the process of evaluation.

Loretta Hardwick

Ms. Hardwick introduced herself and noted that she also works with CBCL, giving her education and professional background. She reiterated what her colleague Nicole had said and gave further context regarding the Environmental Impact Assessment process. She noted that the work done for this assessment was done by Qualified Professionals. She noted that the location sensitive data collected about discussed species was shared with the province.

A question was asked about the potential for flooding if land is being cleared for the turbines. Ms. Hardwick noted that the flooding risk was evaluated as part of the

Environmental Assessment, for both climate change and specific to the project, and no specific risks were identified.

Shan Dekousen

Mr. Dekousen introduced himself and provided his background in renewable energy. He noted that his role involves reviewing and assessing the potential impacts of a turbine on the surrounding environment and what safety impacts could be involved. He spoke specifically to the concern of ice shed that was raised earlier in the year when Council considered another application, and gave specifics on the design elements incorporated into the turbines to address this issue.

Jessica Ma

Ms. Ma introduced herself, being a wind resource manager working for RES out of Prince Edward Island. She has been working on the development of this project for the last three years, to collect wind and climate information about the site to help to determine the layout and design of the site.

A question was asked about how sites are selected when wind and climate data is being evaluated. The different methods of collecting data were shared, and the variables that go into selecting turbine sites were shared.

Patrick Henn

Mr. Henn noted that he is a senior consultant and is acting as an advisor for RES, giving his experience throughout Canada for reference. He offered to answer any questions about the process or zoning that Council may have. He noted that RES has been involved in engagement with community groups to address concerns with recreational use, and spoke of his experience of wildlife once projects are developed.

Councillors did not have any further questions, but expressed their thanks to the residents who came out to speak in favour and against the proposal at this hearing.

Min # 2026-76
Moved and Seconded

That that Municipal Council approves an application by Eigg Mountain Wind Inc. to amend the boundaries of the Wind Resource Overlay in the Plan Antigonish Land Use By-law by rezoning twenty-four (24) 3.14-hectare portions of eighteen separate properties to allow for the construction of 22 Wind Turbines.

Motion Carried

Motions

There are no motions.

Miscellaneous Business

There was no miscellaneous business.

Adjournment

Min # 2026-77
Moved and Seconded

That the Municipal Council meeting adjourn at 8:34pm.

Motion Carried

Warden Nicholas MacInnis

Shirlyn Donovan, CAO