

**Municipality of the County of Inverness
Committee of the Whole Meeting
Thursday, December 14th, 2023
9:30 am
Council Chambers**

MINUTES

Council: Warden Bonny MacIsaac
Deputy Warden Catherine Gillis
Councillor John MacLennan
Councillor Lynn Chisholm
Councillor Blair Phillips
Councillor Claude Poirier

Staff: Keith MacDonald, CAO
Brian Luciano, CFO
Chestley Carr, Director of Public Works
Jenna Beaton, Chief of Staff
Melanie Beaton, Deputy CAO
Debbie Nicholson, Administrative Assistant to Council/ CAO
Jason Calder, Acting Manager of Recreation and Community Wellness
Erin Gillis, COO
Joe Carew, Communications and Community Engagement Specialist

1. CALL TO ORDER

Warden MacIsaac called the meeting to order at 9:30 am and welcomed all in attendance. Roll call was taken. Warden MacIsaac acknowledged that the land on which we gather is located in the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: *That the agenda be approved as presented.*
MOVED BY: Councillor Poirier
SECONDED BY: Councillor Chisholm
MOTION CARRIED

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: *That the Regular Council meeting minutes of November 2nd 2023 be approved as presented.*
MOVED BY: Councillor MacLennan
SECONDED BY: Councillor Chisholm

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: *That the Committee of the Whole meeting minutes of November 16th 2023 be approved as presented.*

MOVED BY: Councillor Phillips

SECONDED BY: Deputy Warden Gillis

MOTION CARRIED

4. STAFF REPORTS

(a) Chestley Carr, Director of Public Works

During the first week of December there were a series of water leaks in the distribution system that caused some residents in Port Hood to lose water pressure. Staff worked diligently during this period to identify two large water main issues and a faulty shutoff valve. All the issues identified were repaired and the water pressure was restored to normal operating pressure on the afternoon of December 7th.

All municipal community hydrants were inspected in the fall and staff are working toward winterizing them. There are a few hydrants in Port Hood that will be inspected again due to the water issues. All fire departments in communities that use hydrants have been notified to contact the municipality if a hydrant is used so municipal staff can re-winterize.

A new booster skid was installed to replace the aging booster pump system in Port Hastings. The Public Works Department has begun implementing their snow removal program for the upcoming winter months in Port Hood, Mabou and Inverness. The communities of Whycomogagh and Cheticamp receive snow removal services via a contractor.

Public works staff continue to address repair and maintenance issues as they arise. Various Municipal staff have completed skid steer training within the last month. Speed radar reports were provided for both Margaree locations for the November 10th to December 8th time frame.

Sampling to ensure the Municipality meets its approvals to operate have been completed with no exceedances to report.

Multiple projects are in various stages of completion including Chéticamp Lift Station Control Panel service replacements, filter installations in Inverness, and the Lift Station Control Panel replacement in Port Hastings.

(b) Erin Gillis, Operations and Occupational Health and Safety

Current initiatives underway in solid waste management include the materials audit in Kenloch and recycling, the holiday collection schedule, addressing missed collections, Kenloch winter preparation, and repairs to the sort line in recycling. The team continues to work on Extended Producer Responsibility programming and the cost benefit for organics programming.

A session was held with the province on by-law development and guidelines for improvements. Residential communication logs and complaint and reporting documents are being updated. Resident calls regarding roaming animals and burn barrels are being addressed.

Partnerships with rural Cape Breton communities have been developed to improve education and communication regarding solid waste practices. Municipal staff are creating social media posts and advertisements. The trail head litter project continues; findings will be shared.

Monthly site inspections in health and safety continue as well as the creation of the 2024 inspection calendar. JOHSC meetings continue monthly.

Multiple projects are at various stages of completion including the C&D cell development, storage building construction in Kenloch and a community bin placement process. The Extended Producer Responsibility submission is underway. Meetings are held with regional and provincial waste educators to discuss solid waste management initiatives.

(c) Jason Calder, Recreation

Age Well Academy sessions were held recently in Port Hastings, West Bay and Margaree. The final two sessions are planned for Port Hood and Blues Mills in December to wrap up the project.

Recreation sessions offered to the public lately include 3 on 3 hockey in Inverness, crafting and painting classes and senior fitness in Port Hood. Staff day was held at Beinn Mhàbu on November 22nd. It was well attended and an enjoyable time was had by all. A partnership is being developed with Beinn Mhàbu to offer movies to the community at the facility theatre.

Multiple projects are underway or completed in Recreation and Community Wellness including the Physical Activity Recreation Master Plan, Book Kings Management, Seniors Safety programming, Age Well Education Sessions, and Walk NS safe signage. The Wellness and Accessibility Committees continue to meet regularly.

Multiple in person and remote meetings were held with various groups and partners including the Accessibility and Senior Safety initiatives, the Age Friendly grant application, and the municipal website focus group. The Wellness committee held an Employee Assistance Program Lunch Learning Session recently.

(d) Melanie Beaton, Special Projects

The focus of the Special Projects department continues to be the advancement of the work of cross functional, internal teams, in partnership with various consultant teams, community and business stakeholders and regulatory bodies, specific to each project.

Linear infrastructure projects are underway as well as many complex infrastructure projects throughout the municipality. The linear sanitary and watermain replacement detailed design in Central Avenue Inverness is 90% complete. Other linear infrastructure projects include the mapping of existing municipal water and sewer assets, planning for Veteran's Memorial Court street reinstatement and extension and Mabou Harbour Road sanitary sewer piping repair. Upgrades and improvements to municipal facilities, buildings and roads are ongoing. Complex infrastructure projects at various stages of completion are ongoing in Whycomomagh, Cheticamp, Inverness, Judique and Port Hood.

Community projects and initiatives include the Mi-Carême Centre upgrades, Mabou Marina improvements, healthcare attraction and retention career fairs, Gypsum Mine Trail parking lot upgrades, branding and signage projects, and a Food Assistance Study. The scope of work for a Municipal Poverty Reduction piece of work is being finalized by municipal staff.

Department staff members are participating in a Construction Law Program through the Construction Association of Nova Scotia (CANS). The course will provide a basic understanding of construction law with topics including, but not limited to, Occupational Health & Safety, bidding and tendering, and construction claims.

(e) Brian Luciano, Director of Finance

The annual municipal audit is nearing completion. The auditors are finalizing the statements in preparation for the January Audit committee meeting. The ARO (asset retirement obligations) report has been received and reviewed with auditors and a memo regarding the J-class road funding has been provided to Council for review. Department staff continue to work with fire departments in gathering required information for joint fire department insurance. Provincial and Federal grant-in-lieu filing has been completed. The Bamboo human resource software will be rolled out in January 2024. Two large water utility customers had meters installed in mid-November. The last large meter install is planned for December. The CFO has restarted the implementation project for Questica Budget software, which was paused in mid-2023. This software will allow for a more streamlined budgeting process and robust reporting.

Multiple projects are at various stages of completion including provincial reporting, department head reporting, grants-in-lieu, development of a method of payment for the Kenloch Transfer Station, grant claim support, the installation of large meters and the Marketing Levy Review.

Multiple meetings continue regularly such as the finance department team, employee benefits, land committee, Municipal Housing Board of Directors, Strait IT Board of Directors, legal counsel, department heads and the public hearing regarding the sale of municipal property. Multiple requests for proposals are either open, awarded, or currently under review. Three recently closed tenders include the Personal Protective Equipment supply, Envelop Inserter, and Inverness Multicourt earthworks.

(f) John Bain, Eastern District Planning Commission

John Bain provided Council with an executive summary of the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-Law. This document is close to a final draft. It has gone through a number of community consultations. This new version would divide the municipality into 5 designations and under that are the established zones. Council shall permit the following Rural Zones in the Rural Designation: 1) Rural General Zone, 2) Rural Commercial Zone, 3) Rural Industrial Zone, 4) Agriculture Potential Zone, and 5) Lakeshore Zone. Council shall, permit the following General Zones, within the Rural Designation: 1) Parks and Open Space Zone, 2) Institutional Zone, 3) Commercial Recreation Zone, 4) Fishing Zone, and 5) Highway Commercial Zone.

5. MUNICIPAL CAPITAL GROWTH FUND

The Municipal Capital Growth Program supports investment in municipal infrastructure projects. Municipalities and villages can apply for funding from the Municipal Capital Growth Program to help reduce the cost of infrastructure projects that support the province's growing population.

MOTION:

Following review of the completed project description, the Council of the Municipality of the County of Inverness moves that the following application is rated and recommended first (1st) priority for application to the Municipal Capital Growth Fund.

1st Priority: Lift Station 1 Renewal & Expansion, community of Inverness

The application is for the replacement of Lift Station #1 (built circa 1972), which currently handles sanitary flows from south of James Street and Highway 19, in the community of Inverness. The project acknowledges the critical need to modernize this critical collection system infrastructure, ensuring reliability, efficiency, and longevity in serving the community's sanitation needs.

The replacement will include constructing a new lift station structure with increased pumping capacity and associated electrical components. The new structure will include a new wet well and concrete valve chamber, alongside installation of new piping, valves, and pump control systems. Additionally, the project will involve removal and demolition of the existing structure.

Overall, the project aims to enhance the lift station's capacity, functionality, and operational efficiency. The redesign and expansion have been planned to not only address current flow requirements but also accommodate short-term committed and long-term projected flows. This strategic approach ensures that the upgraded lift station will have the necessary capacity to support existing commercial and residential needs while also facilitating future community growth.

The work will incorporate a generator and automatic transfer switch which is pivotal for safeguarding the system's functionality during power outages, ensuring uninterrupted operations for environmental protection measures. By implementing these features, the project enhances the resilience of the system, minimizing potential disruptions and environmental risks during unforeseen events.

The proposed work aligns strategically with the objectives of the Provincial: Municipal Capital Growth Program (MCGP), which focuses on investing in capital municipal infrastructure to support Nova Scotia's expanding population. Inverness faces infrastructure limitations impacting community growth. Upgrading Lift Station 1 is crucial to support new housing, enabling sustainable community expansion. By renewing and expanding Lift Station one to accommodate growth this project directly contributes to the MCGP's goals. It ensures that essential infrastructure keeps pace with the increasing needs of the community. This application embodies the necessary multi-level governmental commitment to the well-being of the community of Inverness, safeguarding public health, safety, and the environment. This project is an investment in the joint dedication to shaping a prosperous future for all who call the community of Inverness

and by extension the Municipality and Province of Nova Scotia home.
Cost Breakdown:

Revenue	Amount
Province of Nova Scotia Municipal Capital Growth Fund	\$2,555,006.88
Municipality of the County of Inverness	\$2,555,006.88
Total	\$5,110,013.76

MOVED BY: Deputy Warden Gillis
SECONDED BY: Councillor Chisholm
MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: *Following review of the completed project description, the Council of the Municipality of the County of Inverness moves that the following application is rated and recommended as second (2nd) priority for application to the Municipal Capital Growth Fund.*

2nd Priority: Lift Station(s) Renewal & Expansion, communities of Port Hood & Chéticamp

The application is for the replacement of four (4) lift stations in the communities of Port Hood (LS1, LS2) and Chéticamp (LS3, LS5) (all built in the 1970s). The project acknowledges the critical need to modernize this critical collection system infrastructure, ensuring reliability, efficiency, and longevity in serving the community's sanitation needs.

Overall, the project will aim to enhance the capacity, functionality, and operational efficiency of the lift stations. The redesign will be planned to not only address current flow requirements but also accommodate short-term committed and long-term projected flows. This strategic approach ensures that the upgraded lift stations will have the necessary capacity to support existing commercial and residential needs while also facilitating future community growth. Anticipating and accommodating this growth not only secures the functionality of the systems for current needs but also establishes a resilient infrastructure capable of sustaining and supporting the evolving demands of a developing residential and commercial landscape.

The work will incorporate generators and automatic transfer switches which are pivotal for safeguarding the functionality of the systems during power outages, ensuring uninterrupted operations for environmental protection measures. By implementing these features, the project enhances the resilience of the system, minimizing potential disruptions and environmental risks during unforeseen events.

The proposed work aligns strategically with the objectives of the Provincial:

Municipal Capital Growth Program (MCGP), which focuses on investing in capital municipal infrastructure to support Nova Scotia's expanding population. Upgrading these lift stations is crucial to support enabling sustainable community expansion and new housing. This work will ensure that essential infrastructure keeps pace with the increasing needs of the community, reflecting a proactive approach in meeting provincial priorities related to sustainable development and the infrastructure necessary to support a growing population.

This application embodies the necessary multi-level governmental commitment to the well-being of the communities of the Municipality, safeguarding public health, safety, and the environment. This project is an investment in the joint dedication to shaping a prosperous future for all who call the communities of Port Hood, Chéticamp and by extension the Municipality and Province of Nova Scotia home.

Cost Breakdown:

Revenue	Amount
<i>Province of Nova Scotia Municipal Capital Growth Fund</i>	<i>\$1,460,003.93</i>
<i>Municipality of the County of Inverness</i>	<i>\$1,460,003.93</i>
Total	\$2,920,007.86

MOVED BY: Deputy Warden Gillis
SECONDED BY: Councillor Poirier
MOTION CARRIED

6. PRESENTATION: ACAP (The Atlantic Coastal Action Program) Cape Breton; Kathleen Aikens - Executive Director, Monica Ragan – Program Manager

ACAP Cape Breton is an environmental non-profit organization that offers the knowledge that residents need to make greener choices and works directly on practical solutions that help protect and restore our natural environment. ACAP Cape Breton has evolved into a dynamic group that integrates environmental, social and economic factors into projects focusing on action, education and ecosystem planning. Four main areas of focus are:

- Habitat Restoration – freshwater ecosystem restoration, forest restoration, tree planting project.
- Ecological Monitoring – coastal wetlands, freshwater mussels, piping plovers and frogs.
- Environmental Education – classroom visits and afterschool programs.
- Waste Diversion – community clean ups, shoreline cleanups.

7. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION

North Mountain Cultural and Recreation Centre – Heat Pump and LED Lighting

The request of Council is \$3278.75

Consensus to defer a decision on this request until the Community Grants Program Policy is finalized.

8. ROAD NAME PETITION; CARROLL LANE, MARGAREE FORKS

Recommendation to name an unnamed private road off Mill Road Margaree Forks to Carroll Lane.

9. ROAD NAME PETITION: BELL VIEW LANE, MALAGAWATCH

Recommendation to rename a private road (# 6303 Road) in Malagawatch to Bell View Lane.

10. UNSIGHTLY PREMISES: 3707 Highway 19 Long Point

The Eastern District Planning Commission (EDPC) received a complaint regarding a dangerous & unsightly nature of this property in November 2023. Two inspectors visited the site on November 7th, 2023 and completed an inspection. Immediate action was taken to barricade the collapsed wall portion of the building. The dwelling is severely neglected and dilapidated and meets the *Municipal Government Act* definition as “dangerous and unsightly”.

MOTION: *That that an “Order to Remedy Condition” be issued and that the Order be a Demolition Order issued from Council to the owners of 3707 Highway 19, Long Point. The Order should state to the owners that the dwelling is to be demolished and all debris be removed and disposed of in the appropriate manner within thirty (30) days. If the property owner fails to comply the Municipality will complete the same and recover the costs.*

MOVED BY: Deputy Warden Gillis

SECONDED BY: Councillor Chisholm

MOTION CARRIED

11. J CLASS ROADS: FINANCIAL STATEMENT IMPACT

In fiscal year 2022-23 the Municipality was invoiced by the province of Nova Scotia for 50% of the costs for resurfacing several J-Class Roads. These expenditures were initially budgeted to be funded through a MFC debenture, recorded through the General Capital Fund, and expensed over the term of the loan. During the audit process for 2022-23, Grant Thornton observed that per Section 3(4)d of the Nova Scotia Financial Reporting and Accounting Manual, J-Class roads are not a capital expenditure as the Municipality does not retain ownership. As a result, the full \$1,055,200 must be recorded in expenses for fiscal 2023.

MOTION: *That Council approves the transfer of \$222,177 to the General Operating Fund from the Operating Reserves for the 2022-23 unfunded portion of the J-Class roads expenditure.*

MOVED BY: Deputy Warden Gillis

SECONDED BY: Councillor Chisholm

MOTION CARRIED

12. MUNICIPAL VENDING BY-LAW

Direction to staff to review the elements of the Municipal Vending by-law that pertain to allowable distances between vendors.

13. SECURITY REVIEW

Direction to staff to formulate a policy or practice regarding security protocols when a meeting of Council occurs outside of the Municipal Administration Building.

14. SALE OF 15246 CABOT TRAIL, CHÉTICAMP

MOTION: *That Council resolves to sell the property at 15246 Cabot Trail, Chéticamp to the Chéticamp Economic Council for \$1.00, which is less than fair market value, as the organization is a nonprofit organization that Council considers to be carrying on an activity that is beneficial to the Municipality.*

MOVED BY: Councillor Poirier

SECONDED BY: Deputy Warden Gillis

MOTION CARRIED

15. CORRESPONDENCE: EDPC; UNSIGHTLY PREMISES UPDATE: 221 EAST STREET, PORT HOOD

Correspondence was received from the Eastern District Planning Commission stating that the building on the property at 221 East Street Port Hood has been demolished by the property owners and all the debris has been removed. This property is no longer dangerous or unsightly and the file is now closed.

16. NEXT MEETING DATE

January 11th, 2024 3:00 pm, Regular Council

17. "IN CAMERA"

MOTION: *That Council move to "In Camera" at 12:22 pm to discuss three land items, a security item and a personnel item.*

MOVED BY: Councillor Phillips

SECONDED BY: Councillor Poirier

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: *That Council move out of "In Camera" at 12:59 pm*

MOVED BY: Councillor MacLennan

SECONDED BY: Councillor Chisholm

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: *That the Municipality write off the outstanding property taxes on AAN 10012627 in the amount of \$ 221.57*

MOVED BY: Deputy Warden Gillis

SECONDED BY: Councillor Chisholm

MOTION CARRIED

18. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: *That Council adjourn at 1:00 pm*

MOVED BY: Councillor MacLennan

MOTION CARRIED