

## **Cape Breton Regional Municipality**

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

December 2, 2025

10:00 a.m. at City Hall Council Chambers

### **Council**

Mayor Cecil P. Clarke (Left at 11:35 p.m. and returned to the meeting at 12:51 p.m.)

Councillor Gordon MacDonald

Councillor Esmond "Blue" Marshall

Councillor Steve Gillespie

Councillor Eldon MacDonald

Deputy Mayor Glenn Paruch

Councillor Steve Parsons

Councillor Steven MacNeil

Councillor Dave MacKeigan

Councillor Darren O'Quinn

Councillor Kim Sheppard-Campbell (Left at 11:58 a.m. and returned to the meeting at 2:11 p.m.)

### **Staff**

Christa Dicks, Municipal Clerk / Director of Corporate Information Services

Demetri Kachafanas, KC, Chief Administrative Officer

Tony Mozvik, KC, Director of Legal Services

Tyson Simms, Director of Planning and Development

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

Toni Delorenzo, Principal Secretary, Mayor's Office

Sean Tobin, Chief of Staff

Craig MacNeil, Deputy Fire Chief

Chris March, Deputy Fire Chief

Bruce MacDonald, Manager of Emergency Management

Karen Neville, Senior Planner

Peter Vandermeulen, Planner

Travis Radtke, Housing Coordinator

William Roy, Community Development Coordinator

Jenna MacQueen, Communications Advisor

Spencer Merrill, Information Technology Technician

Kelly McDonald, Administrative Assistant, Clerk's Office

Yuecong Cao, Recording Secretary

### **Absent**

Councillor Earlene MacMullin (Regrets)

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](http://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 Parsons, seconded by Councillor Gordon MacDonald, to approve the December 2, 2025, committee of the whole agenda as presented.

**Motion Carried**

### **2. Approval of Minutes**

**Motion**

Moved by Deputy Mayor Paruch, seconded by Councillor O' Quinn, to approve the CBRM minutes from:

- Committee of the Whole Minutes – November 13, 2025

**Motion Carried**

Deputy Mayor Paruch assumed the Chair at 10:02 a.m.

### **3. Fire and Emergency Services**

#### **3.1 Fire Services Review Update**

Craig MacNeil, Deputy Fire Chief, reviewed the staff report included in the agenda. Discussion took place regarding the provincial fire service study, including updates on data analysis, risk assessments, stakeholder

engagement, governance, potential repeal of the *Rural Fire Act*, and expected timelines for the final report. The following motion was then put forward:

### **Motion**

Moved by Councillor Gordon MacDonald, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that Committee of the Whole recommend to Council to direct the CBRM Regional Fire Service and Department of Finance to review forms part of the overall modernization mandate of the municipality; and the review will take into account policy and procedures for procurement and professional services in support of the overall fire service; and the municipality has a wealth of experienced individuals who serve within the volunteer and career services collaborating more and more for improved fire service delivery and protection measures; and a policy is timely to allow for the engagement of members of the fire service, volunteer and career, on a service procurement basis for professional services whether short term, contract or longer-term service support services. Therefore, be it resolved that the CBRFS and the Department of Finance prepare and recommend a policy and procedures to enable the active engagement of qualified fire service personnel, volunteer and career, within the CBRFS.

Discussion:

- Implementing a policy ensures fairness and aligns with best practices

### **Motion Carried**

Discussion continued regarding governance, structure, taxation, stakeholder engagement and participation, and the provincial fire services governance study.

## **3.2 Operations Report**

Chris March, Deputy Fire Chief, reviewed the operations report, and introduced the training and hiring process included in the agenda package. Discussion took place regarding partnership with the Canadian Coast Guard

Academy, training opportunities, fire services hiring update, and medical first response (MFR), and costs associated with mutual aid.

For Information Only

### **3.3 Volunteer Coordinator, Training, Prevention, and Fleet**

Craig MacNeil, Deputy Fire Chief, reviewed the training, fleet, volunteer operations, and fire prevention report 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 to direct the CAO to direct CBRM Fire Services to organize an internal committee made up of those Volunteer Chiefs and Councillors who would like to participate in the organizing of a service merit awards ceremony with the celebration to be held in the spring of 2026.

Discussion:

- Expressed support for organizing an internal committee

#### **Motion Carried**

Discussion continued regarding the significant progress made within the fire service, particularly around training, data collection, and future opportunities for CBRM to expand its role provincially.

### **3.4 Emergency Management Outreach**

Bruce MacDonald, Manager of Emergency Management, reviewed the staff report and recommendation included in the agenda package.

For Information Only

### **3.5 Emergency Management Manager's Report**

Bruce MacDonald, Manager of Emergency Management, presented the staff report information included in the agenda package. Discussion took place regarding emergency preparedness, the CBRM 311 system, dug wells,

provincial standards, regional emergency management exercise, and potential future operational costs linked to new provincial standards.

For Information Only

Council recessed at 11:58 a.m.

Council reconvened at 12:51 p.m.

Mayor Clarke resumed the Chair at 12:51 p.m.

#### **4. Planning Issues**

##### **4.1 Land Use By-law Zone Map Amendment, Ferry Street**

Peter Vandermeulen, Planner, reviewed staff report and the recommendation included in the agenda package. The following motion was then put forward:

##### **Motion**

Moved by Councillor Eldon MacDonald, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that Committee of the Whole recommend to Council of CBRM to give First Reading of Amending By-law found in Attachment A, which included in agenda package, and schedule a Public Hearing to consider adjusting the boundary of the Utility and Transportation (UT) and Medium Density Urban Residential (UR3) zone designation as show in Schedule A, also included in agenda package, of the Amending By-law.

Discussion:

- Environmental assessments and phases
- Broader scope
- Traffic and road access
- Winter review 2026

##### **Motion Carried**

#### **5. Corporate Services Issues**

##### **5.1 Code Acceleration Fund – Updates to Fast-Tracked Housing Plans**

Tyson Simms, Director of Planning and Development, reviewed staff report and recommendation included in the agenda package. Mayor Clarke noted the recommendation is to forward the report to Council, and Council agreed to proceed. Discussion took place regarding Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) requirements, upcoming provincial building code changes, including tiered energy-efficiency requirements, and the potential for federal building plans to align with CBRM's building planning.

For Information Only

### **5.2 Site Access and Data Sharing Agreement with the National Research Council of Canada (NRC) – Installation of Pipeline Sensors**

Raymond Boudreau, P.Eng., Director of Water and Wastewater, reviewed the staff report and recommendations included in the agenda package.

Discussion took place regarding clarification on the staff report's alternatives. The following motion was then put forward:

#### **Motion**

Moved by Deputy Mayor Paruch, seconded by Councillor Eldon MacDonald, that the Committee of the Whole recommend to Council to approve the Site Access and Data Sharing Agreement between CBRM and the National Research Council of Canada (NRC) to allow installation of corrosion-monitoring sensors on the new water transmission main; and authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute the Agreement on behalf of the Municipality.

Discussion:

- Engagement process between NRC and CBRM
- Project benefits and support
- Future potential project opportunities

#### **Motion Carried**

### **5.3 Committee Vacancy**

Christa Dicks, Municipal Clerk / Director of Corporate Information Services, reviewed the memo included in the agenda package. Council agreed that the Mayor will call for nominations at the next council meeting.

For Information Only

## **6. Committee and Conference Reports**

### **6.1 Police Commission Update November 2025**

Deputy Mayor Paruch reviewed the police commission report and recommendations included in the agenda package. The following motions were then put forward:

#### **Motion**

Moved by Deputy Mayor Paruch, seconded by Councillor Gillespie, that Committee of the Whole recommend to Council to direct staff to review the 2016 Travel Policy for Civilian Police Commissioners, and an allocation of \$25,000 to support upcoming activities and strategic initiatives of the CBRM Commission for the upcoming 2026/27 fiscal year.

Discussion:

- Performance reviews
- Budget process
- Educational travel for Police Commission Members

#### **Motion Carried**

#### **Motion**

Moved by Councillor Parsons, seconded by Deputy Mayor Paruch, that Committee of the Whole recommend to Council to direct CAO for the implementation of the performance review policy.

Discussion:

- Annual basis for reviews
- Increase transparency and awareness on social media

#### **Motion Carried**

Councillor Eldon MacDonald reported positive community feedback was received regarding a recent media article highlighting police activities. A suggestion was made to increase transparency by sharing similar updates through social media.

## **6.2 Information and Activity Report CBRM REN Q2-FY 2025/26**

Councillor Gillespie introduced presenters delivers economic development support to all communities within CBRM through the Regional Enterprise Network (REN) model, in partnership with the Province of Nova Scotia and CBRM, as part of a provincial network. It maximizes funding, leverages investments for greater impact, and collaborates with partners like the Cape Breton Local Immigration Partnership. Operational improvements include increasing oversight committee meetings from two to four times annually and strengthening alignment with the Cape Breton Partnership's Board of Directors through mutual meeting attendance. Discussion took place regarding clarification of committee membership, and discussion research provincial partners.

For Information Only

## **6.3 Cultivating Culture, Navigating Change (CCNC) Creative City Summit 2025**

William Roy, Community Development Coordinator, provided an update on the Creative City Summit in Kingston, Ontario, in October, 2025. The long-standing summit brings together municipal leaders, cultural planners, and developers to share strategies for strengthening local economies, tourism, and community vitality through culture. This year's sessions covered a wide range of topics, including cultural policy and development, cultural strategic plan, community engagement, arts led revitalization, creative ecosystems, noise management, and maintaining cultural infrastructure. Council members reflected on key takeaways from the conference, including the

importance of paying homage to local cultural, the need to build a strong core to drive economic vitality across the municipality, and the geographical challenges CBRM faces given its large landmass compared to similarly sized cities like Kingston. Suggestions were made to explore programs for signage, public art, embedding cultural components into municipal infrastructure projects, and celebrating local heritage (such as preserving historical artifacts). Councillor requested further discussion be considered during the upcoming budget process.

For Information Only

#### **6.4 Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities Conference**

Councillor Eldon MacDonald reported on the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) Conference, which included topics such as offshore wind development and mineral exploration, Climate change impacts, the need for a provincial drought program, traffic safety, rapid growth management, critical minerals, active transportation, emergency services, short-term rentals, social media strategies, and police oversight. The NSFM Annual General Meeting was held during conference, Councillor Eldon MacDonald noted Councillor Gordon McDonald is serving on the Board, and Councillor Eldon MacDonald is serving as Vice-President.

For Information Only

#### **6.5 National Conference on Ending Homelessness**

Councillor Kim Sheppard-Campbell reported on attending a National Conference on Ending Homelessness with over two thousand three hundred participants. Councillor Sheppard-Campbell noted that housing alone is insufficient without addressing systemic barriers such as addiction, mental health, and relationship issues. Drawing inspiration from an initiative in Moncton, New Brunswick, the Councillor proposed organizing an event that centers the voices of people with lived experience to inform local strategies.

For Information Only

**7. Correspondence**

**7.1 Cape Breton Regional Municipality Animal Control**

**Statistics**

For Information Only

**Meeting adjourned at 2:14 p.m.**

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**Cecil P. Clarke**  
**Mayor**

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**Christa Dicks**  
**Municipal Clerk**  
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