

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Minutes of a Meeting of Municipal Council

Held in Council Chamber, 10 Allée Champlain Drive, Cookville, N.S.
Tuesday, January 28, 2025 – 9:00 a.m.

APPROVED by Municipal Council

Date: February 25, 2025

Attendance

Mayor Elspeth McLean-Wile
Deputy Mayor Chasidy Veinotte, District 10
Councillor Morgen Reinhardt, District 1
Councillor Martin Bell, District 2
Councillor Wendy Oickle, District 3
Councillor Pam Hubley, District 4
Councillor Cathy Moore, District 5
Councillor Alison Smith, District 6
Councillor Edgar Burns, District 7
Councillor Kacy DeLong, District 8
Councillor Ben Brooks, District 9

Staff

Tom MacEwan, Chief Administrative Officer
Alex Dumaresq, Deputy CAO
April Whynot-Lohnes, Municipal Clerk
Tina Robichaud-Bond, Executive Assistant

1. Call to Order

Mayor McLean-Wile 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 Brooks congratulated the Oakhill Fire Department in celebrating its 50th anniversary and recognized the Department for its youth brigade.

Mayor McLean-Wile congratulated the Town of Bridgewater for receiving the Federation of Canadian Municipalities 2024 Sustainable Communities Award for its Energize Bridgewater initiative.

2.1 African Heritage Month

Mayor McLean-Wile acknowledged February as African Heritage Month and encouraged all to participate in the activities and celebrations. Mayor McLean-Wile also recognized Mr. Donald Oliver, a Queen's County resident, recounting his many achievements.

3. Public Input

Tyler Veinotte, Lower Northfield, attended public input to provide comments on the cluster development regulations and how the decisions made in its regard could affect his livelihood.

Morgan MacDonald, Crousetown, attended public input to provide comments on the cluster development regulations, requesting that Council consider how policies match up with the federal and provincial supports of affordable and attainable housing.

Mayor McLean-Wile advised that details around the cluster development regulations could be reviewed on the engage.modl.ca website.

4. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Moore, seconded by Councillor Bell that the Agenda be approved as circulated. Carried unanimously.

5. Approval of Minutes – January 14, 2025

The Minutes of the January 14, 2025 Council meeting were approved as circulated.

6. Business Arising from Minutes

Mayor McLean-Wile noted that an issue raised at the public input portion of the January 21, 2025 Policy & Strategy Committee meeting by Andrew Himmelman regarding waste receptacles was on today's agenda.

7. Awarding of Tenders/RFPs - Nil

8. Presentations/Scheduled Times

8.1 Nova Scotia 55+ Games 2025

Joanne Cooper, Co-Chair of the 55+ Games Committee, gave a presentation on the Nova Scotia 55+ Games to be held in Lunenburg County September 21 to 25, 2025 (circulated with the agenda), providing details on the following:

- Vision & Objectives of the Games
- Hosting Committee and support staff
- Lunenburg County demographics
- Game events and venues (Shuffleboard recently added)
- Budgets
- Getting involved

Ms. Cooper explained that the participants would be competing towards the national level games.

It was noted that the public launch for the Games was scheduled for February 21 which would also include a call for volunteers.

It was requested that the committee consider the Riverport area for the kayak Try It event. Ms. Cooper explained that communities interested in hosting a Try It sport could reach out to the Games Committee. She noted also that details on hosting events and registration would soon be available on their social media websites.

9. Consideration of Correspondence - Nil

10. Recommendations from Committees & Boards

10.1. Policy & Strategy Committee

10.1.1 Cluster Development Regulations – First Reading

Councillor Oickle declared a conflict of interest and removed herself from the table.

A recommendation from the Policy and Strategy Committee, including a report from Jacob Macpherson, Planner I, titled “Cluster Development Regulations – First Reading” outlining the amendments to the Land Use By-law and Municipal Planning Strategy was circulated with the agenda.

Reid Sheppard, Deputy Director of Planning & Development Services, was in attendance to review the proposed amendments, as outlined on Appendix A and B. He explained that the amendments included new policies to the current Municipal Planning Strategy and new regulations to the Land Use By-law that would require new developments to go through the development agreement process and provide specifics around a “grandfathering” clause for developments that were already in progress.

Mr. Sheppard advised that the regulations would come into effect as of the date of the posting of the First Reading.

2025-007 Moved by Deputy Mayor Veinotte, seconded by Councillor Smith that Municipal Council accept the recommendation of the Policy & Strategy Committee and conduct First Reading of the amendments to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to include new sections containing the regulations related to cluster development, found in Appendix A and B.

It was requested that graphics of cluster developments be available at the public consultation session for the public to see.

The Motion on the floor was voted on and carried unanimously.

2025-008 Moved by Councillor DeLong, seconded by Councillor Smith that Municipal Council accept the recommendation of the Policy & Strategy Committee and set a date and time for a Public Hearing and Second Reading on March 11, 2025 at 8:30 a.m. in Council Chambers, on the amended Municipal Planning Strategy and Municipal Wide Land Use By-law regulations; and further that staff schedule a public information meeting prior to the Public Hearing to inform residents about the implications of the new regulations. Carried unanimously.

Councillor Oickle returned to the table.

10.1.2 Adoption of Draft Strategic Priorities

A recommendation from the Policy and Strategy Committee, including a report from Alex Dumaresq, Deputy CAO, titled “Draft Strategic Priorities”, was circulated with the agenda.

Mr. Dumaresq noted that the full strategic priorities discussion took place at the Policy & Strategy Committee meeting and provided highlights of that discussion.

2025-009 Moved by Councillor Hubley, seconded by Councillor Bell that Municipal Council accept the recommendation of the Policy & Strategy Committee and adopt, in draft form, the Strategic Priorities, as presented. Carried unanimously.

2025-010 Moved by Councillor Moore, seconded by Councillor Oickle that Municipal Council accept the recommendation of the Policy & Strategy Committee and adopt the following lenses for evaluating projects and proposals in 2025-2026:

- a. Strategic Alignment
- b. Financial/budget
- c. Climate Change & Sustainability
- d. Equity, Inclusion, Diversity and Accessibility
- e. Strategic Communications

Carried. Opposed: Councillor Brooks

2025-011 Moved by Councillor Oickle, seconded by Councillor Hubley that Municipal Council accept the recommendation of the Policy & Strategy Committee and direct staff to proceed with a public engagement event to gather feedback on the draft strategic priorities, and launch the 2025/2026 Municipal Budget Engagement work. Carried unanimously.

Council recessed at 9:56 a.m. and resumed at 10:05 a.m.

8.2 Rural Communities Foundation of Nova Scotia

Hugh MacKay, RCFNS Fundraising Lead with the Dave Gunning Zero Hunger Fund, and Penny Day, Executive Director, Rural Communities Foundation, were in attendance.

Mr. MacKay gave a presentation on the Rural Communities Foundation of Nova Scotia and Dave Gunning Zero Hunger. The presentation provided details on the following:

- What is the Rural Communities Foundation?
- What does the Foundation do?
- What is the Dave Gunning Zero Hunger Fund?

Mr. MacKay advised that the Foundation was asking Council to provide awareness and support to the campaign by promoting concerts and other fundraising efforts.

Mr. MacKay and Ms. Day left the meeting.

10. Recommendations from Committees & Boards

10.1. Policy & Strategy Committee

10.1.3 Communication and Public Engagement

A recommendation from the Policy and Strategy Committee, including a report from Sarah Kucharski, Manager Corporate Services & Communications, titled “Communication and Public Engagement Options Report”, was circulated with the agenda.

Mr. Dumaresq provided an overview of discussion held at the Policy and Strategy Committee meeting of January 21, 2025.

2025-012 Moved by Councillor Bell, seconded by Councillor Hubley that Municipal Council accept the recommendation of the Policy & Strategy Committee and pass a resolution to set a meeting time of 6:00 p.m. for the Council meeting regularly held on the second week of the month, beginning April 8, 2025. Carried unanimously.

10.1.4 Repeal & Replace Policy 003 Council Members’ Remuneration, Benefits & Expenses

A recommendation from the Policy and Strategy Committee, including a report from April Whynot-Lohnes, Municipal Clerk, titled “Amendments – Policy 003 Council Members Remuneration & Expenses Policy and Policy 077 Gifts and Hospitality, and NEW Policy 102 Audit Committee”, providing details on the repeal and replace of Policy 003 was circulated with the agenda.

Elana Wentzell, Director of Finance, provided an overview of the repeal and replace of Policy 003 and noted that a review and subsequent re-adoption of this Policy was an administrative task that was required to be done in January following an election year.

2025-013 Moved by Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor Burns that Municipal Council accept the recommendation of the Policy & Strategy Committee to repeal and replace Policy 003 Council Members’ Remuneration, Benefits and Expenses, as presented. Carried unanimously.

10.1.5 Approval of Amendments & Re-Adoption of Policy 077 Gifts & Hospitality

A recommendation from the Policy and Strategy Committee, including a report from April Whynot-Lohnes, Municipal Clerk, titled “Amendments – Policy 003 Council Members Remuneration & Expenses Policy and Policy 077 Gifts and Hospitality, and NEW Policy 102 Audit Committee”, providing details on the amendments to Policy 077 was circulated with the agenda.

Ms. Wentzell explained that the review and re-adoption of this Policy was an administrative task that was required to be done in January following an election year. Ms. Wentzell noted that the definition of Hospitality in section 2(b) of the proposed Policy, should be revised to say “business activities” rather than “municipal business”.

2025-014 Moved by Councillor Hubley, seconded by Councillor Burns that Municipal Council accept the recommendation of the Policy & Strategy Committee to amend and re-adopt Policy 077 Gifts and Hospitality, as presented. Carried unanimously.

10.1.6 Approval of Policy 102 Audit Committee

A recommendation from the Policy and Strategy Committee, including a report from April Whynot-Lohnes, Municipal Clerk, titled “Amendments – Policy 003 Council Members Remuneration & Expenses Policy and Policy 077 Gifts and Hospitality, and NEW Policy 102 Audit Committee”, providing details of the new Policy 102 was circulated with the agenda.

Ms. Wentzell explained Policy 102 was new and that in the past, the Terms of Reference were relied upon. She explained that a policy is more readily available to the public.

2025-015 Moved by Councillor Moore, seconded by Councillor Burns that Municipal Council accept the recommendation of the Policy & Strategy Committee to adopt new Policy 102 Audit Committee, as presented. Carried unanimously.

10.1.7 Amendments to Policy 049 Property Tax Rebate

A recommendation from the Policy and Strategy Committee, including a report from Elana Wentzell, Director of Finance, titled “Policy 049 – Property Tax Rebate for 2025-26”, providing details on the proposed amendments to Policy 049 was circulated with the agenda.

2025-016 Moved by Councillor Bell, seconded by Councillor Moore that Municipal Council accept the recommendation of the Policy & Strategy Committee and include the changes to the Property Tax Rebate Policy in the 2025-2026 Draft Operating Budget for Council consideration:

- **Households with income under \$30,750 a maximum rebate of up to \$680**
- **Households with income between \$30,751 to \$45,000 a maximum rebate of up to \$475**

- **Households with income between \$45,001 to \$60,000 a maximum rebate of up to \$270.**

It was requested that staff provide a recommendation detailing how household size could be considered when adjusting the monetary threshold and bring the amendments to the next fiscal year of the program.

The Motion on the floor was voted on and carried unanimously.

10.1.8 Direction to draft Pickleball Club Management Agreement

A recommendation from the Policy and Strategy Committee, including a report from Trudy Payne, Director of Recreation, Parks & Tourism, titled “South Shore Pickleball Club Request”, providing details on the proposed Management Agreement with the Pickleball Club was circulated with the agenda.

Ms. Payne gave an overview of the discussion held at the Policy & Strategy Committee meeting of January 21, 2025 and provided an update as follows:

- Pickleball Club working with another contractor in Nova Scotia
- Estimated cost provided was \$487,622 plus HST
- Contractor indicated that the build could progress this year as sufficient material was on hand, but were concerned with tariff implications at this time
- Quote provided may not be relevant if construction was pushed out

RESCINDED 2025-017 Moved by Councillor Hubley, seconded by Councillor Bell that Municipal Council Feb 25, 2025 Res 2025-040 accept the recommendation of the Policy & Strategy Committee and direct staff to draft a 5-year Management Agreement with the South Shore Pickleball Club for establishing six outdoor pickleball courts on PID 60413234, part of the Municipal Recreation Activity Complex (MARC); and further, that the Agreement be brought back to Council for final approval.

It was clarified that the motion was a commitment to draft a Management Agreement and that it did not commit funds.

A concern was raised that the pickleball courts may not be available to the general public and only to Club members.

The Motion on the floor was voted on and carried. Opposed: Councillor Brooks

10.2 Nominating Committee

10.2.1 Audit Standing Committee – Member at Large Appointment

A recommendation from the Nominating Committee, recommending Alex MacDonald as a member at large on the Audit Standing Committee was circulate with the agenda.

2024-018 Moved by Councillor Oickle, seconded by Councillor Veinotte that Municipal Council accept the recommendation of the Nominating Committee and appoint Alex MacDonald as a member at large on the Audit Standing Committee for a three year term from April 1, 2025 to April 1, 2028. Carried unanimously.

11. Staff Reports

11.1 Economic Development

11.1.1 District of Lunenburg Housing Overview

Dave Waters, Director of Economic Development, and Reid Sheppard, Manager of Planning & Development, were in attendance to give a presentation titled “Housing – District of Lunenburg” (circulated with the agenda), providing details on the following:

- Housing overview
- Economic Development Strategic Action Plan 2023-2028
- Authority of municipal unit under the MGA
- Options to promote affordable housing projects
- Current available lands
- Current & next steps

It was clarified that the 30% affordable housing rate of income included all housing related costs, such as rent and utilities.

11.2 Engineering

11.2.1 Waste Receptacle Procurement – Parks & Open Spaces

Maria Butts, Project Manager, reviewed the report, “Waste Receptacle Procurement – Parks & Open Spaces” (circulated with the agenda).

It was noted that no local submissions were received.

2024-019 Moved by Councillor Oickle, seconded by Councillor Burns that Municipal Council authorize staff to purchase twenty-three (23) new waste receptacles for municipal parks and open spaces from CleanRiver Recycling Solutions in the amount of \$56,250.70, plus HST Motion carried. Opposed: Councillor Brooks

12. Mayor’s/Deputy Mayor’s/Councillors’ Matters

12.1 LCLC Update

Deputy Mayor Veinotte provided an update on the following matters of the Lunenburg County Multi-purpose Lifestyle Community Centre:

- New interim General Manager, Marta Selassie
- Café reported increase in business
- General operations and maintenance
- Maintenance and cleanliness
- Advertising & sponsorship
- General Manager's Report for January 2025

12.3 Deputy Mayor's Update

Deputy Mayor Veinotte advised that she attended all meetings assigned as Councillor; the agenda briefing meetings; and the LaHave River Salmon Association dinner and auction.

12.4 Mayor's Update

Mayor McLean-Wile's update is attached to the Minutes.

13. Added Items – Nil

Council recessed at 12:12 p.m. and resumed at 1:10 p.m.

14. In Camera

At 1:10 p.m., it was moved by Councillor Oickle, seconded by Councillor DeLong that Municipal Council go In Camera to discuss the following items:

14.1 Contract Negotiations under Section 22(2)(e) of the MGA

14.2 Contract Negotiations under Section 22(2)(e) of the MGA

Carried.

Municipal Council In Camera in session.

At 3:20 p.m., it was moved by Councillor DeLong, seconded by Councillor Hubley that Municipal Council come out of In Camera and return to open session. Carried.

Municipal Council in session.

15. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

Mayor's Report

Council Meeting - January 28, 2025

There were several important meetings that happened since our last Council meeting:

REMO, the Regional Emergency Measures Organization met to carry out strategic planning. Two important outcomes of the meeting were an agreement to review the governance voting structure of REMO which currently requires MODL plus one other to approve decisions. This is particularly problematic, as viewed by the other partners. There was agreement to review this and come forward with some revisions.

The second issue raised was the perceived inadequacies of the current staffing component to address emergency issues throughout the five units, essentially we do not have enough staff throughout the regional working on emergency preparedness. It was agreed that each unit would identify the needs in their local area and then determine how these could best be addressed through the planning and budgeting process.

A revised budget process was agreed upon which will come back to Council for approval and inclusion in our annual budget.

I met with Peter Silver and several others who represented the **Arties Cove and Pond** Development Commission, the Surfers Alliance and the local fire department. They were advocating for road upgrades and road protection from the beach surge, parking for beach users, signage, and protection of Artie's Cove.

Their priority was repair of the road and culvert. The road shoulders have dramatically eroded and are designated by a couple of fluorescent markers.

I agreed to bring these issues to the attention of Becky Druhan, the MLA for the area to see what approach can be taken with Public Works to have this repaired.

Tom McEwan and I met with Tammy Crowder and Mayor Mitchell to begin discussions on **issues of mutual interest**. This included initial discussion around water and wastewater management, regional planning to support growth, regional economic development, and public transit. Further details will be presented on the recommendations from the meeting at a Council session on February 11, which will include a joint committee of MODL and the Town. It was agreed that the regional approach to planning might take several years to complete however the public transit needs should be acted upon immediately given a study has been completed by MODL and the TOB are interested in collaborating on a joint initiative.

I did meet with Becky Druhan and discussed the following issues:

- Artie's Pond and the need for immediate road and shoulder repair and other requests of the community groups working for improvements
- New Germany School discussed the role the community and the municipality can play in this project. Determined the action that can come from the municipality to indicate our interest in the planning with the head of the South Shore Centre for Education – Ms. Angela Gladwin and the Minister of Education
- The recommendation to develop a management agreement with the pickleball group
- The need for opening the palliative care beds at Fisherman's Memorial Hospital and the need for a hospice for the Lunenburg-Queens communities.

In conclusion, I was encouraged by our parks and recreation discussion last week. There was excellent participation by councillors and good thinking around the value of public input, planning and the implementation strategies of the plans developed in concert with the community. We have lots more work to do on this after staff come forward with criteria to help us in establishing our priorities around developing our park system

Submitted by:

Elsbeth McLean Wile