

Cape Breton Regional Municipality

Council Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2025

2:01 p.m. at City Hall Council Chambers

Council

Mayor Cecil P. Clarke

Councillor Gordon MacDonald

Councillor Earlene MacMullin

Councillor Esmond "Blue" Marshall

Councillor Steve Gillespie

Deputy Mayor Eldon MacDonald

Councillor Glenn Paruch

Councillor Steve Parsons

Councillor Steven MacNeil

Councillor Dave MacKeigan

Councillor Darren O'Quinn

Councillor Kim Sheppard-Campbell

Staff

Demetri Kachafanas, KC, Chief Administrative Officer

Christa Dicks, Municipal Clerk / Director of Corporate Information Services

John Phalen, Director of Public Works

Robert Walsh, Chief of Police

Desiree Magnus, Communications / Public Relations Advisor

Mark Bettens, Fire Chief and Director of Fire and Emergency Services

Bruce MacDonald, Manager of Emergency Management

Raymond Boudreau, P.Eng., Director of Water and Wastewater

Sheila Kolanko, Property Manager

Toni Delorenzo, Principal Secretary, Mayor's Office

Sean Tobin, Chief of Staff

Christina Lamey, Communications Manager

Spencer Merrill, Information Technology Technician

Yuecong Cao, Recording Secretary

Absent

Councillor Paul Nickituk (Leave of absence)

The following does not represent a word for word record of the proceedings of this meeting. The agenda, reports, supporting documents, information items circulated, and video (if available) are online at www.cbrm.ns.ca.

Mayor Cecil P. Clarke called the meeting to order.

Land Acknowledgement

Roll Call

O' Canada

Christa Dicks, Municipal Clerk, introduced and welcomed members of the Royal Canadian Legion for the ceremonial presentation of the first poppy in CBRM. Representing Branch 138 were Larry Wall (Poppy Chair), Lowell Crowe, Gary Patcheson, and Clarence Dawe. The delegation presented Mayor Clarke with the first poppy in CBRM.

Mayor Clarke thanked the delegation from the Royal Canadian Legion for attending and acknowledged Branch 138 Ashby for hosting this year's Sydney and area Remembrance Day ceremony. He noted the importance of ceremonies across the Cape Breton Regional Municipality and highlighted the upcoming milestone: July 17, 2026 will mark the 100th anniversary of the Royal Canadian Legion.

1. Approval of Agenda

Mayor Clarke requested a modification to the agenda to address item number seven point one at this point of the meeting.

Motion

Moved by Councillor Paruch, seconded by Councillor Gordon MacDonald, to approve the October 21, 2025, council agenda and addendum as presented.

Motion Carried

7.1 Crosswalk Painting Remembrance Day

Mayor Cecil P. Clarke reviewed the council agenda request form included in the agenda package. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor MacMullin, seconded by Councillor Marshall, to approve the painting of crosswalks in recognition of Remembrance Day, to be completed before November 11, with the design and locations determined in collaboration with the Royal Canadian Legion and municipal staff.

Discussion:

- Provincial road jurisdiction
- Longevity and program future
- Legion approval

Motion Carried

2. Approval of Minutes: (Previously Circulated)

Motion

Moved by Councillor Parsons, seconded by Councillor MacKeigan, to approve the CBRM minutes from:

- Council – July 15, 2025
- Special Council – July 29, 2025
- Council – August 19, 2025
- Council – September 16, 2025

Motion Carried

3. Proclamations & Resolutions

3.1 Dyslexia Awareness Month

Motion

Moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Gillespie, that Mayor Cecil P. Clarke and Council proclaim October 2025, as Dyslexia Awareness Month in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

Motion Carried

3.2 International Intersex Awareness Day

Motion

Moved by Councillor O'Quinn, seconded by Councillor Sheppard-Campbell, that Mayor Cecil P. Clarke and Council proclaim October 26th, 2025, as International Intersex Awareness Day in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

Motion Carried

3.3 Pancreatic Cancer Awareness

Motion

Moved by Councillor Gordon MacDonald, seconded by Councillor Gillespie, that Mayor Cecil P. Clarke and Council proclaim November 2025, as Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

Motion Carried

3.4 Protect Our Post Office – Maintain Service

Motion

Moved by Councillor Gordon MacDonald, seconded by Councillor Paruch, that Mayor Cecil P. Clarke and Council formally write the Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Joël Lightbound, to:

- Request an immediate halt to the service cuts, and to look instead for ways to increase services and revenues in other areas, such as those as noted above.

- Request that no mandate review takes place until Canada Post returns to stabilized operations.
- Request that any review of Canada Post and the Canadian Postal Service Charter must be done through a full and thorough transparent public review, including public hearings, with all key stakeholders, in every region of Canada.

Discussion:

- Consult with Canada Post regarding potential service changes and branch closures
- Contact local Members of Parliament to seek federal support

Motion Carried

4. Presentations

4.1 EMO Update – Drought Conditions

Bruce MacDonald, Manager Emergency Management, provided a presentation titled, "CBRM Drought Update". The presentation included topics such as current situation, support for residents, current drought plan, status of support to the community, future concerns, future support, and effects on other services. Discussion took place regarding clarification on water container booking time, provincial response and responsibility, water levels, preventative measures, public supplies, rural water users provincial program participation. Council requested to be provided with the breakdown of dry wells by district.

For Information Only

**5. Business Arising – Committee of the Whole Meeting -
September 9, 2025**

5.1 Referral of Drought Conditions and EMO Response to NSFM

Mayor Clarke reviewed the excerpt included in the agenda package. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor Gillespie, seconded by Councillor MacMullin, to refer the matter of drought conditions and Emergency Management Office of the Minister (EMO) response to the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) for a province-wide discussion.

Motion Carried

5.2 Housing Strategy: Land Banking and Surplus Lands Strategy

Demetri Kachafanas, KC, Chief Administrative Officer, reviewed the staff report and recommendations included in the agenda package. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor Parsons, seconded by Deputy Mayor Eldon MacDonald, to direct CAO to prepare a draft Municipal Land Banking Policy, including a surplus land improvement section, for council consideration; establish a funding strategy for surplus land improvements and property acquisitions; and return to council with a staff report outlining the required steps for establishing a property division to manage land banking functions, with details on staffing and budget requirements.

Motion Carried

Councillor Gillespie was not present for the above vote.

5.3 Request For Municipal Property PID 15128903 - 111

Victoria Road, Sydney (District 12)

Sheila Kolanko, Property Manager, reviewed the memo and recommendations included in the agenda package. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor Sheppard-Campbell, seconded by Councillor Paruch, to declare the subject property (PID 15128903) surplus to the needs of the municipality; and authorize staff to initiate the sale process in accordance with Municipal Policy and the *Municipal Government Act*.

Motion Carried

Councillor Gillespie was not present for the above vote.

5.4 Leave of Absence

CAO Kachafanas, reviewed the memo included in the agenda package. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Deputy Mayor Eldon MacDonald, seconded by Councillor MacKeigan, to approve a leave of absence to Councillor Nickituk consistent with Section 17(4) of the *Municipal Government Act* and the CBRM Council Remuneration Policy.

Motion Carried

5.5 Speed Humps vs Bumps

Councillor Sheppard-Campbell reviewed the council agenda request form included in the agenda package. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor Sheppard-Campbell, seconded by Councillor Gillespie, to direct the Public Works Department to explore the feasibility of installing speed humps on residential side streets where excessive speeding and dangerous driving have been reported.

Discussion:

- Alternative traffic calming measures
- Pilot traffic calming projects
- Formal criteria for the installation

Motion Carried

Councillor Paruch was not present for the above vote.

6. Corporate Services Issues

6.1 Policy Review Update

Christa Dicks, Municipal Clerk / Director of Corporate Information Services, reviewed the information report included in the agenda package.

For Information Only

6.2 Solid Waste Collection

John Phalen, Director of Public Works, reviewed the staff report and recommendation included in the agenda package. Discussion took place regarding cost savings and opportunities to expand the municipal workforce. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor Gillespie, seconded by Councillor Parsons, to proceed with the proposed changes for this budget year.

Discussion:

- Possible future cost increases
- Service areas and tax rates
- Heavy garbage collection
- Equipment strategy

Motion Carried

During the discussion on the solid waste collection motion, Councillor Parsons raised a Point of Order regarding future costs and tax rates.

Deputy Mayor Eldon MacDonald assumed the Chair at 3:10 p.m.

7. Council Agenda Requests

7.1 Crosswalk Painting Remembrance Day

This item was addressed after approval of the agenda

7.2 Street Racing and Vehicle Noise

Councillor Gillespie reviewed the council agenda request form included in the agenda package. Discussion took place regarding traffic calming, noise reduction strategies, public perception, community impact and engagement, and public campaigning and education. Council members requested a workshop for further discussion. The following motion was then withdrawn:

Motion

That Council direct the Chief Administrative Officer to direct staff to provide an update on actions taken to address street racing and excessive vehicle noise related to loud mufflers, following discussions held at the police commission meetings in September and December 2023.

Motion Withdrawn

7.3 Traffic, Construction, and Communication Concerns in the Sydney River Corridor

Councillor Gillespie reviewed the council agenda request form included in the agenda package. Discussion took place regarding traffic control, ongoing construction, communication efforts and emergency response plans. Council members requested a workshop with police for further discussion. The following motion was then withdrawn:

Motion

To request a staff report for council / committee to consider.

Motion Withdrawn

8. Conferences and Meetings

8.1 Update on the Nova Scotia Chiefs of Police Fall Conference

CBRM Board of Police Commissioners Chair Paruch reported on the Nova Scotia Police Chiefs Conference, which Commissioner Vickers attended with Chair Paruch. Chair Paruch highlighted a layered policing model, using mixed personnel to free up officers for serious incidents. Chair Paruch also noted the Collision Reporting Occurrence Management System (CROMS) for streamlining collision reporting. Updates to the *Liquor Control Act* now mandate training and criminal record checks for security staff, with non-compliance risking license suspension.

9. Correspondence

9.1 Cape Breton Regional Fire Chiefs' Association November 2025 Meeting

9.2 Meeting Follow-Up Regarding NSFM Board Structure

9.3 Property Valuation Services Corporation

For Information Only

Council recessed at 4:18 p.m.

Council reconvened at 4:23 p.m. to go in camera

10. In Camera Council

10.1 CUPE 759 Agreement

(In Accordance with Section 22(2)(e) of the Municipal Government Act.)

10.2 Expense Update

(In Accordance with Section 22(2)(c) of the Municipal Government Act.)

10.3 Vacancies on Committees

(In Accordance with Section 22(2)(c) of the Municipal Government Act.)

Council reconvened at 5:07 p.m. to go to open session.

10.1 CUPE 759 Agreement

Deputy Mayor Eldon MacDonald called upon Director Evely for the motion on the CBRM / CUPE 759 contract. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor Gordon MacDonald, seconded by Councillor Paruch, that CBRM Council ratify the Collective Agreement between the Cape Breton Regional Municipality and CUPE Local 759, effective November 1, 2024, for a term of four (4) years.

Motion carried

10.3 Vacancies on Various Committees

Municipal Clerk Christa discussed the advertising and response to vacancies and applications for various committees:

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – one application
- Accessibility Advisory Committee – three applications
- Heritage Advisory Committee – one application

The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor Paruch, seconded by Councillor MacMullin, that Council appoint citizens to committees where vacancies remain, in accordance with the established process; and that once applicants had accepted the appointments, they would be publicly posted on the CBRM website.

Motion Carried

Meeting adjourned at 5:18 p.m.

Cecil P. Clarke
Mayor

Christa Dicks

Municipal Clerk

/yc