

Committee of the Whole Meeting
Thursday, July 17th, 2025
9:30 am
Council Chambers

MINUTES

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

Staff: Keith MacDonald, CAO
Brian Luciano, CFO
Melanie Beaton, Deputy CAO
Morgan Murray, Director of Culture and Community Development
Erin Gillis, Chief of Operations
Jason Calder, Recreation Programming Coordinator
Michelle Coffin, Governance and Bylaw Researcher
Debbie Nicholson, Administrative Assistant to Council/CAO
Krista MacInnis, Recreation Coordinator
Crystal Jones, Director of Solid Waste
Siobhan Beaton, Communications & Digital Marketing Coordinator

1. CALL TO ORDER

Warden MacIsaac called the meeting to order at 9:30 am and welcomed all in attendance. Roll call was taken.

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Warden MacIsaac acknowledged that the land on which we gather is located in the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: *That the agenda be approved as presented.*
Moved by: Deputy Warden Chisholm
Seconded by: Councillor Phillips
MOTION CARRIED

4. PRESENTATION; DAVE MORIN, STAFF SARGEANT, ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

RCMP Staff Sargeant Dave Morin provided an overview to Council of the Inverness District. The Inverness, Cheticamp and Waycobah detachments are all fully staffed with a total of 24 positions. Additional resources such as vehicles, a zodiac, snowmobiles and trailers are available for use. Criminal statistics per detachment for the first quarter of 2025 were provided as well as comparisons to the first quarter of 2023 and 2024. Mandatory and developmental/investigative training for members is ongoing. Policing priorities for 2025 include traffic safety (targeting impaired and aggressive drivers), substance abuse (use and trafficking of controlled drugs and substances) and community involvement (school visits, parades, coaching, Remembrance Day, Canada Day).

5. STAFF REPORTS

(a) Chestley Carr, Department of Public Works

Throughout the month of June, Public Works, Water Operators, and Buildings & Grounds crews worked collaboratively to address a range of infrastructure needs across the municipality. From water and sewer line repairs to equipment relocations and system maintenance, teams responded quickly and effectively to ensure reliable service and public safety. Their combined efforts helped maintain essential services and improve infrastructure in several communities.

Activities of staff include:

- Summer maintenance (lawns, sidewalks, municipal facilities, hydrants).
- Six water system repairs (Mabou, Port Hood, Judique, Inverness, Whycomomagh).
- Three standpipe and curb stop repairs.
- Municipal lighting repairs in collaboration with Hilltop Electrical and Andrew Poirier.
- Municipal gravel road maintenance.
- Water utility service connections and disconnections.
- Municipal hydrant inspections, with real time monitoring by using GIS software.
- Municipal vehicle fire extinguisher installations.
- Routine maintenance in municipal lift stations (Port Hood, Whycomomagh, Cheticamp).
- Regular maintenance of generators.
- Water and waste water sampling activities.
- Speed statistics were provided for the month of June for Cheticamp and Belle Cote.

Ongoing projects include lift station control panel replacements in Port Hood, control system upgrades in Port Hood and filter head replacements at the Mabou water treatment plant.

(b) Erin Gillis, Operations Department

Clean up efforts are ongoing at the Kenloch Waste Management facility. Staff are working to resolve equipment challenges, particularly with backhoes. The new Point of Sale (POS) system and Strong Data scale tracking software have been implemented. These upgrades are part of ongoing efforts to improve customer service, enhance accountability, and meet provincial solid

waste regulations. Materials continue to be processed efficiently at the Strathlorne Recycling Facility. Baled cardboard and e-waste continue to be transported out of the facility.

Solid waste education initiatives continue including community clean ups in Whycomagh and Margaree Harbour. ACAP is restarting their “Learning for Littles” programming every Wednesday from July 9 to August 20 for age 4-7 at Dalbrae school. Beach Cleanup Bingo runs throughout the month of July and offers participants the chance to win grocery store gift cards by picking up litter and completing a bingo card. It’s a simple, hands-on way to promote environmental stewardship and keep our beaches beautiful.

Bylaw enforcement continues with site visits and inspections of our permitted food vendors, investigations of three reported illegal dump sites, and dog control issues.

The Occupational Health and Safety incident investigation and corrective action review process is underway. A review of community comfort centers, processes and agreements is ongoing.

Projects currently ongoing include storage building construction in Kenloch, review and assessment of the Extended Producer Responsibilities (EPR), Pleasant Bay waste audit, collections route review, MIP application, NS Guard Community Sessions and bylaw updates.

(c) Jason Calder, Department of Recreation and Community Wellness

June was an exceptionally busy and productive month for the Get Active team. Several key programs wrapped up and a number of summer initiatives were launched, all while welcoming returning and new seasonal staff. There are five returning students and one new team member joining the municipality for the summer season.

Program highlights and community initiatives:

- Jr. NBA Program – program wrapped up in Inverness, Port Hood and Margaree.
- Ball Hockey Leagues – 203 children aged 6-13 years of age took part.
- 3 school supported bike rides – in partnership with Bayview Education Centre.
- Summer Programming Guide – created in partnership with the Communications Team.
- Connecting with community groups – summer festival support.

Ongoing projects include the lacrosse skills camp, bike repair program, adult programming, and the Playfinder Software Changeover. Staff hosted the first pickleball tourney at the Inverness Education Centre Academy and had a good turnout where participants played a round robin format and eventual champions were crowned. There is great interest in further developing these tournaments, especially with the intro of the outdoor court facility. The next tournament to be held August 4th and 5th in Judique.

Staff participated in the 2025 Physical Activity Practitioner Exchange (PAPE) Spring conference in Wolfville. This event focused on building project management knowledge and the sharing of ideas.

(d) Melanie Beaton, Deputy CAO

The following projects were updated:

Complex Infrastructure Projects

- Inverness Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Inverness Outfall
- Port Hood Outfall
- Judique Wastewater Treatment Plant and Outfall
- Judique Dam Rehabilitation
- Port Hood Lift Station # 1
- Port Hood and Chéticamp Lift Station Replacements

Linear Infrastructure Projects

- Central Avenue Water & Wastewater Replacement

Facilities/Buildings/Roads/Active Transportation

- Jajiktek Seawall Trail
- Central Avenue Complete Streets
- Active Transportation Planning Whycomomagh
- Foyer Père Fiset
- Port Hood Community Park
- Destination 252 Signage Plan
- Multi-Court Recreation Facility

Planning and Development

- Development & Servicing

Joint Committees, Foundational Documents, and Core Competencies

- Asset Management & Asset Inventory Development
- Sewer Discharge Bylaw

(e) Brian Luciano, Finance Department

Property tax bills for the municipality have been printed and are currently being mailed to residents and businesses within the county. First quarter water bills have been issued with new rates taking effect April 1, 2025. Door knockers will be delivered to residents that remain on the flat rate. The 2024-2025 annual audit is underway. Doane Grant Thornton has begun sending initial requests to the finance department. The focus on year end will begin once the budget sessions wrap up.

A credit card policy is under review by senior leadership. It will be presented to Council in coming months. Staff have begun compiling information for Provincial reports on budgets, Gas Tax Expenditures and Grant in Lieu. Collections are ongoing for tipping fees for outstanding high value amounts.

A new process for reviewing and approving invoices is now in place. Directors receive and review invoices tied to their budget lines prior to processing. Finance is assisting Capital Projects and Planning in gathering claim data for submission. Diamond software is being transitioned to a new cloud environment. The project is expected to be completed in July.

Multiple meetings continue regularly such as the finance department team, employee benefits, department heads, NS Housing Trust, Strong Data Software, asset management, and cost share with the province for the Central Ave project.

Multiple requests for proposals, requests for quotations and tenders are either open, awarded, or currently being evaluated.

(f) Morgan Murray, Department of Culture and Community Development (CCD)

Ongoing initiatives in the Department of Culture and Community Development include:

- Community Engagement / Visibility
 - Community Halls session in Whycomomagh – 12 volunteer halls participated.
 - Support engagement for parks, active transportation, heritage and culture.
 - Planning for Fall events for Cabot Trail engagement.
 - 196 subscribers to the Community Engagement Newsletter.
 - A recent CBC interview highlighted healthcare attraction and retention efforts.
 - Ongoing communication with key partners.
- Helping organizations create and carry out plans
 - Workplan templates and planning resources have been developed.
 - A draft Food Security Action Plan is underway.
 - Planning workshops are scheduled for this Fall.
 - Development of a Community Non-Profit Toolbox is underway.
 - A grant database has been established and is being improved for broader sharing.
- Issues being addressed
 - Childcare: Awaiting provincial update; preparing to coordinate with providers.
 - Food: Umbrella organization is underway; Meals on Wheels support ramping up.
 - Heritage: Heritage Advisory Committee has been refreshed; communications underway with provincial and regional partners for Inverness County Asylum commemoration project.
 - Youth: A draft Youth Strategy has been completed and application submitted for funding.
 - Libraries: Planning underway to open the new Whycomomagh branch.
 - Transportation: Initial engagement has begun for a new transportation strategy.

Five grants were distributed to municipal organizations over the last month through the Community Development Grants initiative, one through the Cultural Centres Operating Grants, and one through the Culture and Heritage Programming and Events.

(g) Monica Ragan, ACAP Cape Breton

Earth Month is celebrated every April, serving as a global initiative to raise awareness about environmental issues and promote sustainable practices. In the second year of celebrating Earth Month ACAP reached over 5000 people via social media, print media promotion and in-person events. Recent events and initiatives include:

- Community Environmental Outreach
 - West Mabou Beach Walk, June 14th – 27 members of the public attended.
 - Mabou Farmer’s Market – ACAP hosted a community table on June 22nd.
 - Intergenerational Learning – documenting stories of seniors who have witnessed environmental changes in their favourite places.
 - Outdoor Learning for Littles – Wednesdays at the Alexander Doyle Public Library.
- Water in Schools
 - ACAP piloted the new source water programming in two schools: Whycomomagh Education Centre and Bayview Education Centre. This new programming was for students in pre-primary to grade 2. These presentations reached 98 students.
- Earth Month activities
 - ACAP reached 335 students in 3 different school.
 - 2 community litter clean ups collected a total of 1,180 lbs of waste.
 - 91 trees were planted during the community tree planting day in Creignish.

(h) Lynne MacLennan, Cape Breton Partnership

The Cape Breton Partnership provides economic development support to the Municipality of the County of Inverness under the Regional Enterprise Network (REN) model in partnership with the Province of Nova Scotia.

April 1st to June 30th, 2025 Activities:

- Events: Unama’ki – Cape Breton Job Fair Series, Safety First Symposium, Welcoming Workplaces Video Series, The Future of Cape Breton Seafood Exports Podcast
- Local Economic Development Initiatives: Unama’ki – Cape Breton Business Insights Program, Mukk Nqa’ltultuk: Community Connections Symposium, Partners for Progress REN Conference, Business and Entrepreneur Supports
- Creative Economy: Creative Careers, Sea Glass Festival, Creative Nova Scotia Leadership Council, Creative Sector Business Supports
- Green Energy Engagement Program: What We Heard: Second Series of Offshore Wind Community Information Sessions, Electricity Sector Climate Change Adaptation Implementation Team, Canada – Scotland Collaboration: Coastal Futures,
- People and Labour Market Team: Immigration Access +, Coffee & Connect, Community & School Connections, Cape Breton Local Immigration Partnerships (CBLIP), On Our Radar Updates. Cape Breton Job Board
- Upcoming Events and Activities:
 - July 19th & 20th: OffshoreWind4Kids Interactive Showcase with COVE
 - July 31st: Coffee & Connect, Inverness County Centre for the Arts
 - October 23rd: Investor Summit 2025, Inverary Inn, Baddeck

(i) Laura Emery, Eastern Counties Regional Library

Current Initiatives:

- Community Wellbeing – Free items are currently available to the public at all Inverness County library locations (diapers, menstrual products, incontinence products, HIV self-test kits). These items are displayed in public washrooms and common areas.
- Food Security – The 2025 seed library has been incredibly successful, giving away more than 10,000 seed packages across the region.
- Programming Highlights:
 - Hotspot Lending Program – library users can borrow a mobile wireless hotspot.
 - Spring programming – seed library, on-demand programming, take & make crafts.
 - All locations - TD Summer Reading Club.
 - Alexander Doyle Public Library – Community Art Gathering every Thursday.
 - Coady & Tompkins Public Library – Margaree sunflowers, a popular annual activity and Mother’s Day Crafts, Saturday May 20th.
 - Cheticamp Public Library Programming – Retro Games drop in on Friday.

Laura Emery will prepare a presentation on the strategic plan for the fall meeting.

Laura Emery will track down specific sign-up numbers for the summer reading program and send them via email.

Monthly usage statistics were provided for the period of April to June 2025 at the Mabou, Margaree Forks, and Cheticamp library locations.

(j) Terry Smith, Destination Cape Breton (DCB)

On June 10th, CBRM Council made the decision to keep 50% of the marketing levy funds they collect to start their own events initiative. The decision required DCB to adjust its budget by \$450,000.00 resulting in the removal of all major events activity, and reductions in non-core marketing and destination development areas. The Board of DCB has directed that this decision should not impact the tourism industry in the other four municipalities.

Current Initiatives:

- Marketing: Summer advertising campaign continues in Ontario, Quebec, Calgary and the Maritimes, Waterfall Season Campaign, new website to be launched soon, shooting for 2026 campaign to begin shortly, booth at International Snowmobile Congress in PEI, June 11th-15th.
- Destination Development: Mi’kmaw L’Nu Tourism, Cabot Trail 100th Anniversary, Sustainable Tourism Plan, TIANS HR Advisor Program, VIC Concierge Program, Accommodation Needs Assessment.

Statistical Data was provided for the following:

- Visitcapebreton.com sessions – January 1st – July 10th 2025 with comparison to 2024.

- Visitcapebreton.com sessions by market- January 1 – July 10 2025 with comparison to 2024.
- Room Nights Sold – January to March 2025 with comparison to 2024.
- Short term rental unit nights sold – January to June 2025 with comparison to 2024.
- Parks Canada Sites – May to June 2025 with comparison to 2024.

(k) John Bain, Eastern District Planning Commission (EDPC)

The Annual Report for the period April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025 was provided to Council.

Key Items:

- Structure of EDPC: Council Commission Representatives and Staff.
- Staff Activity: Major Projects, Plan Amendments, Rezoning & Policy Changes, and Dangerous and Unsightly Premises.
- Development Control (building permits and subdivision activity per municipality).
- 2025-2026 Operating Estimates.
- Inter-Municipal Services Agreement.
- Auditor’s Report.

6. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANT APPLICATION:

1. District 3 – St Margaret’s Parish Cemetery, Broad Cove for a war memorial.

The Request of Council is \$6,000.00

Recommendation to fund this request in full with funds coming from the following sources:

- \$3,000.00 – Scotia Wind Fund
- \$3,000.00 – District 3 CDC Funds

2. District 6- Siudiac Air An Urlar Historical Cultural Society (Storytellers Gallery) for building improvement project.

The Request of Council is \$5,897.61

Recommendation to fund this request in full with funds coming from District 6 CDC Funds.

3. District 1- Petits Poussins Daycare, Chéticamp for summer camp program.

The Request of Council is \$4,000.00

Recommendation to fund this request in full with funds coming from District 1 CDC Funds.

7. PUBLIC INPUT – REPEAL OF BYLAWS 8 AND 11

Warden MacIsaac asked if there were any oral or written submissions regarding the repeal of bylaws 8 and 11. One written submission was received In favour of the repeal of bylaw 8 and was read aloud.

8. SECOND READING: REPEAL OF BYLAW 8- MISCHIEF & NUISANCES

MOTION: *That Bylaw 8 – Mischiefs and Nuisances passed by the Council of the Municipality of the County of Inverness on July 11, 1994, is repealed.*

MOVED BY: Councillor Gillis

SECONDED BY: Deputy Warden Chisholm

MOTION CARRIED

9. SECOND READING: REPEAL OF BYLAW 11 – CURFEW

MOTION: *That Bylaw 11 – Curfew passed by the Council of the Municipality of the County of Inverness on July 11, 1994, is repealed.*

MOVED BY: Deputy Warden Chisholm

SECONDED BY: Councillor Gillis

MOTION CARRIED

10. PCAP APPLICATION APPROVAL

Approval was received for the PCAP (Provincial Capital Assistance Program) application for the following project: Replacement of Production Well PW1 in Inverness- \$141,881.00

Approval was received for the PCAP (Provincial Capital Assistance Program) joint application submitted in collaboration with the Town of Port Hawkesbury for the linear infrastructure assessment report.

11. MIP APPLICATION APPROVAL

Approval was received for the MIP (Municipal Innovation Program) application submitted in partnership with Victoria County to create efficiencies and improve service delivery across both municipalities.

12. NOTICES OF MOTION

Notice was provided to Council that during upcoming meetings the following bylaw and policy will be put before Council for consideration and discussion. All relevant information required will be provided in the Council package in advance of the discussions.

- I. Bylaw 25 – Building Bylaw (repeal)
- II. Building Permit Fees Policy (repeal)

13. CORRESPONDENCE

- Building Statistics for the month of June 2025 were provided by the Eastern District Planning Commission.

14. NEXT MEETING DATE

September 4th, 2025 – 9:30 am; Regular Meeting of Council

15. IN CAMERA

MOTION: *That Council move to “In Camera” at 12:11 pm to discuss contract items and a capital purchase.*

MOVED BY: Deputy Warden Chisholm

SECONDED BY: Councillor Phillips

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: *That Council move out of “In Camera” at 12:47 pm.*

MOVED BY: Deputy Warden Chisholm

SECONDED BY: Councillor Poirier

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: *That the Municipality enter into the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Municipality of the County of Victoria regarding the Inverness Intermunicipal Residential Collection Service Agreement.*

MOVED BY: Councillor Gillis

SECONDED BY: Councillor Poirier

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: *That Council approve the allocation of capital funding in the amount of \$433,205.00 for the purchase of a 2024 Freightliner M2 with McNeilus 2566 REL (Split Body 40/60) curbside collection vehicle if required. The requirement and timing of the purchase will be dependant on the outcome and review of responses to MCI-RFP-2025-002 – Proposal for Solid Waste Curbside Collection Services (2025-2027). This request is made in recognition of the current Council meeting schedule, the RFP closing timeline, and the lead/delivery time associated with the proposed vehicle.*

MOVED BY: Councillor Phillips

SECONDED BY: Councillor Poirier

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: *That Council approve the capital purchase of a skid steer at a cost of \$115,000.00*
MOVED BY: Deputy Warden Chisholm
SECONDED BY: Councillor Phillips
MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: *That the Council for the Municipality of the County of Inverness authorises the Chief Administrative Officer to finalise agreements with Circular Materials based on the Opt-In Service model under the Extended Producer Responsibility Regulations; and further, that the Council authorises the Chief Administrative Officer and/or Chief Financial Officer to execute the contract with Circular Materials once finalised.*
MOVED BY: Councillor Gillis
SECONDED BY: Councillor Poirier
MOTION CARRIED

16. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: *That Council adjourn at 12:52 pm.*
MOVED BY: Deputy Warden Chisholm
MOTION CARRIED