

Cape Breton Regional Municipality
Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes
March 4, 2025
10:00 a.m. at City Hall Council Chambers

Council

Mayor Cecil P. Clarke
Councillor Gordon MacDonald
Councillor Earlene MacMullin
Councillor Steve Gillespie
Deputy Mayor Eldon MacDonald
Councillor Steve Parsons
Councillor Steven MacNeil
Councillor Dave MacKeigan
Councillor Paul Nickituk
Councillor Darren O'Quinn
Councillor Kim Sheppard-Campbell

Staff

Demetri Kachafanas, KC, Interim Chief Administrative Officer
Christa Dicks, Municipal Clerk
Jennifer Campbell, Chief Financial Officer
Kirk Durning, Director of Recreation, Parks and Grounds, and Buildings and Facilities
Tyson Simms, Director of Planning and Development
Mark Bettens, Fire Chief and Director of Fire and Emergency Services
Craig MacNeil, Deputy Fire Chief
Paul Ferguson, Acting Deputy Fire Chief
Karen Neville, Senior Planner
Sean Tobin, Chief of Staff
Toni Delorenzo, Manager Mayor's Office
Will Roy, Community Development Coordinator
Christina Lamey, Communications and Information Officer
Spencer Merrill, Information Technology Technician
YueCong, Cao, Administrative Assistant, Clerk's Department
Sharon MacSween, Recording Secretary

Absent

Councillor Esmond "Blue" Marshall (Regrets)
Councillor Glenn Paruch (Regrets)

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

At this point in the meeting, Mayor Clarke recognized the passing of Arnold Sylliboy and the mother of Fire Chief Bettens.

1. Approval of Agenda

Motion

Moved by Councillor Parsons, seconded by Councillor Gordon MacDonald, to approve the March 4, 2025, committee of the whole agenda as presented.

Motion Carried

2. Approval of Minutes

- Nominating Committee – February 14, 2023
- Fire and Emergency Services – May 2, 2024
- Committee of the Whole - February 4, 2025

Motion

Moved by Councillor O'Quinn, seconded by Councillor Parsons, to approve the minutes as circulated.

Motion Carried

3. Proclamations

3.1 Amyloidosis Awareness Month

Motion

Moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Sheppard-Campbell, that CBRM Mayor Cecil P. Clarke and Council proclaim the month of March 2025, as Amyloidosis Awareness Month in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

Motion Carried

3.2 International Women's Day

Motion

Moved by Councillor MacMullin, seconded by Councillor Gillespie, that CBRM Mayor Cecil P. Clarke and Council proclaim March 8, 2025, as "International Women's Day" in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

Motion Carried

3.3 National Impaired Driving Prevention Week

Motion

Moved by Councillor Gillespie, seconded by Deputy Mayor Eldon MacDonald, that CBRM Mayor Cecil P. Clarke and Council proclaim March 16th – 22nd, 2025, as Impaired Driving Prevention Week in collaboration with MADD in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

Motion Carried

4. Presentations

4.1 Nova Scotians For Equalization Fairness (NSEF)

Russ Green and Charles Sampson, representatives of the Nova Scotians For Equalization Fairness, provided a presentation on the topic of property taxation and equalization transfer payments.

Discussion took place regarding taxes, equalization formula and CBRM, legal action led by former Mayor Morgan vs constitutional and civil liberties action including costs, reduction in transfer payments from the province and an increase in transfer payment from the federal government to the province.

Motion

Moved by Councillor Sheppard-Campbell, seconded by Councillor Parsons, that CBRM send a letter to provincial and federal government regarding equalization.

Motion Carried

Councillor Gillespie asked the presenters for a copy of the information that they were providing. Russ Green indicated that they would provide the information.

Mayor Clarke advised that a copy of the report prepared by the Nova Scotians For Equalization Fairness (NSEF) be provided to the Auditor during the CBRM Audit.

Committee of the Whole recessed at 10:59 a.m.

Committee of the Whole reconvened at 11:04 a.m.

4.2 Nova Scotia Community Solar

Solarbank representatives, Tracy Zheng and Joel MacNeil of Trimac Engineering, provided a presentation, “The Future is Bright” on the Nova Scotia Community Solar Program, Eskasoni Solar Project, as provided in the agenda package.

Discussion took place regarding the Loch Lomond Project, land parcel selection for solar projects, subscribing to the solar program, solar farm vs homeowner solar projects and return on investment into the program.

Motion

Moved by Councillor MacMullin seconded by Deputy Mayor Eldon MacDonald, to provide Solarbank a letter of support to apply for provincial funding on the provision that all CBRM Planning and Development requirements are met.

Motion Carried

4.3 Cape Breton Partnership Q3 Quarterly Report for the CBRM REN

Tyler Mattheis, President and CEO, Tyler Cole, Lan Zheng and Kelly MacKinnon of the Cape Breton Partnership, presented the Q3 Quarterly Report for the CBRM REN.

For information only.

5. Planning Issues

5.1 Adoption of Wayfinding Strategy for the Cape Breton Regional Municipality

Will Roy, Community Development Coordinator, provided a presentation regarding a proposed wayfinding strategy.

Following the presentation, discussion took place regarding consistent branding, beautification, visualization, provincial signage, traffic signage, and wayfinding improvements.

Motion

Moved by Councillor MacMullin seconded by Councillor O'Quinn, that a recommendation be made to Council to adopt the wayfinding strategy and recommended approach as set out in the report presented, subject to modifications.

Motion Carried

5.2 New Staff Appointment – Assistant Building Official

Tyson Simms, Director of Planning and Development reviewed the staff report included in the agenda.

Motion

Moved by Deputy Mayor Eldon MacDonald, seconded by Councillor Gillespie, that a recommendation be made to Council to appoint Kyle Reynolds as Assistant Building Official responsible for the Administration and Enforcement of the CBRM Minimum Standards By-law (M-100), the CBRM Vacant and Derelict Building By-law (V-300), the CBRM Swimming Pool Fences By-law (S-600), the CBRM Licensing By-law for Shared Dwellings (L-100), and Part XV of the Municipal Government act dealing with Dangerous and Unsightly Premises.

Motion Carried

Committee of the Whole recessed at 1:13 p.m.

Committee of the Whole recessed reconvened at 1:40 p.m.

At 1:40 p.m. Councillor MacKeigan was present for the meeting.

At 1:40 p.m. Committee of the Whole met in camera in accordance with Section 22(2)(c) and (g) of the *Municipal Government Act*.

Committee of the Whole reconvened in open session at 2:11 p.m.

6. Business Arising

6.1 Council – February 11, 2025

a) Vacancies On Various Committees

Christa Dicks, Municipal Clerk, reviewed the report in the agenda. She advised that there are two positions available and nine applications for the Library Board and three positions available for the Police Commission and six

applications which have been voted upon during the in camera session. It is recommended that Committee of the Whole refer to Council the selections of Police Commission and Library Board.

Motion

Moved by Councillor Sheppard-Campbell, seconded by Councillor O'Quinn, to refer the recommendations to Council to appoint the citizen selections to the Library Board of Police Commissioners.

Motion Carried**7. Public Services****7.1 Update: Active Transportation Projects - 2025**

This item was deferred to the budget workshop on Wednesday evening.

8. Corporate Services Issues**8.1 Low-Income Tax Exemption Policy**

Jennifer Campbell, Chief Financial Officer reviewed the staff report on page 68 the agenda package.

Motion

Moved by Councillor Gillespie, seconded by Councillor Parsons, that a recommendation be made to council to approve the draft proposed Low-Income Tax Exemption Policy as amended.

Motion Carried**9. Fire And Emergency Services****9.1 Recommendation For Pre-Authorization of Ladder Truck Purchase In April 2026**

Craig MacNeil, Deputy Fire Chief, advised that there is a slight change from the staff report that included in the agenda package, originally staff were looking for pre-approval for purchase for the new ladder truck, however the truck is now available is the request will be included in the capital budget for

purchase for 2025-26 fiscal year. The process for fire services to purchase a fire apparatus was provided.

Discussion took place regarding cascading, maintenance costs, 30 month wait time for a new apparatus from the assembly line, number of vehicles that will required to be replaced, placement of aerial trucks when one is out of service to ensure rapid community response, and importance of securing purchasing at the current price and responsible planning.

Motion

Moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Deputy Mayor Eldon MacDonald, that Committee of the Whole recommend to Council to approve the purchase of a new ladder truck as presented for the current fiscal year.

Motion Carried

10. Committee Reports: N / A

11. Correspondence:

11.1 Various Correspondence:

- Commissioner William Kaplan, Industrial Inquiry Commission
Reviewing Canada Post
- Honourable John A. Lohr, Minister of Municipal Affairs

For information only.

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Cecil P. Clarke

Mayor

Christa Dicks

Municipal Clerk

/slm