July 6, 2026

The Council for the Municipality of the County of Pictou met in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Administration Building on Monday, July 6, 2026, at 7 p.m.

PRESENT

Dist:
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 (Video Conference)
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
Logan McDowell, Director of Public Works & Development
Adam MacInnis, Communications Officer
Evan Hale, Director of Emergency Management and Public Safety
Ian Watson, Upland Consultants

ABSENT

Rhiannon McNair, Director of Business for the Rural Broadband Project.

CALL TO ORDER & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Deputy Warden Murray called the meeting to order and invited Councillors to pray or reflect, as may be their preference, to help Council focus and properly do the work of the Municipality and to remember our Indigenous communities. He acknowledges that we are on the ancestral territorial lands of the Mikmaqi people and would like to thank the Mikmaqi people today for their ancestors sharing these precious lands with all our ancestors, whether they arrived here 400 years ago or four years ago. May we all live in peace and harmony together.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

A moment of silence was observed.

EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS

No Emergency Resolutions were presented

AGENDA

It was moved that the agenda be approved as presented.
Moved by Clr.Boyles
Seconded by Clr. Turner
Motion Carried

MINUTES

Deputy Warden Murray asked if there were any errors, omissions, or corrections in the minutes for June 1, 2026. Corrections were made to the spelling of Dennis Raniowski and Alex Jardine. The Chair proclaimed the minutes of June 1, 2026, meeting as the official record of the meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter from NRHS Student Regarding Peaker Plants

Clr.Parker spoke to a letter received from a Northumberland Regional High School student expressing concern regarding the proposed peaker plants and their potential environmental and health impacts. Discussion centred on public consultation and youth concerns about the long-term effects of the projects.

Letter Regarding Northumberland Ferries

Council discussed correspondence regarding ferry service. Members expressed support for maintaining two full-time ferries and a backup vessel, noting the importance of reliable service for residents, businesses, and tourism. Councillors welcomed updates indicating ongoing engineering work for a future vessel replacement.

BUSINESS ITEMS NOT REQUIRING ACTION

New Scotland Business Park report was submitted for information.

REPORTS REQUIRING ACTION

2026–2027 Tax Rate Resolution
Motion: A motion was made to approve the 2026–2027 tax rates and operating expenditures.

- Residential/Resource Rate: $0.815 per $100 assessment
- Commercial Rate: $1.825 per $100 assessment
- Estimated Expenditures: $32,612,296

Moved by: Clr. MacKeil
Seconded by: Clr. Dewar
Motion Carried

2026–2027 Water Utility Budget
Motion: A motion was made to approve the Water Utility Budget of $592,440.
Moved by: Clr. Palmer
Seconded by: Clr.MacDonald
Motion Carried

2026–2027 Area Rates
Motion: A motion was made to approve area rates for streetlights, hydrants, fire protection and sewer maintenance.
Moved by: Clr. Wadden
Seconded by: Clr. MacDonald
Motion Carried
Nay Vote: Clr. Boyles

2026–2027 Fire Area Rates
Motion: A motion was made to approve fire area rates for fire service coverage areas.
Moved by: Clr. MacDonald
Seconded by: Clr. Wadden
Motion Carried

East River Business Park Tax Rates
Motion: A motion was made to approve East River Business Park tax rates.
Moved by: Clr.Turner
Seconded by: Clr. Boyles
Motion Carried

2026–2027 Council Grants
Motion: A motion was made approve Council Grants totaling $504,418.
Moved by: Clr. MacKeil
Seconded by: Clr. Palmer
Motion Carried
Nay Votes: Clr. Thompson and Clr. Wadden

Sheep Valuers
Motion: A motion was made to approve the 2026–2027 Sheep Valuer appointments.
Moved by: Clr. Dewar
Seconded by: Clr. MacKeil
Motion Carried

Second Reading – Agricultural Land Amendments
Motion: A motion was made to approve second reading of amendments to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law respecting agricultural land protection.
Moved by: Clr. Palmer
Seconded by: Clr. Baillie
Motion Carried

District 2 Municipal Service Grants
Motion: A motion was made to accept the District 2 Municipal Service Grants for 2026-2027 in the amount of $4,500.00.

Moved by: Clr. Wadden
Seconded by: Clr. MacDonald
Motion Carried

District 4 Municipal Service Grants
Motion: A motion was made to accept the District 4 Municipal Service Grants for 2026-2027 in the amount of $18,840.00.
Moved by: Clr.Baillie
Seconded by: Clr.Parker
Motion Carried

District 5 Municipal Service Grants
Motion: A motion was made to accept the district 5 Municipal Service Grants for 2026 2027 in the amount of $24,272.00.
Moved by: Clr. Thompson
Seconded by: Clr.Dewar
Motion Carried

District 7 Municipal Service Grants
Motion: A motion was made to accept the District 7 Municipal Service Grants for 2026-2027 in the amount of $29,010.00
Moved by: Clr. Parker
Seconded by: Clr. Baillie
Motion Carried

District 9 Municipal Service Grants
Motion: A motion was made to accept the District 9 Municipal Service Grants for 2026 - 2027 in the amount of $22,000.
Moved by:Clr. Boyles
Seconded by: Clr. Turner
Motion Carried

Pictou County Forest School Tax Receipts
Motion: A motion was made to authorize charitable receipt issuance for donations received on behalf of the Pictou County Forest School.
Moved by: Clr. Wadden
Seconded by: Clr. MacDonald
Motion Carried

Community Hall Internet Program Applications
Motion: A motion was made to approve River John & District Lions Club, Meadowville-Poplar Hill Community Hall, and Barney's River Station School Museum under the Community Hall Internet Program.
Moved by: Clr. Dewar
Seconded by:Clr. Thompson
Motion Carried

Supply of New Municipal Vehicle
Motion: A motion was made to purchase a 2026 Chevrolet Equinox EV from Herron

Chevrolet for $48,563.50 plus HST.
Moved by: Clr. Turner
Seconded by: Clr. Boyles
Motion Carried

Atlantic Canada FireFit Regional Championship Sponsorship
Motion: A motion was made to provide sponsorship of $2,500 to the Pictou County Firefighters Association.
Moved by: Clr. Palmer
Seconded by: Clr. MacDonald
Motion Carried

Committee of Council Policy Update Policy # 2026-06-01
Motion: A motion was made to amend the Audit Committee structure by increasing citizen representation from four to five members.
Moved by: Clr. Wadden
Seconded by: Clr. MacDonald
Motion Carried

Municipal Audit Committee Nominations
Motion: A motion was made to appoint Lindsay McDonald and Sarah McKinnon as citizen members of the Audit Committee.
Moved by: Clr.Wadden
Seconded by: Clr. MacDonald
Motion Carried
Councillor Randy Palmer declared a conflict of interest.

Fire Inspector Appointment
Motion: A motion was made to appoint Dalton Pearl as Fire Inspector and rescind the previous appointment of Jason LaGreca.
Moved by: Clr. Thompson
Seconded by: Clr. Dewar
Motion Carried

Bylaw Enforcement Officer Appointment
Motion: A motion was made to appoint Paul Smith as Bylaw Enforcement Officer.
Moved by: Clr.MacDonald
Seconded by: Clr.Palmer
Motion Carried

Signing Authority
Motion: A motion was made to update municipal signing authorities to reflect staffing changes. Authorized signatories include Warden Robert Parker, Deputy Warden Wayne Murray, CAO Brian Cullen, Director of Corporate Services Sueann Musick, and Director of Business Operations Rhiannon McNair.
Moved by: Clr. MacKeil
Seconded by: Clr. Boyles
Motion Carried

Speed Sign Concerns
Residents raised concerns regarding excessive speeds on narrow rural roads and the lack of signage affecting enforcement.
Motion: A motion was made to send a letter to the appropriate provincial authorities requesting review of speed limits and placement of speed signs on several local roads.
Moved by:Clr. Boyles
Seconded by: Clr. Parker
Motion Carried

Generator Expenses
Clr. Boyles provided information regarding the significant costs associated with generator maintenance and service calls for community halls. No action was requested.

Canada Post Changes to Merigomish Post Office
Motion: A motion was made to send letters opposing proposed reductions in hours at the Merigomish Post Office and expressing support for rural post offices.
Moved by: Clr.MacDonald
Seconded by: Clr. Palmer
Motion Carried
Council members expressed concern regarding the erosion of rural services and impacts on residents. The motion was broadened to support rural post offices generally and copies were to be provided to relevant officials including the local MP.

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) System for Sharps
Motion: A motion was made write the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities requesting consideration of an Extended Producer Responsibility system for disposal of used sharps.
Moved by: Warden Robert Parker
Seconded by: Clr.Parker
Motion Carried

DEFERRED BUSINESS
There was no Deferred Business.

MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION
There were no Motions of Reconsideration.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS
Community Announcements were heard.

ADJOURNMENT
There being no further business to come before the meeting, Deputy Warden Murray declared the meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

July 6, 2026

The Council for the Municipality of the County of Pictou met in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Administration Building on Monday, July 6, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. for a public hearing regarding agricultural amendments to the Land Use Bylaw and Municipal Planning Strategy.

PRESENT

Dist:

1 Clr. Joe MacDonald
2 Clr. Deborah Wadden
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6 Warden Robert Parker (Video Conference)
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AGENDA

Motion: It was moved that the agenda be approved as presented.
Moved by Clr.Boyles
Seconded by Clr. Turner
Motion Carried

BUSINESS ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION

Land Use Bylaw – Agricultural Amendments

Deputy Warden Murray opened discussion regarding the proposed Agricultural Amendments to the Land Use Bylaw. Staff noted that no members of the public were present to speak directly to the amendments.

Written Submission – Josh Smith, 7013 Sunrise Trail

Council reviewed the written submission from Josh Smith regarding the potential impact of the proposed amendments on his property.

Staff clarified that the property in question is less than five acres in size and would be excluded from the proposed A1 Agricultural Zone under the amendment approved at first reading. As a result, the proposed changes would not adversely affect the property.

Additional Public Correspondence

A second submission raised concerns regarding an existing kennel operation.

Staff advised that any lawfully existing use that predates the bylaw amendments would be considered a non-conforming (grandfathered) use and would continue to be protected under applicable legislation. Staff further noted that standalone kennels are not currently permitted in the existing G1 Zone and would generally require Rural Commercial zoning.

Planning Advisory Committee Comments

Clr. Palmer, chair of the Planning Advisory Committee, thanked planning consultant Ian and UPLAND staff for their work throughout the process. He acknowledged that the document represents an important starting point for agricultural land-use planning and noted that future councils may make amendments as needed.

Provincial Review Comments

Staff advised that the Province had completed an initial review of the proposed amendments and was generally supportive of the changes.

The Province provided two recommendations:

1. Consider narrowing the range of permitted uses within the Agricultural Potential Zone to place greater focus on agricultural activities.

2. Consider adding policy guidance related to agricultural soils when evaluating development agreement applications for uses such as shooting ranges and racetracks.

Staff advised that addressing these recommendations through amendments at this stage would be considered substantive changes and would require an additional public hearing. It was suggested that Council may instead respond to the Province explaining the rationale for the current provisions.

Clr..Palmer indicated his support for addressing the Province's concerns through the subsequent review process, should the amendments proceed.

ADJOURNMENT
There being no further business to come before the meeting, Deputy Warden Murray declared the meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.