

September 15, 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, September 15, 2025, at 7:10 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

ABSENT

Evan Hale, Director of Emergency Services
Rhiannon McNair, Director of Business Operations, Broadband Initiative

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
Adam MacInnis, Communications Officer
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. Boyles and seconded by Clr. Turner that the agenda be approved as presented. **Motion Carried**

EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS

Warden Parker requested that a discussion be added to the agenda regarding the results of the NSFM survey about strong mayoral powers.

MINUTES

Clr. MacKeil asked if there were any errors, omissions, or corrections in the August 18, 2025, minutes. The members of the Committee entered no errors, omissions, or corrections. The Chair proclaimed the minutes of the meetings on August 18, 2025, as the official record of the meetings. **Motion Carried**

REPORTS NOT REQUIRING A MOTION

COMMUNICATION REPORT

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

RECREATION REPORT

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

WARDEN'S REPORT

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

Clr. MacDonald questioned what the meeting regarding Viola's Place was about. Warden Parker noted that the meeting was an official announcement of renovation work taking place at Viola's Way, not Viola's Place.

Clr. Palmer asked what was discussed at the meeting with Staff Sgt. MacKinnon. Warden Parker requested an update regarding the missing Sullivan children and stated that many people are seeking more information.

Clr. Palmer asked if there was any news to come out of the meeting with Sean Fraser regarding the budget. Warden Parker mentioned that the internet project was a topic of discussion. In terms of the upcoming budget, it was discussed that there will be an increase in spending on defence, and Sean Fraser feels there may be ways that Pictou County can benefit from this. The Pictou County Partnership was also discussed, with a focus on exploring larger initiatives for the county.

Clr. Baillie referenced the meeting on the future use of Valley View Villa and felt that this should be a complete discussion for Council regarding the future use. Warden Parker agreed with Clr. Baillie and the Warden stated that at that meeting, the people operating the villa presented their ideas. The Warden said that the idea was to have the discussion regarding the future use with Council.

INTERNET REPORT

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

TAXES RECEIVABLE REPORT

The Taxes Receivable Report for the month of August 2025 was received for informational purposes.

Clr. Boyles had concerns from a resident who was interested in purchasing a piece of land. Upon calling to obtain tax information, it was noted that the property did not have a PID and, therefore, is not being taxed. Clr. Boyles stated that this resident has encountered this issue approximately five times, and taxes should be collected for the properties. Ms. Cornish will investigate this further.

DEED TRANSFER TAX

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

REPORTS REQUIRING A MOTION

ACCOUNTS PAID – AUGUST 2025

MOTION

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

Clr. Turner asked about the Pictou Island July garbage pickup that totalled \$12,000, and if that is a typical cost, and what is included in the fee. Ms. Cornish said that it was one of the first runs for the year, typically at least two runs a year. A boat is chartered to collect the garbage and recycling. Clr. MacKeil questioned if the fee included tipping fees, Ms. Cornish confirmed that tipping fees are not included in the cost.

INTERNET ACCOUNTS PAID

It was moved by Warden Parker and seconded by Clr. Turner that the Internet Accounts Paid Report for the month of August 2025 be received as presented.

Motion Carried

BUSINESS ITEMS OR ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION

DISTRICT 3 MUNICIPAL SERVICE GRANTS

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Palmer and seconded by Deputy Warden Murray to approve the following District 3 Municipal Service Grants: **Motion Carried**

Pic. Island Comm. Assn (PICA)	\$4,910.00	Windows in Community Ctr.
Caribou River Comm. Hall	\$570.00	AED Battery

Total: \$5,480.00

DISTRICT 7 MUNICIPAL SERVICE GRANT

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Parker and seconded by Clr. Baillie to approve the following District 7 Municipal Service Grant: **Motion Carried**

Middle River Presbyterian Church	\$4,345.00	Accessibility Ramp
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Total: \$4,345.00

DISTRICT 2 COUNCIL GRANT EXTENSION REQUEST

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Wadden and seconded by Clr. Palmer to approve the Little Harbour Community Centre’s request for \$50,000.00 for an extension for the Council Grant for kitchen renovations. **Motion Carried**

NSFM SURVEY RESULTS – STRONG MAYORAL POWERS

The Warden noted that the survey that NSFM sent out regarding strong mayoral powers has been completed. The request for strong mayoral powers originated from the Mayor of HRM. Warden Parker stated that granting strong mayoral powers would take away the rest of Council’s voting power, allowing a mayor to have the authority to independently hire or fire staff or make budget changes without going through Council. The Warden feels this would be a strike against democracy. The NSFM stated that there was substantial disagreement over the strong mayor powers.

MOTION

It was moved by Warden Parker and seconded by Clr. Boyles to send a letter to Minister of Municipal Affairs, John Lohr, with a copy to the Premier and NSFM, strongly suggesting opposition to the strong mayor power and that this is not the right path for municipalities in Nova Scotia. **Motion Carried**

Nay Votes: Clr. Andy Thompson

Clr. Larry Turner

Clr. Boyles voiced opposition to the strong mayoral powers and said that it takes away from the people who fought for democracy. Clr. Turner asked for the results of the NSFM survey. CAO Cullen stated that approximately one-third of elected officials participated in the survey, which demonstrated that a substantial majority were opposed.

Clr. Thompson stated that the NSFM is a lobbying body for municipal governments. The NSFM are in discussions with the provincial government on the issue and Clr. Thompson would prefer to wait until it is decided what the legislature will do before passing judgment or sending letters about this.

Clr. Paker spoke in support of sending the letter and noted that the house will sit before the NSFM conference, and decisions will be made before that.

Warden Parker voiced that this was brought up as an emergency resolution because it will be too late by the time of the NSFM conference in November. If the provincial government hears from the NSFM and as many Councils as possible, it may slow this down. Clr. MacDonald expressed support for sending the letter and stated that other local members of the legislature should receive a copy.

Clr. Thompson clarified that the NSFM is holding another meeting on October 3, 2025, and that just because information is not being reported in the media, it does not mean that action is not being taken.

DEFERRED BUSINESS

There was no deferred business.

MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION

There were no motions of reconsideration.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business before the meeting, so the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

CHAIRPERSON

MUNICIPAL CLERK