MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 28th, 2026
Municipal Administration Building
285 Beech Hill Road
Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

Present were:	Warden Nicholas MacInnis Deputy Warden John Dunbar (by Zoom) Councillor Mary MacLellan Councillor Richelle MacLaughlin Councillor Shawn Brophy Councillor Gary Mattie Councillor Harris McNamara Councillor Sterling Garvie
Regrets:	Councillor Adam Baden-Clay Councillor Wayne Melanson
Staff Present:	Shirlyn Donovan, CAO Allison Duggan, CFO Beth Schumacher, Municipal Clerk Meghan MacGillivray Case, Municipal Solicitor
Others Present:	Gallery (by Zoom and in-person) Wyanne Sandler, Antigonish Coalition to End Poverty Rev. Natasha Brubacher, Antigonish Coalition to End Poverty Beth Latwaitis, Antigonish Arts House / Art Fair Aida Arnold, Antigonish Arts House / Art Fair Joan MacDonald, Antigonish Arts House / Art Fair

---

Call to Order- Warden MacInnis

Warden MacInnis called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

Approval of Agenda

Warden MacInnis called for approval of the Committee of the Whole meeting agenda. Mrs. Donovan asked to delete the in-camera item for personnel matters. An addition, to discuss garbage collection, was requested by Councillor MacLellan.

Moved and Seconded

That the agenda be approved as amended.

Motion Carried

Consideration of the April 14, 2026 Committee of the Whole Minutes

Warden MacInnis called for any errors or omissions in the minutes of April 14, 2026. Councillor McNamara raised a concern with not seeing the written statement that he had provided regarding the discussion about the Council Remuneration policy included into the minutes. Warden MacInnis provided clarification regarding the procedure of minutes taking, noting that legal and the Municipal Advisory had been consulted.

Councillor MacLellan asked about the library discussion item, and why it was not on this agenda. Mrs. Donovan spoke to the item and noted that an email update had been provided to members of the committee after that meeting, but that further discussion could be included on a future agenda if desired.

Hearing no further concerns, the minutes were accepted as presented.

Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

Delegations

Antigonish Coalition to End Poverty

Representatives from the Antigonish Coalition to End Poverty provided an overview of the work done by the group in the community and shared some statistics regarding poverty and food insecurity in the community. The Antigonish Fridge and Pantry are initiatives that are supported by the group. Information about a Guaranteed Livable Basic Income, and how it differs from a livable wage, was reviewed. Information about other municipalities and jurisdictions that have passed motions in support of a Guaranteed Livable Basic Income were shared. A suggestion for a resolution that could be considered by Municipal Council was shared.

Warden MacInnis thanked the Coalition members for their presentation. A question was asked about the amount of the living wage in the area. A suggestion was made to have the NSFM discuss the issue at their AGM later in the year and bring forward the issue at their conference later this week. Members of Council thanked the presenters, shared their own stories and experiences, and noted the challenges that they are hearing from their constituents. Questions were asked about what basic income is anticipated, and how the program is proposed to be financed.

Antigonish Art Fair / Arts House

Representatives from the Antigonish Art Fair / Arts House spoke about work done by artists in the community, showing several different pieces in various mediums that were done by local artists. They shared some figures about the duration, uptake by artists, and attendance at both the Arts House and the Art Fair. Dates for the upcoming Art Fair events over the summer months were shared. Questions were asked regarding how many kids are involved in the programming, and what the school programming regarding art is like. Members of the committee thanked the representatives from the Art Fair /Art House for their presentation.

Continuing Business

Policy Review – Council Remuneration Policy (Policy #14)

Mrs. Donovan spoke to the revisions that were made to the policy, to reflect the direction that was given to staff at the April 14th Committee of the Whole meeting. Mrs. Donovan noted that the clause regarding CPI was changes from "will" to "may", for consideration with the budget, so that Council could make decisions each year based on the economic circumstances should they change. She then provided the committee with a schedule showing the remuneration amounts paid to Council each year from 2018 to present, as budgeted, to give the full picture of the impact of CPI each year on the remuneration noted in the policy since the policy was last updated.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council approves the proposed amendments to Council Remuneration Policy (Policy #14).

Motion Carried
7 in favour
1 opposed (Councillor McNamara, recorded as requested)

New Business

Summer Intern

Mrs. Donovan noted that the summer policy intern that was brought on last year will be returning to assist the team with continuing policy projects over the summer months.

Policy Review – Tax Exemption Policy for Low Income Tax Payers (Policy #15)

Mrs. Duggan spoke to the policy before them for review, noting that on an annual basis, the tax exemption amounts for low income tax payers are reviewed and updated as appropriate. She is proposing to keep the income threshold as it was adjusted last year, but increase the amount of the exemption amount.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee of the Whole recommends that Municipal Council amend clause 2.6 in the Tax Exemption Policy for Low-Income Tax Payers (Policy #15), to increase the Maximum Low Income Exemption amount to $325 for Fiscal 2026/27.

Motion Carried.

Staff Reports

Mrs. Donovan provided a brief overview of highlights from the staff report document. Questions followed regarding the Make Your Move Challenge, and it was noted that staff would provide further details to members of the committee in a follow-up email.

Reports from Inter-Municipal Boards, Committees and Commissions

Antigonish Heritage Museum Board

Meeting on Monday May 4th.

Antigonish Arena Association

Meeting date to be determined.

Eastern District Planning Commission

Met virtually to discuss details of the organizational review.

Eastern Solid Waste Management Committee

Nothing to report.

Pictou Antigonish Regional Library

No report.

RK MacDonald Nursing Home

Board is meeting on April 30th.

Helping Healthcare in Antigonish

No further updates.

Antigonish Affordable Housing (AAHS)

No report.

Antigonish County Adult Learning Association (ACALA)

Met at the end of March and are looking over the staff job descriptions and looking to offer additional programs for adult learners.

Antigonish Community Transit Society (ACTS)

Nothing to report.

Antigonish Regional Emergency Management Office (AREMO)

Meeting later in the month

Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM)

Spring conference starts on April 29th and ends on May 1st.

Additional to the Agenda

Concerns with Changes to Recycling Collection

Councillor MacLellan spoke to the concerns of a resident in her district who has not had their recycling picked up, due to certain items not being sorted as required with the changes based on provincial legislation changes. Mrs. Donovan noted that when

that resident's bags were not collected last week, it was because it was not their blue bag collection day, and the previous occurrence was due to Styrofoam being in the recycling when the program no longer permits them to go in recycling. Mrs. Donovan also acknowledged the challenges with the provincial program, which the municipality is having to administer, and the challenges of rural residents trying to sort and then drive items now designated to go to the depot given the distance of those facilities from many residents. Discussion followed.

A suggestion was made to send correspondence to the local MLAs and ministers of the involved provincial departments of the challenges with the administration of the program and the feedback from residents. Mrs. Donovan noted that she is meeting with Minister Thompson in May and will bring up the concerns raised by Council at that meeting and report back to the committee.

Adjournment

Moved and Seconded

That Committee of the Whole meeting adjourn at 8:42 pm.

Motion Carried

N. MacInnis
Warden Nicholas MacInnis

Shirlyn Donovan
Shirlyn Donovan, CAO