

## **Municipality of the District of Lunenburg Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance Committee**

Held in Council Chamber, 10 Allée Champlain Drive, Cookville, NS  
**Tuesday, September 2, 2025 – 9:00 a.m.**

### **Attendance**

Councillor Wendy Oickle, District 3, Chair  
Councillor Edgar Burns, District 7, Vice Chair  
Mayor Elspeth McLean-Wile  
Councillor Morgen Reinhardt, District 1  
Councillor Martin Bell, District 2  
Councillor Pam Hubley, District 4  
Councillor Cathy Moore, District 5  
Councillor Alison Smith, District 6  
Councillor Ben Brooks, District 9  
Deputy Mayor Chasidy Veinotte, District 10

### **Regrets**

Councillor Kacy DeLong, District 8

### **Staff**

Tom MacEwan, Chief Administrative Officer  
Alex Dumaresq, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer  
Elana Wentzell, Director of Finance  
Joanne Powers, Executive Assistant

#### **1. Call to Order**

Councillor Oickle called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and began by acknowledging that the meeting was held in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

#### **2. Announcements/Acknowledgements/Recognition**

Councillor Smith acknowledged the South Shore District Labour Council which held their annual Labour Day picnic. It was a regional celebration where unions and community organizations had booths, and the Lunenburg/Queens Special Olympics were in charge of the free refreshments.

#### **3. Public Input (15 Minutes)**

#### **4. Changes/Approval of Agenda**

**Moved by Councillor Moore, seconded by Councillor Bell that the September 2, 2025, Finance Committee Agenda be approved as circulated. Carried unanimously.**

#### **5. Approval of Minutes – July 8, 2025**

**The Minutes of July 8, 2025, Finance Committee meeting were approved as circulated.**

- 6. Business Arising from Minutes - Nil**
- 7. Presentations/Scheduled Times - Nil**
- 8. Referrals from Committees/Council - Nil**
- 9. Staff Reports**

**9.1 Finance Department**

**9.1.1 Operating Variance Report 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter (to June 30, 2025)**

Elana Wentzell, Director of Finance, reviewed the report titled, "Operating Variance Report 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter (to June 30, 2025)" (included in the agenda package).

Ms. Wentzell advised that in the first quarter report, an Operating surplus of \$87,500 which represented a 0.19% budget variance. The revenue variance showed \$26,000.

The expenditure variance showed a forecasted budget increase of \$74,300 in additional revenue compared to budget. The expenditure variance showed \$8,200 which included recoverable insurance costs of \$8,200 and increased costs for replacement of malfunctioning septic systems under the LaHave Straight Pipe Replacement Program.

**9.1.2 Capital Status & CCBF Investment Report 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter (to June 30, 2025)**

Elana Wentzell, Director of Finance, reviewed the report titled, "Capital Status & CCBF Investment Report 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter (to June 30, 2025)" (included in the agenda package).

Ms. Wentzell reported that of the \$18.37M approved budget, project costs in the amount of \$970,299 had been paid at the end of the first quarter with a forecast of \$12.8M to be completed by year-end.

It was questioned if in future, a more detailed quarterly report could be provided. Mr. Dumaresq stated that changes were already made to the section on status which used to fall under the project description. If there is interest to try and make some improvement around accountability or the visibility of whether or not a project is on track, then an adjustment might be able to be made to this section.

**9.2 Administration Department**

**9.2.1 REMO Governance Review**

Alex Dumaresq, Deputy CAO, gave the "REMO Governance Review" (attached to the minutes). Topics discussed as part of the review included:

- Daily Operations
  - o Planning
  - o Training & Exercising
  - o Building Network and Relationships with Partners
  - o Public Outreach and Education
  - o Governance & Administration
  - o Emergency Response
- Background
- Background 2025 REMAC Workshop
- Budget Approval Process
- 2025-26 Budget
- Facilitated Discussion Process (Recommended by REMAC Subcommittee)
- Key MODL Positions Recommended by Staff
- Discussion Points

Questions were raised regarding past winter storms and the delay in clearing provincially owned roads, lessons learned from the Shelburne/Tantallon wildfires, the relationship between REMAC and NS Power and the FireSmart Program that accepts clean brush free-of-charge.

**10. Consideration of Correspondence - Nil**

**11. Recommendations from Council – Nil**

**12. Added Items - Nil**

**13. In Camera**

**At 9:58 a.m., it was moved by Deputy Mayor Veinotte seconded by Councillor Burns that the Finance Committee go In Camera to discuss Item 13.1 Contract Negotiations under Section 22(2)(e) of the MGA.**

**Carried unanimously.**

Finance Committee In Camera in session.

**At 10:14 a.m., it was moved by Councillor Brooks, seconded by Councillor Hubley that Finance Committee come out of In Camera and return to open session. Carried unanimously.**

Finance Committee in session.

**13. Adjournment**

**There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.**

## REMO Governance review



September 2025

## Daily Operations

### Planning

- Creation and updating all emergency & contingency plans
- Consulting with Planning Committee and stakeholders
- Approval of plans and policies at Advisory Committee meetings
- Training & Exercising
  - Training and exercising key staff to be prepared for activations
  - Training and keeping AECs updated on roles for on-call coverage
  - Attending training by the province and other entities to stay up to date
  - Be Ready training for municipal staff



## Daily Operations cont'd

### Building network and relationships with partners

- Identifying and maintaining stakeholder partnerships
  - Government departments
  - First responders
  - Community halls/comfort centres
  - Potential suppliers & resources during emergencies
  - Large facilities and businesses
- Working with and keeping updated with the provincial Dept of EM DEM)

### Public Outreach and Education

- Public presentations
- Emergency Preparedness Week
- 72-hour preparedness promotion
- Social media and web presence



## Daily Operations cont'd

PLUS – Special projects as resources permit

### Governance & Administration

- Coordinating and supporting REMAC
- Tracking expenditures vs budget
- Information management among five units

### Emergency Response

- Oversight of on-call rotation
- Serve as “duty officer”
- Critical role in guiding ECC operations



## Background

- After action reports from floods and fires concluded capacity needed to be increased
- 2024/25 budget included additional position
  - Chester objected and did not approve the budget
  - Requirements for approval met within the agreement
- REMAC agreed to review governance arrangements for our REMO



## Background 2025 REMAC workshop

- REMAC met in January to review options and discuss REMO governance, strategic directions, resource allocations.
- Confirmed:
  - Increasing demand for emergency response
  - REMO needs more resources than present allocation
  - Emergency response works best through regional cooperation



## Budget approval process

- Current: 2 units totalling 51% of the budget
- Proposed:
  - 3 units totalling 51% of the budget
  - Enhanced information sharing:
    - REMAC review draft
    - All councils invited to a joint budget presentation
    - REMAC review again before making recommendation to partner councils
    - Councils approve budget



## 2025-26 Budget

- REMAC work resulted in:
  - Expanded budget consultation
  - Continuation of 2 FTEs in REMO budget
  - Addition of an EM position in chester
    - 1/3<sup>rd</sup> billed back to REMO
- Chester requested further governance review



## Facilitated discussion process (recommended by REMAC subcommittee)

- Facilitator Engaged- August 2025
- Pre-planning meeting with Subcommittee and Facilitator- August 2025
- Facilitated session with Councils- September 2025
- Report /Recommendations from Facilitator to Subgroup- September 2025
- Subgroup report and draft agreement to REMAC – October 2025
- REMAC – draft agreement to Council's – December 2025



## Key MODL positions recommended by staff

- Regional approach is central to our emergency management program
- Adjustments to funding and budget approval are acceptable; should not distract from ongoing REMO work
- 2 REMO staff will improve training, public education;
  - commitment from all units for municipal staff required to address activation gap



## Discussion points

- Other governance issues to raise?
- Attendance from MODL

