

**Regular Council Meeting
March 17, 2026
Town Council Chambers**

Present

Mayor S. Cameron
Deputy Mayor A. Murray
Councillor L. MacLellan
Councillor D. Roberts
Councillor J. Pelly
Councillor P. McKenna
Councillor J. Sullivan

Also in Attendance

M. Fougere, Municipal Clerk
M. Barkhouse, Director of Corporate Services
K. MacInnis, Director of Community Development
K. Meisner, P. Eng., Director of Infrastructure and Engineering
D. Dunn, Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF)

Absent with Regrets

R. Delorey, CAO

Gallery (online)

1. Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

Mayor S. Cameron called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and acknowledged that the meeting took place in the traditional and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people and recognized that we are all treaty people.

2. Approval of Agenda

2.1 Additions/Amendments

Under New Business, the following items were added.

8.6 African Heritage – Councillor Roberts

8.7 Tourism – Councillor Roberts

Motion: That the Agenda be approved as amended.

Moved by: Councillor MacLellan

Seconded by: Councillor McKenna

Motion carried.

3. Conflict of Interest

Mayor Cameron declared a conflict of interest with respect to Item 9.2

4. Acceptance of Minutes

- 4.1 Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting – February 17, 2026
- 4.2 Minutes of the Special Council Meeting – February 3, 2026
- 4.3 Minutes of the Special Council Meeting – February 10, 2026
- 4.4 Minutes of the Special Council Meeting – February 23, 2026
- 4.5 Minutes of the Special Council Meeting – March 2, 2026
- 4.6 Minutes of the Special Council Meeting – March 9, 2026

The minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held February 17, 2026, and the Special Council Meetings held February 3, February 10, February 23, March 2, and March 9, 2026, were accepted as presented.

5. Presentations/Proclamations

5.1 Recognition - 2025 Engineers Nova Scotia Award Recipients

Councillor MacLellan recognized Dr. Emeka Oguejiofor, FEC, P. Eng. a resident of the Town of Antigonish and Engineering Professor at St. Francis Xavier University, as a recipient of the 2025 Engineers Nova Scotia J.D. Fraser Service Award recognizing his longstanding service and contributions to the engineer's profession.

Dr. Oguejiofor has over 30 years of experience in engineering education and professional service and has served six years (three terms) on the Council of Engineers Nova Scotia. He currently teaches undergraduate engineering students at St. Francis Xavier University.

Dr. Oguejiofor accompanied by his spouse Mavis, was in attendance for the recognition. Council participated in a commemorative photo with Dr. Oguejiofor and his spouse.

Dr. Oguejiofor provided brief remarks of appreciation to Council.

5.2 Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC) Awareness Month – March 2026

The Mayor read a proclamation declaring March 2026 as Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC) Awareness Month in the Town of Antigonish.

Jessica Grande was present and spoke in support of SUDC awareness in recognition of the loss of her nephew Logan on March 18, 2025, due to SUDC.

The Mayor further noted that Town Hall will be illuminated on March 18 in recognition of SUDC Awareness.

6. Business from Committee of the Whole

6.2 Main Street Accessible Parking Evaluation and Design – RFP Results

Council considered the Request for Proposals (RFP) results for the Main Street Accessible Parking Evaluation and Design.

The Mayor noted that Council's agenda package included a memo outlining the evaluation and design process. The RFP was posted on the Nova Scotia Procurement

website, and two submissions were received. Based on the evaluation, staff recommended awarding the contract to EXP as the top-scoring proponent.

Motion: That Town Council approve awarding the contract for the Main Street Accessible Parking Evaluation and Design to EXP at a cost of \$26,624.00 plus HST.

Moved by: Councillor McKenna

Seconded by: Councillor MacLellan

Motion carried.

6.3 Atlantic Challenger Baseball All-Star Series 2026

Council considered a request related to the Atlantic Challenger Baseball All-Star Series 2026. The Mayor noted that the request includes a financial component and would be considered as part of the upcoming fiscal year budget.

Councillor McKenna inquired about the relationship between the request and the Town's Grants program, including levels of sponsorship. The Mayor clarified that Antigonish Challenger Baseball applies separately through the Town Grants program and that this request is outside of the Grants framework.

It was further clarified that any approved sponsorship would be funded from the Sponsorship budget line.

Motion: That Town Council approve the Grand Slam sponsorship for the Atlantic Challenger Baseball All-Star Series 2026 in the amount of \$5,000.00.

Moved by: Councillor Roberts

Seconded by: Deputy Mayor Murray

Motion carried.

7. Business from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the Minutes.

8. New Business

8.1 James River Watershed Stewardship Board – Vacancies

The Mayor stepped down from the Chair due to his role as Chair of the Nominations Committee. Deputy Mayor Murray assumed the Chair.

Deputy Mayor Murray advised Council that two nominations had been received from the Nominations Committee. Background information on each nominee was provided to Council.

The Chair called for further nominations three times. Hearing none, the nominations were closed.

Ronald B Chisholm and Herbert Callahan were appointed to the James River Watershed Stewardship Board for a three-year term, commencing March 17, 2026.

Following the conclusion of this item, the Mayor resumed the Chair.

8.2 Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) Update

Ms. Denise Dunn addressed Council regarding an update on the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF). A memorandum had been circulated in Council's agenda package in advance of the meeting.

Ms. Dunn outlined the purpose of the federal CMHC Housing Accelerator Fund and advised that the Town of Antigonish was awarded approximately \$1.3 million in 2024 to support housing-related initiatives.

Ms. Dunn reported on completed initiatives, including the Municipal Planning Strategy review, modernization of the building permit process, protection of source water, Town Services Grant program along with Antigonish Community Transit, noting that these initiatives were completed on time and under budget.

Key planning amendments resulting from the Municipal Planning Strategy review were highlighted, including building height increases on James Street, zoning changes to permit higher-density residential development along primary corridors, and process changes to permit certain residential developments as-of-right. Ms. Dunn noted that a public hearing was held on January 13 and that the amendments were approved by the Province in February.

Council was advised that a new online e-permitting portal is operational and that feedback on the system is welcome.

Ms. Dunn reviewed the overall timeline for the HAF program, noting that final reporting is anticipated in 2027.

Councillors MacLellan, McKenna, and Sullivan asked questions related to community transit, use of under-budget funds, and source water protection measures. Ms. Dunn and staff responded to the questions.

The Mayor and Council thanked Ms. Dunn for the update.

8.3 Committee Structure

A memorandum from the Municipal Clerk was circulated to Council regarding committee structure. The Municipal Clerk addressed Council on the development of a centralized calendar for internal and external committees and boards of Council, including meeting dates and times, to be posted on the Town's website for the information of Council and the public.

Council expressed support for the initiative, and the Municipal Clerk will work with Council to complete the schedule for publication on the Town's website.

8.4 Town of Antigonish Video Conferencing Policy

A draft Video Conferencing Policy was circulated to Council for review.

The Mayor addressed Council regarding the draft policy. Ms. M. Barkhouse advised Council that the draft policy requires internal staff review and legal review prior to finalization and would be brought back to Council for approval.

Councillor McKenna requested clarification to the wording related to the loss of connection during virtual participation, suggesting that the policy specify that Council members participating virtually be visible by camera at all times.

Councillor Sullivan asked for clarification regarding meeting procedure should quorum not be maintained due to a loss of connection. It was noted that the meeting would be suspended should quorum not be met.

Council agreed to refer the draft Video Conferencing Policy back to staff for further review and revision. Ms. Barkhouse advised that the revised draft policy could return to Council at the next Committee of the Whole meeting.

8.5 Capital Budget

Kyle Meisner, P.Eng., addressed Council and provided an overview of the proposed 2026–2027 Capital Budget, including infrastructure and sidewalk construction projects. Council discussion took place regarding project timelines, construction scheduling, contractor availability, and coordination with other capital projects.

Questions were raised regarding the Greening Drive sidewalk, source water wells, sewer plant front-end work, and the impact of construction sequencing. Council members emphasized the importance of completing projects within the construction season and receiving clear timelines for tendering and award dates. Staff advised that planning would commence following Council approval of the Capital Budget.

Bay Street – Phase 1B

Motion: That Council approve the Bay Street Phase 1B project as part of the 2026–2027 Capital Budget, as presented.

Moved by: Deputy Mayor Murray

Seconded by: Councillor McKenna

Motion carried.

West Street – Phase 1B

Motion: That Council approve the completion of the West Street Phase 1B project as part of the 2026–2027 Capital Budget, as presented.

Moved by: Deputy Mayor Murray

Seconded by: Councillor Sullivan

Motion carried.

Source Water Wells

Motion: That Council approve the Source Water Wells project as part of the 2026–2027 Capital Budget, as presented.

Moved by: Councillor Roberts

Seconded by: Councillor McKenna

Motion carried.

Sewer Plant Front End

Motion: That Council approve the Sewer Plant Front End project as part of the 2026–2027 Capital Budget, as presented.

Moved by: Councillor Pelly

Seconded by: Councillor MacLellan

Motion carried.

Discussion:

Council discussed project updates. Councillor McKenna requested that one-page project information sheets be posted on the Town website.

Sidewalk Capital Projects

Motion: That Council approve the Sidewalk Capital Projects as part of the 2026–2027 Capital Budget, as presented.

Moved by: Councillor MacLellan

Seconded by: Councillor McKenna

Motion carried.

Mayor requested that the Director of Public Works report back on the outcomes and cost savings associated with the sidewalk crew.

James and West Street Project

Motion: That Council approve proceeding with design work, up to but not including tender award, for the James Street projects.

Moved by: Councillor MacLellan

Seconded by: Councillor McKenna

Discussion and clarification took place. Councillor MacLellan made an amendment to the original motion.

Amended Motion: That Council approve to do the design work up to but not including tender award for the James and West Street Project.

Moved by: Councillor MacLellan

Seconded by: Councillor McKenna

Motion carried.

AT Project B – West Street to Church Street

Motion: That Council pursue the Active Transportation Corridor from West Street to Church Street and approve design work up to, but not including, tender award, pending Council approval.

Moved by: Councillor McKenna

Seconded by: Councillor MacLellan

Discussion: Council discussed the proposed approach to design and tendering.

Motion was withdrawn.

Motion: That Council approve the Director of Engineering to present to Council at the May Council meeting, the plan for construction of the AT Project B, West Street to Church Street for Council's approval.

Moved by: Councillor McKenna

Seconded by: Councillor MacLellan

Motion carried.

Council recessed at 7:46 p.m. and reconvened at 7:59 p.m.

8.6 African Heritage

Councillor Roberts requested clarification regarding funding referenced in the staff report related to African Heritage Month.

Ms. K. MacInnis advised that the Town received \$500 from African Nova Scotia Affairs to support the annual African Heritage Month launch event, noting that the Town applies for this funding each year and that the funds are used to offset event costs.

8.7 Tourism

Councillor Roberts added the item to the agenda and referenced information contained in the staff reports regarding the Antigonish Tourism Association (ATA). Councillor Roberts requested clarification regarding the requirement for a Town Council representative on the ATA Board.

The Mayor and the Municipal Clerk advised that the new ATA Director will be presenting to Council at the upcoming May Committee of the Whole meeting and that additional information would be provided at that time.

9. Correspondence

9.1 Antigonish Transit Society (ACTS) – Funding Letter

Accepted as correspondence for information purposes.

9.2 Letter of Support for Antigonish Coalition to End Poverty

Mayor recused himself from the chair for this item. Deputy Mayor Murray assumed the Chair.

Motion: That Town Council authorize to write a similar letter to the office of the Premier in support of the Antigonish Coalition to End Poverty, and that the letter be signed by the Deputy Mayor.

Moved by: Councillor MacLellan

Seconded by: Councillor McKenna

Motion Carried.

9.3 Pictou Antigonish Regional Library (PARL)– Letter from the Library Board Budget 2026/27

Correspondence from the Pictou Antigonish Regional Library (PARL) Board regarding the 2026/27 budget was circulated to Council for information.

Councillor McKenna, who serves on the PARL Board, provided background information and advised that the PARL budget is legislated by the Province of Nova Scotia.

Councillor McKenna noted that anticipated funding increases are not forthcoming and that the Executive Director has taken steps to address budget pressures, including exploring additional fundraising and reducing operating hours. It was noted that the Antigonish Library will no longer be open on Sundays as part of these measures.

Discussions ensued.

9.4 Antigonish Town & County Library and New Glasgow Library – Update

Council received additional correspondence. The information was similar in nature to Item 9.3 and was considered concurrently.

Discussion continued regarding library funding and the funding formula used by the province and participating municipalities. The Mayor requested that the library funding formula be provided to Council for clarification, specifically outlining the respective provincial and municipal contributions.

Councillor McKenna advised that he will look into obtaining the funding formula and provide the information to Council.

10. Staff Reports

Motion: That the staff reports be accepted as presented.

Moved by: Councillor Roberts

Seconded by: Deputy Mayor Murray

Motion carried.

Council moved into an in-camera session at 8:14 pm pursuant to Section 22(2)(c) of the Municipal Government Act to discuss personnel matters.

Motion: That Council move into an in-camera session pursuant to Section 22(2)(c) of the Municipal Government Act.

Moved by: Councillor Roberts

Seconded by: Councillor McKenna

Motion carried.

Council rose from the In-Camera session at 8:42 p.m.

11. Adjournment

With no further business, Councillor McKenna moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 p.m.



Mayor Sean Cameron



Randy Delorey, CAO