

**West Hants Regional Municipality**  
**March 10, 2026**  
**Chief Administrative Officer Report**



The following report captures activities and events between the February 2026 COTW meeting and the date of the report.

**Governance**

**Meetings and Events**

- COTW Meeting – February 10<sup>th</sup>
- Council Meeting – February 24<sup>th</sup>
- Fire Service Modernization Planning Session (NSFM hosted)– February 17<sup>th</sup>
- Organizational Review Presentation to Council – February 19<sup>th</sup>
- Nova Scotia Government Budget Update by NSFM – February 26<sup>th</sup>
- Shelburne Consolidation Meeting (Mayor and CAO) – March 4<sup>th</sup>

**Administration**

- Meetings and Events
  - West Hants Sports Complex Electronic Sign Meeting – March 3<sup>rd</sup>
  - DEICC Meeting – March 9<sup>th</sup>
- Warming Centre Update – The Caremongers funding application process has concluded. An update has been provided by Caremongers that they will not be receiving funds to support the Warming Centre. It is my understanding through communications that a letter was received awarding approval for funding for the month of March only. The group declined the funding as they have been able to fund raise sufficient funds to cover the remaining time period (March) above and beyond the municipal contribution of \$20,000. The center continues to operate 7 days per week from 7pm to 7am until the end of March.  
There will be value in having a larger group meeting by all stakeholders in the very near future to define roles , responsibilities and resources available to support the homeless community next winter. This includes the defined roles of the municipality moving forward. The pending report scheduled for Councils' review will assist with this discussion.

## Finance

- Meetings and Events
  - Departmental 2026/27 Budget Preparation Meetings – ongoing
- MNP Audit – A presentation by MNP representatives has been coordinated for the COTW meeting. It is hoped that Council can engage directly with MNP as well as Auditor Forse through this opportunity as a follow up to the Audit Committee's review of the financial and operational audit.
- 2024/25 Financial Audit and Financial Statements – A report has been prepared for Council's review as well as a presentation from Auditor Forse to assist Council with any questions they might have regarding the audit with the hopes that Council will revisit their position of not approving the statements. The impacts of not approving the statements are noted in the Director's report.

## Community Development

- Meetings and Events
  - Operational Meetings regarding Sports Complex, Trails, Parks and Open Spaces, Economic Development, Capital Projects and Community Events
- Sports Complex Accessible Designated Areas – A meeting was held at the Sports Complex on March 10<sup>th</sup> with Building Official Tina McKay, the CD Director and Manager as well as the Accessibility Chair and committee member Jordan Stephens and I to review the designated spaces and the recent improper use of the accessible spaces during hockey events. The prioritization of the space not being interrupted at any time during the use of the facility by any party was strictly communicated. Everyone was engaged in the discussion surrounding the current and future designated accessibility spaces with an inclusion and accessibility lens. The Accessibility Committee will be provided with updates moving forward.

## Planning and Development

- Meetings and Events
  - Monthly Inter-Developmental Development Related Meetings
  - Climate Action Committee Meeting – February 11<sup>th</sup>
  - Link NS Meeting – February 19<sup>th</sup>
- Windsor Courthouse – Proposals will be reviewed by Council for the sale and redevelopment of the property at the March COTW, in-camera.

## Economic Development

- Meetings and Events
  - VREN Financial Update – March 10<sup>th</sup> - VREN Staff and Board members were provided with a high level perspective on the VREN as a result of the Nova Scotia Provincial Budget and its impact on the funding to the VREN. Further details will

be shared after the Board has an opportunity to revisit the draft budget of the VREN. A 20% reduction of the Provincial portion of funding is expected. Several programs require an application process to the Province versus the previous guaranteed allocation. Early indications are that those programs will be looked upon favorably. There remains a significant amount of uncertainty about the funding at this time. Updates will be provided through the LOC.

#### **Public Works and Infrastructure**

- Meetings and Events
- Hants Border Sewage Treatment Facility Meeting (Internal WHRM) – February 11<sup>th</sup>

#### **Protective Services**

- Meetings and Events
  - Police Advisory Board Meeting – February 17<sup>th</sup> – The PAB has provided direction for the Board to conduct a strategic planning session. This will include members of the PAB and RCMP staff. Additionally, it is expected that the process will include public and stakeholder consultation to help shape the priorities of the service and community safety. Staff Sargeant Nugent and I are facilitating schedules to accommodate this work.
- The Fire Services Director Recruitment – Interviews are scheduled over the next two weeks with short-listed candidates. Representation from the Nova Scotia Department of Emergency Management and RCMP have been secured to assist with the interview and selection process.

Sincerely,



Mark Phillips  
Chief Administrative Officer  
West Hants Regional Municipality