



MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF ARGYLE
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2025

Council Members Present:

Warden Nicole Albright, Deputy Warden Ted Saulnier, Councillor Malcolm Madden, Councillor Gordon Boudreau, Councillor Greg Foster, Councillor Darryl LeBlanc, Councillor Kathy Bourque, Councillor Glenn Digdon, and Councillor Racheal Surette

Absent with Regrets:

Staff Present:

Chief Administrative Officer Alain Muise and Executive Assistant Chantalle Newell

1. Call Meeting to Order

Warden Nicole Albright called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Invitation to Stand and Move

Warden Nicole Albright reminded Council that they are permitted to stand and move as they need to during the meeting. This is an initiative by Argyle Recreation which normalizes movement in meetings.

3. Approval of Agenda and Conflict of Interest Declaration

By consensus, the agenda was approved as presented.

4. Presentation – None.

5. Approval of Minutes

a. July 31, 2025 – Executive Council Meeting Minutes

By consensus, the minutes of the Executive Meeting on July 31, 2025, were approved as presented.

b. August 6, 2025 – Special Council Meeting Minutes

By consensus, the minutes of the Special Council Meeting on August 6, 2025, were approved as presented.

c. September 4, 2025 – Special Council Meeting Minutes

By consensus, the minutes of the Special Council Meeting on September 4, 2025, were approved as presented.

6. Recognizing Argyle – Council Announcements

Councillor Bourque congratulated the East Pubnico New Horizons on their 50th anniversary.

Councillor Boudreau provided an update on the 21st Annual Tuna Tournament, noting the strong attendance. He expressed his appreciation to the volunteers and extended congratulations to all participants.



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Councillor LeBlanc recognized Jill Mackenzie and the committee for organizing the 38th annual Argyle Abuptic Festival in July. He highlighted the fish fry, Bud's BBQ chicken and the "Legends of the Abuptic" award, which was presented to Wayne and Sharon Spinney. Councillor LeBlanc extended his appreciation to Bud Spinney for his dedication and cooking contributions. He also congratulated all involved for another successful year.

Warden Albright reported on the Annual Quinan Picnic, which was a huge success, noting the line didn't stop all day for food.

Councillor Surette advised the Harvest Festival is this weekend for the Village Acadien. She also highlighted the successful summer the Village had.

Councillor Diggdon thanked the volunteers and organizers for the successful Aiden Léo Memorial Ball Tournament this year. He also thanked volunteers all over the area for their dedication this summer to various activities.

7. Warden's Report

The Warden's Report was attached to the agenda, there were no questions on the report.

8. Committee Reports

There were no committee reports this evening.

9. 7-day Notice

a. Amendments to Article C11 – Procurement

Council received 7-day notice for amendments to Article C11 – Procurement.

10. For Decision and Discussion

a. Festival de la Barge – Tax Exemption Request

It is MOVED by Councillor Greg Foster and SECONDED by Councillor Malcolm Madden to add L'Association du Festival de la Barge to the list for By-Law #28 Tax Exemption for Non for-Profit Organizations and write off the current years tax bill in the amount of \$1.13 for AAN # 05361052

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

b. Second reading – By-Law X25 – Circus Animal Prohibition REPEALED

Executive Assistant Newell explained that several bylaws will be brought forward for repeal between now and the end of the year. Many are outdated, with some not having been reviewed since 1989. She noted the process is lengthy but necessary as part of ongoing bylaw cleanup.

It is MOVED by Councillor Racheal Surette and SECONDED by Councillor Darryl LeBlanc to approve Second Reading of By-Law X25 – Circus Animal Prohibition REPEALED.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY



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c. First Reading – By-Law X5 – Committees and Functions REPEALED

It is MOVED by Deputy Warden Ted Saulnier and SECONDED by Councillor Kathy Bourque to approve first reading of By-Law X5 – Committees and Functions REPEALED.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

d. Article C58 – Social Media Comment Policy

It is MOVED by Councillor Kathy Bourque and SECONDED by Councillor Malcolm Madden to approve Article C58 – Social Media Comment Policy as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

e. Amendments to Article C50 – Council Procedural Policy

It is MOVED by Councillor Darryl LeBlanc and SECONDED by Councillor Gordon Boudreau to approve the amendments to Article C50 – Council Procedural Policy.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

f. Correspondence from Yarmouth International Airport Corporation re: Renaming the Airport

It is MOVED by Councillor Kathy Bourque and SECONDED by Councillor Racheal Surette to support the request from the YIAC to explore a potential name change for the Yarmouth International Airport as part of their upcoming vision and branding exercise.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

g. Strong Mayor Powers

Council discussed the concept of “strong mayor powers,” which could shift municipalities from a warden system to a mayor system and potentially grant mayors veto authority in areas such as administration, provincial initiatives, and budgeting. Concerns were raised that such powers could undermine democratic decision-making, reduce teamwork within councils, and place too much authority in the hands of one individual. Several councillors noted this model may suit larger urban areas but is not appropriate for rural councils. The NSFM and AMANS have both indicated opposition to strong mayor powers, citing risks to effective governance and administration. Council members unanimously expressed opposition to the idea, emphasizing the importance of collaboration and democratic representation. Clarification was also provided that any such changes would require provincial legislation, which could apply either broadly through the Municipal Government Act or specifically to HRM under its charter.

It is MOVED by Deputy Warden Councillor Saulnier and SECONDED by Councillor Kathy Bourque to write a letter to the Province stating councils position on Strong Mayor Powers.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

h. NSFM By-Law Changes

Council discussed recent proposed NSFM bylaw changes, including the removal of the Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia (AMANS) representative from the NSFM Board, as well as a proposal to exclude CAOs from NSFM meetings. Members expressed concern that these changes could reduce collaboration and limit the flow of information between administrators and elected officials. It was noted that NSFM has not provided a clear explanation for the decisions, and questions remain about how councils would access needed information if CAOs are excluded.

It is MOVED by Councillor Glenn Diggon and SECONDED by Councillor Darryl LeBlanc to write a letter to the NSFM questioning what their reasoning is for not wanting a member of AMANS on the board of NSFM.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

11. For Correspondence and Information

a. Water Update

Council received an update on water supports available to residents experiencing dry wells. The Municipality continues to offer drinking water coupons (4L per person per day, up to four jugs per household) redeemable at select retailers, as well as non-potable water delivery for household uses such as flushing and washing. Residents must pre-register with the Municipal Office for non-potable water delivery, which requires suitable storage containers. It was emphasized that this water is not to be poured into wells. Councillors discussed options for improving access, including the use of 1,000L storage tanks, but noted cost and safety considerations. Approximately 150 households have registered for drinking water coupons and 30–40 for non-potable deliveries. Staff and local vendors were thanked for their efforts, and it was noted that longer-term planning is underway, including the possibility of a central water source and expansion of services if drought conditions continue.

b. Correspondence from MODY to Department of Justice

Council received correspondence that the Municipality of Yarmouth sent to the Department of Justice.

c. Correspondence from Comité organisateur des 40e Jeux régionaux de la Nouvelle-Écosse

Council received correspondence thanking them for their contribution to the 40e Jeux régionaux.

d. Correspondence from the Ecology Action Centre

Council received correspondence from the Ecology Action Centre expressing their support for the ADA Project.

e. Correspondence from John Sollows

Council received correspondence from John Sollows expressing his support for the ADA project.



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f. **New Horizons Grant Letters of Support**

- **Patchwork Pals**

It is MOVED by Councillor Glenn Diggdon and SECONDED by Councillor Malcolm Madden to provide a letter of support to Patchwork Pals for their New Horizons Grant Application.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- **SAR New Horizons**

It is MOVED by Councillor Kathy Bourque and SECONDED by Councillor Racheal Surette to provide a letter of support to the SAR New Horizons for their New Horizons Grant application.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

12. Financial Requests

a. **Council Community Grant Request – Friends of TNR - \$700 – District 9**

It is MOVED by Councillor Racheal Surette and SECONDED by Councillor Glenn Diggdon to approve a Council Community Grant in the amount of \$700 for Friends of TNR.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

b. **Les Jeux régionaux 2025 - Deficit Funding Request**

It is MOVED by Councillor Glenn Diggdon and SECONDED by Councillor Kathy Bourque to authorize deficit funding of \$7,500 for the Jeux régionaux 2025 deficit funding request.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

13. Agenda Topics for the next meeting/Notice of Motion by Councillors

Council discussed concerns raised by residents and local businesses regarding the light bylaw. Members agreed that more information and education are needed before any public consultation, including clarity on whether the initiative proceeds as a bylaw or policy and the challenges of enforcement. CAO Muise noted that the bylaw is primarily educational, highlighting key components such as shielding, energy output, and automatic shut-off, with priority discussions planned with commercial property owners. Council emphasized the importance of one-on-one engagement and clear communication to ensure residents and businesses understand the bylaw before further action.

Councillor Boudreau mentioned the mosquito problem and suggested hosting a presentation on local bat populations and their resurgence. A biologist working with a bat program has expressed willingness to meet with Council to provide information and guidance. Warden Albright suggested submitting an application form for the biologist to make a formal presentation, which would then be reviewed for approval.



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Council inquired whether the SPCA is still providing services to the municipality. CAO Muise explained that the SPCA's role has changed under a new agreement, which has not yet been formally signed but is largely finalized.

- Less serious dog issues (e.g., barking, loose dogs not showing aggression) will be handled locally, with processes still being clarified.
- More serious cases (e.g., dog bites, aggressive or dangerous dogs) will continue to be addressed by the SPCA.
- The new arrangement involves reduced costs for the municipality, reflecting the narrower scope of services.
- The SPCA will also provide sheltering for high-risk dogs and, if necessary, euthanasia services.

CAO Muise emphasized the safety of municipal staff and confirmed that untrained bylaw officers will not respond to dangerous situations. Council expressed the need for residents to have clear guidance on who to contact for animal-related concerns and hopes for the arrangement to be fully clarified soon.

Councillor LeBlanc noted there have been multiple requests from residents for a public dog park in Argyle. While dogs were previously brought to ball fields, these areas are not intended for that use. He indicated he plans to bring forward a proposal for a feasibility study on a dog park at a future meeting.

14. Question Period

Comments were made regarding the municipality's social media policy. It was clarified that the policy does not delete comments opposing the municipality's position. The policy focuses on preventing discriminatory speech, inappropriate language, spam, or AI-generated commentary, while encouraging respectful and meaningful disagreement.

Questions were also raised about the warden's voting rights. It was clarified that the warden votes on all motions but does not have a second or tie-breaking vote. In the event of a tie, the motion is considered defeated under Section 21(4) of the MGA.

Residents are encouraged to express concerns through proper channels, preferably face-to-face or via email, rather than on social media, to ensure respectful dialogue.

15. In-Camera

It is MOVED by Councillor Kathy Bourque and SECONDED by Councillor Darryl LeBlanc to go in camera at 8:13 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Councillor Racheal Surette declared a conflict of interest on one of the in-camera items and therefore, did not participate in the discussion or vote on the matter.

The council returned to the regular session at 9:04 p.m. to make the following motions:



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- a. *It is MOVED by Councillor Darryl LeBlanc and SECONDED by Councillor Kathy Bourque to transfer the municipal solar application to Powerbank Corporation in its entirety conditional on their reimbursement of our original investment within 12 months of a successful application.*

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- b. *It is MOVED by Deputy Warden Ted Saulnier and SECONDED by Councillor Kathy Bourque to approve, in principle, the enhancement of medical services in the Municipality of Argyle and to authorize the CAO to create a team and enter negotiations with the interested parties in support of the initiative.*

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

16. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Date Approved

Chair

Clerk/Recorder