A Meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held in Council Chambers at Baddeck on July 7, 2025, at 9:00am with Warden Organ in the Chair.

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

District #1 - Donna Matheson-Lefort

District #2 - Perla MacLeod, Deputy Warden

District #3 - Jess Kerr

District #4 - Rosella Born

District #5 - Fraser Patterson

District #6 – Tim Donovan

District #7 - Jackie Organ, Warden

District #8 – Wanda Hennick

STAFF PRESENT

Leanne MacEachen, CAO

Steff MacLeod, Municipal Clerk and Executive Assistant, Recorder

Morgan MacInnis, Summer Intern

Alix Redden, CFO

Jessica Klein, Digital Communications Administrator

ABSENT

CALL TO ORDER

Warden Organ called the meeting to order and presented the agenda for approval.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councillor Donovan requested an In Camera Meeting to discuss a personnel issue.

On Motion of Councillor Matheson LeFort seconded by Councillor Kerr to approve the Agenda for July 7, 2025, with the noted changes.

Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the June 16th, 2025, and June 19, 2025, Special Meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

On Motion of Councillor Donavan seconded by Councillor Born to approve the Regular Council Minutes of June 16th 2025.

Motion Carried.

On Motion of Councillor Hennick seconded by Councillor Donovan to approve the Special Meeting of Council Minutes of June 19th 2025.

Motion Carried.

COUNCIL DISCUSSIONS

- CAPE BRETON UNIVERISTY REQUEST FOR $35,000

The request was discussed and some of the comments made were:

- Timing of ask was unfortunate as it came in after Budget was approved so Council suggested funding $15,000 of the $35,000 ask in the current fiscal year.
- Discussion took place around where the money will come from and CAO MacEachen suggested it may come out of Council Special Projects, if there is room on that line item. CAO will confirm and let Council know.
- Important for Cape Breton Island to have a medical school.

On Motion of Deputy Warden MacLeod seconded by Councillor Patterson to direct staff to look into how much is still available out of the Council Special Projects Budget.

Motion Carried.

- CAPE BRETON PARTNERSHIP INVESTOR SUMMIT SPONSORSHIP REQUEST

On Motion of Councillor Kerr seconded by Councillor Matheson-LeFort to sponsor the Cape Breton Partnership's Social Cruise for the 2025 Investor Summit for $3,250.00.

Motion Carried.

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

DISTRICT 1

Councillor Matheson-LeFort highlighted special events happening in Wagmatcook:

- Pop-Up Bike Hub July 29th 2-6pm
- Wagmatcook Fishing Derby
- 2025 Mi'kmaw Summer Games in Wagmatcook August 15-24.
- Food Handlers Course July 13th.
- 2025 Mi'kmaw World Waltes Championship July 9th – 10th

DISTRICT 2

On Motion of Deputy Warden MacLeod seconded by Councillor Matheson-LeFort to contact the Province about ATV access on Public Roads.

Motion Carried.

On Motion of Deputy Warden MacLeod seconded by Councillor Kerr to take $1,000.00 from District 2 Budget for Baddeck Nordic Club.

Motion Carried.

- Deputy Warden MacLeod requested $600.00 from District 2 Budget for the Baddeck Golf Society.

DISTRICT 3

- The Waterfront Baddeck project is progressing well.

- This years Prom & Graduation at Baddeck Academy was very well done. Wishing all our graduate's success in their future endeavours.
- A very successful July 1st celebration in the Village was held. Myself, Deputy Warden MacLeod, Councillor Born, and MLA Dianne Timmins took part in the parade. Huge crowd around for the day.
- Tourist season is here. Hoping locals will watch out for visiting friends. They are not always paying attention.

DISTRICT 4

Constituent Communication

- I've recently heard from residents and a local business on a few issues. A business had concerns about garbage pick-up, and I clarified the policy and procedures we have in place.
- A resident raised concerns about brush along the roadway from the North Shore to Wreck Cove, I've connected with Provincial Public Works, and they're working on a solution.
- There were also reports of potholes and sinkholes along Baddeck Bay Road and through St. Ann's, which have been passed along to the appropriate provincial department for follow-up.

Baddeck Academy Graduation – June 27

- I had the honour of attending Baddeck Academy's 2025 graduation ceremony with Councillor Kerr. It was a proud day for students, families, and staff, and I was pleased to help present awards on behalf of the Municipality. Congratulations again to the grads!

KitchenFest – June 27 to July 5

- KitchenFest once again brought Gaelic music, language, and tradition to life across our region. Organized by the Gaelic College, it was a successful event that drew strong support from both locals and visitors. It's great to see this vibrant celebration continue to grow each year.

Canada Day Parade – July 1 in Baddeck

- I joined fellow councillors Kerr, Deputy Warden Macleod, and MLA Dianne Timmins for the Canada Day parade in Baddeck. It was great to see so many residents out and we were happy to have supported the Baddeck parade.

Gaelic College Fundraiser – July 2

- On July 2, I attended a traditional cod dinner in support of the Gaelic College. It was a well-attended evening, helping to support the College's vital work in preserving the Gaelic heritage.

65th Wedding Anniversary – July 5

- I was honoured to attend Judy and John MacDonald's 65th anniversary celebration in Englishtown. It was a lovely gathering, and I was pleased to present a certificate on behalf of the Municipality.

Upcoming events:

- Weekly Ceilidh – Throughout July
- Traditional ceilidhs are taking place Tuesday and Friday evenings at St. Anns Bay United Church, and Wednesdays at the Gaelic College. These local events celebrate local music, hospitality, and culture.
- Englishtown Pub nights are back throughout the summer, next Pub Night is July 9th. Future dates will be posted on the Englishtown Community Hall Facebook page.

Temporary Washroom Support Program

- During budget deliberations, Council agreed to include funding to help address the ongoing need for additional temporary washrooms during tourist season. Now that the funds are in place, I'm bringing this motion forward to request that staff create a way for local businesses to apply for that support. We had previously discussed a cost-sharing model, and while I'm not instructing how it's implemented, I hope that approach may be considered again.
- This process could include a cost-sharing approach, as discussed in my previous motion, and should aim to be available as soon as possible—ideally within July—to support rural businesses during peak tourist season.

On Motion of Councillor Born seconded by Councillor Kerr to direct municipal staff to develop and implement a process for local businesses to apply for funding under the temporary washroom support line item included in this year's budget.

Motion Carried.

DISTRICT 5

- Successful Canada day event at Ross Ferry Marine Park. Congratulations to the community and the Stewardship Society who manages it.

DISTRICT 6

- Local businesses are having people drop off their garbage in their bins and then they have to pay for any extra garbage. CAO MacEachen said in the past, some businesses and residents have put locks on their garbage bins and also suggested businesses purchase bag tags to allow for more bags to be collected. It does still mean that they need to be sorted properly.

- On June 28, IDS hosted a children's play day and BBQ at Freshwater Cove. They had outdoor games, swimming in the freshwater lake, and BBQ snacks with cold refreshments. It was a very popular and fun day for all involved. Great day for kids and adults alike.
- Canada Day Celebrations – The Keltic Lodge hosted a team scavenger hunt followed up by a flag raising (complete with our local RCMP in their Red Serge uniforms). They also provided refreshments and a Canada Day cake. Everyone had a great time. Following the opening at the Keltic Lodge, Cape Smokey hosted their annual "Rising Star" talent competition (amazing talent on full display). Canada Day Gondola rides, and of course more great food and drink. Cape Breton Highlands Golf Club hosted their first ever Canada Day Team Scramble Tournament. Lots of laughs with great folks on a great day.
- On July 5th Doris Warren Memorial Lobster Supper was hosted at the Royal Canadian Legion from 4:00-6:00 pm and they were sold out very quickly.
- On July 9th the Grand Opening Ceremonies and ribbon cutting for the Ingonish Library will be held at 6:00 pm.
- On July 19th the Grand Opening Deck Party at the Royal Canadian Legion in Ingonish will be held. Live music by amazing local group "Trail Bound." BBQ and door prizes will be available, with a dance to follow. It's going to be a great time.

DISTRICT 7

- The library in Ingonish is opening at its new location at the Ingonish Volunteer Fire Department building, encouraged residents to check it out.
- Paving work is causing frustration but please have patience
- Work on Halfway Brook Bridge is almost done.
- Coyote siting, DNRR has been contacted.
- Pinkalicious auction was held over the weekend, and it was a success.

DISTRICT 8

- Canada Day was busy around district 8 with lots of activities from one end to the other. John Cabot Day was held on July 6th with exciting news coming out from the Cabot Society that they acquired the cannon and sword that was given away many years ago. With some testing they are hopeful that this could be history changing. More information to follow. Was a great day with over 250 in attendance. Would like to see a proper stair way there, many people fall or have problems getting to the beach. It was recognized that this is a provincial beach.
- Crab Derby and Crab Feast will be held on July 20th at the Bay St. Lawrence Fire Department. The Crab Derby starts at 8:00 am and the Crab or Ham dinner will start at 12:00 pm.

- The annual Summer Fest and boat parade will be held on August 2nd – it will be a fun day for all. For more information contact Amy ay the Bay St. Lawerence Community Center.
- The North Highlands Community Museum have a full schedule of events for July and August on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Check out their web page or Facebook page for more information.
- The Markland also has a busy event page with lots of musical talent this summer.
- Hopefully road construction will be done soon. Looks like it's a busy tourist season so far.

MOTIONS/RESOLUTIONS

Councillor Matheson-LeFort requested to table a motion for Basic Income to the next session to enable Council to have more time to research it and would like to invite Basic Income Nova Scotia representatives to come to council to address this.

CAO AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Reached out to Kathleen at ACAP for next steps.
- Copies of MPS/LUB have been signed and submitted to the Province
- Grant cheques have been processed and are being sent out.
- Notice will be in water bills regarding adding "W" to account # for online payments - this was discussed before, but implementation was delayed
- Preparing for next tax sale which will be in August and a tender sale
- Waste collection staff will be increasing curbside rejections due to high levels of contamination within garbage/recycling/organics.
- We have been receiving complaints about rejected material at shared garbage boxes. If the garbage box does not indicate the civic numbers sharing the box, our staff have no way of knowing if the material is from one household or five. Residents must indicate the number of households on a shared box.
- Residents are using garbage boxes that are too deep for our staff to access all material. If our staff are unable to reach material inside the box, it will be left behind.
- We are now tracking sharps found in the blue bags and organics. Sharps (hypodermic needles) have been increasingly present in recycling across the province. DivertNS has asked all sites to track and report the number of sharps being improperly disposed of. Improper disposal of needles puts our staff at risk and is a major concern.
- It's great that residents are volunteering to clean up the look-offs along Kelly's Mountain. They're putting the material in black bags which are not accepted in Victoria County. Please let us know when a job has been done, so we can arrange pickup.
- As part of the Signage and Wayfinding strategy project, Fathom consulting will be hosting some stakeholder engagement sessions next week around the county as well as having meetings and discussions with other groups and organizations affected by

signage issues in Victoria County. This is part of the first steps in gathering feedback and identifying continuous and common challenges.
- First quarter water meter reads are getting underway.
- Work underway to design and build two new trailheads to assist with parking safety and trail accessibility. One will be at Hunter's Mountain and the next one will be at the Oregon road entrance to the highlands trails system.
- There has been an ask by a resident for the County to administer a Road Association. This would mean collecting a Road Levy on the tax bills from residents that own properties on the road. We would need a Bylaw developed if this is something Council is interested in.

Council requested this group to come in and discuss what their plan is and provide more information. CAO MacEachen will ask the group to come in and provide a report to Council on Private Roads.

- I'm sure you all received a letter from Digby County Re: Road budget. Wondering if there is an appetite for us to send one as well?

Council agreed for CAO to send a letter.

- WWTP Update - we have placed an order on a NewTerra MBR WWTP. Plant is set to arrive September'ish. It is a modular system. We are focussing first on the large development area, then expanding out.
- Had a meeting with Wagmatcook Chief, and Warden. Chief requested a letter be sent to him to keep him up to date on progress of the construction of the system, so he has info for when he attends AFN meetings, if it was to be discussed. Letter has been sent to Chief Norman. They also are interested in having a Joint Council session.

On Motion of Councillor Matheson-LeFort seconded by Councillor Hennick that staff will arrange a joint meeting with Council and Wagmatcook Band Council

Motion Carried.

IN-CAMERA

On Motion of Councillor Donovan seconded by Councillor Born to go In Camera to discuss a personnel issue.

Motion Carried.

On Motion of Councillor Donovan seconded by Councillor Matheson-LeFort to come out of In-Camera and accept the recommendations from the In-Camera meeting.

Motion Carried.

QUESTIONS FROM GALLERY

None.

NEXT MEETNG

August 11th, 2025, at 9:00am.

ADJOURN

Councillor Organ made a motion to adjourn at 11:39am.