

WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

Committee of the Whole - Meeting Agenda Amended February 12, 2026

January 13, 2026 - 6:00 p.m.

In-person Sanford Council Chambers, 76 Morison Dr, Windsor, NS

Virtual via Zoom (also YouTube Livestream)

Agenda is subject to change due to additions that may not be able to be reflected until after the meeting.



West Hants
something inspiring awaits

1. Call to Order
2. Attendance
3. Approval of the Agenda, including additions or deletions
4. Declaration(s) of Conflict of Interest
5. Announcements
6. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes
 - a) 2025-12-02 Committee of the Whole Minutes
7. Presentations
 - a) Region 6 2026-27 Budget Approval (includes motion) – Christine McClare, Region 6 Regional Coordinator
 - b) Valley Regional Enterprise Network (VREN) Marketing Levy – VanEssa Roberts and Genevieve Allen Heran, VREN Tourism Strategy Manager
8. Unfinished Business/Postponed Motions
 - a) Visual Effects Study of Existing and Proposed Wind Energy Projects Information Report – Acting Director Fougere
 - b) Mill Lake Diversion Pipe Tender Award Recommendation Report – Director Richard
 - c) Payzant Drive and King Street Upgrades Tender Award Recommendation Report Recommendation Report – Project Engineer Bouter
 - d) Tendering Timeline – Rand Street Services and Street Renewal Recommendation Report – Project Engineer Bouter
9. Reports
 - a) **CAO Activity Update - Information Report**
 - b) General Operating
 - c) **Water Utility Operating**
 - d) Water Consumption
10. Correspondence
 - a) General Correspondence Received Ledger as of January 9, 2026

- i. Minister Masland (DEM) Re End of Water Reimbursement Program letter and Droughts
 - b) Correspondence Sent as of January 9, 2026
- 11. New Business
 - a) Development Activity in West Hants Regional Municipality Information Report – Acting Director Fougere
 - b) Appointment of Development Officers Recommendation Report – Acting Director Fougere
 - c) 2024-25 Hantsport Memorial Community Centre Financial Statements – Director Rochon
 - d) New Position - Water Meter Technician Recommendation Report – Director Richard
- 12. Public Comment Period
- 13. In-Camera - None
- 14. Next Meeting Date / Adjournment – January 27, 2026 Council Meeting at 6 p.m.

WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
Committee of the Whole - Meeting Minutes Amended February 12, 2026
January 13, 2026 - 6:00 p.m.
In-person Sanford Council Chambers, 76 Morison Dr, Windsor, NS Virtual
via Zoom (also YouTube Livestream)



1. Additions to the Agenda

2. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

3. Attendance

Council

Abraham Zebian, Mayor

Rupert Jannasch, Councillor Dist. 1

Scott McLean, Councillor Dist. 2

Chrystal Remme, Councillor Dist. 3

Paul Wheadon, Councillor Dist. 4

Bob Morton, Councillor Dist. 6 (6:04 p.m.)

Debbie Francis, Deputy Mayor, Dist. 5

Kayla Leary-Pinch, Councillor, Dist. 7

Paul Morton, Councillor Dist. 8

John Smith, Councillor, Dist. 9

Bonnie Smith, Councillor Dist. 10

Jim Ivey, Councillor Dist. 11

Staff

Mark Phillips, CAO

Todd Richard, Director of Public Works

Carlee Rochon, Director of Financial Services

VanEssa Roberts, Manager of Community Economic
Development

Deanna Snair, Exec. Asst/ Clerk

Kathy Kehoe, Director of Community Dev

Tim Bouter, Project Engineer

Regrets

Kathy Kehoe, Director of Community Development

Presenters:

Six (6) members of the public

Emily Boucher, CEO VREN

Genevieve Allen Heran, Tourism Strategy Manager VREN

Christine McClare, Region 6 Regional Coordinator

Jacob Albury, Dillon Consulting

Jeff Benjamin, Dillon Consulting (ZOOM)

4. Approval of the Agenda including additions or deletions (6:01 p.m.)

As there were no additions, the agenda was accepted as presented.

5. Declaration(s) of Conflict of Interest (6:01 p.m.) - None

6. Announcements (6:01 p.m.)

West Hants Regional Municipality is in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People and this land is governed by the treaties of Peace and Friendship signed in 1726. West Hants Regional Municipality also recognizes that we are all treaty people and have responsibilities to this land and each other. West Hants Regional Municipality also recognizes

African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose history, legacies, and contributions have enriched that part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years.

Council and I as Chair are committed to ensuring this meeting and its participants conduct themselves in a respectful and professional manner as outlined in the municipality's Municipal Code of Conduct. Meeting presenters, staff, and the public are expected to conduct themselves in an equally respectful manner at all times the meeting is being conducted. I thank you all in advance for your commitment to these important meeting principles.

The Newport Titans Jr. C Hockey will host the All Star game this coming Sunday at 3 p.m. at the GFL rink.

The upcoming 2026 Long Pond Classic was scheduled for Sat. January 24th beginning at 1 p.m.

The upcoming District 8 Town Hall meeting was scheduled for January 21, 2026 at 6 p.m. at the Hantsport Fire Station.

Appreciation was extended to those who attended the District 5 and 6 Town Hall meeting held at the Three Mile Plains Hall on January 8, 2026.

Additional Town Hall meetings were being scheduled and would be advertised on the municipal website and social media pages.

7. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (6:05 p.m.)

a) 2025-12-02 Committee of the Whole Minutes

With no changes proposed, the minutes were approved as presented.

8. Presentations

a) Region 6 – Christine McClare, Region 6 Regional Coordinator (6:05 p.m.)

Ms. McClare provided a brief introduction, provided background and explained what Region 6 does. The Municipality was part of Region 6 Solid Waste Management, a liaison group of 12 Municipalities dedicated to reducing waste and promoting proper waste sorting and diversion. In accordance with the Inter-Municipal Agreement each Council of a participating in Municipality must approve the Region 6 proposed budget. If approved the Municipality would contribute \$31,258.41 in quarterly payments to Region 6 for the 2026-27 fiscal year and paid through the diversion credit reserve so there was no impact to the general tax rate.

Discussion Points:

- The agreement with the Atlantic Dairy Council has concluded. Municipalities now receive payments directly through the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR).

MOVED BY MAYOR ZEBIAN AND COUNCILLOR P. MORTON THAT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE RECOMMENDS COUNCIL APPROVE THE REGION 6 INTERMUNICIPAL COMMITTEE BUDGET OF \$834,248 WITH \$147,885 DUE FROM THE REGION 6 MUNICIPAL UNITS AND THE WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY PORTION AS \$31,258.41 DUE IN QUARTERLY PAYMENTS. MOTION CARRIED

b) Valley Regional Enterprise Network (VREN) Marketing Levy – VanEssa Roberts and Genevieve Allen Heran, VREN Tourism Strategy Manager (6:12 p.m.)

Manager Roberts and Ms. Allen Heran reviewed the supplementary Marketing Levy report addressing questions from the previous Committee of the Whole meeting. The report noted that WH staff and regional tourism operators previously participated in the process (through consultation with the STAR program and with the Transitional Implementation Working Committee) and confirmed that a Marketing Levy would have no direct financial impact on West Hants residents or businesses. It also noted that short-term rentals such as Airbnb already collect similar levies in other jurisdictions. Implementation would require initial and ongoing staff resources, with the level of involvement depending on the DMMO model and collection approach chosen.

Ms. Genevieve Allen Hearn provided an overview of the project, noting that authority over Marketing Levy funds rests with the Municipality, which would collect the levy, determine how funds are granted to the DMMO, and retain portions for administration or third-party platform fees if required. A proposed DMMO governance model would include up to 15 members with sectoral, municipal, and cultural representation, along with non-voting ex-officios. Levy implementation would not apply to existing bookings in the first year, resulting in lower initial revenues and a gradual scaling of staffing. Based on a 70% remittance rate across Annapolis, Kings, and West Hants, the levy could generate approximately \$700,000, with a hybrid funding model combining levy revenues and membership fees recommended. The DMMO would operate under municipal service agreements with defined roles, KPIs, and expectations, use a third-party platform (ORHMA) for collection, and focus initially on education and compliance, with enforcement used only when necessary. Successful examples were cited, including Destination Cape Breton and Discover Halifax, where marketing levies have driven record tourism growth, significant economic returns, major event attraction, and strong resident support, as well as similar models operating in Truro–Colchester and Yarmouth–Acadian Shores.

Discussion Points:

- If Airbnb collects the marketing levy, they remit the funds to the municipality as a lump sum, making it difficult to track individual compliance. As a result, some municipalities require Airbnb operators to remit the levy directly through a municipal portal instead.
- As the survey was anonymous, it was difficult to determine how many West Hants short-term rentals participated. However, Tourism Nova Scotia and AirDNA data indicated that 89 of the 164 available rooms in West Hants were represented in the survey, including several of the region's largest accommodation operators.
- There has been no indication of STRs deregistering as a result of the marketing levy; however, some deregistration occurred following the introduction of new provincial regulations.
- It was hoped that all municipalities from West Hants to Annapolis would participate. Annapolis County has already implemented a Marketing Levy, with Kings and other municipalities in various stages of engagement, and a coordinated, aligned approach was encouraged. In other regions, some municipalities joined later, such as Inverness County in Cape Breton.

- The membership model lets non-accommodation tourism businesses join with tiered benefits, while accommodation operators receive the highest benefits due to levy remittance.
- The greatest resistance appeared to be from single-property STR owners. If a marketing levy was implemented, they would be required to participate as accommodations, since the provincial Bill No. 24 allows municipalities to apply levy rules to all fixed-roof accommodations, and STRs must be provincially registered.
- Municipalities may use levy funds to hire staff for coordination and operator engagement, as Colchester did with a part-time levy coordinator. Yarmouth relies on the DMMO for these relationships. The need for municipal resources depends on the chosen approach. Concerns about municipal staff being burdened by levy management and collection was why some municipalities hired dedicated support.
- Levy funds would be distributed with proportional representation, ensuring contributing areas are included in marketing, while also leveraging high-profile attractions to draw visitors. The DMMO would aim to spread tourism to lesser known “hidden gems” that lack marketing resources.
- Small independent STRs may benefit from joining the levy by gaining access to top-tier marketing, bookings through the DMMO site (reducing reliance on high-fee platforms), board representation, and opportunities for training, professional development, and networking.

MOVED BY COUNCILLORS REMME AND B. SMITH THAT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE RECOMMENDS COUNCIL SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MARKETING LEVY IN PRINCIPLE, PENDING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR SUPPORT FROM OTHER MUNICIPAL UNITS.

A question was raised about whether more information was needed before proceeding. It was felt none was required, and a friendly amendment was proposed to state the motion as “with the support of the other municipalities.” The motion was only in principle, with a formal agreement to be reviewed and finalized once details were agreed upon.

MOVED BY COUNCILLORS REMME AND B. SMITH THAT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE RECOMMENDS COUNCIL SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MARKETING LEVY IN PRINCIPLE, PENDING SUPPORT FROM OTHER MUNICIPAL UNITS. MOTION CARRIED. Nays: Jannasch, B. Morton, Leary-Pinch, J. Smith and Zebian

8. Unfinished Business/Postponed Motions

- a) Visual Effects Study of Existing and Proposed Wind Energy Projects Information Report (includes presentation from consultant) (7:02 p.m.)

Acting Director Fougere reviewed the report. Following Council’s request in November 2024 for additional information related to a proposed wind farm in the Vaughn and Upper Vaughn area,

subsequent provincial planning amendments to wind turbine setback policies led to the withdrawal and resubmission of the original development agreement under the new framework. In February 2025, Council approved a cumulative Visual Effects Study, completed by Dillon Consulting, to inform future decision-making outside of active planning applications. The study assessed visibility, shadow flicker, and cumulative visual impacts of three wind farm projects and found that while turbines may be visible in some areas, vegetation, terrain, and distance significantly reduce impacts, with limited cumulative effects and full compliance with provincial shadow flicker standards. Overall, the study concluded that severe or widespread cumulative visual impacts are unlikely, though visual changes to the landscape will occur. While municipalities cannot regulate wind projects based on visual or aesthetic impacts, the study provided valuable context for community awareness and potential future policy discussions within provincial regulatory limits.

b) Mill Lake Diversion Pipe Tender Award Recommendation Report (7:13 p.m.)

Director Richard reviewed the report. The Mill Lakes Diversion Pipe project was a critical capital initiative to ensure a reliable water supply to the Windsor Water Treatment Plant and to maintain required ecological flows in Falls Brook. Following repeated blockages of the Mill Lakes dam outlet control structure beginning in fall 2024 combined with low lake levels that halted gravity flow, emergency pumping was required on multiple occasions to sustain water supply, highlighting the need for a permanent solution. Design for the project was completed in 2025 and the work was tendered in December 2025, with five compliant bids received. Gary Parker Excavating Ltd. submitted the lowest compliant bid and based on price, experience, and compliance, was being recommended for award of the construction contract.

Discussion Points:

- The blockage was caused by a collapse of the existing control structure; Earth and Dam constructed in 1898 and beyond its life expectancy.
- The hope was to remain within the contract award; however, a contingency was in place in case it was needed.
- Engineers have advised the plastic piping currently being used now will last 100+ years.
- The total project cost was \$415,169.49, with the carry forward amount rounded up to \$425,000.
- Additional upgrades to the Earth and Dam will be required to meet current standards and will be addressed in the five-year plan.
- The new 18-inch diversion pipe will route around the dam, not through it, with the new intake being installed near the bottom of the lake, a few inches above the lakebed.
- Consulting services were awarded through an RFP process with weighted criteria; construction tenders were awarded based on lowest compliant bid to ensure objectivity.
- Questions were raised regarding last summer's drought and the potential for dredging as a response. While dredging the lake to increase capacity and supply during drought conditions was theoretically possible, the estimated cost would exceed \$3 million. In addition, significant environmental concerns would need to be addressed, and a comprehensive geotechnical analysis would be required.

MOVED BY COUNCILLORS B. SMITH AND WHEADON THAT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE RECOMMENDS COUNCIL APPROVE THE AWARD OF TENDER WHRMPW25-14 — MILL LAKES DIVERSION PIPE — TO GARY PARKER EXCAVATING LTD. FOR THE TENDERED PRICE OF \$347,599.60 BEFORE APPLICABLE TAXES. MOTION CARRIED. Nays B. Morton and Zebian

MOVED BY COUNCILLORS B. SMITH AND WHEADON THAT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE RECOMMENDS COUNCIL APPROVE A CONSTRUCTION CONTINGENCY AMOUNT OF \$52,139.94 BEFORE APPLICABLE TAXES. MOTION CARRIED. Nays: Zebian

c) Payzant Drive and King Street Upgrade Recommendation Report (7:30 p.m.)

Project Engineer Bouter reviewed the report. The Payzant Drive Extension and King Street Upgrades project was a Council-approved capital initiative identified as a priority in the 2025/26 Capital Budget to improve transportation connectivity and municipal servicing in Windsor. The project involved extending Payzant Drive to create a new connection with King Street, along with associated roadway, sidewalk, and underground infrastructure upgrades on both corridors. These improvements support future development, enhance traffic flow, replace a deteriorated section of the water system dating back to 1883, and complete the looping of the Irven Drive Extension watermain. Portions of the road construction were being delivered through an existing Development Agreement with Parsons Green Development, while the remaining works have been designed, tendered, and are proceeding toward construction following Council approvals and a competitive procurement process.

Discussion Points:

- The Development Agreement requires WHRM and the private developer to construct their respective portions of the road at the same time, triggered by whichever party initiates first. The developer plans to proceed this summer, aligning with WHRM, with substantial completion required by the end of November.
- Once both portions are completed, the road will be fully passable. The developer must build to WHRM municipal standards at an estimated cost of \$1–2 million, with DA clauses in place to address non-compliance.
- The project budget assumed 50% external funding; however, fewer funding programs were available than anticipated. No additional funding programs were currently available, resulting in increased reliance on debt and reserves.
- Council has identified the project as a priority, but the absence of external funding increases debt servicing while reserve funding remains unchanged. Capital Reserves cover design, engineering, and project management; sidewalks and curbs were funded through CCBF, with remaining costs debt financed.
- Increased borrowing significantly impacts affordability. The debt servicing ratio was 6.8% at the end of 2023/24 and could rise to approximately 9% if all planned borrowing proceeds, which may influence future capital project timing.

- The project improves water system reliability by creating looped connections, allowing continued service in the event of a watermain break.

MOVED BY COUNCILLORS WHEADON AND B. SMITH THAT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE RECOMMENDS COUNCIL APPROVE THE AWARD OF TENDER WHRMPW25-15 — PAYZANT DRIVE AND KING STREET UPGRADES — TO ITS CONSTRUCTION INC. FOR THE TENDERED PRICE OF \$4,272,564.00 BEFORE APPLICABLE TAXES. MOTION CARRIED. Nays: Zebian, P. Morton and Leary-Pinch

MOVED BY COUNCILLORS WHEADON AND B. SMITH THAT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE RECOMMENDS COUNCIL APPROVE THE CONSTRUCTION PHASE ENGINEERING SERVICES TO DESIGNPOINT ENGINEERING & SURVEYING LTD. FOR THE TOTAL PRICE OF \$91,524.00 BEFORE APPLICABLE TAXES. MOTION CARRIED. Nays: P. Morton and Leary-Pinch

MOVED BY COUNCILLORS WHEADON AND B. SMITH THAT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE RECOMMENDS COUNCIL APPROVE A CONSTRUCTION CONTINGENCY AMOUNT OF \$654,613.20 BEFORE APPLICABLE TAXES. MOTION CARRIED. Nays: Zebian, P. Morton and Leary-Pinch

d) Tendering Timeline — Rand Street Services and Street Renewal Recommendation Report (7:55 p.m.)

Project Engineer Bouter reviewed the report. Project Engineer Bouter reviewed the report. Rand Street in Hantsport has been identified as a priority infrastructure renewal project within the Municipality’s five-year Capital Budget, based on the age and condition of existing underground services and roadway infrastructure. The project, with design work now complete, includes the replacement of water, sanitary, and storm infrastructure, as well as full street reconstruction with curb, gutter, and sidewalk improvements. Given favourable market conditions and lower-than-anticipated tender pricing on recent projects, staff were seeking approval to issue the Rand Street tender in early 2026 to take advantage of competitive pricing, with the intent of awarding the contract within the approved capital planning framework and completing construction by November 2026.

Discussion Points:

- There was a small portion of where Bishopville Road meets Rand Street that was included within the tender to address previous concerns related to flooding.
- Within the Capital Budget (year 2) \$6.7 million was estimated in the budget, after the tender drawings were completed a class A estimate of \$6.03 million was received. It was hoped that tendering the project during favourable conditions would result in lower tenders being received.

MOVED BY COUNCILLORS LEARY-PINCH AND P. MORTON THAT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE RECOMMENDS COUNCIL APPROVES

THE RAND STREET SERVICES AND STREET RENEWAL PROJECT BE TENDERED IN JANUARY 2026, WITH THE INTENT OF BRINGING A CONTRACT AWARD RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL ON FEBRUARY 24, 2026. MOTION CARRIED. Nays: McLean and Jannasch

A break occurred at 8:03 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 8:17 p.m.

9. Reports

a) CAO's Report (8:17p.m.)

The CAO provided an overview highlighting ongoing Council and Committee meetings, with upcoming strategy session scheduled for Saturday. Other activities included meetings with the Newport GFL Arena to discuss their Capital Workplan, DEICC Meeting last evening, a Property Taxation Discussion RE The Crossing and the Organizational review, which has started and expected to be completed near the end of May. Operational Meetings regarding the booking of facilities in an attempt to streamline/refine the process related to invoicing. The Planning Department remains busy with monthly Inter-Developmental Development Related Meetings continuing and recent meetings regarding the Hants County Exhibition renovations.

The Courthouse is currently on the market advertised "for sale", with a deadline for submissions slated for February 27, 2026. Proposals will be provided to Council in March for review.

Lots of discussions with the Valley Regional Enterprise (VREN) related to tourism and marketing.

Attended the Police Advisory Board strategy workshop which focused on developing a framework for strategic planning and clarifying how the Police Advisory Board can support the RCMP in service delivery and in advancing priorities identified by Council and the community.

The Fire Services Director position has been advertised with a closing date of January 26, 2026.

The Warming Centre was operating seven days a week from 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m., with the majority of hours covered by volunteers rather than paid staff. Caremongers continues to work through the provincial funding application process. The remaining outstanding item was securing an insurance quote.

As part of the audit process, an Audit Committee meeting was being scheduled for the first week of February. The MNP Water Audit was expected to be presented at that meeting.

Discussion Points:

- The Regional Plan Review was currently in the initial draft stage and has been shared publicly to gather feedback on the draft document. There was no fixed deadline for completion, as the timeline was dependent on the receipt and review of public feedback. It was anticipated that the document will be ready for final review in late spring, at which time it will proceed through the standard planning department review and approval process.
- Previous engagement feedback would also be included in the report.

b) General Operating as of ~~December~~ ~~October~~ 31, 2025 (8:30 p.m.)

Director Rochon reviewed the report. If revenues and expenditures incurred evenly throughout the year, about 58.3% of the annual budget would be utilized at this point; however, approximately 85% of total revenues were collected to date. Expenditures were slightly below the expected norm, as the municipality was just entering the colder season when costs associated with winter snow removal and ice plant operations typically begin to increase. Based on current projections, a surplus of \$569,182 was anticipated. Changes since the last projection include updated sewer revenue estimates now based on two quarters of data, although the full impacts of mandatory water conservation measures implemented during the drought have not yet been realized. Deed transfer tax revenues continue to project slightly higher than budgeted, transfers from other levels of government are exceeding budget due to additional grant funding received, and other revenues have increased as a result of higher interest and penalties on outstanding balances. On the expenditure side, transportation costs were trending higher due to several factors, including the addition of Dial-A-Ride services, increased insurance costs, and higher expenses related to road repairs and maintenance, including tree removal.

Discussion Points:

- Report was based on the first two (2) readings for water and sewer.
- Transportation associated with Protective Services were coming in at 27.2%. The Fire Services and RCMP were paid out quarterly and the report only reflects half of these payments.

c) Water Utility Operating as of ~~December~~ ~~October~~ 31, 2025 (8:35 p.m.)

Director Rochon reviewed the report noting that projections had been updated, resulting in a reduced anticipated variance in the budget for rate sales. An increase remained, largely attributable to water purchased from haulers, which contributed to the higher amounts reflected in the other revenue line. Projected expenses increased within Administration in general, primarily due to higher depreciation costs, while other costs in this area were now projecting lower than previously anticipated. Transmission and Distribution expenses were trending higher as a result of increased fuel and maintenance costs associated with water main breaks and leak detection activities. The Source of Supply category was projecting lower due to reduced watershed road maintenance; however, this may change depending on winter road conditions. Overall, the projected deficit decreased and was now estimated at \$454,268.

Discussion Points:

- Only two (2) billings were captured within the report. Fire gets billed once at the end of the year.
- Any surpluses accrued from previous years were put into a reserve account. The rate study identified deficits would be offset by these surplus funds. It was believed the rate study identified enough to be withdrawn from the surplus reserve account to offset the projected deficit.

d) Water Consumption as of ~~December~~ ~~October~~ 31, 2025 (8:38 p.m.)

Director Rochon reviewed the report that reflected second quarter billing (reads from July – September and billed in October). Closed accounts and adjustments were represented in the Q3 column. There was currently a 58 % variance between the bulk water consumption and the Three Mile Plains billing, with authorized and accounted for non-revenue water equating to 2,799,758 imperial gallons.

Discussion Points:

- There was a typo in the numbers for Wentworth Road in the Q2 column. It was noted that in Q1, 1260 cubic meters and in Q2, 1132 cubic meters were used. The number should have been 249,000. The wrong cell was pulled forward.

10. Correspondence (8:43 p.m.)

a) General Correspondence Received Log as of January 9, 2026

- i. 2025-12-15 Minister Masland (DEM) Re End of Water Reimbursement Program letter and Droughts

b) Correspondence Sent as of January 9, 2026 - None

11. New Business

a) 2025 Development Activity in West Hants Regional Municipality Information Report (8:44 p.m.)

Acting Director Fougere reviewed the report. The report summarized land use planning and development activity in West Hants Regional Municipality in 2025, which marked steady, residential-led growth. The municipality processed 15 planning applications and created approximately 66 new subdivision lots, supporting ongoing housing demand through both approvals and as-of-right development. In 2025, 283 new residential units were permitted, continuing a growth trend since 2020, with construction values significantly boosted by wind farm developments. Key initiatives included advancing the consolidation of municipal planning documents and implementing the Housing Accelerator Fund, both of which support increased housing supply. Continued growth of over 200 new units annually and population growth of about 4% through 2027 was anticipated, with a Housing Needs Report update planned following the 2026 census.

Discussion Points:

- This was good information to have to take forward into budget discussions as well as for the public to be aware of.

b) Appointment of Development Officers Recommendation Report (8:46 p.m.)

Acting Director Fougere reviewed the report. In 2025, William Overholt was designated Alternate Development Officer and has served as the sole Development Officer since November, maintaining service levels and supporting staff training. To strengthen capacity, the municipality has hired Derek Robertson as Manager of Development Control Services, starting January 21, 2026. Both individuals were qualified and experienced, and appointing them as Development Officers will ensure continuity, strong leadership, and effective administration of the Land Use and Subdivision By-laws.

Discussion Points:

- The Manager of Development Control would also act in capacity as a Development Officer. The title (manager) was created to fill a vacancy and would help provide leadership and continue to create capacity within the Planning Department.

MOVED BY MAYOR ZEBIAN AND COUNCILLOR LEARY-PINCH THAT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE RECOMMENDS THAT COUNCIL APPOINT WILLIAM OVERHOLT AND DEREK ROBERTSON AS DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS EFFECTIVE JANUARY 28TH, 2026 IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 243 OF THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT. MOTION CARRIED

c) 2024-25 Hantsport Memorial Community Centre Financial Statements (8:48 p.m.)

Director Rochon reviewed the report. Since the introduction of an area rate for the Hantsport Memorial Community Centre (HMCC) in 2016, following Council approval and a favourable vote by Hantsport residents, the Municipality has provided annual funding to support HMCC operations, with adjustments over time for staffing needs and inflation. The 2024-25 review shows HMCC recorded a consolidated net surplus of \$98,108, while receiving \$106,522 in area rate funding, a portion of which is being held pending acceptance of financial statements. In accordance with the Area Rate Policy, area rate funded expenses must operate on a breakeven basis, and municipal staff will continue to monitor HMCC's financial performance.

MOVED BY MAYOR ZEBIAN AND COUNCILLOR P. MORTON THAT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE RECOMMENDS THAT COUNCIL ACCEPTS THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS PROVIDED BY HANTSPORT MEMORIAL COMMUNITY CENTRE (HMCC) AND THAT ANY 2024-25 HOLDBACKS AND ELIGIBLE 2024-25 AREA RATE PAYMENTS BE RELEASED TO HMCC FOR THE PURPOSES OF PROVIDING SERVICES DEFINED IN THE 2025-26 BUDGET. MOTION CARRIED

d) New Position - Water Meter Technician Recommendation Report (8:51 p.m.)

Director Richard reviewed the report. The report recommended adding a Water Meter Reader and Technician position to Public Works to improve billing accuracy, reduce water loss, enhance customer service, and ensure regulatory compliance. The role would strengthen operational efficiency within the water utility and was fully funded through the utility operating budget, with no impact on the general tax rate.

Discussion Points:

- Several concerns were raised as the position appeared to be similar to the CET position that was added last year, and the pay scale did not appear to align with the education level required for the role. The consensus was that this was not the appropriate time to consider the request. It was suggested that the discussion would be better held after the organizational review was completed and once budget deliberations have occurred, or during the budget process, when the financial impacts and figures would be clearly understood.

MOVED BY COUNCILLORS WHEADON AND IVEY THAT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE RECOMMENDS THAT COUNCIL APPROVE THE ADDITION OF ONE FULL-TIME WATER METER TECHNICIAN POSITION TO THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT STAFF COMPLEMENT EFFECTIVE JANUARY 2026. MOTION DEFEATED. Nays: Zebian, Francis, Ivey, B. Smith, J. Smith, P. Morton, Leary-Pinch, B. Morton, Remme, McLean and Jannasch

13. Public Comment Period (9:04 p.m.)

Cody Sandford, a resident of Falmouth, provided comments on the Marketing Levy presentation, expressing that he does not support the proposed tax levy. Mr. Sandford spoke about his personal experience as a short-term rental owner, noting the financial and administrative challenges already faced by property owners in the industry. He shared concerns that the implementation of a levy would add unnecessary costs and administrative burden to small operators. Mr. Sandford also emphasized that many short-term rental owners have already voiced their lack of support for a marketing levy at a public engagement session years ago. He encouraged Council to consider having conversations and even a public engagement session with short term rental owners to hear what they have to say and to better understand the potential impacts of an additional levy on local tourism operators.

14. In-Camera – None

15. Next Meeting Date / Adjournment – January 27, 2026 Council meeting

The meeting adjourned at 9:09 p.m. as there was no further business to discuss.

Deputy Mayor Debbie Francis, Chair

Deanna Snair, Municipal Clerk