

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, July 22, 2025 – 9:00 a.m.

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 Ben Brooks, District 9 (via TEAMS)

Regrets

Councillor Kacy DeLong, District 8

Staff

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

1. Call to Order

Deputy Mayor Veinotte called the meeting to order at 9:01 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

2.1 Proclamation – Emancipation Day

Mayor McLean-Wile proclaimed August 1 as Emancipation Day commemorating the British parliament's abolishment of slavery across its empire.

Councillor Smith acknowledged the NS Farmers' Market Week and recognized the 644 Group who manage the New Germany Market.

3. Public Input - Nil

4. Approval of Agenda

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

5. Approval of Minutes – July 8, 2025

The Minutes of the July 8, 2025 Council meeting were approved as circulated.

6. Business Arising from Minutes - Nil

7. Awarding of Tenders/RFPs

7.1 Award of RFP 2025-01-400 MARC Ballfield Backstops, Fencing & Dugout Adjustments

Maria Butts, Project Manager, reviewed the report, "Award of RFP 2025-01-400 MARC Ballfield Backstops, Fencing and Dugout Adjustments" (circulated with the agenda), providing details on the project and the recommendation to award the project to Eastern Fence Erectors Limited.

2025-151 Moved by Councillor Hubley, seconded by Mayor McLean-Wile that Municipal Council award RFP 2025-01-400 MARC Ballfield Backstops, Fencing and Dugout Adjustments to Eastern Fence Erectors Limited in the amount of \$122,900, excluding HST, as approved in the 2025-2026 capital budget. Carried Unanimously.

7.2 Award of RFP 2025-01-401 Wastewater Treatment Options Study (2025) Conquerall Bank & New Germany

Tyler Richardson, Municipal Engineer, reviewed the report, "2025 Wastewater Treatment Options Study Conquerall Bank and New Germany" (circulated with the agenda), providing details on the project and the recommendation to award the project to exp Services Inc.

It was clarified that the study would provide best options for both technical and financial solutions on each wastewater treatment plant.

It was noted that exp Services Inc. was a knowledgeable and experienced firm.

2025-152 Moved by Councillor Bell, seconded by Councillor Moore that Municipal Council award RFP 2025-01-401 2025 Wastewater Treatment Options Study for Conquerall Bank and New Germany to exp Services Inc. for an amount of up to \$95,512, including a 15% contingency and net HST, as approved in the 2025-2026 capital budget.

It was noted that the report should be available by the end of the year.

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

### 7.3 Award of RFP 2025-01-403 Land Conservation Strategy

Abhi Jain, Climate Change and Sustainability Manager, reviewed the report, "Award of Land Conservation Strategy RFP #2025-01-403" (circulated with the agenda), providing details on the scope of the strategy and the recommendation to award the project to CBCL Limited.

It was clarified that the properties would be evaluated using a virtual Geographical Information System, and that the project would streamline and help identify properties of high conservation value for future acquisitions.

Concerns were raised regarding how data collected on private property would be shared. It was noted that the data collected would be for internal use only and that no data would be publicly available.

It was clarified that all properties in the Municipality would be evaluated, and that the evaluation would not interfere with the landowner's ability to develop or sell their land.

It was requested that staff provide information on how CBCL would approach indigenous land guardians.

2025-153 Moved by Mayor McLean-Wile, seconded by Councillor Oickle that Municipal Council award RFP 2025-01-403 Land Conservation Strategy to CBCL Limited for \$89,167.50 plus HST for the completion of the Land Conservation Strategy Project, as approved in the 2025-2026 capital budget with the additional funds of \$39,167.50 +HST to be paid from the Sustainability Reserves Fund. Carried unanimously.

Council recessed at 10:09 a.m. and resumed at 10:18 a.m.

8. Presentations/Scheduled Times - Nil
9. Consideration of Correspondence - Nil
10. Recommendations from Committees & Boards
  - 10.1. Finance Committee
    - 10.1.1 First Reading - Repeal & Replace By-law 018 Building Code By-law

A recommendation from the Finance Committee, including a report titled "First Reading – Repeal and Replace, Building Code Bylaw 018" detailing the proposed amendments to the Bylaw, was circulated with the agenda.

Graham Hopkins, Inspection Services Manager, provided the following summary of the amendments:

- Removal of building fees from By-law and moving them to the Fees Policy;
- Addition of requirements for location certificates; and

- Addition of expiry date for building permits.

2025-154 Moved by Councillor Oickle, seconded by Mayor McLean-Wile that Municipal Council accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee and repeal and replace By-law 018 Building Code By-law, and conduct First Reading of the new By-law 018, as presented effective January 1, 2026, and give notice of its intention to conduct Second Reading at the September 9, 2025 Council meeting. Carried unanimously.

#### 10.1.2 Amendments to Policy 058 Fees re Building Fees

A recommendation from the Finance Committee, including a report titled "Amendments Policy 058 Fees (Building Permit Fees)" detailing the proposed amendments to the Policy, was circulated with the agenda.

Graham Hopkins, Inspection Services Manager, provided the following summary of the amendments:

- Addition of Building Code fees to the policy (removed from Building Code By-law); and
- Modified method of calculation of fees due to new e-permitting software.

2025-155 Moved by Mayor McLean-Wile, seconded by Councillor Reinhardt that Municipal Council accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee and amend Policy 058 Fees by adding building permit fees that will come into effect on January 1, 2026. Carried unanimously.

#### 10.1.3 Amendments to Policy 058 Fees re Credit Card Fees

A recommendation from the Finance Committee, including a report titled "Acceptance of Credit Card Payments & Fee Policy 058 Update" detailing the proposed amendments to the Policy and the further increase to the credit card fee since the recommendation of the Finance Committee was circulated with the agenda.

Elana Wentzell, Director of Finance, reviewed the report and explained that the credit card fee be increased to 2% to help cover both the processing fee charged by Moneris and the individual credit card companies.

2025-156 Moved by Councillor Bell, seconded by Councillor Hubley that Municipal Council amend Policy 058 Fees to include a 2% processing fee for credit card payments, as presented. Carried unanimously.

11. Staff Reports

11.1 Recreation, Parks & Tourism

11.1.1 Quality of Life Report

A report from Trudy Payne, Director of Recreation, Parks & Tourism, titled "Quality of Life" providing details on the "Quality of Life: Programs and services to maintain and improve affordability and quality of life for our residents" strategic priority selected by Council was circulated with the agenda.

Ms. Payne gave a presentation on the Quality of Life Strategic Priority (attached to the Minutes), highlighting the following:

- Definitions and Key Terms
- Engage NS Wellbeing Framework – Eight Domains
- Analysis of current status
- Assumptions and Conclusions
- Options to Consider
- Alternatives & Direction

It was noted that Designing for Belonging meets all the deliverables.

Concerns were raised regarding the following:

- Community groups competing for funding
- Training to expand to non profit community groups
- Excluding some people due to training being academic in nature
- Creating a program to just fit a grant criterion
- Municipal Role - Build volunteer base and provide support to them to create and deliver programs that recognize community needs.

2025-157 Moved by Councillor Hubley, seconded by Councillor Oickle that Municipal Council authorize staff to implement the Designing for Belonging training and the subsequent community of practice/network workshop using \$8000 from the Recreation Department budget and \$35,000 in federal and provincial grants for a maximum budget of \$43,000.

It was noted that staff would reach out to community organizations to recruit members for training.

The motion on the floor was voted on and carried. Those opposed: Councillors Burns, Brooks, Bell, and Mayor McLean-Wile.

Council directed staff to move forward with the following tasks:

1. Community asset mapping

2. Engage NS survey presentation
3. Offer navigator services
4. Review grant policy for more flexibility

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

12.1 LCLC Update

Deputy Mayor Veinotte advised that the LCLC meeting was not held. Instead a strategic planning session was held, and she would have more information to provide at a later date.

12.2 Deputy Mayor's Update

Deputy Mayor Veinotte advised that she attended a REMO meeting; agenda briefing; cheque signing; and all other meetings as assigned.

12.3 Mayor's Update

Mayor McLean-Wile's updates are attached to the Minutes.

13. Added Items - Nil

14. In Camera - Nil

15. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

# Quality of Life

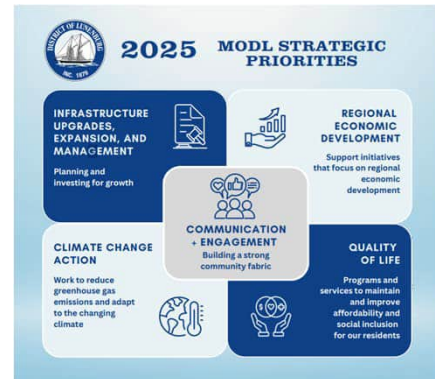
Strategic Priority Discussion  
Council Meeting  
July 22, 2025



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## Quality of Life Strategic Priority

- Programs and services to maintain and improve affordability and quality of life for residents.
- Help address loneliness, reconnect with community and improve social inclusion.
- Celebrate and preserve communities.
- Communication and Engagement - Rebuilding a strong community fabric.



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## Agenda

- Definitions and Key Terms
- International, National, Provincial and Municipal Quality of Life or Wellbeing Frameworks
- Current Situation
- Community Examples
- Analysis
- Assumptions and Conclusions
- Discussion – What next?
- Alternatives and direction

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## Questions to Consider



- What other actions would Council like to undertake to increase social connections, social inclusion and to build a stronger community fabric?
- Is there additional information you need before setting a course of action?

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## Definitions and Key Terms

- Quality of Life – “the wealth and comfort of individuals based on both material and non-material factors that are important to people’s lives, such as health, social connections and material comfort.” *Federal Government – Toward a Quality of Life Strategy for Canada*
- Loneliness - “as an unpleasant feeling that people experience when they perceive their social relationships to be qualitatively or quantitatively inadequate.” *BMC Public Health Review*

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## Definitions and Key Terms (cont.)

- Social Isolation – “a state in which the individual lacks a sense of belonging socially, lacks engagement with others, has a minimal number of social contacts, and they are deficient in fulfilling and quality relationships” *BMC Public Health Review*
- Community Fabric- “The interconnected network of social relationships, institutions, and shared values that support a community’s ability to maintain ecological balance, economic viability, and social equity over time.” - *Sustainability Directory*

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## Definitions and Key Terms (cont.)

- Social Inclusion - "the process by which efforts are made to ensure equal opportunities – that everyone, regardless of their background, can achieve their full potential in life. Such efforts include policies and actions that promote equal access to (public) services as well as enable citizen's participation in the decision-making processes that affect their lives." - *United Nations*
- Wellbeing – "the presence of the highest possible quality of life in its full breadth of expression focused on but not necessarily exclusive to: good living standards, robust health, sustainable environment, vital communities, an educated populace, balanced time use, high levels of democratic participation, and access to and participation in leisure and culture". - *Canadian Index of Wellbeing*



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## Engage NS Wellbeing Framework

### The Eight Domains



- Education +
- Living Standards +
- Healthy Populations +
- Time Use +
- Leisure and Culture +
- Our Environment +
- Democratic Engagement +
- Community Vitality +



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## Domain #1 - Education



- The Municipality plays very little role in the formal education system.
- The Municipality plays a significant role in offering informal education opportunities by providing courses of interest as well as cultural learning. Organizations within the district also offer informal education opportunities.
  - Examples of courses: Cooking classes, Art classes, Food Handlers courses, wilderness survival.
- The Municipality made it a priority to ensure high speed internet is available to residents and businesses.

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## Domain #2 - Living Standards



- Planning by-laws that enable a number of housing options
- Agencies that support those needing housing such as South Shore Open Doors Society and South Shore Housing Action Coalition
- Dry Wells Financing Program
- Property Tax Rebate Program
- Public Transit – Lunenburg County Wheels and routes being developed

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## Living Standards (cont.)



- Food Security – local food banks, community cupboards/fridges/freezers and associations like We Feed Lunenburg, YMCA home delivery service, & VON Meals on Wheels.
- Organizations like St. Vincent de Paul and Salvation Army – helping with all day-to-day needs
- Agriculture initiatives



Society of  
Saint Vincent de Paul



We Feed Lunenburg



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## Domain #3 - Healthy Populations



- Active Living Coordinator who implements the Active Living and Active Transportation strategies.
- Active Living initiatives: Cycling for All Abilities; walking programs to nursing homes, bike scavenger hunts.
- Partner in the community hub that will see health practitioners, other than doctors, offering health services. The municipality will have community space in the Hub.
- Regional Accessibility Coordinator and an accessibility plan.

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## Healthy Populations (cont.)



- Provides a variety of physically active and mental health programs.
- Equipment Loan Program
- PRO Kids/PRO Fund
- Planning to develop a public art policy and Arts and Culture Strategy
- Helps fund Seniors Safety Program
- Organizations such as VON offering a number of health and social supports.



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## Domain #4 - Time Use



- Programs, activities and an extensive park and trail system offered by MODL and a number of community organizations and businesses.
- Recognize the economic and employment trends which require people to work. Some may work two jobs due to economic circumstances beyond their control.
- MODL provides free/low-cost recreation opportunities, so people have access to quality programs and spaces in their leisure time.
- Individuals seeking own opportunities such as painting or gaming online.



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## Domain #5 - Leisure and Culture



- Quarterly program brochure that provide programs, events and activities throughout the Municipality examples include: seniors corn boil and mussel bake, family fun days, easter egg hunt, winter socials.
- Many organizations and community halls offer a wide range of activities and events as well.



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## Domain #6 - Our Environment



- An extensive parks and trails system
- Partners in conservation – Mahone Bay Islands Conservation Association, NS Nature Trust, Kingsburg Coastal Conservancy
- Established a land conservation policy and working on a land conservation strategy
- Local Climate Change Action Plan
- Clean Energy Financing Program
- Completing the provincial flood line data collection project
- Coastal Protection regulations



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## Our Environment (cont.)



- Steps to address the woolly adelgid bug
- Regional Emergency Management Organization
- Waste Management – Municipal Joint Services Board
- LaHave River Straight Pipe Replacement Program
- Waste Water Treatment facilities
- Municipal Wide Planning
- Litter Clean-up Funding Program

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## Domain #7 - Democratic Engagement



- This election saw a 1.5% increase in voter turn out.
- Public Input at committee/council meetings
- Hold two council meetings a month – one during the day, the other in the evening.
- Livestream committee and council meetings.
- Presentations welcomed – need to be booked in advance.

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## Democratic Engagement (cont.)



- Identified communication and engagement as a strategic priority – conducted a communication and public engagement survey to better understand how residents wish to receive information and participate in municipal initiatives;
  - investing in more print direct mail pieces
  - more radio ads, digital advertising
  - exploring a municipal app.

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## Domain #8 - Community Vitality



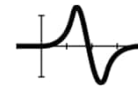
- Recreation and parks programs, events and activities
- Hired in partnership an Anti-Racism and Diversity Coordinator
- Volunteer support and Project Volunteer
  - Examples: Volunteer Fire Departments, Trail Associations, and advice and guidance from our Director of Recreation
- Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility – IDEA
- Community groups making connections and networks
  - Examples: New Germany Community Café, Riverport Food Vibes, Front Street Oven Wolfville and Mahone Bay United

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## Analysis



- Organizations tend to work in silos
- Further away from 'urban' core communities more self sufficient
- Community groups need funding and navigation support
- Pilot program grants not sustainable
- Community groups are an investment in communities and neighbourhoods
- We all have a role to play in quality of life
- Community organizations and volunteers are vital to quality of life
- Increase in newcomers – need to be more welcoming and inclusive

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## Analysis (Cont.)



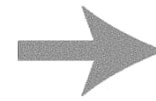
- Parks and open spaces are valued
- Recreation play a significant role in bringing people together
- Know who the movers and shakers are
- Non-profits spend a great deal of time securing funding
- More downloading to municipalities and community group/volunteers
- Communities are resilient especially during an emergency
- Community/Fire halls are often the hubs in communities
- Relationship building and communication are key

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## Assumptions and Conclusions



- The Municipality has a number of assets that contribute to quality of life
- Community groups, community facilities and volunteers are vital
- Flexibility and sustainability needed in funding programs
- Need specific data for the Municipality
- Volunteers and group need navigation services
- Relationship building and communication are key to building strong communities

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## Discussion – Options for Council to Consider



- Undertake community asset mapping
- Invite Engage NS to present 2019 survey results, promote their 2025 survey, and invite them to return with the Fall 2025 findings.
- Establish a Quality of Life Working Group with community representation
- Offer navigator services to groups and individuals

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## Options for Council to Consider (cont.)



- Continue to invest in Project Volunteer
- Review grant policy to see where we can be more flexible
- Increase annual operating grant funding

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## Option for Council to Consider – Grant Funding



- Partner with the University of New Brunswick and offer Designing for Belong training and support services to staff and community participants

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## Alternatives for the Grant Funding

- Issue an RFP seeking training and mentoring services
- Return grant money



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## Alternative for the other options

- Direct staff to bring back further information



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## Questions Re-Visited



- What actions would Council like to undertake to increase social connections, social inclusion and to build a stronger community fabric?
- Is there additional information you need before setting a course of action?

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## Recommended Motion



Move that Council authorize staff to implement the Designing for Belonging training and the subsequent community of practice/network workshop using \$8,000 from the Recreation Department budget and \$35,000 in federal and provincial grants for a maximum budget of \$43,000.

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# Mayor's Report

July 22, 2025

My report today will be short given I took a break and had a hiking holiday in Scotland. You might find it interesting to know that in Shetland there are many of the same issues as we have here in Nova Scotia. There continue to be issues on the development of windfarms especially in Shetland. Residents are concerned about the financial benefits accruing to local authorities from the development. Environmental concerns over disturbance of the moors and headlands which are the natural nesting areas of many birds. The impact of windfarms on the flight paths and natural nesting habits of native and migratory birds. Finally, residents are concerned about the impact on tourism and quality of life for residents by the change in the landscape. The Shetland Council has been very involved in the development of a windfarm of 103 turbines in size; this required a major infrastructure investment in establishing a cable connect the Islands with the mainland of Scotland and in upgrading the transmission lines on the islands. The financial benefits to Shetland are significantly less than what were originally proposed 2-4 million pounds/year as opposed to 20 million pounds.

Staff directors and planning staff along with Councillors met with David Bowlby, MLA for Annapolis and Assistant to the Minister of Agriculture. His interests were primarily in the area of planning and the preservation of farmland, the relationship between food insecurity and access to farmland. There was a good discussion, and he was certainly open to have further conversations about the opportunities for agriculture in our district.

Together with our CAO, I met with several residents on the opportunities for housing in the district outside the Cookville area. Tom Webb is involved in several planned cooperative housing projects which could potentially be in our municipality. Cooperative housing projects require a lengthy development process to establish the appropriate governance structure and the related building and financing plan. Another resident was interested in potentially donating land for the development of housing; Tom outlined the steps to consider in making that decision and what role the municipality could play in the development of the project.

There was a strategic planning session held for the Lunenburg County Lifestyle Centre. This involved the Board, representatives from the MJSB and key staff from the LCLC. Key issues identified were board governance, financial stability, and operational improvement to address growth in usage.

I participated in a meeting regarding the CAO Evaluation. We are working on a new process with new documentation to complete the evaluation. The chair of the committee will report in more detail on this at a subsequent meeting.