

Regular Council Meeting  
Thursday, February 5, 2026  
9:30 a.m.  
Council Chambers

## MINUTES

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

Staff: Keith MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer  
Melanie Beaton, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer  
Erin Gillis, Chief of Operations  
Morgan Murray, Director of Culture and Community Development  
Christina MacDonell, Director of Finance  
Debbie Nicholson, Administrative Assistant to Council/Chief Administrative Officer  
Megan Wludyka, Chief Communications Officer  
Siobhan Beaton, Communications & Digital Marketing Coordinator  
Michelle Coffin, Governance and Bylaw Researcher

### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

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

### 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

### 3. 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.

### 4. PROCLAMATIONS:

#### i. AFRICAN HERITAGE MONTH

*The following proclamation was read by Warden Maclsaac:*

**WHEREAS** February is observed as African Heritage Month in Nova Scotia, honouring the resilience, achievements, and cultural, social, and economic contributions of African Nova Scotians and people of African descent; and

**WHEREAS** African Nova Scotians have historically played significant roles in Industrial Cape Breton, including the coal mining industry that was foundational to the economy in Inverness County; and

**WHEREAS** the 2026 theme, “Strength in Unity: Moving Forward with Purpose, Prosperity, Power, and Progress,” recognizes unity as an active force for change that strengthens communities, advances justice, and creates new opportunities; and

**WHEREAS** Inverness County continues to welcome newcomers from across Africa whose cultures, skills, and contributions enrich the social, cultural, and economic factories of our communities; and

**WHEREAS** African Heritage Month encourages all residents to learn, reflect, and celebrate the stories and contributions that strengthen our shared heritage;

**THEREFORE**, be it resolved that I, Warden Bonny Maclsaac, on behalf of the Council of the Municipality of the County of Inverness do hereby proclaim February 2026 as African Heritage month in Inverness County.

ii. **NATIONAL GIRLS & WOMEN IN SPORTS DAY**

*The following proclamation was read by Warden Maclsaac:*

**WHEREAS** February 5 is recognized as National Girls and Women in Sports Day, a day to celebrate the achievements and contributions of girls and women in sport and to acknowledge the important role athletics play in empowering girls and building confidence, leadership, and lifelong wellness; and

**WHEREAS** participation in sport fosters inclusion, resilience, teamwork, and community pride, and helps create opportunities for girls and women to reach their full potential both on and off the field of play; and

**WHEREAS** Inverness County has a long and proud history of girls and women achieving success in sport at the provincial, national, and international levels in disciplines such as judo, track and field, hockey, ringette, softball, and many others; and

**WHEREAS** the continued success of girls and women in sport is made possible through the dedication of athletes, coaches, mentors, volunteers, and organizers who work to ensure safe, welcoming, and supportive opportunities for participation and excellence; and

*WHEREAS on February 5, the Municipality of Inverness County will recognize seven women from across the county who have made significant contributions as athletes, coaches, mentors, and organizers, helping to ensure that girls in Inverness County have the opportunity to both play and excel in athletics;*

*THEREFORE, be it resolved that I, Warden Bonny MacIsaac, on behalf of the Council of the Municipality of the County of Inverness, do hereby proclaim February 5 as National Girls and Women in Sports Day in Inverness County, and encourage all residents to recognize, celebrate, and support the achievements and ongoing contributions of girls and women in sport.*

The following residents of the Municipality of the County were acknowledged with a certificate of appreciation recognizing their achievements and contributions of women and girls in sport:

Velda Aucoin  
Ashley Crowley (online)  
Nadine Clark (online)  
Norma MacKinnon  
Lori Shaw  
Coline MacEachern  
Janet MacIsaac

#### **5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION:** *That the Regular Council meeting minutes of January 8, 2026 be approved as presented.*

**MOVED BY:** Councillor Poirier

**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Phillips

**MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION:** *That the Committee of the Whole meeting minutes of January 22, 2026 be approved as presented.*

**MOVED BY:** Councillor Gillis

**SECONDED BY:** Deputy Warden Chisholm

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **6. PRESENTATION, Sgt. Lance Wood, Royal Canadian Mounted Police**

The following updates were provided to Council by Sgt. Lance Wood:

- Human Resources at the Chéticamp, Inverness, Waycobah and Port Hawkesbury detachments.
- A domestic violence corporal is coming to the Port Hawkesbury detachment.
- The street crime unit is now fully staffed and is building capacity.

- Crime statistics for the period of October 1, 2025 to January 31, 2026 were provided, and were divided by detachment (Chéticamp, Inverness, Waycobah and Port Hawkesbury).
- Issues expressed by Council included speeding, drug use, littering, texting while driving, DUI (driving under the influence) check stops, telephone scamming, and the recent drug usage town hall in the community of Inverness.

**7. NEW NOVA SCOTIA RIDING: CHÉTICAMP – MARGAREES – PLEASANT BAY:**

The Nova Scotia House of Assembly gave the 2025 Electoral Boundaries Commission a mandate to recommend a new electoral boundary that will provide effective representation for the Acadian region of Chéticamp. The commission held two rounds of public consultations in the district to present possible scenarios. After seven public meetings were held the commission came to a unanimous agreement on the following recommendation: That the District of Inverness be divided into two new ridings 1.) Chéticamp – Margarees – Pleasant Bay and 2.) Inverness – We’koqma’q. The new riding of Chéticamp – Margarees – Pleasant Bay represents the fifty sixth seat in the province.

**8. STAFF UPDATE: FEEDBACK LOOP (Megan Wludyka)**

*The Feedback Loop* is a monthly survey designed to gather resident feedback on a variety of Municipal topics throughout 2026. Surveys will be released on the third Thursday of each month, inviting residents to share their perspectives and ideas. Each survey will include targeted questions related to the monthly topic, as well as opportunities for residents to provide general feedback about the topic. Surveys are designed to take no more than 10 minutes to complete, and all responses will remain anonymous. Surveys will be available online, with paper copies available at multiple locations throughout the county. As participation grows and feedback is collected, the Municipality will compile and share summary reports highlighting key themes and insights provided by residents.

**9. RESOLUTION: REQUEST TO PRESENT TO COUNCIL POLICY/ REQUEST AGENDA ITEM**

*The enclosed resolution was read by Warden MacIsaac. Consensus was given by Council.*

**WHEREAS** *Council is committed to efficient and well-organized meetings; and*

**WHEREAS** *a Public Request to Present to Council form has been developed to standardize requests from members of the public; and*

**WHEREAS** *a set of Guidelines for Presenters to Council will be provided to approved presenters to ensure preparedness and proper formatting;*

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** *that Council approves the use of the Public Request to Present to Council form and the Guidelines for Presenters to Council for all future presentations.*

**10. STAFF UPDATE: 2026 HEALTH AWARDS**

Nominations are now open for the 2026 Excellence in Health Care Awards. This is an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the dedicated healthcare professionals who work tirelessly and selflessly to serve others. Award categories include but are not limited to doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners, allied health professionals, volunteers, and more. Nominations can be made online, or by paper copies, with a nomination deadline of February 28, 2026. An awards committee made up of municipal staff and a mix of practicing and retired healthcare professionals will select winners, which will then be announced at an awards gala in Chéticamp on April 22, 2026.

#### **11. UPDATE: FOYER PÈRE FISET NEW BUILD**

A new, state-of-the-art long term care facility is currently under construction in the community of Chéticamp next to the existing building. It will accommodate seventy-two residents and remain connected to the Sacred Heart Community Health Centre. Key features of the new building include:

- The colors of the Acadian Flag reflected in the exterior design.
- Energy Efficiency (in floor heating and maximization of daylight).
- Single loaded patient room (with two adjoining rooms for couples on each level).
- Multiple communal areas as well as an outdoor garden.

Construction on the new facility began in November 2024 and is expected to be completed in 2027.

#### **12. MEMORANDUM: LINK NOVA SCOTIA ACT REGULATIONS**

With the passing of Bill 24, the Link Nova Scotia Act, the Minister of Public Works has order-making power to order a municipality to build, change, or remove transportation infrastructure within the Municipality, or to do anything that would be necessary in the interest of safe, efficient and coordinated movement of people and goods. To ensure clarity, fairness, and accountability, regulations have been developed that must be considered when using Ministerial order-making powers under the Act.

*Direction to staff to reach out to Link Nova Scotia and invite them to a future meeting of Council.*

#### **13. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM JANUARY 22 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

i. **Raising the Villages Cooperative Ltd. - Community Health and Well Being Gatherings**

The request of Council is \$2,000.

**MOTION:** *That Council not support this request for funding.*

**MOVED BY:** Councillor Gillis

**SECONDED BY:** Deputy Warden Chisholm

**MOTION CARRIED**

ii. **Community Matters Allons-y Ensemble – Festival Chocolat Chaud**

The Request of Council is \$2,000.

**MOTION:** *That Council support this request in full with funds coming from the Regional CDC funds.*  
**MOVED BY:** Councillor Poirier  
**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Phillips  
**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **14. NOTICE OF MOTION**

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

**Municipal Fees Policy** – staff will be seeking an amendment to add a dog tag registration fee date to the policy.

#### **15. CORRESPONDENCE**

- Correspondence was received from the Honourable Fred Tilley, Nova Scotia's Minister of Public Works in response to a letter issued by Council regarding the condition of the Cabot Trail in the Lake O'Law area.
- Correspondence was received from the Nova Scotia Department of Public Works regarding the three-year cost share agreement for subdivision streets (J Class Roads).

#### **16. NEXT MEETING DATE**

February 19, 2026, 9:30 a.m.: Committee of the Whole

#### **17. IN CAMERA**

**MOTION:** *That Council move to "In Camera" at 10:58 a.m. to discuss a land item.*  
**MOVED BY:** Councillor Phillips  
**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Poirier  
**MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION:** *That Council move out of "In Camera" at 11:08 a.m.*  
**MOVED BY:** Deputy Warden Chisholm  
**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Poirier  
**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **18. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** *That Council adjourn at 11:08 a.m.*

MOVED BY:  
MOTION CARRIED

Deputy Warden Chisholm