

February 17, 2026

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 Tuesday, February 17, 2026, at 7:45 p.m.

**PRESENT**

- 1 Clr. Joe MacDonald
- 2 Clr. Deborah Wadden
- 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  
Adam MacInnis, Communications Officer  
Rhiannon McNair, Director of Business Operations, Broadband Initiative

**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. Boyles and seconded by Clr. Turner that the agenda be approved as presented. **Motion Carried**

**EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS**

No Emergency Resolutions were brought forward.

## **MINUTES**

Clr. MacKeil asked if there were any errors, omissions, or corrections in the January 19th, 2026, minutes. Warden Parker asked the minutes reflect that it was the Salem Wastewater project he was speaking about rather than the Salem water project. The correction was noted. The Chair proclaimed the minutes of the January 19, 2026, meeting as the official record of the meeting.

## **PRESENTATION – Cindy MacKinnon and Kelyn Palmer of DEANS regarding the Tourism Levy.**

- Marketing levy reinvests directly into Pictou County's tourism economy.
- Approximately \$300,000 annually is generated through the levy, enabling:
  - Digital marketing
  - Local tourism branding
  - Website modernization
  - Event support (e.g., MHL Showcase)
- Only 20% of Airbnb/short-term rental operators currently paying levy; outreach planned.
- Municipal contribution noted: approximately \$22,000 from businesses in the MOPC.
- Work underway with Pictou Landing First Nation on bilingual (English/Mi'kmaq) wayfinding signage.
- Operators expressed needs for:
  - Restaurant manual for visitors
  - Local experience gift cards for frontline staff
  - Updated local tourism map
- Enforcement and licensing are provincial responsibilities.

### **Council Questions & Discussion:**

- Concerning room vs. property counts, enforcement, and fairness among operators.
- Need for streamlined levy payment options (annual or semi-annual, online payments).
- Inquiry about potential levy funding for refreshed highway gateway signage.
- Broad support for a stronger regional tourism identity.

## **7. REPORTS NOT REQUIRING A MOTION**

### **7.1 Communications Report**

Reviewed for information.

### **7.2 Recreation Report**

Reviewed for Information.

### **7.3 Warden's Report**

- The reference in the Warden's Report to "*meeting with Minister Tilley and build officials*" should correctly read **Build Nova Scotia**, which is the new entity formed by merging multiple government departments.
- Highlighted the innovative greenhouse-style project at Summer Street Industries.
- Urged members of Council and residents to encourage as many people as possible to complete the Engage Nova Scotia – Quality of Life Survey.

### **7.4 Internet Report**

- Weather delays affected installations.
- Highway crossing permit in Merigomish area remains primary barrier.
- New TV and phone packages soon be fully functional.

### **7.5 Healthy Pictou County Report**

Provided for information.

### **7.6 Tax Receivable Report**

Provided for Information

### **7.7 Deed Transfer Tax Report**

Provided for Information

## **8. REPORTS REQUIRING A MOTION**

### **8.1 Accounts Paid – January 2026**

**Motion:** It was moved to accept the accounts as presented.

Moved by Clr Turner

Seconded by Clr Wadden

**Motion Carried.**

### **8.2 Internet Accounts Paid – January 2026**

**Motion:** It was moved to accept the internet accounts as presented.

Moved by Clr. Boyles

Seconded by Clr. Turner

**Motion Carried.**

## **9. BUSINESS ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION**

### **9.1 MSG Grant Extension Requests**

#### **9.1.1 Little Harbour Community Centre – \$16,000.00 - Kitchen Renovations**

**Motion:** To approve the grant extension for the Little Harbour Community Centre.

Moved by Clr. Wadden  
Seconded by Clr. Baillie  
**Motion Carried**

#### **9.1.2 Seaboard Cemetery – \$1,000.00 - maintenance**

**Motion:** It was moved to approve the extension of the municipal service grant for Seaboard Cemetery.

Moved by Warden Parker  
Seconded by Deputy Warden Murray

**Motion Carried**

#### **9.1.3 Northumberland Regional High School – \$10,000.00 - Greenhouse Project**

**Motion:** It was moved to approve the extension of the municipal service grant extension for District 6 and 7 for Northumberland Regional High School.

Moved by Clr. Parker  
Seconded by Clr. Turner

**Motion Carried**

#### **9.1.4 Abercrombie Community Centre – \$2,013.00 - hall renovations**

**Motion:** It was moved to approve the extension of the municipal service grant for the Abercrombie Community Centre.

Moved by Clr. Turner  
Seconded by Clr. Thompson

**Motion Carried**

#### **9.1.5 District 13 Recreation & Planning Commission – \$680.00 - Community Coordinator position.**

**Motion:** It was moved to approve the extension of the community coordinator grant for District 13 Recreation and Planning Commission.

Moved by Clr. Palmer  
Seconded by Clr. Thompson

**Motion Carried**

#### **9.2 Council Grant Extension – Seniors Outreach – \$715 to support spring lunch-and-learn programs in West River and Garden of Eden.**

**Motion:** It was moved to approve the extension for the council grant for the Pictou County Senior's Outreach.

Moved by Clr. Parker  
Seconded by Clr. Dewar

Motion Carried.

#### **9.3 AI Policy**

Overview:

- Establishes responsible staff use of AI within MOPC.
- Prohibits AI for confidential, in-camera, or legal matters.

- Minutes for sensitive sessions must remain manually prepared.
- Policy to be reviewed semi-annually.

**Motion:** It was moved to accept the AI Policy with a change to in the wording to ensure that the policy is reviewed either semi-annually or annually.

Moved by Clr. Turner

Seconded by Clr. Palmer

**Motion Carried**

#### **9.4 Governance Policy – Rural Broadband Oversight Committee**

Key Elements:

- Committee makeup: Warden, Deputy Warden, 3 councillors-at-large, plus 2 citizen appointees.
- Support staff/technical advisors included.
- Quorum: majority of voting members (50% + 1).
- Duplication removed between governance policy and terms of reference.

**Motion:** It was moved to a adopt the Governance Policy for the Rural Broadband Oversight Committee as presented.

Moved by Clr.Wadden

Seconded by Deputy Warden Murray

**Motion Carried**

#### **10. DEFERRED BUSINESS**

No deferred items discussed.

#### **11. MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION**

None brought forward.

#### **12. COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Community Announcements were heard.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the meeting, Clr. MacKeil declared the meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

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CHAIRPERSON

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MUNICIPAL CLERK