

May 19, 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, May 19, 2026, at 8:03 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

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

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.

EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS

Majority consent was given by Property Services members to add two emergency resolutions to the agenda.

- 9.1 District 1 Municipal Service Grant Addition
- 9.9.4 Update on care at Valley View Villa

AGENDA

Motion: It was moved that the agenda be approved as presented.

Moved by: Clr. Boyles

Seconded by Clr. Turner

Motion Carried

ERRORS OR OMISSIONS/CORRECTIONS TO MINUTES

Clr. MacKeil asked if there were any errors, omissions, or corrections in the minutes for April 20, 2026. The members of the Committee entered with no errors, omissions, or corrections. The Chair proclaimed the minutes of the meeting on April 20, 2026, as the official record of the meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence was received for information:

- Minister of Municipal Affairs (12-month advance notice of legislation affecting municipal spending)
- Municipality of the District of St. Mary's (letter of support for Antigonish Coalition)
- Town of Lockeport (Nova Scotia Power rates and ownership)

REPORTS NOT REQUIRING A MOTION

Communications – Reviewed for information

Recreation — Reviewed for information.

Warden's Report — Reviewed for information.

Healthy Pictou County Report — Reviewed for information.

Tax Receivable Report — Reviewed for information

Deed Transfer Tax Report - Reviewed for information

REPORTS REQUIRING MOTION

Accounts

Motion: It was moved that the Accounts for April 2026 be approved as presented.

Moved by: Clr. Turner

Seconded by: Clr. Wadden

Motion Carried

Internet Accounts

Motion: It was moved that the Internet Accounts for April 2026 be approved with a correction to a line error regarding a fuel charge of \$41,000.00.

Moved by: Clr. Parker

Seconded by: Clr. Wadden

Motion Carried

BUSINESS ITEMS OR ITEM REQUIRING ACTION

9.1 District 1 Municipal Service Grants

Motion: It was moved to accept the District 1 Municipal Service Grants totaling \$24,640.00 to be paid in the 2026-2027 fiscal year.

Moved by Clr. MacDonald

Seconded by Clr. Palmer

Motion Carried

9.2 District 3 Municipal Service Grants

Motion: It was moved to accept the District 3 Municipal Service Grants totaling \$37,040.00 to be paid in 2026-2027 fiscal year.

Moved by: Clr. Palmer

Seconded by: Clr. MacDonald

Motion Carried

9.3 District 6 Municipal Service Grants

Motion: It was moved to accept the District 6 Municipal Service Grants totaling \$21,000.00 to be paid in the 2026-2027 fiscal year.

Moved by: Warden Parker

Seconded by: Clr. Baillie

Motion Carried

9.4 District 10 Municipal Service Grants

Motion: It was moved to accept the District 10 Municipal Service Grants totaling \$15,700.00 to be paid in the 2026-2027 fiscal year.

Moved by: Clr. Palmer

Seconded by: Deputy Warden Murray

Motion Carried

9.5 Council Grant Review for 2026-2027 Budget

- Discussion held regarding allocation reductions and policy concerns.
- Community Connectivity Grant policy identified as requiring clarification.
- Direction: Grants Committee to review policy and return with clarification.

9.6 River John Legion Grant Request

Agenda item was withdrawn.

9.7 Municipal Audit Committee Nominations

Motion: It was moved to defer appointments of two qualified nominations pending review of committee policy to potentially allow additional appointments.

Moved by: Clr. Wadden

Seconded by: Clr. Turner

Motion Carried

Nay Vote: Clr. Boyles

9.8 Tax Sale Write Off

Motion: It was moved accepted the writes off from the Municipality's April 2026 tax sale totaling \$170,799.85.

Moved by: Clr. Wadden

Seconded by: Clr. Palmer

Motion Carried

9.9 Tax Sale Update

It was reported that the next tax sale is currently being prepared, with a tentative timeline of August or September 2026, with September being preferred due to anticipated higher participation outside of the summer period. Staff advised that 60-day notices will be issued in the coming weeks in accordance with legislative requirements.

Staff noted that the Municipality is reviewing the method of sale for the upcoming process. The sealed tender approach used previously was generally effective; however, improvements are being considered, including the use of electronic bid submissions to streamline administration and reduce manual processing requirements.

Staff also advised that:

- The current round of tax sale properties is proceeding with legal work being completed;
- Future rounds are expected to include participation from local legal firms to improve processing timelines; and
- Multiple tax sale rounds may be required to address the existing backlog of properties.
- Accessibility considerations were discussed, and it was confirmed that while digital submissions will be encouraged, non-digital methods will remain available to ensure inclusivity.

9.9.1 Update to RFP for Valley View Villa

Staff advised that the RFP is currently in the drafting stage and remains a work in progress, with further refinement required before it is finalized. It is anticipated that the document will be completed and ready for release within the coming weeks.

Staff outlined the proposed structure of the RFP, noting that it is being designed as a two-stage process:

- Stage One will focus on the submission of conceptual proposals, where interested proponents will outline their proposed ideas and potential uses for the facility;

- Stage Two will involve more detailed negotiations with shortlisted proponents, including the development of formal agreements and conditions to protect the Municipality's interests.

It was further noted that subsequent negotiations in Stage Two may include consideration of:

- Contractual terms and conditions;
- Financial arrangements;
- Project viability; and
- Mechanisms such as performance bonding or other protections to mitigate risk to the Municipality.

A timeline concern was raised regarding the urgency of advancing the RFP. It was noted that the new Valley View Villa facility is scheduled for completion on February 28, 2028, and that the Municipality will have a limited timeframe following that date to determine the future of the existing building

Members expressed the view that, given these timelines, it is important to advance the RFP process as efficiently as possible to ensure sufficient time for review, negotiation, and implementation of any approved project.

9.9. 2Coalburn/ MacLellans Brook Water Project (Phase 2)

Council considered a request to apply to the Federal Government's Build Community Strong Fund to support Phase 2 of the Coalburn–McLellan's Brook water project.

It was noted that Phase 1 of the project had previously been completed; however, portions of the originally planned service area were not included due to cost constraints. The proposed Phase 2 application would address these gaps, including connecting previously omitted sections and making limited extensions to ensure continuity of service within the overall project area.

Staff advised that, at this time, detailed program parameters have not yet been released by the federal government. As a result, the Municipality does not currently have confirmation of funding levels, eligibility requirements, or exact cost-sharing arrangements

Members expressed support for the project, noting its potential to:

- Improve water infrastructure;
- Support residential growth and development; and
- Enhance long-term planning and servicing within the affected communities.

Concerns were also raised regarding competing infrastructure priorities within the Municipality, including ongoing issues with water and wastewater systems in other areas. It was noted that funding opportunities should also be explored for those needs.

Motion: It was moved that the Municipality apply to the Federal Build Communities Strong Fund for phase 2 of the Coalburn/MacLellans Brook Water Project.

Moved by: Clr. Wadden

Seconded by: Clr. Palmer

Motion Carried

Nay Vote: Clr. Boyles]

9.9.3 Student/Casual Employment Policy

Motion: It was moved to accept updates that define a wage range for casual employees in the Municipality's Student/Casual Employment Policy.

Moved by Clr. Wadden

Seconded by: Clr. Palmer

Motion Carried

9.9.4 Valley View Villa Care Update

Council received a verbal update regarding operations and resident care at Valley View Villa during the ongoing labour disruption.

It was reported that the strike had been ongoing for several weeks and that operations are continuing under an Essential Services Agreement. Staff indicated that core services remain in place, including the provision of meals, administration of medications, and implementation of resident care plans. Recreational programming continues on a reduced scale, with additional support anticipated through the arrival of students to assist with activities.

Council discussed the status of resident care during the disruption. Some members raised concerns regarding reports circulating within the community regarding the quality of care, including issues related to meals, hygiene, and overall service levels. It was noted that these concerns had been shared through various informal channels and warranted awareness.

Other members emphasized that Valley View Villa operates within a regulated system, and that formal complaint processes are in place to address any concerns related to resident care. It was noted that such concerns should be reported through the appropriate channels to ensure they are properly reviewed and addressed in accordance with established procedures, rather than relying on informal or unverified sources.

Council concluded that the situation should continue to be monitored, with confidence placed in the existing oversight, regulatory requirements, and complaint processes designed to ensure resident well-being.

DEFERRED BUSINESS

No business was deferred

MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION

No motions were brought forward for reconsideration.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Events were brought forward for community announcements.

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