A Meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held in Council Chambers at Baddeck on November 17, 2025, at 10:00am with Warden Organ in the Chair.

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

District #1 - Donna Matheson-Lefort

District #2 - Perla MacLeod, Deputy Warden

District #4 - Rosella Born

District #5 - Fraser Patterson

District #6 – Tim Donovan

District #7 - Jackie Organ, Warden

District #8 – Wanda Hennick

STAFF PRESENT

Alix Redden, Acting CAO

Steff MacLeod, Municipal Clerk and Executive Assistant, Recorder

Ursula Melski, Manager of Communications

Jessica Klein, Digital Communications Administrator

ABSENT

District #3 - Jess Kerr

Leanne MacEachen, CAO

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

On Motion of Councillor Hennick seconded by Deputy Warden MacLeod to approve the Agenda for November 17, 2025.

Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the October 20, 2025, Meeting of Council of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

On Motion of Councillor Donovan seconded by Councillor Hennick to approve the Regular Council Minutes of October 20, 2025.

Motion Carried.

Warden Organ gave thoughts and prayers to Councillor Kerr and his family on the loss of his wife Beverly.

PRESENTATIONS

NET ZERO COMMUNITY BUILDING PRESENTATION – ANDY THOMPSON AND LIAM COOK

Mr. Thompson and Mr. Cook gave a presentation and some highlights include:

- Importance of community halls but how they are facing fewer volunteers, increased energy poverty, neglected maintenance, closures and sell offs.
- Challenges with upgrades include:
  - Staff Capacity for Funding and Retrofits
  - Subject Matter Experts on Net Zero Energy
  - Bridge Financing
  - Project Funding
  - Access To Larger Grant Opportunities
  - Local Qualified/Trusted Contractor Network
- Vision for Net Zero Adoption:
  - Capture Community Interest
  - Keep Upgrades Affordable
  - Use Proven Retrofit Methods
  - Support Local Contractors
  - Increase Community Resiliency

Council thanked the presenters for their time and informative presentation.

Curtis Tobin, the new Economic Development Coordinator with the Cape Breton Partnership introduced himself to council and will be attending a future meeting to explain his role further.

COUNCIL DISCUSSIONS

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

DISTRICT 1

Remembrance Day Iona:

- I was honoured to attend and participate in the Remembrance Day service at St. Columba Church in Iona this year. The ceremony was thoughtful and moving, with a strong sense of community spirit and appreciation for all who have served. My sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to such a meaningful and respectful service.
- Following the ceremony, the Grandona Legion hosted a wonderful lunch. The hospitality was exceptional, the food delicious, and it was heartening to see so many residents come together to share stories and fellowship. Events like these remind us of the strength and warmth of our communities.
- Thank you to all the organizers, volunteers, and attendees who helped make this Remembrance Day both memorable and deeply meaningful.

Flooding and washouts on Washabuck Peninsula:

- After months of drought, we're grateful that the recent heavy rains have at least provided some relief by replenishing residents' cisterns. Unfortunately, these same rains have also caused washouts and flooding in parts of the district. Thankfully, most of these issues have already received prompt attention or are currently in the process of being repaired.

Break-in:

- As many of you are aware, a community centre in District 1 recently experienced a break-in. We would like to extend our thanks to Cst. John Appleby for his prompt response. Although the loss of valuables, and damage to the property were unfortunate, we still moved forward and held a successful dance on Saturday evening.
- A note to the individuals responsible: we have never stored, and will never store, our cash boxes in the hall. We hope the leftover tubs of ice cream were worth the effort—and that you enjoyed a very memorable cup of tea from our new tea urn.
- On a more serious note, residents, please remember to check on any seasonal or weekend properties in the area regularly, and ensure they are secured to the best of your ability.

On Motion of Councillor Matheson-LeFort seconded by Councillor Born to take $1,000.00 from District 1 Budget for Grandona Legion.

Motion Carried.

DISTRICT 2

- Attended Remembrance Day ceremonies in Middle River and Baddeck
- Requested to ask EMO about drone purchase pilot project for fire watch.

DISTRICT 4

On Motion of Councillor Born seconded by Councillor Matheson-LeFort for a streetlight request at 46715 Cabot Trail.

Motion Carried.

- We have been experiencing an increase in break-ins—both residential and commercial, as well as near misses and dangerous situations occurring at residents' properties. Several community members have reached out, and at a recent event I heard directly from attendees who shared their concerns. In response, we will be requesting that the RCMP attend a future community gathering to speak with residents and offer guidance.
- I attended both the Investor Summit and the NSFM Conference. They were valuable events with excellent networking opportunities and informative sessions that were relevant and educational for our municipality.
- I was honoured to represent District 4 and the municipality at two important events: The Veterans' Dinner at the Baddeck Legion on November 9th and the Remembrance Day service at North River Bridge. It was a privilege to attend these ceremonies on behalf of our community.
- Upcoming Community Events. Englishtown Community Hall – "Adopt a Family" Program - In partnership with the Every Women's Shelter, the hall is supporting a local family for the holiday season. Donations are being accepted until December 5th. Please contact the hall for more information. Indian Brook Fire Hall – Christmas Fair. The Fire Hall will be hosting its Christmas Fair on December 6th, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

DISTRICT 5

- There was a Remembrance Day service held in Big Bras d Or, the speaker spoke about Jack Munro, who was from Kempt Head.
- Lunch and Learn taking place today in Big Bras d'Or.
- Usual complaints about the gravel roads.

DISTRICT 6

- RCMP are asking seasonal residents to let them know if they are not going to be around and they can do drive by's of their properties to check on them as there have been some break ins.
- Honored to attend several Remembrance Day services. Including services at the high school. The service at Legion Branch 105 was well attended and MLA Timmins laid the provincial wreath and thank you to the volunteers.
- November 22 there will be a tree lighting at Fresh Water Cove.
- November 29 is the Parade of Lights, starts at the rink building and goes to the Keltic Lodge.
- Council have written a letter to Parks Canada in relation to the Keltic Lodge and request that they keep in contact as some decisions need to be made and soon.
- WWTP some of the material is on site, no work has been started yet and no work will start until permits and documents are in place.

DISTRICT 7

- Attended NSFM and Investor Summit conferences
- Attended Remembrance Day services.
- Senior Socials are well attended.
- December 7: Christmas concert St Andrews at 7pm.
- November 27: AGM for Highland Manor.
- November 30: tree lighting at St Andrews Parish Hall, it is a grinch theme.

DISTRICT 8

- Attended the NSFM Conference where many interesting topics were covered, including an impressive presentation by Peace by Chocolate owner Tareq Hadhad, it was very moving and inspiring.
- Bay St Lawerence Community Center will be having their annual Santa workshop on December 3rd. Donations are welcomed please reach out to the center. They also have 45's on Sunday and Crib on Thursdays both at 7pm.
- North highlands Nodic started their Saturday Breakfasts on November 1st, 10am to 12pm. They will also have a Christmas Market & Big Breakfast on November 22nd, 10am to 1pm.
- The Cabot Fire Ladies Auxiliary will be having a spaghetti supper and game night Friday December 12th (details on their Facebook page).
- December 14th kids Christmas fun day with games Santa photos, crafts food and more.
- Requesting more information on dry fire hydrants, CAO will reach out to EMO.
- The Parade of Lights is on Saturday November 29th in Ingonish, please message organizers if you want to put a float in, every district loves this event.

MOTIONS/RESOLUTIONS

On Motion of Deputy Warden MacLeod seconded by Councillor Donovan to accept the recommendations made at the November 3, 2025 In-Camera meeting.

Motion Carried.

CAO AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

CAO Report:

- Asked DCBA for clarification on if Councillor Born would be a conflict of interest as a business owner, it was determined that there was no conflict of interest. Congrats on the Board designation Councill Born.
- Council has replied to the Village proposal. They have 30 days to reply which is December 4.
- Fishermen being charged for traps - Fishermen are commercial customers, and, accordingly, our bylaw charges a tipping fee for disposal. Fee typically runs about $35.
- MP Battiste coming to Council in January 2026.
- Joint REMO Funding Application has been signed and submitted.
- Letters for March tax sale are going out soon as well as tax reminders.
- Next tax sale is Nov 25 – only 4-5 properties remaining.
- All year-end reports have been completed and submitted to province/UARB
- The fall edition of the News & Views Municipal newsletter was mailed on November 5 and a project update for the Ingonish Wastewater Treatment plant project was issued this month. Project updates can be found on Engage Victoria County.
- ***In case you missed it Council Meeting Recap*** will be a regular website feature to highlight key information and resources from regular council sessions.
- Communications plans in progress:
    - New safety measures for the tipping floor with be launched on November 24. Online messages and site signage are planned along with communication for staff and the public who use the tipping floor.
    - The expanded recycling program will begin on December 1. An updated sorting guide and waste collection calendar is being sent to residents and there will be ongoing educational messaging with a plan to target seasonal residents next year.
- A tender has been posted for the C&D Haul of material from Dingwall to Baddeck. The haul is expected to begin November 24th.
- As of November 24th, PPE will be required for anyone needing to access the tipping floor. People are encouraged to use curbside collection.
- Intermunicipal solid waste collection plan is wrapping up, with Dillon presenting it to Council early to mid-December.
- Finalizing our contract with Circular Materials.
    - The new recycling materials list has been repaired by Morgan and will be mailed out.

  - Changes begin December 1st, 2025.
- The VC Civic Centre (rink) is looking to have tip fees waived or reduced related to materials that the contractor will not be taking for salvage – we are recommending that this be waived but will bring it back to Council when we have the $ amount.
- Water repair is happening on Friday, November 14th. We will be using internal staff to perform traffic control.
- WWTP holding tank was delivered a couple of weeks ago and the plant was delivered on Friday, November 14th.
- Cabot Trail 100 advisory group is presented to Cape Breton MLA's on October 27th, 2025, to convey the project details. All MLA's in attendance were in strong support of the project thus far and have a stronger understanding of the importance of the trail and communities and residents around the trail.
- Cabot Trail 100 advisory group is presenting to the Minister of CCTH as well as Deputy and Assistant Deputy Ministers and the Executive Director of NS Tourism in early December during the TIANS conference in Halifax.
- Will be attending the Destination Cape Breton Elevate Tourism Conference on November 26th here in Baddeck.
- Work beginning to finalize a few private land easements in order to complete next phases of the trail development
- Completed planning and executing two community workshops on community funding opportunities. One in Baddeck hosted more than 20 participants and Cape North had 19 for a presentation and break out discussions with Provincial Project officers from five different divisions of Nova Scotia Department of Community, Culture, Tourism & Heritage. Hats off to Yvette and Colleen for their planning and delivery of this successful event which all participants were willing to deliver again next year.

FCM REPORT

Councillor Patterson attended the FCM Board meetings in Ottawa in October and some highlights from that trip include:

- Visited MP's and Senators in their offices.
- Cell phone legislation.
- Infrastructure discussions.
- Rink funding discussions.
- Good networking opportunities.

CORRESPONDENCE

All forwarded. There was a piece of correspondence received late, and it was requested to be read during the meeting. It will be read at the next Council meeting.

IN CAMERA MEETING

Warden Organ called for an In-Camera meeting to discuss a legal matter.

On Motion of Deputy Warden MacLeod seconded by Councillor Donovan to go In Camera to discuss a legal matter.

Motion Carried.

On Motion of Councillor Hennick seconded by Councillor Donovan to come out of the In-Camera Session.

Motion Carried.

On Motion of Councillor Matheson-LeFort seconded by Councillor Hennick to accept the recommendations made at the In-Camera Session.

Motion Carried.

QUESTIONS FROM GALLERY

2 members of the public were in attendance.

NEXT MEETNG

December 15, 2025, at 10:00am.

ADJOURN

Warden Organ made a motion to adjourn at 12:02pm.