MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 27, 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 with Regrets:	None
Staff Present:	Shirlyn Donovan, CAO Beth Schumacher, Municipal Clerk Jackie Cleary, Acting CFO
Others Present	Gallery (virtual)

Call to Order- Warden MacInnis

Warden MacInnis called the meeting to order at 7:09pm.

Approval of Agenda

Warden MacInnis called for approval of the Committee of the Whole meeting agenda. A request was made to add a Contract Negotiation item under In-Camera business. A request was made to add an item to discuss AEDs at community centres.

Moved and Seconded

That the agenda be approved as amended.

Motion Carried

Consideration of the October 13, 2026 Committee of the Whole Minutes

Warden MacInnis called for any errors or omissions in the minutes of October 13, 2026. Hearing none, the minutes were accepted as presented.

Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

Delegations

There were no delegations.

Additions to the Agenda

AED Funding for Community Centres

Councillor Baden-Clay provided the committee with an overview of the concern raised by the Mini Trails Community Centre, where the battery for their AED unit is believed to be nearing the end of its lifespan. There was brief discussion about the history of the program, where the municipality provided community centres throughout the County, as a one-time purchase. Councillor Baden-Clay put forward a proposal for the County to continue to provide replacement AED units to community centres at specified intervals (e.g. 8-10 years), with the community centres being responsible for maintaining those AED units between those replacement intervals.

Councillor MacLaughlin noted that the two community centres in her district have similar concerns about the replacement costs for their AEDs. She noted that, where the facilities are volunteer-run and they took the units after they were encouraged to have them available for the community, it seems difficult to expect them to incur the cost of their replacement. She also noted that many of these centres also act as emergency centres for their immediate area. If there is an expectation of the units being available for community use, then the municipality should be supporting the community centres with follow-up financial support for the units.

Councillor Mattie shared that several Fire Halls were also supplied with AED units under the same program. He suggested looking at a shorter replacement cycle if the units aren't making it to eight years before the batteries start to have issues. A suggestion was made to have staff enquire about what community centres and fire halls will need replacements, with further discussion about blanket replacements, and whether there is any available funding that could be considered, and how there could be a discussion at the upcoming NSFM conference.

Staff was directed to include this item in the 2027/2028 budget.

Continuing Business

There was no continuing business.

New Business

Water Budget

Mrs. Cleary provided the committee with an overview of the Water Budget. She noted that budget uses the current rates, and that staff is in the process of getting a new water rate study underway. As such, any revenue for the water services is set and based on current rates. She provided a detailed review of the revenue and

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expenditures of the water utility. There was discussion about the leaks to the water tank in St. Joseph's after it was constructed, and whether any of the costs of filling the tank were recouped. A suggestion was also made to look at moving a booster station along the Post Road that was utilized before the water tower was built to another part of the community needing that infrastructure for pressure.

Mrs. Clearly provided the committee with an explanation of the depreciation costs noted in the budget, linking to the discussion with the auditor earlier in the month. She also provided an explanation of the schedule of water utility debt repayments. Overall, a deficit of $77,929 is projected for the utility, and she spoke further to the challenge of breaking even without a recent rate study to reflect the increases in expenses that have happened since the last study was done.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council approves the 2026-2027 Water Budget as presented.

Motion Carried

Sponsorship Request – 2026 Paqtnkek Traditional Powwow/Mawi'omi

Mrs. Donovan provided the committee with an overview of the sponsorship request for the Powwow/Mawi'omi taking place on November 21-22. She noted that the Town has sponsored the event at a Platinum level of $5,000.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council approves a sponsorship in the amount of $5,000 towards the 2026 Paqtnkek Traditional Powwow/Mawi'omi.

Motion Carried

Staff Reports

Mrs. Donovan highlighted several items outlined in the staff report summary report, including staff meetings regarding water and sewer infrastructure, the change in the financial software program from Diamond to Naviline, the website redesign, fire training facility development updates, by-law enforcement file numbers, the planning session that was attended by many members of Council, uptake on low income tax exemption program, water billing numbers, and progress reports on many public works projects in the community. Updates on recreation programming, including fall swimming lessons and the potential impact of any possible strike action impacting schools were shared as well.

Community Events

- Deputy Warden Dunbar attended Neil Diggins' birthday celebration in Bayfield. He noted that the annual Heatherton Community Centre Bazaar and Roast Beef Dinner will be happening on November 7th, and the Heatherton Group Home Concert fundraiser will be later in November.

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- Councillor MacLellan share that the Arisaig Hall has an upcoming Halloween Party. She shared that they also have and many recreational programmes underway, such as Chair Yoga and Tai Chi.
- Councillor mattie share that he attended the recreation presentation at Joint Council, the Planning 101 session hosted by the EDPC in Port Hawkesbury, and an Antigonish Community Transit meeting where the Sisters of St. Martha provided support to the organization.
- Councillor McNamara shared details about the November 1st Havre Boucher Veterans Day recognition ceremony.
- Councillor MacLaughlin shared that the community centre in Lochaber is starting crib games, on November 28th will host their Christmas Market, and has community breakfasts starting on November 8th. She also shared that the community centre in St. Joseph's is hosting their Christmas Market on November 8th, has Tai Chi starting, and is hosting a breakfast on November 15th.
- Councillor Brophy shared that the Lion's Club had a breakfast on October 25th and it was very successful.
- Warden MacInnis shared that the St. Andrew's Partnership Association Harvest Festival took place earlier in the month, where awards to dedicated volunteers at organizations in St. Andrews were given out. The event also had a petting zoo and breakfast. On Friday November 6th there is a 4H Day awards event in St. Andrews. He also shared that on October 25th a Fireman's Breakfast took place in St. Andrews.

In-Camera Business

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee move into an in-camera session to discuss Contract Negotiations and Personnel Matters at 8:02pm.

Motion Carried

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee adjourns the in-camera session at 8:32 pm.

Motion Carried

Adjournment

Moved and Seconded

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

Motion Carried

Warden Nicholas MacInnis

Shirlyn Donovan, CAO

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