

**Special Council Meeting  
February 10, 2026  
Town Council Chambers**

**Present**

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

**Also in Attendance**

R. Delorey, CAO  
M. Fougere, Municipal Clerk  
M. Barkhouse, Director of Corporate Services  
B. Collier, Manager of Accounts  
K. Meisner, P.Eng., Director of Infrastructure and Engineering  
S. Long, Communications and Marketing  
K. MacInnis, Director of Community Development

Gallery (Online & In-Person)

**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Cameron called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM. The mayor 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**

**Motion:** That the Agenda be approved as presented.

Moved by: Councillor MacLellan

Seconded by: Deputy Mayor Murray

**Motion carried.**

**3. New Business**

**3.1 Arena Capital Request**

CAO provided council with background on the Arena request.

**Motion:** That council agree to have the CAO write a letter to the Arena for the Capital

Moved: Councillor Sullivan

Seconded: Councillor McKenna

**Motion carried.**

### **3.2 2025-2026 Electric Utility and Water Budget**

#### **Water Budget**

M. Barkhouse presented an overview of the proposed 2025–2026 Water Utility Budget. The presentation had been circulated to Council in advance.

Council discussed forecast rates, historical net expenses, depreciation, and potential provisions for emergency funding. It was noted that any rate adjustments would require approval from the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board.

Discussion also addressed the current water deficit and anticipated budget pressures, with administration and depreciation costs representing approximately 63% of operating costs. Clarification was provided regarding supervision allocations and insurance coverage.

#### **Electric Utility Budget**

M. Barkhouse presented an overview of the Electric Utility Budget, including four data sets: the approved 2025–2026 budget, current forecast, and January year-to-date actuals.

Revenue projections are based on regulated rates and consumption levels, with no rate changes incorporated beyond those already approved.

Power purchase costs remain the largest operating expense, representing approximately 83% of total operating costs, consistent with historical experience for municipal electric utilities.

Council discussed utility reserves, the previous use of reserves for the Grid Modernization project, and the ongoing rate review process with the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board. Staff noted that future rate adjustments will follow the updated flow-through rate process aligned with Nova Scotia Power.

Questions were raised regarding wholesale rate increases and the financial impact while awaiting regulatory approval.

Note: The budget presentation will be revisited at a future Audit Committee meeting.

### **3.3 2026 -2027 Assessment Rates**

M. Barkhouse presented the proposed 2026–2027 assessment rates:

- Residential: 1.30
- Commercial: 2.90
- Resource: 1.30
- Residential impact (2026 capped assessment): 2.60%

The presentation included an overview of residential, commercial, and resource assessments, projected property tax revenues, and Grants in Lieu of Taxes (GIL). Comparative information between the 2025–2026 and 2026–2027 assessments and tax rates was also provided.

Council discussed:

- Charging new developments and short-term rentals (e.g., Airbnb) at commercial rates, with clarification on provincial regulations.
- Potential revenue loss from vacant leased units.

The Mayor welcomed back Kate McInnis from maternity leave and thanked Shannon Long for serving as Acting Director of Community Development during the leave.

#### **4. In-Camera Session**

Motion: That Council move In-Camera at 7:21 p.m. pursuant to Section 22(2)(e) and Section 22(2)(a) of the Municipal Government Act.

Moved by: Councillor Roberts

Seconded by: Deputy Mayor Murray

**Motion carried.**

4.1 Contract Negotiations (MGA Section 22(2)(e))

4.2 Acquisition, sale, lease and security of municipal property (MGA Section 22(2)(a))

Council rose from the In-Camera session at 9:54 p.m.

#### **5. Adjournment**

With no further business, Deputy Mayor Murray moved for adjournment at 9:54p.m.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Sean Cameron



\_\_\_\_\_  
Randy Delorey, CAO