

Committee of the Whole Meeting
Thursday, October 16th, 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
Melanie Beaton, Deputy CAO
Erin Gillis, Chief of Operations
Christina MacDonell, Director of Finance
Michelle Coffin, Governance and Bylaw Researcher
Debbie Nicholson, Administrative Assistant to Council/CAO
Megan Wludyka, Chief of Communications
Emery Ferraro, Trails 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: Councillor Poirier
SECONDED BY: Deputy Warden Chisholm
MOTION CARRIED

4. STAFF REPORTS

(a) Chestley Carr, Department of Public Works

Department staff continue to work collaboratively across divisions to maintain essential services, respond to emergencies, and progress important infrastructure and safety initiatives. Monthly highlights include:

- Crosscut paving repairs should be completed by the end of the month.
- Hydrant inspections, repairs and pressure testing are underway in serviced communities.
- Leak detection training for department staff.
- All water and waste water facilities are in compliance.
- Lawn and streetscape care in all serviced communities and municipal facilities continues.
- Streetlight outages are being addressed by a contractor.
- Necessary maintenance for municipal roads is being scheduled.
- Leaks and breaks identified in Inverness and Mabou are being addressed.
- Snow removal vehicles are being prepared for the winter season.
- Safety tours and site assessments are ongoing with the onsite safety advisor.

(b) Erin Gillis, Operations Department

Solid Waste Management:

- The new Point-of-Sale (POS) system at Kenloch has processed 95 transactions so far.
- Ongoing equipment challenges at Kenloch are being managed to maintain site operations.
- 105 metric tons of treated and clean wood and 521 metric tons of solid waste have been transferred. An RFP has been issued for the removal of scrap metal.

Strathlorne Recycling Facility:

- Loading bay repairs have been approved.
- The copper and aluminum recovery project will soon launch at Strathlorne.
- The curbside collection contract for the Extended Producer Responsibility has been received and is currently under review.

Solid Waste Education

- Communication strategies are being created for paint, batteries, and electronics disposal.
- Funding from Divert NS allowed the solid waste team to hire a summer student who worked on waste reduction activities and community audits.

Bylaw Enforcement

- Staff are investigating reports of illegal dumpsites and dog issues.
- Divert NS Enforcement Report tracks activities related to solid waste enforcement from April 1 – September 31.

Occupational Health and Safety

- Support to trenching, excavation, traffic control, respiratory protection, chemical storage, and contractor management. Monthly JOHSC meetings continue.

Emergency Management

- A review of community comfort centers, processes, and agreements is underway.
- Communications with provincial department of emergency management on new REMO and REOC process, staffing, and responsibility is underway.

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

Recreation Program initiatives and highlights:

- Successful launch of Adult Sports Activities in gyms across the county.
- The adoption of Playfinder in the Adult group has been a positive success in the fall registration period.
- A Bike to School repair day is planned for the Inverness Academy Education Centre.
- Events are planned to commemorate Seniors Week in Nova Scotia.
- The County Running Circuit has wrapped up for the season.

Youth Programming summer highlights:

- The department continues to support community groups with school programming, youth soccer and Inverness County Athletics.
- Ocean Literacy sessions are being coordinated with county schools.
- CBU basketball youth clinic was hosted by the Inverness school.
- Inverness Recreational Dance program will launch this month.
- Wave volleyball camps are planned for Inverness, Port Hood and Belle Côte.

(d) Melanie Beaton, Deputy CAO

The following projects were updated:

- Inverness Wastewater Treatment Plant and Outfall
- Judique Wastewater Treatment Plant and Outfall
- Port Hood Wastewater Treatment Plant Outfall
- Whycocomagh Wastewater Treatment Plant Outfall
- Judique Dam
- Port Hood Lift Station # 1 and # 3
- Chéticamp Lift Station # 3 and # 5
- Central Avenue Water and Wastewater Replacement
- Central Avenue Complete Streets
- Jajiktek Seawall Trail
- Whycocomagh Active Transportation Planning
- Foyer Pere Fiset
- Port Hood Community Park
- Destination 252 Signage Plan
- Kenloch C&D Cell Closure
- Port Hastings Roundabout
- Source of Supply (Chéticamp/Inverness/Mabou)
- Chéticamp Wastewater Treatment Plant Digester
- Community Centre Improvements in Meat Cove and Pleasant Bay
- Inverness Multi-Court Facility

(e) Christina MacDonell, Finance Department

Department Highlights:

- 2024-25 Audit – onsite auditor visit is scheduled for late October.
- Staff are exploring options for electronic payments to vendors.
- Remaining water meter upgrades are ongoing.
- A purchase order policy is in development.
- Provincial Reporting is underway (SOB-A, SOB-E, FIR response, AER)
- Property Tax Collections – processing of payments (annual deadline was late August).
- Tipping Fee Collections – staff are accessing Strong Data to generate invoices.
- Water Bills – In conjunction with the Town of Port Hawkesbury, staff received training on issuing water bills.
- Monthly meetings occur regularly with staff on various department initiatives.
- 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)

Major Projects and Initiatives Updates:

- Healthcare – 5 year plan involving new recruitment, awards and career fairs.
- Libraries – Whycomomagh Library expansion and fundraising campaign underway.
- Childcare – ongoing support of existing centres with funding and advice.
- Community Spaces – ongoing support of community halls.
- Culture – drafting an implementation plan for a municipal arts and culture strategy.
- Food security – ongoing support of existing food security programs.
- Heritage – Heritage Property Program update continues with a website and presentations to neighboring municipalities planned.
- Learning – Continued support of Inverness County's Literacy Council.
- Newcomers – Continues support of CBLIP on initiatives.
- Recreation Facilities – Continued support of existing facilities.
- Transportation – Six community sessions planned for this fall.
- Visitors - Supporting the Cabot Trail 100th Anniversary engagement efforts.
- 6 Community Development Grants were issued recently.

(g) Monica Ragan, ACAP Cape Breton

Community Environmental Outreach Initiatives:

- Deliver public education focusing on local ecosystems, environmental solutions, and Water Conservation and protection
- Staff attended farmers markets and festivals offering public education and soliciting the public's feedback on suggested programming.
- Intergenerational Learning Program – nature walks in Inverness and Mabou Coal Mines.

- Community Clean ups: July 25 – Whycocomagh, July 31 – Inverness Beach, August 7 – Margaree Harbour. 335 kg of waste was collected.
- Communications of programming continues on social media and local newspapers.
- Staff are preparing to visit three schools in October 2025 with the new source water programming. These visits will take place from October 20 to 23 at We'koqma' q Mi'kmaw School, Inverness Education Centre/Academy, and Pleasant Bay School. These presentations will be for grades pre-primary to Grade 8.

(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.

July 1st to September 30th, 2025 Activities:

- Events: Partner Day Event at the Glenora Distillery in July, nominations are now open for the 2025 Welcoming Spirit Awards.
- Local Economic Development Initiatives: Unama'ki – Cape Breton Business Insights Program, Development Supports and Studies, and Business and Entrepreneur Supports.
- Creative Economy: ongoing support for the Cape Breton Film Industry, the *Little Lorraine* Film, The Cape Breton Comedy Festival, Inverness County Centre for the Arts, and the Cape Breton Creative Arts Awards.
- Green Energy Engagement Program: Energy Conversations and Collaborations, Indigenous Energy Engagement, Women and Youth Technical Capacity for the Blue Economy (WYTEC Blue), and Nova Scotia Offshore Wind.
- People and Labour Market Team: Inverness County Healthcare Professionals Welcome Event, Coffee & Connect and In Focus: Newcomer Experiences in Unama'ki – Cape Breton.
- Upcoming Events and Activities:
 - October 22nd: Cape Breton Partnership AGM
 - October 23rd: Investor Summit 2025, Inverary Inn, Baddeck

(i) Laura Emery, Eastern Counties Regional Library (ECRL)

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.
- Outdoor Learning for Littles – ECRL partnered with ACAP Cape Breton to provide a weekly drop-in session for children to explore nature and learn about their natural environment. The group used the library in case of inclement weather.
- Programming Highlights
 - Alexander Doyle Public Library – Community Art Gathering every Thursday, new and improved book return box.

- Cheticamp Public Library Programming – Nova Scotia Works School Liaison Sessions, and Library Guild.
- Coady & Tompkins Public Library – Crafting Series in July and August, Next Ride (free test drives in EVs and e-bikes).

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

(j) Jody MacArthur, Destination Cape Breton (DCB)

Current initiatives:

Marketing Campaign

- The fall campaign is in market in Ontario, Quebec, Calgary, and the Maritimes, with the winter campaign to be launched shortly.
- The new website launched in mid-July, and is faster, and more user and AI agent friendly.
- Shooting for the 2026 campaign took place in August and over the Thanksgiving weekend.
- Participation in the Atlantic Canada Showcase in Saint John New Brunswick.

Destination Development

- A video and survey were recently launched for the Cabot Trail 100th Anniversary.
- The Sustainable Tourism Plan was recently completed and will be rolled out to industry and partners in the next few weeks.
- Through a partnership with the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia (TIANS), training programs were provided to 183 industry members.
- Accommodation Needs Assessment was recently delivered.

Statistical Data was provided for the following:

- Visitcapebreton.com sessions for the period January 1 – October 10, 2024/2025.
- Room nights sold for the period January – May, 2024-25.
- Short term rentals in Inverness County for the period January – September 2024/2025.
- Parks Canada Site Visits for the period May – September 2024/2025.

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

- Plan Eastern Nova: Final Updates – Second Reading approval, May 22nd, 2025.
- Inverness County Wind Turbine Policy Review – The amended Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law came into effect September 11, 2025.
- Le Cap Hotel Development Agreement – hospitality venue in Chéticamp.
- “Not for Residential Development” Lots, Inverness Subdivision Bylaw amendment request.
- Rezoning request from C-1 to R-1 in Chéticamp to construct a Fourplex.
- Rezoning request from residential centre – R1 to commercial Zone – C1 to support construction of a consignment store in Whycocomagh.

- Application to allow for commercial zoning – Chéticamp takeout restaurant.
- The status of all Dangerous and Unsightly Premises files for 2025 were provided to Council.

5. PRESENTATION: EMERY FERRERO, SUMMER STUDENT TRAILS CREW

Three Inverness County students were employed during the summer as Trails Crew Team Members. The goals of their project was to learn about trail methods and concepts, make community contributions and learn about how trails and recreation can be career paths.

Key elements of the project were:

- Emphasis on safety in the workplace and in nature.
- In office education through videos and presentations.
- Field work on local projects.
- Getting to know the local volunteer groups.
- Learning the proper use of traditional hand tools.
- Learning how to use modern trail building technology- GIS, apps, Garmin.

6. PORT HOOD COMMUNITY PARK CAPITAL CAMPAIGN (Melanie Beaton)

Planning for the new Port Hood Community Park is underway. Thanks to the generous donation of land from Ted & Hermina vanZutphen, the park will be located at the corner of Main St. and Wharf Rd., on the site of the former Port Hood Consolidated School. The municipality has partnered with local community members with the goal of creating an inclusive and accessible environmentally sustainable space. Plans are underway to launch a capital campaign to raise resources for the project (equipment, in-kind or monetary).

7. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANT APPLICATION: Captain Angus L. MacDonald Branch 132 Royal Canadian Legion (Generator Updates)

The Request of Council is \$1,845.65

Recommendation to fund this request in full with funds coming from District 3 CDC Funds.

8. INVERNESS MULTI COURT FACILITY – BOOKING POLICY

A draft policy to outline the procedures and conditions for booking the Inverness Multicourt Facility, ensuring equitable, accessible, and efficient use of municipal recreation facilities was presented to Council. This policy shall be approved at a future meeting of Council.

9. FIRST READING: BYLAW 20 TRAILERS (repeal)

MOTION: *That Bylaw 60 - A Bylaw Respecting the Repeal of Bylaw 20 – Trailers advance to Second Reading at the next Regular Meeting of Council.*

MOVED BY: Councillor Phillips

SECONDED BY: Deputy Warden Chisholm

MOTION CARRIED

10. FIRST READING: BYLAW 21 – TRAILER COURTS (repeal)

MOTION: *That Bylaw 61 - A Bylaw Respecting the Repeal of Bylaw 21 – Trailer Courts advance to Second Reading at the next Regular Meeting of Council.*

MOVED BY: Councillor Poirier

SECONDED BY: Deputy Warden Chisholm

MOTION CARRIED

11. FIRST READING: BYLAW 24 – DEVELOPMENT OFFICER (repeal)

MOTION: *That Bylaw 62 - A Bylaw Respecting the Repeal of Bylaw 24 – Development Officer advance to Second Reading at the next Regular Meeting of Council.*

MOVED BY: Deputy Warden Chisholm

SECONDED BY: Councillor Poirier

MOTION CARRIED

12. FIRST READING: BYLAW 40 – RESPECTING RELIEF FROM LIABILITY (repeal)

MOTION: *That Bylaw 63 - A Bylaw Respecting the Repeal of Bylaw 40 – Respecting Relief from Liability advance to Second Reading at the next Regular Meeting of Council.*

MOVED BY: Councillor Gillis

SECONDED BY: Councillor Phillips

MOTION CARRIED

13. FIRST READING: BYLAW 36 – PENSIONS (repeal)

MOTION: *That Bylaw 64 - A Bylaw Respecting the Repeal of Bylaw 36 – Pension Bylaw advance to Second Reading at the next Regular Meeting of Council.*

MOVED BY: Councillor Gillis

SECONDED BY: Deputy Warden Chisholm

MOTION CARRIED

14. NOTICE OF MOTION

This is notice to Council that during a future meeting the following bylaw will be presented for Council's consideration and discussion. All the information required will be in your package in advance of the discussions.

- Bylaw No. 50: Bylaw to Amend By-Law 30: Capital Cost of Sewer & Water Construction

15. 2025 PROVINCIAL VOLUNTEER AWARDS

The 2025 Provincial Volunteer Awards were held in Halifax on September 29th. Cheticamp resident Darlene Boudreau travelled to the ceremony to represent Inverness County.

16. CORRESPONDENCE

- Eastern District Planning Commission: September 2025 Building Statistics

17. NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER COUNCIL MEETING DATES

November 13th, 2025 – Regular Council

November 20th, 2025 – Committee of the Whole

December 4th, 2025 – Regular Council

December 11th, 2025 – Committee of the Whole

18. NEXT MEETING DATE

November 13th, 2025 – 9:30 am; Regular Meeting of Council

19. "IN CAMERA"

MOTION: *That Council move to "In Camera" at 11:44 am to discuss a land item and a human resources item.*

MOVED BY: Deputy Warden Chisholm

SECONDED BY: Councillor Gillis

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: *That Council move out of "In Camera" at 11:50 am.*

MOVED BY: Councillor Poirier

SECONDED BY: Deputy Warden Chisholm

MOTION CARRIED

20. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: *That Council adjourn at 11:50 am.*
MOVED BY: Councillor Phillips
MOTION CARRIED