



NOTICE

MEETING: Regular Council Meeting

DATE: Wednesday, April 16th, 2025

TIME: 6:00 pm

PLACE: Council Chambers, 8296 Highway 7,
Sherbrooke

Please Advise If Unable To Attend



Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

Regular Council Meeting
Wednesday, April 16th, 2025

We acknowledge that we are gathering in Mi'kmaqi the traditional unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Additions to the Agenda
4. Approval of the Agenda
5. Approval of Minutes from:
 - a. Council meeting held: March 19th, 2025
6. Business Arising from Minutes
7. Recommendations from Committees of Council:
 - a. COTW held March 19th, 2025
 - b. COTW held April 2nd, 2025
8. Outside Committee Reports
9. Other Matters of Business
10. CAO Report

Adjournment

A 10-minute question and answer period pertaining to agenda items.



Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

Regular Council Meeting
Wednesday, March 19th, 2025

We acknowledge that we are gathering in Mi'kma'ki the traditional unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

1. Meeting, Date & Time:

The Regular Council meeting of the St. Mary's Municipal Council was called to order on Wednesday, March 19th, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers Sherbrooke, N.S.

2. Attending:

Warden James Fuller
Deputy Warden Beulah Malloy
Councillor Emma Tibbo
Councillor Dana O'Connell
Councillor Scott Beaver

Also Attending:

Doug Patterson, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
Marian Fraser, Director of Finance (DOF)
Jadzia Rudolph, Municipal Clerk
Keren Ruller, Director of Economic Development

3. Additions to the Agenda:

- There were no additions to the agenda.

4. Approval of Agenda:

On motion of Councillor O'Connell and seconded by Deputy Warden Malloy, Council approved the agenda as presented.

Motion approved.

5. Approval of Minutes:

The Warden called for errors or omissions to the previous minutes, hearing none, Council approved the minutes from the Regular Council meeting held February 10th, 2025.

Motion approved.

6. Business Arising from the Minutes:

- There was no business arising from the minutes.

7. Recommendations from the Committee of the Whole:

Committee of the Whole – Wednesday, February 5, 2025

On motion of Councillor O'Connell seconded by Deputy Warden Malloy, Council Repeal the current Transfer Station Recovery Policy.

Motion approved.

Committee of the Whole – Wednesday, February 19th, 2025

On motion of Councillor Beaver seconded by Councillor O'Connell, Council approve the 2025/2026 Application for Residential Low Income Property Tax Exemption with the annual household income range threshold as laid out in the table below and the tax exemption credit amount with the corresponding range, all other eligibility requirements remain the same as outlined in the application.

Motion approved

Committee of the Whole – March 5th, 2025

On motion of Councillor Tibbo seconded by Councillor Beaver, Council agree to appoint Warden Fuller and Councillor O'Connell as an alternate to the Smart-Go Board (External Committee).

Motion approved

On motion of Councillor O'Connell seconded by Deputy Warden Malloy, Council transfer the 2024-2025 Municipal Operating Surplus on March 31st, 2025, to the following;

- a. Repay the Municipal Capital Reserve \$109,500.80 for the Recplex ice re-surfacer*
- b. Transfer \$75,000 into the newly established Fire Service Capital Reserve*
- c. Transfer any remaining surplus funds into the Municipal Capital Reserve*

Further, recommend that Municipal Council direct staff to develop a Fire Service Capital Reserve Policy that would outline eligibility requirements for a Municipally registered Fire Department servicing the Municipality of St. Mary's to access funds within the reserve and develop a corresponding application and scoring process.

Motion approved

On motion of Councillor Tibbo and seconded by Councillor Beaver, Council authorizes staff to collaborate with local artists, environmental organizations, and other stakeholders to design, and produce the panel project contents.

Further, that staff will report back with key milestones including design and installation, to ensure the project stays on track and within budget.

Further, all work on the project shall be within the \$25,000.00 applied for, from Oceans North including all taxes.

Motion approved

On motion of Councillor O'Connell and seconded by Deputy Warden Malloy, Council agree to send 2 members of Council, (Councillor Tibbo and Warden Fuller) to the FCM Conference in Ottawa, Ontario on May 29th to June 1st, 2025.

Motion approved

On motion of Councillor Tibbo and seconded by Councillor Beaver, Council agree to direct staff to write a letter of support for the Road Trail Act for connecting highway 7 to Trout Lake Road and Connecting the Sonora Trail to businesses in Port Hilford. Further, that Council will support with communicating that the St. Mary's ATV Club is an asset to the community and businesses operating within.

Motion approved

On motion of Councillor O'Connell and seconded by Councillor Beaver, Council decided that it is not in the budget to provide Community First Guysborough Housing with funding for the purchase of land in Sherbrooke for housing at this time.

Motion approved

8. Outside Committee Reports

- There were no Outside Committee Reports.

9. Other Matters of Business

- There was no Other Matters of Business.

10. CAO Report:

- See the Agenda/Package for the report.
- Doug Patterson, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) informed the Council of the updates to the low-income tax application as the threshold was amended to a tiered system.
- Recreation Department - The St. Mary's Recplex will have the ice melted at the end of March the last free skate will be March 22nd.
- Rink Revitalization grant has been applied for the St Mary's Recplex compressor and to complete interior painting.
- Construction and Demolition - ongoing work is being completed by staff to help restore a residential collection service.
- Economic Development – Planning for tourism season, working on a new website to promote businesses, attractions, events, and facilities in St. Mary's.

Adjournment

On motion of Warden Fuller, there being no further matters of business, the Council adjourned at 6:13pm.

Motion approved.

Recorded By
Jadzia Rudolph, Municipal Clerk

Approved By
Warden Fuller



Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

Wednesday April 16th, 2025
Council Meeting

Recommendations from Internal Committees

Committee of the Whole – March 19th, 2025

On recommendation of Councillor Beaver, seconded by Councillor O'Connell, Council approve \$8,625.00 Plus HST for Digital Nova Scotia Grant on the advertising campaign. This grant will provide \$17,250.00 worth of digital tourism advertising for a cost of \$8,625.00 to the municipality with the remaining 50% matched by Digital Nova Scotia. Further, Council approves the award for digital marketing and tourism support to Sociable Media Inc. in the sum of \$11,500. Plus HST.

Recommendation adopted.

Committee of the Whole – April 2nd, 2025

On recommendation of Councillor Beaver and seconded by Councillor Tibbo, Council adopt the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Hate & Accessibility (IDEAA) Advisory Committee Policy and repeal the Accessibility Advisory Committee Policy.

Recommendation adopted.

Finance Department

Property Taxation:

Interest on overdue accounts was applied in the beginning of March. Property Valuation Service Corporation (PVSC) received 53 appeals for the Municipality of St. Mary's. PVSC assessors will work at completing a review of the appeal accounts over the next several months.

Property Taxes Collected:

By fiscal year as of March 31st, 2025

- 2024-2025 Taxes – 96.27% Collected
- 2023-2024 Taxes – 98.46% Collected
- 2022-2023 Taxes – 98.3% Collected

Financial Statements and Reporting:

Completed monthly bank reconciliations/ financials and prepared reports along with processed accounts payable, receivables and various invoicing as required. Continued work with Directors and CAO on the 2025-2026 budget deliberations and presentations to Council. Prepared all documents associated with preparing budgets for the Annual General Meeting including key budget messaging. Continued work with consultants for the Water Rate Study and completed information requests from the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board. Complete provincial reporting for the capital investment plans for the Canada Community Building Fund. Began the audit planning process which will continue throughout the spring. Completed final reporting for ACOA on the EMO emergency shelter capital project.

Committee/Policy Work:

Continued work and attended regular meetings as a board member on the Association of Municipal Administrators (AMA). Attended provincial procurement committee meeting as AMA board representative.

Continued work on reviewing the 2025 assessment roll with new municipal districts in comparison with fire boundaries. Met with individual fire departments representatives to prepare reports for their consideration while determining/setting their annual fire protection levy.

Developed a staff report for council's review on the 2025-2026 grants to organizations applicants received and completed a review for policy compliance. After presenting to the committee of the whole council suggested changes to the *General Government Grant Policy*. Completed suggested amendments and corresponding staff report for council's review.

Completed staff report for councils review on projected year end operating surplus including the creation of a fire services capital reserve fund.

Created a policy workplan for the Community Project Support term position and began work on a Municipal Vehicle Policy which will be presented to Council for consideration this spring.

Human Resources:

Completed bi-weekly and monthly payroll procedures and remittances. Reviewed staff schedules, timesheet summaries, ROE's, confirmed/prepared letter of offers, and participated in interview as needed/required. Attended with coworkers an "enhance workplace safety" workshop.

Community Development & Recreation Department

Committees:

Accessibility Advisory Committee:

The Accessibility Advisory Committee met on March 13th, 2025. The Committee received an updated that the Provincial Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment have been approved and the reviewed the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Hate & Accessibility Advisory Committee Policy. The Committee felt the policy was well developed and ready to be presented to Council.

Events:

March Break Free Skate:

The Department hosted a Free Skate on Friday, March 14th in partnership with SMECA Schools Plus.

Easter Egg Hunt:

Staff completed planning for the Annual Easter Egg Hunt held in partnership with the Whale Sanctuary Project in Sherbrooke Village. The event is scheduled for April 19th, 2025.

Winter Fun Fest:

Winter Fun Fest occurred on March 8th & 9th. All the events were well attended and staff received great feedback. Darrell Boutilier was the winner of St. Mary's Got Talent; Norah Fraser won the Cookie Competition. As winners of those events, they got to pick a non-profit to donate \$100 to. They both chose the St. Mary's Food Bank and as a result \$200 was donated to the St Mary's Food Bank.

Facilities:

St. Mary's Fitness Centre

Staff completed Fitness Centre Orientations for 6 new users.

St. Mary's Recplex

The Recplex finished the winter season, it was used five days per week during the month of March with 5 private rentals totalling 12 hours.

Human Resources:

Active Living Coordinator Employment Opportunity:

The Municipality continued to advertise the job opportunity of Active Living Coordinator.

Professional Development:

Highland Region Recreation Coordinators Association (HRRCA) Meeting:

The Director of Community Development and Recreation attended the HRRCA Meeting on March 5th. Topics of discussion included - The Director of Community Development & Recreation is a member of the Leadership Camp Committee and has been working in collaboration with other members to plan and coordinate a one-day training for Summer Day Camp Leaders for the Highland Region.

Enhance Workplace Safety: Verbal De-escalation & Harm Reduction:

The Director of Community Development & Recreation completed Verbal De-escalation & Harm Reduction Training on March 5th, 2025. The training included practical skills and strategies to manage harassment and de-escalate challenging interactions in a variety of workplace settings.

Emergency First Aid & CPR:

Staff of the Department of Community Development & Recreation completed their Emergency First Aid & CPR Certification on March 12th, 2025.

The Working Mind:

The Director of Community Development & Recreation participated in a two-day training titled *The Working Mind* on March 19th & 20th. The training is designed to promote mental health and reduce the stigma around mental illness in the workplace. It aims to promote organizational mental health, strengthen coping skills, transform how employees think and talk about mental health and illness, and create a more supportive work environment.

Policy Development & Review:

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Hate & Accessibility Advisory Committee Policy:

Staff completed the draft of the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Hate & Accessibility Advisory Committee Policy. The Policy was presented to the Accessibility Advisory Committee on March 13th, 2025.

Partnerships & Collaboration:

Eastern Counties Regional Library Strategic Planning Engagement Session:

Staff participated in a Strategic Planning Engagement Session hosted by Stephen Coyle of ATN Strategies to share thoughts from the perspective of the Municipality.



Programs:

50+ Hockey:

At the St. Mary's Recplex on Thursday evenings from 8 to 9pm. The last session of this program was held on March 20th, 2025.

Before & After School Program:

The Before and After Program is well underway with an average of five daily participants for the month of March. The BAP Supervisor attended the monthly online Community of Practice Meeting. The Director of Community Development completed Subsidy Claims & Parent Fee Reduction Reports and completed and sent out invoices for the month of February.

Drop In Curling:

Offered in partnership with the St. Mary's Curling Club, Drop-In Curling is on Tuesday's from 6:30pm to 8:00pm. The last session of this program was held on March 25th, 2025.

Free Skate:

Free Skates are every Saturday from 1:00pm to 2:00pm at the St. Mary's Recplex! The last free skate was held on March 22nd, 2025.

Girls Group:

Held on Wednesdays in the SHOPS room from 3:00pm-4:00pm for girls in grades 7-9. There are currently 5 registered participants.

Open Gym:

Held on Wednesday evenings from 6:00pm-8:00pm in the small gym at SMECA for all ages. There has been an average of 10 participants.

St. Mary's House League Hockey:

The St. Mary's House League Hockey is for ages 5-15 and is every Thursday from 6 to 8pm and Saturday's from 10:00am-12:00pm. There is a total of 42 participants registered in this program. The program wrapped up with a skills night and a family free skate. The last session of this program was held on March 27th, 2025.

St. Mary's Recreation Adult Hockey:

St. Mary's Recreation Adult Hockey is on Wednesday evenings at the St. Mary's Recplex from 7:00pm-9:00pm. The last session of this program was held on March 26th, 2025.

Swim Program:

Staff have received permission from Liscomb Lodge to hold swimming lessons in their indoor pool. Staff are working to develop job descriptions & advertisements and seeking training for Lifeguard and Swim Instructor Certifications.

Winter Walking & Rolling Challenge:

The Winter Walking & Rolling Challenge occurred during the month of February. There were seven participants and a total of 2,134,846 steps.

Public Works Department

St. Mary's Transfer Station:

Public works is now seeking the assistance of the *Department of Environment and Climate Change* to obtain the appropriate approvals for future possibilities at the St. Mary's Transfer Station for Construction & Demolition services as part of municipal plans to develop a new public C&D service.

Human Resources:

The Department of Public Works thanks Ray Laves for his service at the St Mary's Recplex this past winter. Ray's work term ends at the end of March and completion of the winter ice season.

Economic Development Department

Tourism NS:

Researched the cost benefit for Salt Scapes this year. Reached out to DEAN's/Coastal NS and Guysborough Tourism to see if they were open to partnering and determined it would be something to consider for next year as there was not enough interest or availability for partnership.

Arranged for a full-page advertisement for the Coastal NS Tourism Map and Guide for 2025.

Met with the Manager for Liscomb Lodge to discuss content for new website.

Presented Tourism Website, Digital Ads as part of DCMP grant and Social Media Program to Council. Kick off website program with Sociable Media Inc. Ongoing progress meetings on branding, SWOT, asset inventory and templates for photography content.

Networking with Tourism Guysborough, and the Sherbrooke Village.

Writing grant applications for TDAP Communities with Tourism NS. Met with program administrator to get assistance in furthering our application for the greatest leverage. This will have the ability to leverage our deliverables from Sociable media and augment some of our initiatives regarding potential for additional photography/video and marketing if approved.

Met with IT and AMENS regarding submission of donated photography and video from local tourism businesses for use on the new website. Researching and drafting required forms with assistance from SME's.

Writing grant application for the Emerging Destinations Program with Tourism NS.

Wrote and submitted grant application for the Emerging Destinations Program with Tourism NS.

Working with Visit Guysborough Tourism web developer, Simply Ducky, on updating businesses and events on the St. Mary's tab on the website.

Met with Visit Guysborough Tourism committee president and committee board member from Sherbrooke Village to open the channels of communication and identify areas of potential collaboration.

Climate Change Clean Foundation:

Working with Clean Foundation to plan for use of St Mary's Flood mapping data for the data's publication. Representative on the Flood Mapping., contractor lined up.

Source Water Protection Plan:

Undertaking thorough review of the documentation for the SWP. Review of provincial requirements in the 5-step process, the gap analysis and past committee meeting minutes.

Compiled a list of deliverables agreed upon in the committee meetings and cross referenced the draft SWPP document.

Sent out introductory email to SWP committee with plans to reconvene later in the spring.

Drafting risk analysis framework for review and completion with SWPA committee at upcoming meeting.

EMO:

Updating contact list for Logistics Section Binder. Began training for Incident Command System (ICS) 100.

Business Support:

Reached out to the high school and made connections with the Guidance Councillor, Student Liaison with NS Works, and business teachers to build a relationship around youth engagement.

Posted information on the Nova Scotia MOST program.

Ongoing research for guest speakers and details around business awards events.

Making inquiries on booking guest speaker and Lions Hall for Business Week in October.

Reached out to the province regarding blue tourism amenity highway and way marker road signage to get new and improved signage for our St. Mary's District. Liaising with Sherbrooke Village on the matter as support in this regard was requested. Have now opened dialogue and will be developing a proposal of requested signage improvements to be submitted in April.

CAO and I met with Guysborough business development committee member to get information on proposed Tourism Levy and required development of associated new by-law.

Networking and assisting new businesses with getting added to the municipal business directory.

HAF Housing:

Met with CMHC rep to review first set of Milestones. Generated a breakdown of "Schedule A" with timeline of deliverable for HAF initiatives and budget allocations.

Research:

Conducting research on available anonymous survey models for reaching out to the business community for their engagement and feedback on both Tourism and Economic Development.

Municipal Clerk

Civic Addressing:

The Municipal Clerk has been working on Civic Addressing with the building inspector to update civic addresses and PID's on the Nova Scotia Civic Address Finder (NSCAF) website. The clerk has been coordinating with residents to get updated civic numbers posted.

Council/COTW Meetings:

The Municipal Clerk has been attending all Council and Committee of the Whole Meetings, documenting all recommendations and motions on an Excel sheet to keep track of all recommendations, motions, and contracts and whom they pertain to. The clerk also records minutes throughout the meetings, posts the appropriate agendas and minutes online to the Municipal Website and Facebook Page, and sets up all IT needed for meetings. Agendas, Minutes, and Audio files can be found by visiting: <https://www.saint-marys.ca/council-agendas-and-minutes.html>. A new Owl 3 meeting camera was purchased to enhance the quality and efficiency of Council meetings.

First Aid/CPR Training:

The Municipal Clerk has attended and completed the First Aid course, enhancing the ability to respond effectively, ensure the safety and wellbeing of those around.

Workplace Safety & Verbal De-Escalation Training:

The Municipal Clerk has successfully completed Verbal De-Escalation training, equipped with the skills to manage and diffuse challenging situations effectively in the workplace. This training highlights the commitment to fostering a calm, respectful, and productive environment for both staff and the public.

JOHS Committee:

The Joint Occupational Health & Safety (JOHS) Committee meeting was held on March 3rd to review the ongoing health and safety initiatives within the organization. All staff members have completed the necessary courses and training, ensuring they are well-equipped to recognize and address potential hazards.

EMO:

Municipal Clerk has been focused on reviewing and enhancing the organization's preparedness for any potential emergencies. The clerk has reviewed the Emergency Management Plan and the draft flood contingency plan. The Municipal Clerk/EMO will

be working with staff to ensure that staff foster a well-informed team, capable of responding effectively to emergencies, ensuring the safety and continuity of services within the community. The clerk is coordinating ICS training for staff and coordinating a joint evacuation training” with Municipality of the District of Guysborough.

Water Utility:

The clerk has been updating and filing all water utility bills, arrears reports, interest and meter reads on the Municipal website. Water Utility is to be updated every quarter.

Electronic Content/Advertising:

Updating the Municipal Website with current content, agendas and minutes, policies, by-laws, expense sheets, and information. Updating the Municipal Facebook Page with current content for all departments, such as Community Events, Programs, and Activities the Municipality is holding and supporting.

Newsletter:

The Municipal Clerk has been the point of contact for staff, residents, organizations, and council members to include submissions into the monthly newsletter. The monthly newsletter can be found at: <https://www.saint-marys.ca/residents/newsletter.html> and to send a submission to be included email: newsletter@saint-marys.ca.

Committees:

Accessibility Advisory, Fire Services, JOHS, Audit, EMO, etc.
Scheduling and attending Committee meetings, along with creating agendas and recording the minutes for the different Committees of the Municipality.

Interactive Panel Project

The Municipal Clerk has been working on an interactive panel project aimed at promoting local wildlife and supporting conservation efforts throughout the municipality. This initiative features engaging, informative displays that highlight native species and their habitats, fostering a greater awareness of environmental preservation. Through this project, the Clerk is helping will educate the community about the importance of protecting local animals and encouraging active involvement in conservation efforts.

Street Light Request:

The clerk has been working with Nova Scotia Power to get residents' streetlights erected where needed.

Assisting Where Needed:

Helping with the gathering and coordination of the different departments of the Municipality, as well as the distribution of agendas, packages, training, calendar appointments, etc. helping wherever needed.