

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy & Strategy Committee
Held in Council Chamber, 10 Allée Champlain Drive, Cookville, N.S.
Tuesday, September 16, 2025 – 9:00 a.m.

Attendance

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

Regrets

Councillor Cathy Moore, District 5
Councillor Kacy DeLong, District 8

Staff

Tom MacEwan, Chief Administrative Officer
Alex Dumaresq, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
April Whynot-Lohnes, Municipal Clerk
Joanne Powers, Executive Director

1. Call to Order

Deputy Mayor Veinotte 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 – Nil

3. Public Input – Nil

4. Changes/Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Hubley, seconded by Councillor Brooks that the Agenda be approved as circulated. Carried unanimously.

5. Approval of Minutes – July 15, 2025

The Minutes of July 15, 2025, were approved as circulated.

6. Business Arising from Minutes

Alex Dumaresq, Deputy CAO, provided information on a Public Input request about the Municipality's Climate Change Plan and how it relates to natural storage, from a resident at the July 15, 2025, Policy and Strategy Committee meeting:

- Costs associated with green projects – since 2019 the MODL capital budget included 1.27M for climate related work and drew in \$457,000 in grants, resulting in a net capital.

7. Presentations/Scheduled Times – Nil

8. Referral From Committees/Council – Nil

9. Staff Reports

9.1 Administration Department

9.1.1 Housing Strategy

Xinyuan Wu, and Jonathan Bertram, Policy Analysts, reviewed the presentation titled, "Housing Strategy Report Outline" (included in the agenda package). The following topics were discussed:

- Background
 - Demographics
 - Existing Housing Market
 - Definitions and Categories
 - Housing Stock Estimates
 - Housing Stock Table Summary
 - Housing Affordability Pressure
 - Jurisdiction and Authority
 - Key Takeaways
- Issues and Challenges
 - Housing Academic Research
 - Stakeholder Interviews
 - Key Takeaways
- Solutions
 - Directions
 - An Environment for Growth
 - Private Market Actions
 - Investment Beyond Underground Services
 - Non-market Housing Actions
 - Actions/directions Not Recommended
- Next Steps
- Public Engagement
- Appendix
 - Summary Table

Discussion followed on a range of topics relevant to the housing strategy, with an emphasis on rural contexts and long-term sustainability. Key points included:

- **Farmland & Food Security:** Consider integration into the housing strategy to protect agricultural land and promote local food systems.
- **Rural Housing Stock:** Need to address gaps in deeply rural areas and ensure these communities are not overlooked.
- **Data Limitations:** Current study uses 2021 data; concerns raised about relevance and need for updated/localized data.
- **Affordability Gap:** Interest in rent-to-own and alternative ownership models to improve access to housing.
- **Non-Market Housing:** Importance of clearly defining non-market housing to align understanding and policy.
- **Pre-Development Grants:** Identified as crucial for enabling smaller or community-led housing initiatives.
- **Community-Based Models:** Emphasis on avoiding housing concentration near towns; support for models that allow residents to stay within their communities.
- **Secondary Suites:** General support for a program to encourage secondary suites as a flexible housing option if program is feasible.
- **Land Banking:** Ensure availability in strategic areas for future development needs.

Moved by Councillor Oickle, seconded by Mayor McLean-Wile that the Policy and Strategy Committee direct staff to proceed with public engagement on the draft Housing Strategy in November 2025, and bring the feedback back to Council for review prior to the adoption of the Housing Strategy.

Holding virtual sessions and having more than two public engagement meetings was raised. Consensus was not to hold virtual but add two more public engagement meetings.

Carried unanimously.

The Committee recessed at 10:18 a.m. and resumed at 10:29 a.m.

9.1.2 Strategic Priorities Update

Alex Dumaresq, Deputy CAO, reviewed the presentation titled, “Projects Update” (included in the agenda package). The items discussed included the following:

- Background
- Completed this Quarter
- Progress on Highest Priority Projects
- Progress on Q2/3 Projects
- Notes & Next Steps

9.2 Planning & Development

9.2.1 Proposed Municipal Boundary Adjustment – Land Transfer MODL to TOL

Ella Gindi, Planner II, reviewed the report titled, “Proposed Municipal Boundary Adjustment: Land Transfer from the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg to the Town of Lunenburg (included in the agenda package).

Ms. Gindi explained that a request was received from the Town of Lunenburg on June 24, 2025, seeking to resolve a jurisdictional anomaly affecting four parcels in the Salt Meadows Subdivision. The adjustment would transfer approximately 1.93 acres of land currently split between the two municipalities fully within the Town of Lunenburg boundary. Impacts to the Municipality would be minimal, with an estimated annual taxation loss of \$146.29, and no expected changes to infrastructure or service levels.

Moved by Mayor McLean-Wile, seconded by Councillor Bell that the Policy and Strategy Committee recommends to Council that Municipal Council agree to the boundary line adjustment of the mutual boundary in the Salt Meadows Subdivision as requested by the Town of Lunenburg and, further, that Municipal Council authorize the Mayor to submit a joint application with the Town of Lunenburg to the Nova Scotia Regulatory and Appeals Board to approve the requested change of the mutual boundary. Carried unanimously.

9.2.2 Repeal & Replace - Building Code By-law

Graham Hopkins, Inspection Services Manager, reviewed the report titled, “Building By-law – Repeal and Replace” (included in the agenda package). Mr. Hopkins advised that second reading of the By-law was deferred to the Policy & Strategy Committee, so that the expiry of building permits could be re-examined. †

The current Building Code By-law does not address the expiry, renewal, or revocation of building permits. These new clauses are necessary to support the implementation of the new building permit tracking system. These updates will also align the authority to revoke building permits with the requirements of the Building Code Act, zoning by-laws, on-site sewage disposal regulations, and driveway access permits.

Moved by Councillor Reinhardt, seconded by Councillor Bell that the Policy and Strategy Committee recommends to Council that Municipal Council proceed with second reading and repeal and replace By-law 018, Building Code, at the September 23, 2025 Council meeting. Carried unanimously.

10. Mayor’s/Deputy Mayor’s/Councillors’ Matters – Nil

11. Added Items – Nil

12. In Camera – Nil

13. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:54 a.m.