Cape Breton Regional Municipality
Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes
March 3, 2026
10:02 a.m. at City Hall Council Chambers

Council
Mayor Cecil P. Clarke
Councillor Gordon MacDonald
Councillor Earlene MacMullin
Councillor Esmond “Blue” Marshall
Councillor Steve Gillespie
Councillor Eldon MacDonald
Deputy Mayor Glenn Paruch
Councillor Steve Parsons
Councillor Steven MacNeil
Councillor Dave MacKeigan
Councillor Kim Sheppard-Campbell (Arrived at 10:05 a.m. and left at 12:40 p.m.)

Staff
Demetri Kachafanas, KC, Chief Administrative Officer
Christa Dicks, Municipal Clerk / Director of Corporate Information Services
Tony Mozvik, KC, Director of Legal Services
Tyson Simms, Director of Planning and Development
John Phalen, Director of Public Works
Travis Radtke, Housing Coordinator
John Crane, Manager of Bylaws and Building Inspection Services
Toni Delorenzo, Principal Secretary, Mayor’s Office
Jenna MacQueen, Communications Advisor
Sean Tobin, Chief of Staff
Spencer Merrill, Information Technology Technician
Kelly McDonald, Administrative Assistant, Clerk’s Office
Yuecong Cao, Recording Secretary

Absent
Councillor Paul Nickituk (Leave of absence)
Councillor Darren O’Quinn (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

1. Approval of Agenda

Motion

Moved by Councillor Parsons, seconded by Deputy Mayor Paruch, to approve the March 3, 2026, committee of the whole agenda as presented.

Motion Carried

2. Approval of Minutes

Approval of the minutes as listed in the agenda package was deferred; the December 2, 2025, minutes will be circulated for future approval.

3. Presentations

3.1 CBRM REN Economic Development Updates

Mayor Clarke introduced Tyler Cole and Lan Zheng, Economic Development Officers with Cape Breton Partnership, to provide a presentation titled, “CBRM REN Economic Development Update”. The presentation included topics such as the business insights program, new workforce development program for the film and television industry, a new immigration services program, and the Q3 completed report. Discussion took place regarding the business insights program survey, labor cost and workforce challenges, immigration, property tax and business concerns, offshore wind industry and future opportunities, and the impact of provincial budget on workforce development.

For Information Only

3.2 The Donkin Mine Noise – Six Years of Harm: A Request for Council Action

Mayor Clarke introduced Catherine Fergusson, Founding Member of the Cow Bay Environmental Coalition. The representative reviewed the information report regarding the Donkin Mine noise, which is included in the agenda package, and discussed topics such as the Donkin Mine noise, public health obligation and the request for Council action. Discussion took place regarding the noise concern. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Sheppard-Campbell, that the Committee of the Whole recommend to Council to request the Mayor write a letter to the Province of Nova Scotia, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, and the Minister of Health and Wellness regarding the harm residents are experiencing from ongoing noise exposure.

Discussion:

- Update on Donkin Mine noise testing
- Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) inaction
- Request for improved noise testing and government action

Motion Carried

3.3 Sydney Harbour Governance Modernization

Mayor Clarke introduced Lorna Campbell, CEO from the Port of Sydney Development Corporation; and David Bellefontaine, Port Consultant, from Bellefontaine Consulting Services, to provide a presentation titled, “Sydney Harbour Governance Modernization”. The presentation included topics such as the decision requested, background, common governance models, management’s preferred governance model, and letters of support. Discussion took place regarding financial implications, governance and

representation, liability and environment, and the condition of the south dock.

Motion

Moved by Councillor Gordon MacDonald, seconded by Councillor Parsons, that the Committee of the Whole recommend to Council to support the Port of Sydney Development Corporation (PSDC)'s initiative to establish a local harbour authority to strengthen governance and management of Sydney Harbour, and further that CBRM Council recognize PSDC as the unifying proponent to advance discussions with Transport Canada respecting harbour governance and management modernization.

Discussion:

- Governance and economic development
- Local revenue retention and autonomy for funding
- Clarification on revenue and governance
- Support for port development and infrastructure
- Liability protection and representation confirmed

Motion Carried

At 11:49 a.m. Councillor Eldon MacDonald raised a Point of Order regarding governance at the south dock, welcoming new revenue for responsible infrastructure investment, and supporting proper focus on south dock improvements first.

4. Corporate Services Issues

4.1 Proposed Amendments to Building By-law (B-300) for E-permitting

Tyson Simms, Director of Planning and Development, introduced Travis Radtke, Housing Coordinator, to provide a presentation titled, "CBRM Building By-law B-300 Amendments – E-permitting". The presentation included topics such as the background of e-permitting implementation,

summary of key amendments, digital plans of modernized submission requirements, permit duration, additional clarifications, financial implications, conclusion and next steps. Discussion took place regarding system demo of the new system and Council praise for the new system. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Councillor Gillespie, seconded by Deputy Mayor Paruch, that Committee of the Whole recommend to Council to give first reading to the Building By-law(B-300), and schedule a public hearing to consider amendments, as generally set out in Attachment A, which is included in agenda package at an upcoming meeting of Council; and direct staff to review the corresponding fee policy, CBRM Fee Policy: Planning, Development and Building to be returned to Council prior to launch of E-Permitting.

Discussion:

- E-permitting system update
- Paper application access
- Demolition permit requirements
- Online payment options

Motion Carried

Deputy Mayor Paruch assumed the chair at 11:59 a.m.

Mayor Clarke resumed the chair at 12:06 p.m.

4.2 Public Works Winter Operations

John Phalen, Director of Public Works, provided a presentation titled, “Winter Operations November 2026”. The presentation included topics such as jurisdiction, operations, winter sidewalk maintenance, winter parking ban, winter maintenance costs, and equipment. Discussion took place regarding

sidewalk priorities, bus stop accessibility, coordination with province, commercial snow disposal, and fire hydrants and parking bans.

For Information Only

Council recessed at 12:40 p.m.

Council reconvened at 1:02 p.m.

4.3 Implementation of Solid Waste Collection Update

John Phalen, Director of Public Works, reviewed the staff report and recommendation included in the agenda package. The same recommendation was approved at the Council meeting on October 21, 2025, and is included in the March 3, 2026, committee of the whole agenda for clarification purposes. Discussion took place regarding in-house service transition, service levels, staffing and trucks, financial concerns, union notification, transition monitoring (including staffing, costs, maintenance, and overtime), reporting back next year with actual numbers, and tagged garbage.

For Information Only

5. Council Agenda Request

5.1 Sidewalk Snow Clearing Priority

This item has been deferred to the council meeting scheduled for March 10, 2026.

6. Committee Report

6.1 CBRM REN Q3 Report

Councillor Gillespie presented the CBRM REN Q3 report to Council including quarter briefs, business investment and engagement, investment attraction, major project and strategic sectors, talent, immigration and population growth, and community and business events. Discussion took place regarding

provincial budget cuts. The CAO noted potential budget implications for CBRM, but further information is awaited.

For Information Only

7. Correspondence

7.1 Catalone Lake Restoration Update

7.2 Provision of a Blood Donation Service for the CBRM

7.3 Destination Cape Breton Briefing regarding Closure of Port Hasting Visitor Information Centre

7.4 Budget 2026-2027 – Defending Nova Scotia

For Information Only

Meeting adjourned at 1:38 p.m.

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Cecil P. Clarke
Mayor

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Christa Dicks
Municipal Clerk
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