MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 8, 2026, 5:30pm
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
Absent:	None
Staff Present:	Shirlyn Donovan, CAO Beth Schumacher, Municipal Clerk Cole MacIsaac, Director of Public Works Denise Dunn, HAF Coordinator
Others Present:	Gallery (by Zoom)

Call to Order- Warden MacInnis

Warden MacInnis called the meeting to order at 5:33pm.

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 August 25, 2026 Committee of the Whole Minutes

Warden MacInnis called for any errors or omissions in the minutes of August 25, 2026. The minutes were accepted as presented.

Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

Continuing Business

There was no continuing business.

New Business

Acceptance of BCSF Funding

Mrs. Donovan spoke to the funding options that were explored for the development of a roadway for the Antigonish Affordable Housing (AAHS) development on Sugarloaf just off of Highway 337. The Build Community Strong Fund (BCSF) application was made over a year ago, and staff was contacted in July and informed that 40% of the cost of the roadway will be supported by the BCSF fund. A Council motion is needed to approve accepting the fund, which the municipality will administer to AAHS.

Discussion followed regarding the relationship between AAHS and the municipality with respect to the administration of the fund, and the process that will need to be followed for the procurement of the construction of the roadway.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council agree to accept the funding from the Build Communities Strong Fund and that the Municipality has the authority and capacity to enter into and execute the funding agreement with Canada.

Motion Carried.

By-law Officer Vehicle Purchase

Ms. Schumacher reviewed the request for quotations (RFQ) process that was followed for the selection of a vehicle for the by-law office following Council's approval of the purchase of a vehicle for that position in the capital budget. Questions followed regarding features such as lighting and a trailer hitch, and the decision process in selecting a new vehicle vs. a used vehicle, and an SUV over a truck.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council that Municipal Council purchases one 2026 Chev Equinox LT AWD vehicle from Ron MacGillivray Chev Buick GMC at the quoted price of $42,85.75.

Motion Carried.

8 in favour, 1 opposed, 1 abstention

Community Evacuation Plan

Mrs. Donovan spoke to the draft Community Evacuation Plan that was prepared by the EMO Coordinator, Blaise MacDonald. She noted that staff has undertaken community training regarding evacuations, and that the Town is considering the same document. Members of the committee asked a question about sections 2.2.4 and 2.2.5 appearing to be duplicates and wished to have clarification. A concern was

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raised with how the after-hours numbers are displayed on page 42 of the report. Staff noted that they would follow-up to amend the document and bring it back to the committee for their consideration at the next meeting. Discussion followed regarding how to share the details of the plan with the community.

Discussion About Basic Income Letter of Support

Members of the committee were provided with copies of the presentation that was made by the Antigonish Coalition to End Poverty on April 28th. Councillor Baden-Clay asked for the discussion to be added to the agenda this evening, and shared that he had been absent from the April meeting and saw that no motion or resolution was made at the end of that presentation. He noted that the Town had made a motion at their last meeting and wondered if County Council would do the same.

Questions followed regarding how such an initiative would be administered. Councillor Baden-Clay spoke to the information in the presentation, sharing that the concept is one that has been discussed for a while and could replace other current support systems. He noted that at the municipal level, there is not specific forms of support systems being advocated, but a general expression of support for the concept from Municipal Council.

Some councillors expressed that they were not comfortable with supporting a motion as proposed, expressing concern with existing taxation and government spending, concern that those who can work will not, and asking for pensions and disability support to be increased instead. Questions were also asked about geographical differences in how a livable income is determined, and generally wanted to know more about the concept before advocating a position on the subject. Others expressed how a single system could reduce the administrative costs of distributing support payments. They noted that many other municipalities have expressed their support for this initiative.

A request was made by the committee to have staff look into the questions that were asked at the meeting for further consideration by the committee. Mrs. Donovan asked for clarity on what information the scope committee is looking for, where the subject falls outside of municipal jurisdiction, to allow for adequate allocation of staff resources to the effort.

A request was made to put a motion on the floor to allow for a vote. The motion provided in the April 28th presentation was used.

Moved and Seconded

> The Committee recommends that Municipal Council request a letter from the Warden to the Prime Minister, Ministers, and Premier of Nova Scotia calling on the Government of Canada to implement a Guaranteed Livable Basic Income, ensuring that everyone has sufficient income to meet their needs, which would contribute to the eradication of poverty and homelessness, relieving pressure on municipalities to use limited resources to fill in the gaps of a failing social safety net.

Motion Defeated.

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Staff Reports

Mrs. Donovan reviewed the staff report in detail for the benefit of the committee. Staff was asked to undertake additional messaging about the funding model for the active transportation development, where it has been several years the initial funding announcement. Suggestions for ways to incentivize individuals to become swim instructors was discussed.

Community Events

Warden MacInnis shared a number of thank-you cards received over the summer

- Dolly Parton Imagination Library
- Art Fair / Arts House
- L'Arche Antigonish 23rd Annual Summer Camp

Councillor Brophy shared that he attended the Truck and Tractor Pulls and asked that a note be sent to the organizer for running such a well attended event.

Councillor MacLaughlin shared details about the Lochaber take-out dinner (baked lasagna) on September 11th. She also noted that the St. Joseph's Community Centre 20th anniversary celebrations are happening with month, and they are selling tickets for a shed draw, will have an online auction, and will have a celebration on Saturday September 19th.

Councillor Garvie shared that he hosted a barbeque for the athletes visiting for the Heavy Events at the Highland Games

Councillor MacLellan shared that the Arisaig Fiddlers were very busy over the summer at the Arisaig Hall. Both of the community centres in her districts had several events over the summer.

Deputy Warden Dunbar shared that the ENSE concluded on the weekend, and it was very successful despite the rain. He congratulated all of the members of the Heatherton 4H Club. He also acknowledged the work done by members of the community in Heatherton to upgrade the area where the rink is in the winter.

Warden MacInnis shared that he attended the ENSE, and that despite the rain the event was well attended. He gave his thanks to the volunteers and participants involved in the event.

Additions to the Agenda

There were no additions to the agenda.

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Adjournment

Moved and Seconded

That Committee of the Whole meeting adjourns at 6:57 pm.

Motion Carried

Warden Nicholas MacInnis

Shirlyn Donovan, CAO

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