

June 2, 2025

The Municipal Council for the Municipality of the County of Pictou met in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Administration Building on Monday, June 2, 2025, at 7:00 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
- 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
Rhiannon McNair, Director of Operations, Broadband Initiative
Shellie Pettipas, Administrative Assistant
Adam MacInnis, Communications Officer

ABSENT

Evan Hale, Director of Emergency Services

CALL TO ORDER & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Warden Parker 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.

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.

ERRORS AND OMISSIONS/CORRECTION OF MINUTES

Warden Parker asked if there were any errors, omissions, or corrections in the minutes for the May 5, 2025, Council Meeting. The minutes of the May 5, 2025, Council Meeting were reviewed by the Municipal Council. Warden Parker proclaimed the minutes of the meeting of May 5, 2025, as the official record of the meeting.

Warden Parker asked if there were any errors, omissions, or corrections in the minutes for the May 5, 2025, In-Camera Meeting. The minutes of the May 5, 2025, In-Camera Meeting were reviewed by the Municipal Council. Warden Parker proclaimed the minutes of the meeting of May 5, 2025, as the official record of the meeting.

Warden Parker asked if there were any errors, omissions, or corrections in the minutes for the May 5, 2025, Public Hearing. The minutes of the May 5, 2025, Public Hearing were reviewed by the Municipal Council. Warden Parker proclaimed the minutes of the meeting of May 5, 2025, Public Hearing as the official record of the meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Municipality of East Hants to NSFM regarding Code of Conduct training.
2. Letter from NS EMO on the path forward for Ground Search and Rescue teams.
3. Resident is concerned that the MOPC does not have a noise bylaw.
4. Letter from the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources regarding uranium Mining in Nova Scotia.

Clr MacDonald requested that a meeting be arranged with the Warden, Clr. MacDonald, the complainant, and the complaine to arrange a meeting regarding the noise complaint in District 1.

PRESENTATIONS

Warden Parker presented Mr. Charlie Strickland with a certificate to recognize his 29 years of service with the Pictou County Volunteer Ground Search and Rescue and read the following tribute.

The Pictou County Volunteer Ground Search and Rescue organization was formed in 1995, by the late Donald MacKenzie, then Emergency Management Officer for the

county and the late Pictou County Warden Hank Dunnewold, who recognized the need for the county to have trained, dedicated search members.

Charlie Strickland volunteered to become a member of this newly formed organization, only to find himself elected as the first President. The team did not become operational until spring of 1996. Since then, the PCVGSAR has been operating as a charitable organization requiring volunteers to train, finance operations, equipment, and vehicles, present various lost prevention and outdoor safety programs to community members, as well as manage search and civil response operations, when called upon by RCMP or the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Organization, within their local region as well as supporting other search teams.

Charlie, not only trained and provided training to volunteers but was also active in many responses with the Pictou County Volunteer Ground Search and Rescue. Operating in the team's Search Director role, he created and managed an annual budget for various projects, training course material, and equipment to ensure the team had adequate supplies and resources.

Perhaps one of the most memorable and proud moments of Charlie's volunteer experiences was his involvement as one of forty PCVGSAR members who travelled to Halifax to help with the Swissair 111 Airplane Crash Disaster recovery. Although an emotionally taxing experience for all, Charlie saw GSAR in action, showing the professional capability of volunteers to organize and assist in a multi-agency disaster. He was honored to be a pallbearer at the Memorial Site which commemorates this tragedy and he treasures the pin and note indicating "appreciation of your professionalism, compassion, and tremendous support during Swissair 111 operations".

All search and civil emergency responses were important to him, as family members and friends need GSAR service to have resolve. At the same time, Charlie was keenly aware this cannot compromise volunteer safety and minimize the need for emotional support during and after a response.

Charlie was always thinking of ways to improve the team. As Search Director, he was always considering improvements either through the purchase of equipment, training activities, etc. Always cognizant of safety and liability issues for the team, Charlie wrote the safety manual now used by the *Nova Scotia Ground Search and Rescue Association* to help GSAR teams prevent injuries and legal challenges.

Ever thinking of prevention, he developed the "Dementia Handout Kit" (before Android & Apple Phones) to help guardians report missing loved ones for a speedier rate of recovery.

Before his retirement, Charlie planned and organized the modernization of the Incident Command Post for PCVGSAR.

During his 29 years as a volunteer, Charlie has tried to uphold his responsibilities with professionalism and decorum. He has worked with many team members, as well as municipal, provincial, and federal agencies and representatives to accomplish the best for PCVGSAR. As a leader, he has tried to educate, communicate, and implement high GSAR standards to enhance and build strong GSAR teams in Nova Scotia.

We have been extremely fortunate to have this quality of individual on the PCVGSAR team and as a member of NSGSARA. It is this type of GSAR volunteer, with the support of the community, that will continue to serve Pictou County and Nova Scotia well.

Following the presentation, Mr. Strickland thanked Council for the continued support over the years and thanked fellow searchers. Mr. Don Gunton also made a presentation to Mr. Strickland on behalf of the PCVGSAR.

CLIMATE CHANGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE BURSARY AWARDS

Warden Parker presented certificates and bursaries to Climate Change Advisory Committee members Pierre Bredell and Violet McCullough, and read the following:

Violet McCullough was the first student member of the MOPC Council's Climate Change Advisory Committee. As a member of the Northumberland Regional High School's Environmental Committee, Violet brought new perspectives and good ideas to the Advisory Committee. She worked actively on the Tree Planting Sub-Committee, planting spruce seedlings in the spring with student volunteers she recruited, and helping with the distribution of oak and maple seedlings to County homeowners in the fall. Violet was sponsored by the Advisory Committee to participate in the *2024 Smart Energy Halifax: Canada's Green Technology Event*, where she was particularly impressed by the collaboration between different renewable resources. Violet will be particularly remembered as an Advisory Committee member for her strong advocacy for the development of media about climate change action for distribution in County schools, and she will be missed.

A year after Violet joined the Advisory Committee, Pierre Bredell became the second student member (we suspect due to some encouragement from Violet!). Pierre actively participated in Advisory Committee meetings and was also interested in climate change education. The Tree Planting Sub-Committee was the area that Pierre gravitated to, volunteering with friends on the spring seedling planting projects. He also participated for a period on the Climate Change Action Planning Sub-Committee, undertaking a couple of areas of climate change research. Like Violet, Pierre was a sponsored participant in the *Smart Energy Event in April 2024*, and he was fascinated with all the new clean technologies that were on display. We will also miss the thoughtful input Pierre has brought to the Advisory Committee over the past three years.

RIVER JOHN RESIDENTS CONCERNED ABOUT URANIUM MINING

Ms. Barb Harris, a resident of District 4, addressed Council to express the concerns of residents of River John. Ms. Harris requested Council's support in asking the provincial government to put a pause, allowing communities to become informed, evaluate the risks and benefits, and provide input.

Ms. Harris requested that two motions be considered by Council:

1. MOPC Council formally requests that the provincial government pause before granting any leases for uranium exploration in the county, to allow time for Council and communities to become informed and give input about the potential impacts of uranium exploration on the community.
2. MOPC Council believes that the River John watershed must be protected and agrees to begin a process with the aim of achieving protection of the River John watershed. As we undertake this process, we request that the province not permit any activities that would be allowed in a protected water area.

Ms. Harris noted that the province has identified three areas for uranium exploration, with one of these areas located in Louisville and River John. This site is situated within the River John watershed.

Ms. Harris stated that the provincial government is moving fast to open the province to uranium exploration, and they are proceeding without evaluating general or site-specific risks and without consulting with the communities, the public, and First Nations.

Ms. Harris said there is still a lot to learn about the potential impacts and how to protect a rural watershed.

Clr. Boyles asked where information on this and its effects can be found. Ms. Harris stated that several resources are available that could be shared and that many geologists in the province are prepared to discuss the dangers. Ms. Harris noted that Nova Scotia has low-grade uranium, and there is no scarcity; the world does not need Nova Scotia's uranium.

Clr. Dewar noted that recent bylaws have been put in place to protect watersheds, including restrictions on animals in the vicinity of watersheds. Clr. Dewar said this is not the time to fool around with this, and this must be stopped. Warden Parker said there is no listed watershed in River John and Clr. Dewar noted that there is still underground water that is a water source. Ms. Harris said there is a map of Nova Scotia watersheds, and the River John Watershed is on the map, there is a catchment basin, which is a subsection of a watershed and is within this River John watershed.

Ms. Harris noted that a public meeting will be held on Thursday, June 5, 2025, at the River John Legion.

Clr. Thompson noted there has been a long-standing practice of not passing motions while in front of the presenters, and for that reason, would not support the motion. Clr. Thompson noted that both sides of the story need to be heard before decisions are made. Clr. MacKeil agreed with Clr. Thompson that it has been the long-standing practice. Clr. MacKeil said that the motion is to request a pause for more information to become available and said the request was understandable.

Warden Parker said Council's job is to support the community and to speak on behalf of the citizens who are requesting a pause. Clr. Baillie spoke in favour of the motion and noted that the most important thing is to have more time to have questions answered.

Warden Parker stated that this motion would be treated as an emergency resolution and that a majority vote is required to proceed with voting on the motion.

Nay Andy Thompson

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Boyles and seconded by Clr. Baillie to send a letter to the provincial government requesting that the provincial government pause before granting any leases for uranium exploration in the county, to allow time for Council and communities to become informed and give input about the potential impacts of uranium exploration on the community.

Motion Carried

Nay Vote: Clr. Thompson

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Baillie and seconded by Clr. Boyles to send a letter to the provincial government to request that it protect the River John watershed and not permit any activities that would not be allowed in a protected water area.

Motion Carried

Nay Votes: Clr. Donald Parker

Clr. Deborah Wadden

Clr. Randy Palmer

Clr. Darla MacKeil

Clr. Andy Thompson

Clr. MacKeil voiced having an issue with calling it the River John watershed area and feels this does not align with the Land Use Bylaw documents. CAO Cullen noted that the province defines this as the River John watershed, which encompasses the entire area.

Clr. Thompson would be unable to support the motion due to the reasons previously stated and feels it is not good practice to conduct this procedure in front of presenters.

Clr. Wadden requested that Council hear from the Department of Natural Resources for more information.

BUSINESS ITEMS NOT REQUIRING ACTION
NEW SCOTLAND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT REPORT

The New Scotland Business Development Report was received as presented.

NSP 2023 EVERGREEN INTEGRATED RESOURCE PLAN (IRP) – ACTION PLAN AND ROADMAP UPDATE

The Nova Scotia Power 2023 Evergreen Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) has been received for informational purposes.

BUSINESS ITEMS OR ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION

CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Turner and seconded by Deputy Warden Murray to accept the Climate Change Action Plan as presented.

Motion Carried

Nay Vote: Clr. Peter Boyles

MACLELLANS BROOK WATER PROJECT

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Palmer and seconded by Clr. Thompson that SW Weeks be awarded the contract for the MacLellans Brook/Coalburn Water Project Extension at a cost of \$6,940,396.00 plus HST.

Motion Carried

Warden Parker noted that it requires a lot of cooperation from other bodies to make this happen, and it is crucial to work with the towns to ensure sufficient water is available to service the areas. Clr. Palmer noted that the Town of New Glasgow has a first-class watershed and said that Council is fortunate to have an agreement with the town.



RESOLUTION

WHEREAS the Municipality of the County of Pictou received three bids from contractors for the construction of the MacLellans Brook/ Coalburn Water Extension Project.

WHEREAS municipal staff worked with all parties to determine the scope of the project that would be within the funding envelope of the original project of \$7,646,071.00.

WHEREAS the scope changes have been approved by all the funding agencies and the Municipality's financial services committee.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Municipality of the County of Pictou award SW Weeks the contract for the MacLellans Brook/Coalburn Water Project Extension at a cost of \$6,940,396.00 plus HST.

DATED at Pictou, N.S. this 2nd day of June 2025.

Sgn _____

DISTRICT 3 MUNICIPAL SERVICE GRANTS

It was moved, Clr. MacKeil and seconded by Clr. Turner to approve the following District 3 Municipal Service Grants.

Motion Carried



RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the Municipality of the County of Pictou approves the following Municipal Service Grants for District 3:

Bayview Hall Street Light	\$40.00	Yearly Cost
Bayview Community Hall	\$900.00	MaintenanceHaliburton-
Pictou Cemetery	\$2,000.00	Maintenance
St. James Mill Dam Cemetery	\$1,800.00	Maintenance
Seaboard Cemetery	\$2,000.00	Maintenance
Caribou Island Cemetery	\$500.00	Maintenance
Waterside Cemetery Co	\$2,000.00	Maintenance
Central Caribou Cemetery	\$5,000.00	Maintenance
Upper Caribou River Company	\$6,000.00	Maint. and Expansion
Caribou River Community Hall	\$2,700.00	Maintenance and Expenses
Caribou District Fire Department	<u>\$3,000.00</u>	Gazebo Construction
Total	\$25,940.00	

DATED at Pictou, N.S. this 2nd day of June 2025.

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DISTRICT 7 MUNICIPAL SERVICE GRANTS

It was moved by Clr. Parker and seconded by Clr. Baillie to approve the following District 7 Municipal Service Grants.

Motion Carried



RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the Municipality of the County of Pictou approves the following Municipal Service Grants for District 7:

Mill Brook & Area Community Club	\$1,300.00	Cell Booster, Gravel and Fill for Hall.
Forest Hill Cemetery	\$2,000.00	Maintenance
Mill Brook Cemetery	\$2,600.00	Maintenance
Friends of Pioneer Cemetery	\$2,500.00	Maintenance
Friends of Caledonia Cemetery	\$1,000.00	Headstone Repair
NRHS – Greenhouse project	\$5,000.00	Assist in Purchase and Install Greenhouse
Carpool Lot Street Light	<u>\$480.00</u>	Yearly Operating Cost
Total	\$14,880.00	

DATED at Pictou, N.S. this 2nd day of June 2025.

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DISTRICT 10 MUNICIPAL SERVICE GRANTS

It was moved by Clr. Palmer and seconded by Clr. MacDonald to approve the following District 10 Municipal Service Grants. **Motion Carried**



RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the Municipality of the County of Pictou approves the following Municipal Service Grants for District 10:

Thorburn & District War Veterans Assoc.	\$1,667.00	Maintenance/history binder or names on cenotaph
MacPhersons Mills Community Hall	\$4,000.00	Maintenance & Floor Repair
District 13 Rec and Planning Commission	\$5,500.00	Facility Maintenance
Union Presbyterian Church	\$2,500.00	Replace Windows
Thorburn Cemetery Association	\$2,500.00	Maintenance
The Mountain Cemetery (McLellans Mtn)	\$3,200.00	Maintenance
MacPhersons Mills Cemetery	\$3,000.00	Maintenance
Total	\$22,367.00	

DATED at Pictou, N.S. this 2nd day of June 2025.

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HIGH SCHOOL BURSARIES

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. MacDonald and seconded by Clr. Wadden to approve the following High School bursaries.

Motion Carried



RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED the Municipality of the County of Pictou approve the following grants and bursaries to these local high schools:

Northumberland Regional High School	\$2,000.00	Graduation/Bursary
North Nova Education Centre	\$2,000.00	Graduation/Bursary
Pictou Academy	\$200.00	Bursary
Tatamagouche Regional High School	\$200.00	Bursary
Total	\$4,400.00	

DATED at Pictou, N.S. this 2nd day of June 2025.

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CLIMATE CHANGE BURSARIES

MOTION

It was moved by Deputy Warden Murray and seconded by Clr. Turner to approve the following Climate Change Advisory Committee Bursaries: **Motion Carried**



RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED the Municipality of the County of Pictou approve the following bursaries to the graduating members of its Climate Change Advisory Committee:

Violet McCullough	\$500.00
Pierre Bredell	\$500.00
Total	\$1000.00

DATED at Pictou, N.S. this 2nd day of June 2025.

Sgn _____

APPOINTMENT OF CODE OF CONDUCT INVESTIGATOR

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Wadden and seconded by Clr. MacDonald to appoint Charles Thompson of Burchell MacDougall as the Municipality of Pictou County's Code of Conduct Investigator.

Motion Carried



RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the Municipality of the County of Pictou appointment Charles Thompson of Burchell MacDougall as its Code of Conduct Investigator at a cost of \$275.00/hour for investigations and \$275.00 for writing a report.

DATED at Pictou, N.S. this 2nd day of June 2025.

Sgn _____

SHARED SERVICES LETTER OF SUPPORT

CAO Cullen noted that the Pictou County Shared Services Authority is applying for funding for a generator project at the East River Environmental Control Centre under the Capital Assistance Program. The CAO stated that part of the conditions is that there is support from the municipal units.

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Palmer and seconded by Clr. MacKeil that Council send a letter of support to endorse the East River Environmental Control Centre's application through the PCAP Program for a generator project.

Motion Carried

CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS

There was no deferred business.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Community Announcements were made.

MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION

There were no motions of reconsideration.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the meeting, the Warden declared the meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

WARDEN

MUNICIPAL CLERK