

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
COUNCIL CHAMBERS TOWN HALL
MAY 19, 2026, 6:00 PM
MINUTES**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Deputy Mayor Paul Saulnier (Chair)
Councillor Rick Foote
Councillor Shane Weir
Councillor William McCormick
Mayor Mike Bartlett

STAFF PRESENT:

Tom Ossinger, Chief Administrative Officer
Leslie Brinton, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Karen Morrell, Administrative Assistant

REGRETS:

A. CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL

B. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

C. CELL PHONE USE DURING MEETINGS

D. AGENDA

- D.1 Additions/Deletions
 - Addition: M2 Legal
 - L.4 Legion Project Briefing
- D.2 Approval

Motion:

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Councillor Weir that the agenda for May 19, 2026, be approved as presented.

Motion carried

E. DECLARATIONS OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None

F. DELEGATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

F.1 Legion Project Briefing-Yolande Donaldson

“Remember Them” Project, a remembrance initiative created to honour Canadian Armed Forces members who died while serving overseas and are buried abroad. The project was initiated by Korean War Veteran Bob Garron and is intended as a memorial tribute rather than a fundraiser. The Legion’s goal is to have the display placed in public buildings for year-round viewing. Pricing information was provided for both large and small display sizes.

Motion:

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Mayor Bartlet recommend to Council that we approve the purchase of one (1) “Remember Them” memorial display from the Legion Project for placement at the Digby Station, at a cost of up to \$122.00 plus applicable taxes.

Motion carried

G. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

G.1 April 20 2026

Motion:

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Councillor Weir, that the minutes of April 20, 2026 be accepted as presented.

Motion carried

H. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

H.1 Municipality of the District of Barrington

Municipality of the District of Barrington is concerned about power rate increases that are unfair to residents and trust in Nova Scotia Power has been shaken. They are asking Nova Scotia Power for a five-year rate freeze and for government to consider public ownership to better protect residents and a thorough exploration of returning Nova Scotia Power to public ownership, ensuring that residents' interests are prioritized over corporate profits. This letter is our letter of support.

H.2 Request-Queen Street Acquisition

At this time the town of Digby will not be selling the town owned lot at Queen Street and the response to the request has been mailed out.

I. STAFF REPORTS

I.1 Director of Finance

a) Report

The first draft of the Capital Budget had previously been presented to Council, with a second amended draft presented on May 11, 2026. The Operating Budget first draft has been completed and reviewed with senior management, with one remaining item outstanding from the Director of Public Works before presentation to Council later this month or early next month.

b) Monthly Financial Statement –Operating and Capital Budget

Committee of the Whole reviewed the Town of Digby Non-Consolidated General Operating Fund Statement of Operations for the year ended March 31, 2026. Total revenues to date were reported at \$5,885,815 compared to a budget of \$5,764,979. Total expenditures were reported at \$5,576,529 compared to the budgeted amount of \$5,466,315. Increases were noted primarily within protective services and transportation services.

c) Monthly Financial Statement - Capital

Total Capitol Budget \$5,262,624. The year to date Expenditures are \$2,530,495.99. The remaining budget variance is approximately \$2.73 million under budget. Several infrastructure and fire department projects account for the largest portions of the remaining capital variance.

I.2 Director of Public Works

a) Report

A major highlight of the report was the continued engineering work for the proposed watermain extension from Bel Air Drive to Industrial Drive, along with ongoing upgrades to Lift Station 8.

A noticeable increase in requests for new water and sewer service connections compared to previous years, which may indicate increased residential or commercial development activity within the Town.

Other activities noted:

- repairing a water leak on Water Street,
- replacing large water meters at the High School and doctors' offices at the Medical Clinic
- hydrant maintenance and identification upgrades, and routine inspections and flushing. all water quality testing results came back clean, with zero coliform and E. coli detections throughout the distribution system and wells. litter clean-up,
- park and green space preparation,
- shoulder maintenance,
- servicing seasonal equipment, and wharf area clean-up.

Public washrooms have now reopened full-time for the season and are operating seven days per week. The report showed a significant seasonal increase in transfer station usage: there were 1,338 transfer station clients, and 1,299 household hazardous waste drop-offs during April.

This sharp increase reflects heavier spring clean-up activity and could have future operational or budget impacts if higher usage trends continue.

Two notable capital projects were reported as completed or substantially completed: the trail section off Montague and Mount Street, and aggregate work for the Culloden sidewalk project

I.3 Special Constable/Bylaw Officer

a) Protective Services Report

- crossing guard resignation received; recruitment to be initiated.
- multiple solid waste complaints in Queen Street area and other locations; several properties issued notices or directed to clean.
- Several property investigations ongoing relating to waste, property standards, and animal control.
- Rat concerns at 13 Maiden Lane linked to waste management practices; corrective actions directed.
- By-Law Officer attending Atlantic By Law Officer Association conference May 11–15 including training in enforcement, mental health, and evidence gathering; limited field inspections during this period.

I.4 Dangerous & Unsightly Administrator

a) Dangerous or Unsightly Premises Reports

Dangerous and unsightly file at 159 Queen Street resulted in partial compliance; Order to Remedy issued with a 30-day compliance period.

I.5 Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
a) Report

Housing Accelerator Fund progress: Applications received for 5 missing middle housing units for Sydney Street and Queen Street.

- \$37,500 earmarked for April approvals; program total to date \$90,000
- Canada Summer Jobs approved: Funding confirmed for 4 positions; 2 gardeners and 2 VIC staff totaling \$9,386
- Alertable system update: 504 subscribers; majority using mobile app 78.2%
- Staff participation in multiple regional meetings and emergency management exercises
- Municipal award nomination submitted for By-Law Enforcement Officer at the Atlantic By Law Officer Association (ABOA) Conference.

I.6 Chief Administrative Officer Report
a) Report

The Development Officer issued four development permits in April. Seven building permits were also issued for residential construction, renovations, repairs, and decks.

Three fire inspections were completed, with deficiencies identified. Property owners were given 30 days to complete corrective actions.

The appeal to the Nova Scotia Regional Appeals Board (NSRAB) was dismissed and has now been appealed to the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal. No further update is available at this time.

The Fire Department responded to 12 calls during April

The Supreme Court matter regarding the removal of a shed from the West Street right-of-way has been postponed due to service issues. A new court date has not yet been scheduled.

The Town is exploring an Expression of Interest application under the Build Communities Strong Fund (BCSF) for potential funding of the King Street infrastructure project between Prince William Street and Raquette Road. Preliminary design and costing work for the project has already been completed.

The CAO has also prepared information regarding the taxable status of the Digby Wharf property, which will be discussed in in-camera session.

Motion:

Moved by Councillor Foote and seconded by Mayor Bartlet that we have reviewed the program details of the Build Communities Strong Fund (BCSF) and submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to the federal government.

Motion carried

Motion:

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

Motion carried

J. CORRESPONDANCE

J.1 None

K. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NEW BUSINESS AGENDA ITEMS

None

L. NEW BUSINESS

L.1 HR 2014-13 Overtime/Standby/Callout Policy Amendment

Public works discussed at senior management amendment is we would like to remove the highlighted portion, Sunday over time. We have found that the wording is outdated and unfair. If you are scheduled for Sunday you get regular time but if you are called in on a Sunday you get a premium wage for your work. At the time that this policy was drafted it was based on a five-day operation however in present times the need to work the seven days of the week is now the norm.

Motion:

Moved by Mayor Bartlett and seconded by Councillor McCormick the committee recommends that HR 2014-13 Overtime/Standby/Callout Policy amendments be brought forward to the next council meeting

Motion carried

L.2 Administration Policy #2025-05 Council Meetings & Proceedings

Time, place and meetings were overlooked when we revamped the policy, add time place and date of meetings.

Amendment council meetings and proceedings

Motion:

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Mayor Bartlett that we move the Administration Policy #2025-05 Council Meetings & Proceedings amendment to the council for approval.

Motion carried

L.3 Banner Committee-Deputy Mayor Saulnier

Meeting scheduled for May 27, 6:00 PM.

L.4 Legion Project Briefing-Yolande Donaldson

Motion:

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Mayor Bartlett recommend to Council that we approve the purchase of one (1) "Remember Them" memorial display from the Legion Project for placement at the Digby Station, at a cost of up to \$122.00 plus applicable taxes.

Motion carried

M. IN-CAMERA-Contracts

Motion:

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Councillor Weir that the committee go IN CAMERA for Contracts.

Motion Carried

Motion:

Moved by Councillor and seconded by Councillor that the committee go out of IN CAMERA.

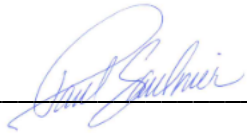
Motion Carried

N. ADJOURNMENT

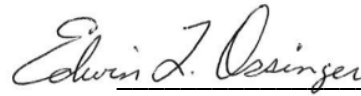
Motion:

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

Motion Carried

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Gaultier", is written over a horizontal line.

Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edwin J. Ossinger", is written over a horizontal line.

Chief Administrative Officer