



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS TOWN HALL  
MARCH 17, 2026

A. CALL TO ORDER – ROLLCALL

B. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

C. CELL PHONE USE DURING MEETINGS

D. AGENDA

D.1 Additions/Deletions

None.

D.2 Approval

Motion:

*Moved by Mayor Bartlett and seconded by Councillor Foote that the agenda be approved as presented.*

Motion carried

E. DECLARATIONS OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None

F. DELEGATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

None

G. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

G.1 February 17, 2006

Motion:

*Moved by Councillor Foote and seconded by Councillor McCormick, that the minutes of February 17, 2026 be accepted as presented.*

Motion carried

H. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

H.1 None

## I. STAFF REPORTS

### I.1 Director of Finance a) Report

Projected year-end operating surplus of ~\$70,307, with higher revenues (deed transfer tax, tax interest) and increased expenses (fire protection, signage, equipment repairs). Staff reported that a Project Monitoring Report for the Carleton Street PCAP Grant was submitted to the province requesting an extension beyond March 31, 2026, and a response has not yet been received.

Staff have begun testing a pre-authorized debit (PAD) payment option for property taxes with one taxpayer. If the process is successful during the April interim billing period, the program may be expanded. Pre-authorized debit payments for water billing are currently operating smoothly.

Information was provided regarding a recent municipal cybersecurity webinar, emphasizing staff awareness, verification of email sources, and the use of multi-factor authentication. Multi-factor authentication is currently in place for remote access to the Town's accounting system.

The Town's 2025 annual report required under the Personal Information International Disclosure Protection Act (PIIDPA) has been submitted.

Staff are preparing the Town's application for the HST Offset Program, which is due April 2.

The Town has been asked to provide documentation supporting a \$42,000 Hurricane Dorian disaster assistance claim submitted in 2019 as part of a provincial audit review.

Regarding the Municipal Capital Growth Program (MCGP) Grant, staff have submitted a progress report requesting a change in project scope and an extension to March 31, 2027, to allow for the installation of two generators at the wastewater treatment plant.

An update was also provided on municipal rental units. Rent at 53 Mount Street (DATS) is current except for March, pending direction regarding a cheque received. Rent for the Food Bank unit at the same address was outstanding as of March 5, 2026. Rent for the residential dwelling is current.

### b) Monthly Financial Statement – Operating and Capital Budget

Year-to-date revenues totaled **\$5,753,827** compared to a budget of **\$5,764,979**, while total expenditures were **\$5,250,982** compared to a budget of **\$5,466,315**. This resulted in an **operating surplus of \$502,845**. After financing and transfers, the Town shows a **year-to-date surplus of \$213,501**.

Staff noted several variances within the operating budget, including **higher revenues from deed transfer tax and interest on unpaid taxes**, as well as **increased expenses related to equipment repairs, fire protection, and street signage**.

The year-end operating projection currently estimates a **surplus of approximately \$70,307**.

### c) Monthly Financial Statement - Capital

This report outlined expenditures and progress on various capital projects including fire department equipment, infrastructure upgrades, sidewalks, generators, and other municipal improvements. Total capital expenditures year-to-date were **\$2,709,302.29** against an annual capital budget of **\$5,262,624.00**.

## **I.2 Director of Public Works**

### **a) Report**

Staff completed the **2025 Wastewater Annual Report** and began preparation of the **2025 Digby Water Commission Annual Report**.

Work also included development of a traffic plan for the Lobster Bash, review of insurance listings, and requesting a quote for replacement of the garage door at **13 Queen Street**.

An updated **2026/27 Operating Budget template** was provided to the Director of Finance.

For the **Digby Water Commission**, staff cleared snow around hydrants, completed quarterly monitoring repairs, and **Nova Scotia Power replaced power poles at wells 7, 8, and 9**.

Routine work orders were completed, water cuts were topped up, and well roads and Windmill Road were plowed.

Equipment updates included replacement of a broken window on the **2019 backhoe**. The loader plow was damaged during snow removal, with repairs estimated at **\$11,000** and parts expected within **five to seven weeks**. Rust spots on the loader were sanded, primed, and painted.

The **Transfer Station** reported **671 clients in February 2026**, compared to **854 in January 2026**.

## **I.3 Special Constable/Bylaw Officer**

### **a) Protective Services Report**

An **RCMP request for CCTV footage** from Water Street was noted; however, camera coverage in the centre of downtown remains limited due to the current positioning of the camera near Ricardo's storefront.

Parking conditions on **Water Street** have improved following discussions with a local business owner regarding staff parking, and no further complaints have been received.

Staff reported **13-point changes, one segment change, and nine civic address changes** related to the renaming of **Penny Lane**, and notices have been issued to affected residents.

Two copies of a new **Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)** addressing unexpected absences have been provided to crossing guards for review and acknowledgement.

No issues were reported regarding **dog control, vending licences, or solid waste management**.

Under **By-Law Enforcement**, staff reported that a drainage concern at **58 First Avenue** has been addressed, with water now redirected away from the roadway.

## **I.4 Dangerous & Unsightly Administrator**

### **a) Dangerous or Unsightly Premises Reports**

The Administrator of Dangerous and Unsightly Premises submitted a report dated March 5, 2026.

An inspection was conducted at **159 Queen Street** on February 10, 2026. The inspection noted the portable toilet had been removed and the toilet on site was operational. No containers or evidence of human waste were observed during the inspection.

A subsequent complaint was received on February 27 indicating containers of human waste had been observed on the property by **Nova Scotia Power**. Staff advised that discussions with legal counsel may be required to determine potential options and the appropriate level of by-law involvement given the ongoing civil dispute.

**I.5 Deputy Chief Administrative Officer  
a) Report**

During February, staff attended meetings including Council, Transit Consultation, Senior Management Team, Executive Committee, Joint Council, Committee of the Whole, the Digby Water Commission, Special Council, and an **Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia** website meeting with ATN Strategies and Aptitude Digital.

Under the **Housing Accelerator Fund**, staff reported that information has been drafted for the website launch of the Affordable Housing Grant. A digital survey was also distributed to applicants who submitted development permits within the last two years to gather feedback related to development control and planning application fees. Feedback received will be used in reviewing the initiative.

Regarding the **Nova Scotia Transit Research Incentive Program (NS TRIP)**, the final report, including the approved Transit Feasibility Study and financial report, has been submitted and staff are awaiting release of the remaining holdback.

**I.6 Chief Administrative Officer  
a) Report**

Two development permits were issued in February for construction of a triplex at **55 Sydney Street** and a single-family dwelling on **Second Avenue**.

Three building permits were issued for construction of a triplex at **55 Sydney Street**, renovation of a retail store at **50 Water Street**, and renovation of commercial space at **87 Warwick Street**.

No new inspections were conducted in February; however, follow-up inspections were completed at **40 Water Street** and **87 Water Street**, where deficiencies had been corrected. Deficiencies were also identified at **87 Water Street** and **92 Water Street**, with 30 days provided for compliance.

Regarding the **Nova Scotia Regional Assessment Board** Fire Inspection Appeal, the appeal was dismissed; however, the applicant has appealed the decision to the **Nova Scotia Court of Appeal**, and there is no further update at this time

The **Digby Fire Department** responded to fourteen calls during the month of February.

**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Councillor Foote that the reports be accepted as presented.***

**Motion carried**

**J. CORRESPONDANCE**

**J.1 Letter of Support for Antigonish Coalition to End Poverty**

**Committee gave direction to the CAO that staff draft a letter of support for the Antigonish Coalition to End Poverty on behalf of the Town of Digby.**

## **J.2 Digby General Auxiliary**

The Committee noted that organizations receiving grants from the Town are required to report on the use of those funds. The Town expressed its appreciation to the Digby General Auxiliary for providing a submission outlining how the allocated funds were utilized.

**Committee gave direction to the CAO that staff should provide a list of Grant applicants that have not submitted an outline on how they allocated the previous years rewarded grant funds.**

## **K. NOTICE OF MOTION**

**None**

## **L. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NEW BUSINESS AGENDA ITEMS**

**None**

## **M. NEW BUSINESS**

### **M.1 Council Reports Policy Review**

The policy establishes requirements for elected officials to provide reports outlining their activities related to Town business in order to maintain accountability and transparency. The committee is noticing a trend where committee reports are not being submitted and that trend will need to stop. We need the reports. Another trend we have noticed is the late application for items to be placed on the agenda which is not allowing our committee members to do the necessary research to form an informed decision on subject being discussed the day we have the meetings.

The policy requires elected officials to submit monthly reports detailing attendance at Council, Committee of the Whole, committees, boards, and commissions, as well as events and conferences attended. Committee chairs or representatives are also required to provide updates on committee activities affecting Council decision-making. The policy further requires that **new business be introduced through a Request for Decision (RFD) form**, submitted seven working days prior to a Committee of the Whole meeting for review by the CAO and Executive Committee.

### **M.2 Digby & Area Senior's Safety Society-CORE Funding**

Council received a funding request from the Digby and Area Seniors' Safety Society for **\$23,600** for the 2026/2027 fiscal year in support of the Society's core programming. The request continues the incremental increases in annual funding previously provided by the Town. Council was also provided with the Society's draft 2026/2027 operating budget, outlining projected revenues of approximately **\$96,050** and expenses of **\$93,152**.

#### **Motion:**

***Moved by Mayor Bartlett and seconded by Councillor McCormick that the request from the Digby and Area Seniors' Safety Society for \$23,600 for the 2026/2027 fiscal year in support of the Society's core programming with incremental increases in annual funding be brought forward to Council for decision.***

**Motion carried**

### **M.3 Letter Regarding Armory**

A member of Council raised the matter of the local armory facility in Digby and the potential importance of maintaining or strengthening federal support for such infrastructure in light of the current geopolitical climate and evolving Canada–United States relations. It was suggested that Council consider preparing correspondence to the appropriate federal representatives to express the Town’s interest in the continued presence and potential future use of the armory in Digby.

**Council discussed the matter and agreed that Councillor McCormick will draft the necessary letters to the appropriate departments within the Government and report back any progress.**

### **M.4 Current Visitors Information Centre Operations**

The Committee was advised that the Visitor Information Centre is anticipated to open on May 24. The CAO could not confirm that provincial funding will continue to be provided for the current year. It was further noted that recent provincial changes to tourism funding levels will not impact the operation of the Visitor Information Centre this fiscal year. CAO will update as soon as more information becomes available regarding funding.

## **N. IN-CAMERA-LEGAL & PERSONNEL**

### **Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Mayor Bartlett that the committee go IN CAMERA for Legal & Personnel matters.***

**Motion Carried**

### **Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Mayor Bartlett that the committee go out of IN CAMERA.***

**Motion Carried**

## **O. ADJOURNMENT**

### **Motion:**

***Moved by Mayor Bartlett and seconded by Councillor McCormick that we adjourn the meeting at 8:00 PM***

**Motion Carried**

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Chair

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Chief Administrative Officer