

June 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, June 16, 2025, at 7:15 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  
Rhianon McNair, Director of Business Operations, Broadband Initiative  
Adam MacInnis, Communications Officer

**ABSENT**

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. Boyles that the agenda be approved as presented. **Motion Carried**

## **EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS**

There were no emergency resolutions.

## **MINUTES**

Clr. MacKeil asked if there were any errors, omissions, or corrections in the May 20, 2025, minutes. The members of the Committee entered no errors, omissions, or corrections. The Chair proclaimed the minutes of the meetings on May 20, 2025, as the official record of the meetings.

## **REPORTS NOT REQUIRING A MOTION**

### **COMMUNICATION REPORT**

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

### **RECREATION REPORT**

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

### **WARDEN'S REPORT**

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

### **INTERNET REPORT**

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

Clr. Turner noted that a discussion took place regarding a governing model for the MOPC Network project and questioned its status. CAO Cullen stated that a consultant had been engaged to develop the terms of reference for long-term governance.

Clr. Boyles noted the significant increase in new subscribers and questioned the reasoning behind it. Ms. McNair stated that marketing initiatives and the completed construction have significantly increased the number of people that can be served.

Clr. Boyles commended the MOPC Network staff for their prompt resolution of issues with the service in District 9.

Clr. Thompson noted that many residents in the Garden of Eden area were disappointed to learn that the internet service would not be available beyond the Moose River and French River Road Intersection. The permanent residents in this area have no other option than Starlink. Clr. Thompson noted that the wireless option only works in a portion of the area. Clr. Thompson stated that Bell has a fibre line running through this

area, and therefore, the federal government considers it a serviced area. Clr. Thompson stated that a better solution is needed for these residents because they deserve what was promised to the rural areas. Clr. Dewar suggested that residents contact the MP to express concerns.

Clr. Palmer noted that when the announcement was first made, it was stated that fibre would be run through the 347, and those homes would be hooked up to fibre. Clr. Palmer agreed that residents should be in contact with Sean Fraser, who was in attendance when the announcement for the service was initially made. Ms. McNair stated that staff have been discussing possible options to manage the gap for residents who are unable to receive services. Clr. Palmer referred to the press release from July 26, 2018, which stated that residents of the communities of MacPherson's Mills, Blue Mountain, and Eden Lake would be receiving service through the project.

## **MOTION**

It was moved by Clr. Parker and seconded by Clr. Dewar to write a letter to MP Sean Fraser to look into the matter and attempt to rectify it from Moose River to the end of the county line and the Pictou Landing community and Pictou Landing First Nations.

**Motion Carried**  
**Nay Vote: Clr. Peter Boyles**

Clr. Wadden stated that if a letter is being sent regarding the areas that are unable to be serviced due to this, it should include Pictou Landing and all other areas affected.

CAO Cullen stated that the Universal Broadband Fund is 100% committed, and if these areas are to be built, it would be on the project's dime. The CAO noted that it has been proven that communities are not being served, and from the federal government's perspective, all the allocated money is fully committed.

Clr. Boyles does not support the motion and said specific communities should not be left out. Clr. Dewar stated that all groups will be fought for, and perhaps certain areas should not be specified in the motion. Clr. Palmer said this is for the community that has existing fibre run through, but there is no service provided, and for the government to consider having Bell connect those areas.

## **TAXES RECEIVABLE REPORT**

The Taxes Receivable Report for the months of April 2025 and May 2025 was received for informational purposes.

## **DEED TRANSFER TAX**

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

## **REPORTS REQUIRING A MOTION**

## **ACCOUNTS PAID – APRIL 2025**

### **MOTION**

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

## **INTERNET ACCOUNTS PAID**

It was moved by Deputy Warden Murray and seconded by Clr. MacDonald that the Internet Accounts Paid Report for the month of May 2025 be received as presented. **Motion Carried**

## **BUSINESS ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION**

### **MUNICIPAL SERVICE GRANTS**

#### **DISTRICT 1**

It was moved by Clr. MacDonald and seconded by Clr. Turner to approve the following District 1 Municipal Service Grants: **Motion Carried**

District One Development Soc.	\$1,700.00	Community Newsletter
Barney's River St. School Museum	\$1,500.00	Maintenance
Hattie Cemetery Committee	\$500.00	Maintenance
Kenzieville Cemetery	\$1,500.00	Maintenance
Kenzieville District Action Group	\$1,500.00	Exercise Equipment
Lismore & Dist. Community Centre	\$1,500.00	Maintenance
Lismore & Dist. Community Centre (Lismore Summer Rec Program)	\$1,500.00	Children of District 1
MARSA	\$1,500.00	Ext. Lights, gutters/maint.
St. Andrew's Cemetery, Egerton	\$1,000.00	Maintenance
Merigomish Cemetery Company	\$1,500.00	Maintenance
Old School Cooperative Merchants	\$1,500.00	Operating Costs
Pic. Co. Celtic Assoc.	\$400.00	Creation of Memory Book
Piedmont Valley Cemetery	\$1,500.00	Maintenance
Sutherland's River Comm. Centre	\$1,500.00	Hall Upgrades
Telford Cemetery Assoc.	\$900.00	Maintenance
Thorburn War Memorial	\$500.00	Maintenance
Dist. 1 – Merigomish Street Light	\$40.00	Yearly cost
French River Cemetery Society	\$1,500.00	Maintenance
Sutherland's River Pioneer Cemetery	\$960.00	Maintenance
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$24,000.00</b>	

## **DISTRICT 5**

It was moved by Deputy Warden Murray and seconded by Warden Parker to approve the following District 7 Municipal Service Grants: **Motion Carried**

Dalhousie Snowmobile Club	\$6,000.00	Steel Roof for Hall
Lyon's Brook & Area Women's Inst.	\$2,800.00	Music Therapy Prog
Lyon's Brook Hall Society	\$7,300.00	Parking Lot Expan.
Meadowville Poplar Hill Comm. Hall	\$8,390.00	Gazebo Const.
Scotsburn Fire Department	\$11,000.00	Pump Purchase
Elmfield Hall Street Light	\$40.00	Yearly Cost
Meadowville Hall Street Light	\$40.00	Yearly Cost
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$35,570.00</b>	

## **DISTRICT 6**

It was moved by Warden Parker and seconded by Clr. Turner to approve the following District 6 Municipal Service Grants: **Motion Carried**

West River Fire Dept Aux.	\$2,000.00	Kitchen Supplies
Salem & Area Recreation	\$10,000.00	Conc. Storage Bldg.
NRHS	\$5,000.00	Purchase & Install
		Greenhouse
Durham Community Club	\$3,000.00	Upgrades
Salem Presbyterian Church	\$1,500.00	Fridge for Hall
West River Presbyterian ChurchHall	\$2,000.00	Hall Upgrades
Loch Broom Log Church	\$2,000.00	Maintenance
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$25,500.00</b>	

## **DISTRICT 9**

It was moved by Clr. Boyles and seconded by Clr. Parker to approve the following District 9 Municipal Service Grants: **Motion Carried**

Hillside Cemetery	\$2,000.00	Maintenance
Hillside Community Society	\$9,000.00	Storage Bldg/Main
Linacy Fire Department	\$9,000.00	Firefighting Eq.
Priestville/Walkerville Cemetery	\$2,000.00	Maintenance
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$22,000.00</b>	

## **TAX SALE UPDATE**

CAO Cullen stated that notices will go out in approximately the next week or so. Following the last meeting, the CAO got a legal opinion on disclosing the minimum bid, and the solicitor stated that the minimum bid could be posted. Based on timeframes, it will probably be September when the final will be available to Council.

Clr. Boyles asked when the tax itself would take place. CAO Cullen said that bids will be accepted until August, and then they will be brought back to Council in September. Clr. Boyles asked if, going forward, the tax sales would be held on a regular basis. CAO Cullen said that within the next month, another 150 title searches will be back, and another tax sale can be held.

## **VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD**

Clr. Boyles expressed concerns with any MOPC Committee member being nominated for Volunteer of the Year. Clr. Boyles feels this provides a better opportunity for nominees to get votes from Council. Clr. Boyles said this is in the best interest of volunteers that nominees are not on committees with Councillors.

Warden Parker said there are some very good volunteers involved in several committees and feels that these individuals should not be eliminated. The Warden said the person selected was not chosen because they were on an MOPC committee. Warden Parker said that it may actually deter people from volunteering on committees, and they should all continue to be treated equally as volunteers.

## **NEW MICROPHONES IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

Clr. MacKeil stated that the microphone system in Council Chambers needs to be upgraded, and staff have received two proposals.

Warden Parker noted that more residents are watching the meetings online, and the feature to record votes would be beneficial for viewers in this case. CAO Cullen noted that the current microphone system is not repairable and is at a point where action needs to be taken with the system.

Clr. Thompson noted that the upgraded microphone system enhances accessibility for residents and believes that if this system remains in place for 15 years or more, then the higher-quality system should be considered. CAO Cullen stated that both systems from a sound perspective would be the same but the voting system would be added in the upgraded system and would be visible to viewers.

Clr. MacDonald asked if the accessibility factor would be improved with the system. CAO Cullen said that the visual component would show up and the sound quality would be greatly improved. Clr. Turner stated that accessibility for residents is important. Clr.

Turner stated that as the current system continues to break down then the prices will continue to rise.

### **MOTION**

It was moved by Clr. Turner and seconded by Clr. Thompson for the purchase of the \$57,000.00 unit for the new microphone system with the voting system for Council Chambers.

**Motion Carried**

**Nay Votes: Clr. Darla MacKeil, Clr. Chester Dewar  
Clr. Peter Boyles, Clr. Donald Parker**

### **MOTION**

It was moved by Clr. Palmer and seconded by Clr. Turner to go to In-Camera session.

**Motion Carried**

### **MOTION**

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

**Motion Carried**

### **DEFERRED BUSINESS**

There was no deferred business.

### **MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION**

There were no motions of reconsideration.

### **COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Community announcements were given.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There was no further business before the meeting, so the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

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CHAIRPERSON

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MUNICIPAL CLERK