MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Special Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 7, 2026
Municipal Administration Building
285 Beech Hill Road
Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

Present were:	Warden Nicholas MacInnis Deputy Warden John Dunbar 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 Allison Duggan, CFO Beth Schumacher, Municipal Clerk Tammy Feltmate, Director of Public Works (Acting) and Sustainable Communities Megan MacInnis, Strategic Initiatives Coordinator Meghan MacGillivray Case, Municipal Solicitor
Others Present:	Gallery (by Zoom and in-person)

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 Committee of the Whole meeting agenda.

Moved and Seconded

That the agenda be approved as presented.

Motion Carried

Consideration of the April 28, 2026 Committee of the Whole Minutes

Warden MacInnis called for any errors or omissions in the minutes of April 28, 2026. Councillor McNamara was concerned with the discussion raised in the review of the April 14th minutes regarding the interpretation to not append notes to the minutes, and asked the CAO to provide the names of those parties that were consulted when making that interpretation. Hearing no further concerns, the minutes were accepted as presented.

Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

Budget Deliberations

Councillor MacLaughlin asked if the order of the agenda items could be modified in order to allow the parties in attendance in the gallery to not have to wait for the community partnership grant discussion.

Antigonish Affordable Housing Funding Request

Mrs. Donovan provided members of the committee with an overview of correspondence received from Antigonish Affordable Housing (AAHS) regarding their Sugarloaf project, giving an update on the changes to the phasing of the construction of units and other funding streams. They noted that their AGM is expected at the end of June.

Mrs. Donovan reviewed the requests that were put forward by AAHS and that status of the committee's decisions on those matters to date. She noted that the request for $500,000 ($100,000 over 5 years), was being put before the committee for discussion this evening.

Members of the committee asked for clarification of past funding commitments made by the municipality to AAHS for other developments that they have done in the community. Mrs. Donovan provided an overview of the different ways that the municipality has supported their various developments over the years. The need for housing in the community was discussed. A question was asked about whether other municipal obligations for water and sewer upgrades in the community that are identified for development in the same timeframe could pose a financial strain.

Discussion followed regarding concerns from several councillors about the feasibility of the $500,000 requested over the timeframe identified given the other obligations for infrastructure that the municipality has to handle, specifically water and sewer infrastructure. A question was asked about what other amounts the municipality could look to provide to support to the project, or if the contribution request could be deferred.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council approves the funding request of $500,000.00 by Antigonish Affordable Housing Society, to be paid out as $100,000 a year over five years, to support the Sugar Loaf Project.

Motion Defeated

St. FX University Sports Facilities Funding Request

Mrs. Donovan spoke to the request that was made by St. FX earlier in the year with respect to funding to support renovations proposed to the various sports facilities on campus. These upgrades include accessibility upgrades, and Mrs. Donovan reviewed several of the funding sources that are also being explored to support the project. The total ask from St. FX to the municipality for the upgrades is $150,000, with a total project cost anticipated of $3.6million. Discussion followed regarding funding commitments for the Special Olympic bid in the previous fiscal year, the economic opportunities that hosting events brings to the community, and whether the funding contribution could be split over several fiscal years.

Direction was given to send the proposal to the Accessibility Committee for their review the proposal for feedback to the Committee of the Whole later in the month.

Community Partnership Grants

Mrs. Donovan thanked Megan MacInnis, Allison Duggan, and Alisha Bowie for all of the work that they put into the preparations of the grants program materials, including a series of community information sessions that Ms. MacInnis held earlier in the year to help community groups learn about the program. Mrs. Donovan noted that just under $800,000 of grants were requested in the applications received, which exceeds the $483,000 allocated in the budget for grants for F26/27, so staff had made suggestions to try to distribute the available funding to assist as many groups as possible, for applications meeting the criteria for the program.

Mrs. Donovan then went through each of the grants requested and discussed both the request made and the staff recommendation for each application for the benefit of the committee. Members of the committee had an opportunity to ask questions about each grant request. Staff was asked by the committee members to reallocate some of the recommended grant amounts, and those adjustments were made in real time to the chart of applications.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council approves the distribution of Community Partnership Grants for F2026/2027 as presented, and put that recommendation forward for incorporation in the 2026/2027 Operating Budget.

Motion Carried

In-Camera Items

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee move into an in-camera session to discuss the Personnel Matters at 7:42pm.

Motion Carried

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee adjourns the in-camera session at 8:45 pm.

Motion Carried

Adjournment

Moved and Seconded

That Committee of the Whole meeting adjourn at 8:45 pm.

Motion Carried

Warden Nicholas MacInnis

Shirlyn Donovan, CAO