

Cape Breton Regional Municipality
Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes
June 3, 2025
10:02 a.m. at City Hall Council Chambers

Council

Mayor Cecil P. Clarke (Left at 3:53 p.m. and returned at 4:45 p.m.)
Councillor Gordon MacDonald (Arrived at 11:27 a.m.)
Councillor Earlene MacMullin
Councillor Esmond "Blue" Marshall
Councillor Steve Gillespie (Arrived at 11:05 a.m.)
Deputy Mayor Eldon MacDonald
Councillor Glenn Paruch
Councillor Steve Parsons
Councillor Steven MacNeil (Left at 3:00 p.m.)
Councillor Dave MacKeigan
Councillor Paul Nickituk (Left at 4:59 p.m.)
Councillor Darren O'Quinn
Councillor Kim Sheppard-Campbell (Left at 12:36 p.m. and returned at 1:40 p.m.)

Staff

Demetri Kachafanas, KC, Chief Administrative Officer
Christa Dicks, Municipal Clerk / Director of Corporate Information Services
Tyson Simms, Director of Planning and Development
Mark Bettens, Fire Chief and Director of Fire and Emergency Services
Ray Boudreau, Director of Water and Wastewater
Jennifer Campbell, Chief Financial Officer
Robert Sampson, KC, Solicitor
Craig MacNeil, Deputy Fire Chief
Chris March, Deputy Fire Chief
Bruce MacDonald, Manager of Emergency Management
Toni Delorenzo, Principal Secretary, Mayor's Office
Sean Tobin, Chief of Staff
John Phalen, Director of Public Works
Dana Milley, Manager of Public Works North
Christina Lamey, Communications Manager
Jenna MacQueen, Communications Advisor
Travis Radtke, Housing Coordinator
Spencer Merrill, Information Technology Technician
Aidan Connors, Public Policy Intern
Kelly McDonald, Administrative Assistant
Yuecong Cao, Recording Secretary

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

1. Approval of Agenda

Motion

Moved by Councillor Paruch, seconded by Councillor Parsons, to approve the June 3, 2025, committee of the whole agenda and addendum as presented.

Motion Carried

2. Presentations

2.1 Catalone Lake Restoration Committee

Kevin McNeil, Co-Chair of Catalone Lake Restoration Committee, provided a presentation, introduction and overview the Catalone Lake. The presentation included topics such as Catalone Lake history, the present situation, shoreline erosion, flooding damage, loons nest flooding, blocked gut and solutions. Discussion took place regarding a petition for restoration, community support, project scope and cost, and ecological challenges to improve the Catalone Lake. Councillor MacNeil informed he will be requesting this item to be included for further discussion during the June 10, 2025, council meeting.

2.2 Cow Bay Environmental Coalition – Protecting Community Health, Addressing the Donkin Mine Noise

Catherine Fergusson, Founding Member of the Cow Bay Environmental Coalition, provided a presentation about the tonal noise produced by the Donkin Mine. The presentation included topics such as protecting community

health, community response and findings, independent expert analysis, regulatory inaction, industrial approval renewal, and the importance of support. Discussion took place regarding CBRM council support, Donkin Mine community, and advocating to the provincial government for action. Councillor MacNeil informed he will be requesting this item to be included for further discussion during the June 10, 2025, council meeting.

3. Corporate Services Issues

3.1 Compost Facility Future Planning

John Phalen, Director of Public Works, reviewed the staff report and recommendation included in the agenda package. Discussion took place regarding cost savings, job security, and compost odor. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor Sheppard-Campbell, seconded by Councillor Paruch, that a recommendation be made to Council to direct staff to proceed with option two, which is included in the June 3, 2025, committee of the whole agenda, and start a phased close out of the CBRM compost facility.

Discussion:

- Compost processes
- Compost market challenges
- Contract processes

Motion Carried

3.2 Operation of our Solid Waste Recycling Facility

John Phalen, Director of Public Works, reviewed the staff report and recommendation included in the agenda package. Discussion took place regarding sale of the equipment and facility. The following motion was the put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor Paruch, seconded by Councillor O' Quinn, that Committee of the Whole recommend to Council to direct staff to proceed with sale of facility at 345 Gulf Crescent.

Discussion:

- Extended Producer Responsibility
- Contract processes

Motion Carried**3.3 Extended Producer Responsibility - Collection of Recyclables**

John Phalen, Director of Public Works, reviewed the staff report and recommendation included in the agenda package. Discussion took place regarding cost savings and gratification for staff's work. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor Gillespie, seconded by Deputy Mayor Eldon MacDonald, that a recommendation be made to Council to direct staff to proceed with the collection of recyclables using Circular Materials as per Council motion of November 28, 2023.

Discussion:

- Cost savings

Motion Carried**3.4 Main-a-Dieu Community Development Association / Coastal Discovery Centre Lease Renewal**

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

Motion

Moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Deputy Mayor Eldon MacDonald, that a recommendation be made to Council to approve a five-year lease with the Main-a-Dieu Community Development Association on the same terms as the previous lease.

Motion Carried**3.5 Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) Update: Housing Strategy and Fast-Tracked Housing Plans**

Tyson Simms, Director of Planning and Development reviewed the housing accelerator fund update included in the agenda package. Following the presentation, discussion took place regarding public engagement sessions, benefit for fast-tracked housing plans, and the approved operating budget for 2025/2026.

For Information Only

3.6 Water and Wastewater Billing - Update

Ray Boudreau, Director of Water and Wastewater, reviewed the staff report and recommendation included in the agenda package. Following the presentation, discussion took place regarding composition of the wastewater bill.

For Information Only

3.7 CBRM Policies

Christa Dicks, Municipal Clerk, reviewed the staff report and recommendation included in the agenda package. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor Gordon MacDonald, seconded by Councillor Gillespie, that Committee of the Whole recommend that Council review and consider the draft *Administration of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines Policy*, as outlined in the attached draft document, which is included in June 3, 2025, committee of the whole agenda, at a forthcoming meeting of the Council.

Motion Carried

Committee of the Whole recessed at 12:02 p.m.

Committee of the Whole reconvened at 12:36 p.m.

Deputy Mayor Eldon MacDonald assumed the Chair at 12:36 p.m.

4. Fire and Emergency Services**4.1 Cape Breton Search & Rescue**

Sharon MacSween, President of Cape Breton Search and Rescue, provided a presentation introducing the duties of the organization. Discussion took place regarding intake processes, infrastructure, and comparison of Cape Breton Search and Rescue and Nova Scotia Ground Search and Rescue Association.

For Information Only

4.2 Report - Cape Breton Regional Fire Chiefs' Association to CBRM

Rod Beresford, Chair of Fire Chiefs' Association, reviewed the report included in the agenda package. Discussion took place regarding focus on standardization, resource allocation, and strategic planning to enhance fire service delivery in CBRM.

For Information Only

4.3 Fire and Emergency Services Updates

Mark Bettens, Fire Chief and Director of Fire and Emergency Services, reviewed the staff report included in the agenda. Discussion took place regarding recent development and ongoing initiatives with Cape Breton Regional Fire and Emergency Services, Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Program, Trunked Mobile Radio (TMR) system, fire station infrastructure, Nova Scotia public safety Field Communications (NSPSFC), and Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) Program.

For Information Only

At 2:16 p.m. Christa Dicks, Municipal Clerk, informed the meeting has now been in progress four hours and due to legislation to proceed with the meeting, a motion is requested. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor Gordon MacDonald, seconded by Councillor MacKeigan, to proceed with the meeting.

Motion Carried**4.4 Station 23 Glace Bay Budget Error**

Mark Bettens, Fire Chief and Director of Fire and Emergency Services, reviewed the staff report for Glace Bay Budget Error, included in the agenda package. Discussion took place regarding budget allocations, volunteer department, career department, composite department. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor Gillespie, seconded by Councillor Sheppard-Campbell, that Committee of the Whole recommend to Council to approve a decrease in Glace Bay #23 budget by \$50,000 and place in Fire Train Cost Centre, GL 6020.

Amended Motion

Moved by Councillor Gordon MacDonald, seconded by Councillor MacKeigan, that the Committee of the Whole recommend to Council that the decrease in Glace Bay #23 budget by \$35,200 and place in Fire Train Cost Centre, GL 6020. This decrease results in Glace Bay #23 receiving a total of \$29,800.

Main Motion Withdrawn**Amended Motion Carried****4.5 Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus Standard Operating Procedure for New Breathing Apparatus**

Chris March, Deputy Fire Chief, reviewed the staff report and introduced the SCBA program, included in the agenda package.

For Information Only

4.6 Fleet Replacement Motion

Craig MacNeil, Deputy Fire Chief, reviewed the report and recommendation included in the agenda package. Discussion took place regarding the fire department budget, fire services standard, and infrastructure. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Mayor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Sheppard-Campbell, the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council review and consider the purchase of all fire apparatus listed on June 3, 2025, committee of the whole agenda, as part of the 2025 replacement plan.

Discussion:

- Insurance rates
- Fleet refurbish timelines
- Clarification on the motion, to review and consider

Motion Carried

4.7 Report – Training

Craig MacNeil, Fire Deputy Chief, reviewed the training report included in the agenda package. Discussion took place regarding volunteer operations, training, and finance.

Information Only

4.8 Report - Operations

Chris March, Fire Deputy Chief, reviewed the operations report, and introduced the training and hiring process included in the agenda package. Discussion took place regarding the new hiring and training processes.

For Information Only

Councillor MacMullin assumed the Chair at 4:21 p.m.

Deputy Mayor Eldon MacDonald resumed the Chair at 4:25 p.m.

4.9 Report – All Hazards Plan Update

Bruce MacDonald, Manager of Emergency Management, presented the staff report information included in the agenda package.

For Information only

4.10 Correspondence:

- a) Rod Beresford – Paging Protocol for Possible or Working Structure Fires**
- b) Chief Adrian Langlois – Grand Lake Road Volunteer Fire Department**

ADDENDUM

- c) Transition of Budget Administration for Glace Bay Volunteer Fire Department**

For Information Only

4.11 Fire and Emergency Services Discussion – Various Topics**a) Councillor Discussion Request**

Councillor Gordon MacDonald reviewed the councillor discussion request included in the agenda package. Discussion took place regarding grants, fleet clawbacks, stipends, and Medical First Responders (MFR), automatic callouts for Cape Breton Regional Fire Services.

For information only

b) Fire and Emergency Services Update

Mark Bettens, Fire Chief and Director of Fire and Emergency Services, reviewed the updated services report included in the agenda package.

Discussion took place regarding grants, Medical First Responders (MFR).

For information only

5. Council Agenda Request**5.1 Exploration of Amendments to Planning Documents
Related to Single Access Communities and Subdivisions**

Councillor Parsons reviewed the council agenda request and recommendation included in the agenda package. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor Parsons, seconded by Councillor Sheppard-Campbell, that Committee of the Whole recommend to Council for CAO to direct staff to explore potential amendments to planning documents to address concerns related to subdivisions and communities with only one point of ingress and egress. This review should consider public safety, emergency access, traffic flow, and future connectivity. A report outlining potential options and recommendations shall be brought back to Council for consideration.

Motion Carried

5.2 Open Air Burning Bylaw (B-400):

Councillor MacMullin reviewed the council agenda request and recommendation included in the agenda package. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor MacMullin, seconded by Councillor MacKeigan, that a recommendation be made to Council to direct CAO to have staff review the Open-Air Burning By-law (B-400) which was passed and adopted by council May 18, 1999, with particular attention to Schedule A and Schedule B which outline the areas of CBRM that are permitted and prohibited from participating in open air burning.

Motion Carried**5.3 Cape Breton Regional Municipality Burning Bylaw B400**

Councillor MacKeigan reviewed the council agenda request and recommendation included in the agenda package. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor MacKeigan, seconded by Councillor MacMullin, that a recommendation be made to Council to consider that staff be directed to conduct a comprehensive review of the current Burning Bylaw B400, and prepare a proposed new bylaw that aligns with and is consistent across all communities within the Cape Breton Regional Municipality. That the enforcement of the Burning Bylaw also be reviewed and addressed to ensure the safety of our firefighters and first responders.

Motion Carried**5.4 Discarded Needles**

Councillor Gordon MacDonald reviewed the council agenda request and recommendation included in the agenda package. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor Gordon MacDonald, seconded by Councillor Gillespie, that a recommendation be made to Council to direct staff to provide a staff report at an upcoming meeting of Council regarding what CBRM does to collect discarded needles.

Discussion:

- Importance of safer communities

Motion Carried

6. Correspondence

- 6.1 Boundary Review for Reinstalment of French Road Area in CBRM District 7**
- 6.2 Traffic Safety Act Consultation Process**
- 6.3 Request for a Regional Transportation Strategy for Eastern Nova Scotia**
- 6.4 Federal-Provincial Equalization Transfer Payments in Cape Breton Regional Municipality**

For Information Only

Meeting adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

Cecil P. Clarke
Mayor

Christa Dicks
Municipal Clerk
/yc