A Committee of the Whole meeting was held in the Little Narrows Community Hall at Little Narrows on October 5, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. with Warden Organ in the Chair.

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

District #1 - Donna Matheson-Lefort

District #3 – Ian Nicholson

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

Alix Redden, CFO

Ursula Melski, Manager of Communications

ABSENT

District #2 - Perla MacLeod, Deputy Warden

CALL TO ORDER

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

On Motion of Councillor Donovan seconded by Councillor Nicholson that the Agenda for October 5, 2026, be approved.

Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 14, 2026, COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES

On Motion of Councillor Hennick seconded by Councillor Born to approve the September 14, 2026, Minutes.

Motion Carried.

SOLAR PROJECT PRESENTATION – TYLER COLE, VICTORIA COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, MILA SIMON AND INA LILA (POWERBANK CORP) AND JOEL MACNEIL (TRIMAC ENGINEERING)

Victoria County received $75,000 in 2025 to explore green renewable energy projects. In 2026, the Municipality issued a request for proposals to identify viable renewable energy opportunities and assess potential rooftop and ground-based solar projects on municipal and other suitable lands.

The study identified four potential solar locations:

- **Community Solar:** White Point Road in New Haven and 445 Old Margaree Road, which could each support a project of approximately 3.5 MW and serve about 460 homes.
- **Commercial Net Metering:** The Victoria Highland Civic Centre and Municipal Administration Building, where solar generation could help offset municipal electricity costs. It was noted that the Baddeck Arena is not a municipal asset however we are exploring this option on behalf of the Victoria Highland Civic Centre Committee.

A third option, a 100 MW battery energy storage system on Rear Little River Road, was also identified. The system could store electricity when demand is lower and release it during peak periods. However, the recommendation to Council does not include advancing this option at this time.

The presentation also outlined potential funding through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Green Municipal Fund. Stream 1 could fund feasibility studies and business cases, with up to $200,000 available per project and no municipal cash required upfront.

The next steps would include confirming which sites should advance, completing feasibility and interconnection studies, determining the preferred ownership structure, and addressing any required land-use changes.

Council Recommendation: Councillor Patterson recommended that Council advance the four Community Solar and Commercial Net Metering locations, including the two sites in New Haven, the Municipal Administration Building and the Victoria Highland Civic Centre, while excluding the battery energy storage system. Staff would return to Council with the cost of each feasibility study for consideration at a future Council meeting.

EASTERN DISTRICT PLANNING COMMISSION (EDPC) REZONING REQUEST – JOHN BAIN

John Bain presented a rezoning application for PID #85041622 at 448077 and 48079 Cabot Trail, Tarbot, requesting a change from the Commercial Recreation (CR) Zone to Rural General (RG) Zone.

Planning staff reviewed the application against the Municipality’s zoning policies and determined that the existing building meets the applicable criteria. Staff are of the opinion that the proposed

rezoning is consistent with the Municipal Planning Strategy and meets the criteria under Policies 3-11 and 6-24. Staff therefore recommend approval of the application.

Next Steps: The Committee of the Whole currently acts as the Municipality's planning committee. Council will consider giving First Reading to the rezoning bylaw and setting a date for a Public Hearing, where residents will have an opportunity to provide feedback before Council makes a final decision.

Council Recommendation: Councillor Patterson made a recommendation to give a First Reading and set a Public Hearing Date at the next Meeting of Council.

Overview of Eastern District Planning Commission, services and current projects
John Bain provided an overview of its services and current projects. Victoria County has worked with EDPC since 1995 as part of an intermunicipal planning partnership.

EDPC provides a range of planning and regulatory services for the Municipality, including rezoning, variances, site plan approvals, building permits and inspections, subdivisions, fire inspections, and dangerous and unsightly premises matters.

The presentation also included updates on several projects:

- **Plan Victoria County:** The Baddeck Area Advisory Committee will review the Baddeck Area Plan before it is brought to Council for approval. The plan will guide planning and development in the Baddeck area.
- **Coastal Protection:** EDPC is developing flood mapping to help communities better understand and plan for coastal flooding. Funding from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities will support consultant work and public engagement.
- **Organizational Review:** EDPC is conducting an external organizational review to explore opportunities to develop a more proactive planning function that can work with municipalities and towns on long-term community planning, rather than primarily responding to individual applications and requests.

WAYFINDING UPDATE – DAN COFFIN

Council received a proposed four-year phased approach to implementing the Wayfinding Strategy. The strategy is intended to improve signage throughout Victoria County and make it easier for residents and visitors to navigate the Municipality.

As a major tourism destination, the strategy aims to ensure signage is consistent, useful, and reflective of Victoria County. The presentation outlined the proposed phases, estimated costs, and potential funding partners.

Council Recommendation: Councillor Born recommends that Council:

- Endorse the Wayfinding Strategy and the four-year phased implementation plan in principle.
- Include $90,000 for Phase 1 in the 2027–28 budget, subject to funding approval.
- Authorize staff to apply to the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) and provincial funding programs for each phase.

TAIGH CURAIM DAYCARE FUNDING REQUEST DISCUSSION

Council discussed a funding request to support the replacement of the septic system at the Bay St. Lawrence Community Centre. The improvements are required before licensed childcare services can begin operating at the facility.

Councillor Recommendation: Councillor Matheson-Lefort recommends that Council approve the recommendation to contribute toward the septic system improvements, as outlined in the recommendation report.

J-CLASS ROADS DISCUSSION

Council discussed the upcoming process for identifying priority J-Class roads in Victoria County. The Municipality must submit a list of five priority roads to the Province by the end of October. Cost-sharing information will be provided after the priority list is submitted.

Council members were asked to bring forward their priority J-Class roads at the next Council meeting so a letter can be prepared for submission to the Province.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Councillor Patterson gave notice of a motion to attend the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Board Meeting in Ottawa.

- Dates: December 1–4, 2026
- Location: Ottawa, Ontario

NEXT MEETING

November 13, 2026, 10:00 am.

ADJOURN

Warden Organ adjourned the meeting at 4:02pm.