



Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

Committee of The Whole (COTW) Meeting

Wednesday January 7th, 2026

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

1. Meeting, Date & Time:

Warden Fuller called the COTW Meeting of the St. Mary's Municipal Council to order on Wednesday January 7th, 2026, at 5:02pm in the Council Chambers, Sherbrooke, N.S.

2. Attending:

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

Also Attending:

Lesley McFarlane, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
Marian Fraser, Director of Finance/Treasurer
Jadzia Rudolph, Municipal Clerk
Teddy Stevens, Director of Public Works
Keren Ruller, Director of Economic Development
Mallory Tibbo, Director of Community Development and Recreation

3. Additions to the Agenda:

- Addition of Item # 7. Presentation Basil Pitts from Provincial Department of Public Works
- Addition to #8. Correspondence Sherbrooke & Area Volunteer Fire Department Letter
- Addition of Item # 9. g. Sherbrooke & Volunteer Fire Department Request for Loan Guarantee

4. Approval of the Agenda:

On the motion of Deputy Warden Malloy and seconded by Councilor O'Connell, Council approved the agenda with the addition.

Motion approved.

5. Approval of Minutes:

On the motion of Councillor O'Connell seconded by Councillor Tibbo, hearing no errors or omission to the previous minutes, Council approved the minutes of the COTW Meeting held December 3rd, 2025.

Motion approved.

6. Business Arising from the Minutes:

- a. A letter of support in response to the St. Mary's Hospital society has been drafted and all council members have reviewed and signed; the letter will be sent to the appropriate personnel.

7. Presentation: Basil Pitts, Area Manager, Provincial Department of Public Works

- Mr. Pitts informed Council of a summary of the capital projects on-going, winter activities and levels of service taking place during the 2025-26 winter season, the rural impact mitigation

program, as well as the 5-year plan for the department of public works throughout Guysborough County.

- Council was informed Archibald Bridge will be designed this season and tendered in the fall of 2026 to be completed in 2027. Also, the Silvers Falls Truss Bridge went to tender twice and no bids were received.
- Council inquired about guardrails on Highway 211 in Port Hilford and were informed that there were no bidders as it was a small job. Council asked what they do in this situation and Mr. Pitts advised that they gather up multiple items into a larger contract which tends to attract more bidders.
- Council also asked about the Sherbrooke falls embankment along Highway 7 and were informed that it will be replaced with rock, when necessary, as they no longer do concrete spraying.
- Council also inquired about guardrails on the other side of Cochrane Hill, Mr. Pitts agreed to check into that.
- Mr. Pitts raised the matter of the Sherbrooke crosswalk and mentioned that it can be addressed, staff to send in a formal request based on the November 19, 2025 motion of Council.
- Council asked why there were not many activities for MODSM appearing in the five year plan and were informed that activity is prioritized based on the volume of traffic.
- Mr. Pitts indicated he will send the municipality a list of what the department does, and if Council has from their constituents' top priorities for the department to consider when planning for future preparation, to send them to the department.

8. Correspondence:

- a. Sherbrooke & Area Volunteer Fire Department Letter
 - A letter was received from Sherbrooke & Area Volunteer Fire Department regarding a request for a loan guarantee support for the purchase of a 2013 freightliner pumper truck for \$210,000 for the fire department.
 - The department has applied for a loan through RBC on a 5-year term for \$125,000, as part of that process they are required from the financial institution to have a loan guarantee from the Municipality.

9. Other Matters of Business:

- a. 5 Year Service Award – Mallory Tibbo
 - Council presented Mallory Tibbo, Director of Community Development and Recreation with a certificate for exceptional service to the municipality for the past five years.
- b. 20 Year Service Award – Marian Fraser
 - Council presented Marian Fraser. Director of Finance/Treasurer with a certificate for exceptional service to the municipality for the past twenty years.

Council unanimously decided to take a 5-minute recess at 5:40pm.

Council reconvened at 5:45pm.

Mallory Tibbo, Director of Community Development and Recreation left the meeting at 5:45pm.

- c. Staff Report - Disposal of Real Property Policy
 - Staff provided Council with a draft *Disposal of Real Property policy* for their consideration.

- Council has the opportunity to provide amendments to the draft policy, accept as is, or repeal and follow the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*.
 - Council requested additional time to review the proposed draft policy and bring back to the next Committee of the Whole for discussion.
- d. Staff Report – Transfer Station, Construction and Demolition
- Staff informed Council that in order to be compliant with Section 18 of the Approval to Operate issued by the Department of Environment and Climate Change for the St. Mary's Transfer Station, a groundwater, surface/storm water and leachate monitoring plan must be developed by March 31, 2026.
 - Under the municipal standing offer for engineering services, Strait Engineering Ltd has provided a quote for the development of a plan to meet the directives in section 18 of the Approval to Operate. The quoted price from Strait Engineering Ltd is \$16,300+HST.
 - The quoted price of \$16,300+HST is within the available budget of \$30,000.

On recommendation of Councillor Beaver seconded by Councillor O'Connell, Council approve Strait Engineering Ltd to develop a plan by March 31, 2026, for St. Mary's to fulfill the requirements of Section 18 of the NS Department of Environment and Climate Change Transfer Station C&D Approval to Operate, for the quoted price of \$16,300+HST, funded from the remaining available \$30,000.

Recommendation adopted.

- e. Staff Report – 2026 Property Tax Assessment Roll Summary
- Please see the agenda/package for the staff report.
 - Staff informed Council that the revenue increase section is based on using 2025/26 tax rates applied to the 2026/2027 property tax assessments. Total potential revenue increase - if the tax rates remain the same as 2025/26 is \$150,084.
 - Overall increase in taxable assessments from 2025-2026 to 2026-2027 is 6.04%, last year the increase was 5.63% year-over-year.
- f. Staff Report – 2026/27 Uniform Assessment
- Please see the agenda/package for the staff report.
 - Staff informed Council based on the information received and the 2026-2027 uniform assessment the education expense for the Municipality for the fiscal year 2026-2027 will increase by \$45,344, a 5.91% increase from 2025-2026.
- g. Staff Report - Sherbrooke Volunteer Fire Department Request for Loan Guarantee
- Staff informed Council that the Sherbrooke & Area Volunteer Fire Department has requested loan guarantee from the Municipality to support the acquisition of a 2013 Freightliner Pumper Truck.
 - Council reviewed the request, the importance of upgrading the aging fleet, the Departments past loan commitments, financial impacts and ability to collect if payment by way of fire tax levy collection if the department defaults on the loan.
 - Council agreed to proceed with providing the Department with a loan guarantee on a 5-year term for \$125,000 to purchase a 2013 Pumper Truck. Staff will ensure all supporting documentation is completed for the guarantee.

On recommendation of Deputy Warden Malloy seconded by Councillor Tibbo, Council agree to provide a Loan Guarantee to the Sherbrooke and Area Volunteer Fire Department for the acquisition of a 2013 Freightliner Pumper Truck in the amount of \$125,000 through the Royal Bank of Canada on a 5 Year Term. If the Department defaults on the terms of the loan the Municipality will fund the loan payments through annual fire tax levy revenue collected on behalf of the Sherbrooke and Area Volunteer Fire Department.

Recommendation adopted.

10. In-Camera: Contract Negotiations

On motion of Councillor Beaver seconded by Councillor O'Connell Council agree to move In-Camera for Contract Negotiations at 6:14pm.

Motion approved.


On motion of Deputy Warden Malloy seconded by Councillor O'Connell Council agree to reconvene to regular session at 6:44pm.


Motion approved.

Adjournment

On motion of Warden Fuller there being no further matters of business, Council adjourned at 6:45pm.

Motion approved.


Recorded By
Jadzia Rudolph, Municipal Clerk


Approved By
Warden Fuller