MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 23, 2026, 6:00pm
Municipal Administration Building
285 Beech Hill Road
Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

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Present were:	Warden Nicholas MacInnis Deputy Warden John Dunbar Councillor Mary MacLellan Councillor Adam Baden-Clay Councillor Richelle MacLaughlin Councillor Shawn Brophy Councillor Wayne Melanson Councillor Gary Mattie Councillor Harris McNamara Councillor Sterling Garvie
Regrets:	None
Staff Present:	Shirlyn Donovan, CAO Beth Schumacher, Municipal Clerk Meaghan MacInnis, Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Others Present:	Gallery (by Zoom and in-person) Shayla MacDonald, ACALA Andy Pumphrey, ACALA

Call to Order- Warden MacInnis

Warden MacInnis called the meeting to order at 6:44pm.

Approval of Agenda

Warden MacInnis called for approval of the Committee of the Whole meeting agenda. Ms. Schumacher asked to add an item regarding a sponsorship request from Music on

Main. Councillor Garvie asked to add a discussion item regarding the closure of the Foot Clinic at St. Martha's hospital that was announced for September.

Moved and Seconded

That the agenda be approved as amended.

Motion Carried

Consideration of the June 9, 2026 Committee of the Whole Minutes

Warden MacInnis called for any errors or omissions in the minutes of June 9, 2026. The minutes were accepted as presented.

Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

Delegations

Shayla MacDonald and Andy Pumphrey - ACALA

Ms. Pumphrey and Ms. MacDonald introduced themselves and noted that they were before the committee to speak to a proposal that they are putting forward for a community resource and event navigator position. They noted that they feel that businesses, non-profit organizations, and community groups are struggling to get information to residents. They provided an overview of their proposal to create a resource, being a search engine, to provide a single source of information for residents with the suggestion that the search engine be hosted by the Town and County. They felt that the information could be integrated into the role of the communications officer, wouldn't be too onerous on the existing workload for staff, and needed to be done in conjunction with the Town of Antigonish as well as Paqtnkek for full community coverage. They felt that the entire project could be done within the existing approved budget.

The floor was opened for questions from the committee. A question was asked about how information is expected to be collected. The presenters noted that the search would be based on online resources and information, but that information could be added manually if groups contact staff to include that information. They also proposed that staff could search the tool for information for residents that don't have access to the web. Clarification was asked about whether the proposal is for an additional staff position, or for a tool using existing staff. The presenters noted that they had initially thought an additional staff position might be needed, but that the management of the search software could be incorporated into the workload of existing staff. Long-term, they felt that a separate navigator role could be important. Discussion followed regarding having a navigator person vs. having a local search engine. Questions were asked about timelines and expected costs. The presenters noted that they felt that this could not be a volunteer role, and expressed concern about the silos they see when organizations and groups have their own information resources.

Warden MacInnis asked about whether the proposal was one that could be contracted for development. The presenters expressed concern with outsourcing the tool, feeling that the model could change for commercial purposes over time. A question about reaching residents without cellular or internet access, and the

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presenters noted that they thought that the navigator could go out into communities and hold information sessions to reach those residents. The success of similar roles, such as the Make Your Move Coordinator, were discussed.

Members of the committee asked about next steps regarding the proposal. Mrs. Donovan suggested rescheduling the presentation for an upcoming Joint Council meeting, as well as discussing the proposal further at an upcoming Strategic Planning session with Council. The presenters were thanked for coming to the committee meeting to share their proposal.

Continuing Business

Strategic Priorities Quarterly Updates

Mrs. Donovan spoke briefly to updates regarding servicing, summarizing the updates that were provided at the Joint Council meeting last week. An update on the pump ordered for the Wrights River Aquifer was provided, and discussion followed regarding the timing of requests from the Town for use of the Wrights River water source when the Town water source at the James River Dam run low.

Ms. MacInnis provided a brief summary of the status of the Now priorities, covering subjects including the 5-year capital plan, boundary review, communications strategy, and housing accelerator fund initiatives. Next priorities that were noted with updates included policy review, source water test and production wells, the recreation needs assessment, active transportation, long-term sewer strategy, and the municipal plan review.

Ms. MacInnis provided an update on advocacy priorities, including cellular service advocacy and ATV corridor advocacy role. She then reviewed several of the operational initiatives, giving updates on the progress made for those items. Staff noted that with the Boundary Review wrapping up, there would be a space opening in the “now” priorities list, and there could be opportunity for “next” priorities to move up. Discussion followed, and members of the committee asked to have details on potential movement of items in the list at the next update.

New Business

Sponsorship Request – Antigonish Music Festival

Ms. MacInnis spoke to the memo included in the agenda package, outlining a request made for sponsorship for the Antigonish Music Festival. She reviewed the requests for support, and Mrs. Donovan gave some overview of the requests made to the Town which included an in-kind donation but refusal of providing financial support. She noted that the request would not have qualified for the Community Partnership Grants where the event organizer is for-profit. The risk of sponsoring the event and it not happening was discussed, particularly with the short timeline leading up to the event. A question was asked about ticket sales to date. The marketing plan was shared, including the use of the students working with the Tourism Coordinator assisting with postering. Other events happening that weekend were discussed.

Members of the committee noted that many of the established arts and cultural events and organizations in the community did not receive their full ask for the Community Partnership Grants, where there were so many requests received. Members of the committee expressed that it was too bad that the organizer didn’t

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start the marketing and promotion of the event earlier. Ms. MacInnis shared that the event organizer is using local businesses for the event where possible.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council provide a sponsorship of $5,000 to the Antigonish Music Festival taking place August 7-8 2026, to support the promotion, marketing, and delivery of the core festival programming.

Motion Carried.

Special Constable Appointment

Ms. Schumacher shared an update with the Committee regarding the hiring of Nasif Shah as the new By-law Enforcement Officer, to start on Monday, June 29th. She requested a motion from the committee to appoint Mr. Shah, to facilitate the application to be made to the Department of Justice to allow him to issue summary offense tickets for by-law infractions. Discussion followed regarding the proposed vehicle for the position, where funds collected for summary offense tickets go, and discussion about the motion and scope of the by-law officer role.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council appoint Nasif Shah as By-law Enforcement Officer for the Municipality of the County of Antigonish for the purpose of enforcing the By-law Respecting the Responsible Ownership of Dogs, Noise By-law, Kennels By-law, Special Events By-law, Civic Addressing By-law, and the By-law Respecting the Collection and Disposal of Solid Waste.

Motion Carried.

Sponsorship Request – Music on Main

Ms. MacInnis provided an overview of the proposal put forward by Music on Main for sponsorship for a relaunch of their concert series. She noted that they are a non-profit organization but had missed the deadline for the Community Partnership Grants for this year. The three concert events that are planned will be free to the community to attend. Members of the committee expressed concern with late requests for support for items that should be part of the Community Partnership Grant process, and asked that notification be provided with any support provided to encourage future requests to apply for that process.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council provide a sponsorship in the amount of $5,000 to the Music on Main events 2026.

Motion Carried.

Reports from Inter-Municipal Boards, Committees, and Commissions

- Antigonish Heritage Museum Board – nothing to report
- Antigonish Arena Association – passed a motion to approve the purchase of a new Zamboni. Interior updates to the building have been done and look wonderful.

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- Eastern District Planning Commission – next meeting will be held virtually on Thursday June 25th
- Eastern Regional Solid Waste Management – next meeting in September
- Pictou Antigonish Regional Library – discussion about concerns regarding libraries closing on Sundays. Funding constraints and the impact on operations were discussed.
- RK MacDonald Nursing Home – tour held on June 18th of the new building. Next board meeting on June 25th.
- Helping Healthcare in Antigonish– met June 22nd and discussed applying for funds to work with recreation to act on feedback from physicians to establish a cricket league.
- Antigonish Affordable Housing Socity – AGM taking place on June 24th. Reports on desks.
- Antigonish County Adult Learners Association – discussed non-profits accessing information and how to get information out. Discussed the proposal presented earlier this evening
- Antigonish Community Transit Society – met with everyone to get the options from Happy Cities to get feedback on an option developed as part of the Housing Accelerator Fund initiatives.
- Antigonish Regional EMO – nothing to report
- Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities – nothing to report. Fall conference November 3-6 in Halifax.

Additions to the Agenda

Foot Clinic at St. Martha's Hospital

Councillor Garvie has been receiving calls from residents expressing concern that they have been notified that the foot clinic, currently located at St. Martha's, will be closed in September. He would like to see a letter sent to the Premier and the Minister of Health.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council send a letter to the Minister of Health, as well as the Strait Areas Chiefs, Wardens, and Mayors, enquiring about the notice of the upcoming closure of the foot clinic at St. Martha's.

Motion Carried.

Ms. Melanson joined the meeting at 8:35pm.

In-Camera Items

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee move into an in-camera session to discuss the Personnel Matters at 8:35pm.

Motion Carried

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Moved and Seconded

That the Committee adjourns the in-camera session at 9:36 pm.

Motion Carried

Moved and Seconded

That Municipal Council make the Make Your Move Antigonish Community Coordinator position permanent in the Recreation Department.

Motion Carried

In Favour (6): Councillors MacLellan, Baden Clay, MacLaughlin, Brophy, Melanson, and Warden MacInnis
Against (3): Councillors McNamara, Mattie, and Deputy Warden Dunbar
Abstention (1): Councillor Garvie

Adjournment

Moved and Seconded

That Committee of the Whole meeting adjourn at 9:38 pm.

Motion Carried

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Warden Nicholas MacInnis

Shirlyn Donovan, CAO