MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
# ANTIGONISH

## Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

**Tuesday, March 24, 2026, Following Asset Management Committee**
**Municipal Administration Building**
**285 Beech Hill Road**
**Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4**

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| Present were: | Warden Nicholas MacInnis<br>Deputy Warden John Dunbar<br>Councillor Mary MacLellan<br>Councillor Adam Baden-Clay<br>Councillor Richelle MacLaughlin<br>Councillor Shawn Brophy<br>Councillor Wayne Melanson<br>Councillor Gary Mattie<br>Councillor Harris McNamara<br>Councillor Sterling Garvie |
| Regrets: | None |
| Staff Present: | Shirlyn Donovan, CAO<br>Beth Schumacher, Municipal Clerk |
| Others Present: | Gallery (online and in-person)<br>Lynn Delorey, Antigonish Tourism Association<br>Mike MacEacher, Antigonish Visitor Information Centre |

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**Call to Order- Warden MacInnis**

Warden MacInnis called the meeting to order at 5:56pm.

**Approval of Agenda**

Warden MacInnis called for approval of the Committee of the Whole meeting agenda. Mrs. Donovan asked that two in-camera items for the Acquisition, Sale, Lease, and Security of Municipal Property be added. Councillor MacLaughlin raised a concern with road washouts after flooding earlier in the month and asked for a discussion item regarding whether the province has emergency funding for washed out roadways. Mrs.

Donovan noted that she would look into the matter and get back to the committee with more information.

Moved and Seconded

That the agenda be approved as amended.

**Motion Carried**

## Consideration of the March 10, 2026 Committee of the Whole Minutes

Warden MacInnis called for any errors or omissions in the minutes of March 10, 2026. He noted an occurrence where his name was mis-spelled, and staff noted that would be corrected. Hearing no further concerns, the minutes were accepted as presented.

## Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

## Delegations

### Lynn Delorey, Antigonish Tourism Association

Ms. Delorey provided members of the committee with a quarterly update regarding the Antigonish Tourism Association. She reviewed the different engagement meetings that she has held with a variety of different organizations and individuals throughout the community. A summary of the actions taken to date, including website review, governance review, asset and event database work, and social media campaigns were reviewed. She noted that the association was successful in securing funding to provide for a co-op student over the summer months. Different marketing campaigns were reviewed. Ms. Delorey noted that they would be attending Saltscapes in Halifax in April.

Councillor Mattie asked if there could be more information shared about accessibility in the community through tourism resources, including highlighting facilities and amenities in the community. Warden MacInnis asked for information about how a business could be featured or promoted by the Tourism Association, noting the tuna charters as an example. Councillor McNamara raised concerns with parking for the campers in town near the library where the VIC is located, and spoke to the loss of the provincial information centres including the one in Port Hastings. Questions were asked about the North Shore Development Association and the road to Cape George Lighthouse.

### Mike MacEachern, Visitor Information Centre

Mr. MacEachern provided members of the committee with a review of the Visitor Information Centre history and role. He provided a summary of the 2025 statistics from the digital kiosks that were installed at the beginning of the 2025 season. The different community events held throughout the past year were highlighted. Councillor Garvie asked whether there were bus tours held in the community and shared a suggestion about other communities that have created Christmas displays on wharves. Councillor Baden Clay asked what impact the closure of the library on Sundays is expected to have on VIC operations on the weekends. Mr. MacEachern spoke to steps being taken by the VIC overall based on the expected impacts of the

provincial budget cuts. Discussion regarding the kiosks followed, and ideas were shared about what could be done to have more available through the community.

Mr. MacEachern and Ms. Delorey were thanked for their presentations, as well as the work that they and their teams have done to promote the county.

**Continuing Business**

Fiscal 2025/26 Financial Update to November 30, 2025

Mrs. Duggan provided members of the committee with an overview of the financial statements for the municipality up to November 30, 2025, with a comparison to the budget for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026. She reviewed the budget, both revenue and expenses, line by line for the benefit of the committee. A request was made to have staff provide a summary of how the deed transfer tax has changed over the last five years, to give an idea of housing sale activity in the community.

Mrs. Duggan then spoke to the status of different capital projects in the budget, including the reserves. She also spoke to the debenture and debt repayments that the municipality has in the budget. Mrs. Duggan was thanked for her presentation.

**New Business**

Resident Petition Regarding the Kennels By-law

Ms. Schumacher spoke to a petition that was received by the county regarding the Kennels By-law, specifically requesting that it be revised to also apply to shelters. Discussion followed regarding the by-law, grandfathering of existing establishments, and the different options presented by staff for dealing with the concerns raised in the petition.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that the petition received requesting *That the Municipality of the County of Antigonish revise their dog kennel by-law to include animal shelters as part of the regulated operations* be received and tabled for further discussion at a later date.

**Motion Carried.**

Policy Review – Municipal Covid-19 Vaccination Policy

Mrs. Donovan provided a summary of the reason for the policy being created in 2021, how it was amended in 2022. She shared that during the review of the policy, legal suggested that the policy be kept as a placeholder if something was required again. Discussion followed. The committee felt that there was no need to repeal or change the policy.

Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC) Awareness Proclamation

Warden MacInnis read out the proclamation to recognize March 2026 as Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC) Awareness Month.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council proclaim March 2026 as Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC) Awareness Month.

**Motion Carried.**

Non-Profit Tax Exemption Request

Mrs. Donovan spoke to two requests that have been made to add two properties to the list of those noted in Part 1 of Policy #35 - Tax Exemption for Non-Profit Organizations Policy. The two properties in question, being for the Parish Glebe House of St. Paul's in Havre Boucher and the second being the Manse property of the Tracadie United Baptist Church and recommended for inclusion in the list of properties noted in the policy, to provide for relief from property tax.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council add AAN#01415026 and AAN#04710584 to Part 1 of Policy #35 - Tax Exemption for Non-Profit Organizations Policy.

**Motion Carried.**

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

Antigonish Heritage Museum Board

No further updates.

Antigonish Arena Association

Meet on March 25th at 6pm.

Eastern District Planning Commission

No update provided.

Eastern Solid Waste Management Committee

Meeting on March 26th.

Pictou Antigonish Regional Library

The PARL Board met on March 12th, where the financial position of the library was discussed. Updates regarding the different ways in which budget constraints would be handled as discussed at this meeting were provided. Discussion followed. A suggestion was made to provide information about fundraising efforts for the library in the next County Connect. A further suggestion was made to add an agenda item at the next Committee of the Whole meeting to discuss the library funding concerns in further detail.

RK MacDonald Nursing Home

Board meeting on March 26th. The Board is looking to see if they can get the items that aren't covered in the capital program in the new build. The project is on schedule considering the weather difficulties.

Helping Healthcare in Antigonish

No further updates.

Antigonish Affordable Housing (AAHS)

Meeting on March 25th.

Antigonish County Adult Learning Association (ACALA)

Last meeting regarding Board self-evaluations and provincial funding update. Next meeting is March 25th.

Antigonish Community Transit Society (ACTS)

Met during the previous week to discuss the proposed change of the fixed route. Council has been invited to participate in information sessions to give feedback on the proposed fixed route changes. Discussion followed.

Antigonish Regional Emergency Management Office (AREMO)

No update.

Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM)

Spring conference is at the end of April in Yarmouth.

**In-Camera Items**

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee move into an in-camera session to discuss Personnel Matters and the Acquisition, Sale, Lease, and Security of Municipal Property at 7:37pm.

**Motion Carried**

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee adjourns the in-camera session at 8:31 pm.

**Motion Carried**

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council approves the creation of a full-time position of "By-law Officer", for the purpose of providing administrative and enforcement support to municipal operations.

**Motion Carried**

**Adjournment**

Moved and Seconded

That Committee of the Whole meeting adjourn at 8:32 pm.

**Motion Carried**

Warden Nicholas MacInnis

Shirlyn Donovan, CAO