

December 16, 2025

The Financial Services Committee for the Municipality of the County of Pictou met in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Administration Building by videoconference and teleconference on Monday, December 16, 2025, at 7:40 p.m.

PRESENT

- 1 Clr. Joe MacDonald (videoconference)
- 2 Clr. Deborah Wadden (videoconference)
- 3 Clr. Darla MacKeil
- 4 Clr. Ronald Baillie
- 5 Deputy Warden Wayne Murray
- 6 Warden Robert Parker
- 7 Clr. Donald Parker
- 8 Clr. Larry Turner
- 9 Clr. Peter Boyles
- 10 Clr. Randy Palmer
- 11 Clr. Andy Thompson
- 12 Clr. Chester Dewar

IN ATTENDANCE

Brian Cullen, CAO, Municipal Clerk-Treasurer
Sueann Musick, Director of Corporate Services/Deputy Clerk
Karen Cornish, Deputy Municipal Treasurer
Logan McDowell, Director of Public Works & Development
Evan Hale, Director of Emergency Services
Rhianon McNair, Director of Business Operations, Broadband Initiative
Adam MacInnis, Communications Officer
Shellie Pettipas, Administrative Assistant

CALL TO ORDER & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Clr. MacKeil, Chair of the Financial Services Committee called the meeting to order and acknowledged that we are on the ancestral territorial lands of the Mikmaq people.

AGENDA

It was moved by Clr. Turner and seconded by Clr. Palmer that the agenda be approved as presented. **Motion Carried**

EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS

Clr. MacDonald requested an addition to the agenda to discuss the Sutherland's River Community Centre and District's Community Enhancement Project.

MINUTES

Clr. MacKeil asked if there were any errors, omissions, or corrections in the November 17, 2025, minutes. The members of the Committee entered no errors, omissions, or corrections. The Chair proclaimed the minutes of the November 17, 2025, meeting as the official record of the meeting. **Motion Carried**

REPORTS NOT REQUIRING A MOTION **COMMUNICATION REPORT**

The Communication Report for the month of November 2025 was received as presented.

Clr. Turner asked what was discussed during the AI Training Session, how it could benefit the county, and the potential risks of AI use. Mr. MacInnis indicated that the training was an overview of AI and the basics of using the programs. Mr. MacInnis noted that one of the most significant risks is the risk of including residents' information. Mr. MacInnis said that some forms of AI are now common practice. Mr. MacInnis noted that many municipalities do not currently have a policy on AI use, but this should be considered in the future to determine what would be allowed.

Warden Parker acknowledged that the story about the winning class in the Litter Awareness Committee's litter challenge contest ranked second in views. The Warden said the new Litter Awareness Committee is doing a great job, and the level of interest in the post indicates community concern and support for the committee.

RECREATION REPORT

The Recreation Report for the month of November 2025 was received as presented.

WARDEN'S REPORT

The Warden's Report for the month of November 2025 was received as presented.

INTERNET REPORT

The MOPC Network Sales and Marketing Report for the month of November 2025 was received as presented.

PICTOU COUNTY SOLID WASTE LANDFILL VOUCHER 2025 REPORT

The Pictou County Solid Waste Landfill Voucher 2025 Report was received as presented.

Clr. Dewar noted a decrease in the amount of garbage dumped in the woods in District 12 since the implementation of the Landfill Voucher Program. Clr. Dewar is hopeful that the program continues for years to come.

Clr. Palmer stated that when first joining Council, illegal dump sites were a big issue. Over the last 10 years, Clr. Palmer has not received any calls about dump sites and agreed on the importance of the program.

Clr. MacKeil asked for an update on the reverse onus discussion from the Mayors and Warden meeting. CAO Cullen indicated that this was discussed at the Pictou County Shared Services Authority meeting, and there was agreement to review the entire solid waste bylaw due to upcoming EPR changes.

PICTOU ANTIGONISH REGIONAL LIBRARY REPORT

The Pictou Antigonish Regional Library Report was received as presented.

Clr. Wadden asked whether the letter regarding library funding had been sent to the province. Warden Parker signed the letter and indicated that it was being circulated among the other municipal units for signatures and would then be sent to the province.

HEALTHY PICTOU COUNTY REPORT

The Healthy Pictou County Report was received as presented.

TAX RECEIVABLE REPORT

The Taxes Receivable Report for the month of November 2025 was received for informational purposes.

DEED TRANSFER TAX

The Deed Transfer Tax Report for the month of November 2025 was received as presented.

REPORTS REQUIRING A MOTION **ACCOUNTS PAID – NOVEMBER 2025**

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Palmer and seconded by Clr. Turner that the Accounts Paid Report for the month of November 2025 be received as presented. **Motion Carried**

INTERNET ACCOUNTS PAID

It was moved by Warden Parker and seconded by Clr. Turner that the Internet Accounts Paid Report for the month of November 2025 be received as presented.

Motion Carried

BUSINESS ITEMS OR ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION

DISTRICT 10 COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY FUND MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Palmer and seconded by Clr. Thompson to approve the District 10 Community Connectivity Event Grant for District 13 Recreation and Planning Commission in the amount of \$1500.00 for the community Christmas party.

Motion Carried

Clr. Palmer stated that the event, which took place on November 29, 2025, was a success and thanked the MOPC Network staff for attending the event and for providing hot chocolate. Clr. Palmer said these funds helped bring the community together and that it was a good way to spend the money.

GRANT EXTENSIONS SALEM AND AREA RECREATION ASSOCIATION

MOTION

It was moved by Warden Parker and seconded by Clr. Palmer to approve the Salem and Area Recreation Association's request for an extension of its District 6 Municipal Service Grant for \$10,000.00.

Motion Carried

PICTOU ISLAND COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Palmer and seconded by Deputy Warden Murray to approve the Pictou Island Community Association's request for an extension of its District 3 Municipal Service Grant for \$4,910.00.

Motion Carried

NORTHEAST NOVA SCOTIA CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

Clr. Dewar asked whether there is an opportunity to collect outstanding taxes from the correctional facility. Clr. Dewar noted that one way to send the message through would be by shutting off the water to the facility. Clr. Dewar is hopeful that a resolution will be reached.

CAO Cullen stated that the current issue is how the sewer rate is calculated and that it will change to a system that enables future calculations. The outstanding amount is being reviewed from a legal perspective to determine whether further action is warranted. The CAO noted that some properties are currently metered, and a project is on the books to meter the remaining properties. CAO Cullen indicated that the first step is to meter all properties, analyze the system as it currently stands, and then allocate costs and adjust cost allocation. The CAO stated that an RFP will be put out in the new year for the water meters. Clr. Dewar appreciated the effort to resolve this issue and is hopeful it will work out moving forward.

Ms. Cornish indicated that the larger amount due is for fire protection of the hydrants, not for sewer rates. Ms. Cornish confirmed that the fire protection is uncollectible and will remain so after this change, as it is still considered a tax.

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Dewar and seconded by Clr. Palmer to continue the \$250.00 tax exemption for property owners with a total income of \$30,000.00. **Motion Carried**

Clr. MacKeil asked how long this amount has been in place and whether it reflects the rising cost of living. Warden Parker asked where the county stood in relation to neighbouring municipalities. CAO Cullen noted that municipalities handle property tax exemptions differently.

RECREATION CAPITAL GRANT

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Palmer and seconded by Clr. Baillie to approve the Recreation Capital Grant in the amount of \$1,000 for Northumberland Karate. **Motion Carried**
Nay Vote: Clr. Peter Boyles

Warden Parker stated that if the organization serves all of Pictou County, other municipal units should be asked to contribute funding. Clr. Boyles expressed concern that funding is being allocated to organizations located in other municipalities and voiced opposition to the motion. Ms. Musick noted that Northumberland Karate is operated by Chris Crucikshank, who led the program in Scotsburn for many years. Clr. Wadden spoke in support of the motion, noting that Northumberland Karate is a great organization serving all children within the county.

Deputy Warden Murray questioned whether sufficient capital remained to cover this request; CAO Cullen confirmed there were adequate funds. Clr. Boyles said it is wrong to cut funding from an organization serving rural parts of the county and give it to other towns.

SUTHERLANDS RIVER HALL COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. MacDonald and seconded by Warden Parker to recommend to Council that the Municipal Administration Office collect donations and issue charitable receipts for donations in the amount of \$100.00 or more on behalf of the Sutherland's River and District Community Centre's Community Enhancement Project.

Motion Carried

DEFERRED BUSINESS

There was no deferred business.

MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION

There were no motions of reconsideration.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Community announcements were given.

IN-CAMERA

MOTION

It was moved by Deputy Warden Murray and seconded by Clr. Palmer to go to In-Camera session.

Motion Carried

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Boyles and seconded by Clr. Turner to return to regular session.

Motion Carried

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the meeting, Clr. MacKeil declared the meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

CHAIRPERSON

MUNICIPAL CLERK