



MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF ARGYLE
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, MAY 15, 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, Director of Finance Marsha d'Eon, and Executive Assistant Chantalle Newell

1. Call Meeting to Order

Warden Nicole Albright called the meeting to order at 6:32 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

It is MOVED by Councillor Darryl LeBlanc and SECONDED by Councillor Malcolm Madden to approve the agenda with the addition of items 12C Butte de la Croix and 12D Le Club des Acadien de Seniors de Wedgeport.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Councillor Boudreau declared a conflict of interest for the Wedgeport Heritage Society Community Grant. He will excuse himself from the meeting during that time.

Councillor Madden has declared a conflict for 3 of his grant requests and will excuse himself from that part of the meeting.

Councillor Bourque declared a conflict of interest for the East Side Community Centre Grant.

4. Presentation – Free Store Presentation from Evangel Assembly

Reverend Cindy Dunnett, Care and Connection Pastor at Evangel Assembly, spoke about the church's Free Store, which was launched in December 2022 to address food insecurity identified during the COVID-19 pandemic. The program initially started with grocery box distribution, the initiative evolved into a more sustainable model offering free groceries, clothing, and household items at the former Lighthouse Church on Argyle Street.



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The store operates monthly on the second Wednesday and has seen consistent growth, now serving people from Yarmouth town, the municipality of Yarmouth, and the municipality of Argyle. The store is staffed primarily by senior volunteers and operates with dignity and confidentiality for clients.

In the most recent month, the store filled 62 requests, serving 160 people (74% adults, 26% children). Year-to-date, 291 requests have supported 807 individuals. About 30% of these are single-adult households. The cost per request averages \$35.

The purpose of the presentation was to raise awareness to the program.

5. Approval of Minutes

a. April 24, 2025 – Executive Council Meeting Minutes

By consensus, the April 24, 2025, Executive Council Meeting Minutes were approved with the change of “West Pubnico Fire Department for year 2 of 2 at 0.09 cents per \$100 of assessment for the fiscal year 2025-2026”.

6. Recognizing Argyle – Council Announcements

Councillor Diggon wished a Happy 97th birthday to a resident in his district and he thanked the volunteers from various organizations that have been picking up litter around the communities.

Deputy Warden Ted Saulnier thanked the Ground Search and Rescue that came from all over South West NS to search for evidence in the disappearance of Zach LeFave which took place over two days.

Warden Albright reported on presenting to students in grades 3-5 at the Plymouth School about what a councillor does. She mentioned the students were very interested and engaged.

7. Warden’s Report

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

8. Committee Reports

Councillor Bourque reported on a new reuse centre that will be opening at the waste park, where items that are still usable but discarded can be resold by non-profit organizations who will then be able to keep the profits to support their organizations.

Councillor LeBlanc reported on the Yarmouth Airport Task Force being active with several new members. Plans are underway for a joint meeting involving all three municipal councils and local MLAs to provide a full update on recent developments and the future direction of the airport.

Councillor LeBlanc also reported on the hiring process for the new aquatics manager at the Mariners Centre. After a thorough interview and scoring process involving multiple strong candidates, a selection has been made, and an announcement will be made in the near future.

9. 7-day Notice

a. Article C57 – Veterans Banner Policy

Council received 7-day notice on the NEW Article C57 – Veterans Banner Policy.

10. For Decision and Discussion

a. Budget Presentation - Operating Fund & Capital Fund

CAO Muise went over the operating fund and highlighted the major expenditures that were garbage and policing. He highlighted the difference between mandatory and optional expenses. The operating budget is up for approval this evening, however the capital fund will be up for approval next week.

It is MOVED by Councillor Darryl LeBlanc and SECONDED by Councillor Kathy Bourque to approve the Operating Budget for the fiscal year 2025-2026 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

b. Tax Rate Approvals - Residential, Commercial and Resource

It is MOVED by Councillor Darryl LeBlanc and SECONDED by Councillor Malcolm Madden that Council approve the following rates for the 2025-2026 fiscal year: Residential \$1.13 per \$100 of assessment (increase of 2 cents), Resource \$1.13 per \$100 of assessment (increase of 2 cents), Commercial \$2.29 per \$100 of assessment (no change).

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

c. Temporary Borrowing from Operating Reserve

It is MOVED by Councillor Glenn Diggon and SECONDED by Councillor Kathy Bourque to authorize a temporary loan of up to \$2,000,000 (non-interest bearing) from the operating reserve to the operating fund with full repayment by August 31, 2025.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

d. Youth Wellbeing Network - Request for Committee Member - Deferred from last meeting

It is MOVED by Councillor Darryl LeBlanc and SECONDED by Councillor Greg Foster to appoint Deputy Warden Saulnier to the Youth Wellbeing Network Committee.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

e. Physician Recruitment Committee - Request for Alternate - Warden Albright

It is MOVED by Councillor Darryl LeBlanc and SECONDED by Councillor Glenn Diggon to appoint Kathy Bourque as the alternate for the Physician Recruitment Committee.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Councillor Greg Foster raised an issue concerning poor landline service from Bell Canada in the Hubbards Point area. A resident experienced days without phone service, yet a 911 call somehow registered, prompting an RCMP visit. Although Bell replaced the cable from her home to the main road, others in the area continue to suffer from issues like crackling and snapping on the line. The root cause appears to be outdated infrastructure, with new cables installed in some regions (e.g., Tusket and Morris Island), but not in the affected in-between areas.

Cell phone service is also unreliable; an example was given where a call between two people just 2 km apart was impossible without switching to landlines.

Councillor Foster criticized poor customer service and the lack of accountability. He highlighted the Commission for Complaints for Telecom-television Services (CCTS), a free ombudsman service that helps resolve telecom disputes. However, few Canadians (only 20%) are aware of it, and telecom companies often fail to inform customers as required by law.

CAO Muise indicated the provincial government is aware of and shares concerns about poor cell phone coverage in the area. Plans are underway to construct or upgrade cell towers, with some activity expected as early as spring this year. Key areas targeted include East Kemptville, Port Maitland, North Range, Middle Ohio, Corberie, Carleton, and Port Maitland—though not all are immediately local.

Some communities, like Quinan and East Kemptville, currently have no cell service at all, making the issue especially urgent. While it's uncertain how much the new infrastructure will improve service, there is hope that it will help.

It is MOVED by Councillor Greg Foster and SECONDED by Councillor Glenn Diggon to write letters to telephone companies and regulators as well as federal and provincial government partners in order to lobby for better telephone service in the Municipality of Argyle.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

g. Updates - Councillor Malcolm Madden

Councillor Madden submitted a request for an update on the flooding on Highway 3 and Highway 308. Executive Assistant Newell provided an update for Council that the Municipality and Province are collaborating and are still investigating what the issue may be, as they ruled out the Canada Post property as being the issue. During the next big rainfall, Director of Operational Services, Kyle Boudreau, along with the province, will go back to the site to investigate other causes.

Councillor Madden also requested an update on correspondence to the province that was requested by a council motion. CAO Muise provided an update indicating a phone call was made shortly after the motion passed to inform provincial officials, including Bruce Hancock and the Deputy Minister, of the council's request. The province has acknowledged receipt of the motion but has not yet responded.

A separate discussion was held regarding when a motion is necessary to communicate with other government officials. It was concluded that if Council is making a formal request for action from the



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province, a motion is required. However, if the communication is solely to share information, a motion is generally not needed.

h. Approval of List of Charitable Organization Tax Exemption

Councillor Diggdon declared a conflict of interest for this item and refrained from voting on it.

It is MOVED by Councillor Ted Saulnier and SECONDED by Councillor Greg Foster to approve the list of Charitable Organization Tax Exemption as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

i. Interest on Overdue Accounts

It is MOVED by Councillor Kathy Bourque and SECONDED by Councillor Racheal Surette that Council approved the interest rate of 13% per annum on overdue accounts and that the current year's property taxes be payable and due by July 31, 2025, and interest will accrue after that date.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

j. End of May Meeting

There are four councillors away at the end of the month for a conference, therefore, Council has decided to cancel their Executive Meeting at the end of the month.

It is MOVED by Councillor Darryl LeBlanc and SECONDED by Councillor Gordon Boudreau to cancel the Executive Council Meeting at the end of May.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

11. For Correspondence and Information

a. Correspondence from Mayor Blair to Minister Lohr

Council was copied on correspondence from the Mayor of Colchester to Minister Lohr regarding the recently announced amendments to the Minimum Planning Requirement Regulations, which establish new maximum allowable setbacks for wind turbines in Municipalities.

b. Correspondence from Minister Lohr re: Fire Records Management System

Council received correspondence from Minister Lohr providing an update on the investment the province is making towards how the province manages fire services records.

c. Correspondence from Minister Lohr re: Reprofilng of the Beautification and Streetscaping Program (BSP) and the Community Works Program (CWP)

Council received documentation regarding the reprofilng of the Beautification and Streetscaping Program (BSP) and Community Works Plan (CWP).

d. Correspondence from Minister Lohr and Minister Masland re: Fire Services Review

Minister Masland sent an email to councils regarding what the Province is doing for fire services review.



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e. Correspondence from Becky Druhan re: Additional Officer Program

Warden Albright received correspondence from Becky Druhan regarding the additional officer program

f. Oceans 11 - Deputy Warden Saulnier

Deputy Warden Saulnier provided an update on an Oceans 11 Meeting that was had regarding the fishing community.

g. Correspondence from Hear! Here! Society

The Hear! Here! Society sent their final report for councils information.

12. Financial Requests

a. Radio CIFA - Renewal of Municipality Logo on Vehicle

It is MOVED by Councillor Gordon Boudreau and SECONDED by Councillor Glenn Diggon to approve the CIFA request to renew the sponsorship for the logo on the car in the amount of \$900 plus tax for the fiscal year 2025-2026.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

b. Council Community Grants for District 1:

Councillor Malcolm Madden declared a conflict of interest and therefore recused himself from voting on the grants for le Club Acadien, Eel Brook Fire Department, and SAR/Eel Brook Community Group.

It is MOVED by Councillor Malcolm Madden and SECONDED by Councillor Kathy Bourque to approve a Council Community Grant in the amount of \$700 for Village Friends.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

It is MOVED by Councillor Malcolm Madden and SECONDED by Councillor Gordon Boudreau to approve a Council Community Grant in the amount of \$400 for Le Jardin des Petits.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

It is MOVED by Councillor Malcolm Madden and SECONDED by Deputy Warden Ted Saulnier to approve a Council Community Grant in the amount of \$600 for Abrams River School House Society.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

It is MOVED by Councillor Malcolm Madden and SECONDED by Councillor Darryl LeBlanc to approve a Council Community Grant in the amount of \$500 for Théâtre Sud-Ouest.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

It is MOVED by Councillor Darryl LeBlanc and SECONDED by Councillor Glenn Diggon to approve a Council Community Grant in the amount of \$700 for le Club Acadien.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY



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It is MOVED by Councillor Kathy Bourque and SECONDED by Councillor Racheal Surette approve a Council Community Grant in the amount of \$700 for Eel Brook Fire Department.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

It is MOVED by Councillor Darryl LeBlanc and SECONDED by Councillor Racheal Surette to approve a Council Community Grant in the amount of \$600 for SAR/Eel Brook Community Group.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

c. Council Community Grants for District 2:

It is MOVED by Deputy Warden Saulnier and SECONDED by Councillor Gordon Boudreau to approve the following Council Community Grants in District 2:

- Harbour Hill Community Hall - \$700
- Cemetery Committee Comeau's Hill - \$700
- Comeau's Hill & Little River Harbour Beach Committee - \$700
- Association des Clairmont, DeViller, Fitzgerald, and Jacquard - \$700
- Plymouth Recreational Hall Society - \$700
- Butte de la Croix - \$700

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

d. Council Community Grants for District 3

Councillor Gordon Boudreau declared a conflict of interest and therefore recused himself from voting on the grant for the Wedgeport Acadian Heritage Society.

It is MOVED by Councillor Gordon Boudreau and SECONDED by Councillor Glenn Diggon to approve a Council Community Grant in the amount of \$700 for Wedgeport Legion Branch 155.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

It is MOVED by Councillor Gordon Boudreau and SECONDED by Councillor Glenn Diggon to approve a Council Community Grant in the amount of \$700 for Wedgeport Tuna Museum.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

It is MOVED by Councillor Gordon Boudreau and SECONDED by Deputy Warden Ted Saulnier to approve a Council Community Grant in the amount of \$700 for Wedgeport Nature Trail.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

It is MOVED by Councillor Gordon Boudreau and SECONDED by Councillor Darryl LeBlanc to approve a Council Community Grant in the amount of \$700 for Wedgeport District Ladies Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

It is MOVED by Councillor Gordon Boudreau and SECONDED by Councillor Kathy Bourque to approve a Council Community Grant in the amount of \$700 for Le Club des Acadien de Seniors de Wedgeport.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

It is MOVED by Councillor Racheal Surette and SECONDED by Councillor Malcolm Madden to approve a Council Community Grant in the amount of \$700 for Wedgeport Acadian Heritage Society.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

e. Council Community Grants for District 4:

It is MOVED by Councillor Greg Foster and SECONDED by Deputy Warden Saulnier to approve the following Council Community Grants in District 4:

- Twin Village Social Club - \$700
- Hubbards Point and Area Community Development Association - \$700
- Club Social des Iles - \$700
- St. Joseph Cemetery - \$700

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

f. Council Community Grant for District 5

It is MOVED by Deputy Warden Saulnier and SECONDED by Councillor Kathy Bourque to approve the following Council Community Grants in District 5:

- Belleville and Friends Community Group - \$700
- Le Comité Touristique de la Paroisse Ste. Anne du Ruisseau - \$700
- SAR New Horizons Seniors Club - \$700
- Patchwork Pals - \$700

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

g. Council Community Grant for District 6

It is MOVED by Councillor Darryl LeBlanc and SECONDED by Councillor Malcolm Madden to approve the following Council Community Grants in District 6:

- Green Grove Cemetery Association - \$700
- New Horizon Seaside Park Association - \$700
- Lower Argyle Harbourview Cemetery - \$700
- Mount Pleasant Cemetery - \$700

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

h. Council Community Grant for District 7



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Councillor Kathy Bourque declared a conflict of interest and therefore recused herself from voting on the grant for the East Side Community Centre.

It is MOVED by Councillor Kathy Bourque and SECONDED by Councillor Gordon Boudreau approve a Council Community Grant in the amount of \$700 for East Pubnico New Horizons Association.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

It is MOVED by Councillor Kathy Bourque and SECONDED by Councillor Racheal Surette approve a Council Community Grant in the amount of \$700 for Ladies Auxiliary of East Pubnico Fire Department.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

It is MOVED by Councillor Darryl LeBlanc and SECONDED by Councillor Racheal Surette approve a Council Community Grant in the amount of \$700 for East Side Community Centre.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

i. Council Community Grants for District 8

It is MOVED by Councillor Glenn Diggon and SECONDED by Councillor Darryl LeBlanc to approve the following Council Community Grants in District 8:

- Les Amies du Musée - \$700
- Société historique acadienne de Pubnico-Ouest - \$700

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

j. Council Community Grant for District 9:

It is MOVED by Councillor Racheal Surette and SECONDED by Councillor Kathy Bourque to approve the following Council Community Grant in District 9:

- Le Village Historique Acadien de la Nouvelle-Ecosse - \$700

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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

14. Question Period

CAO Muise answered various questions from the public that were received from Facebook.

Q: What percentage of the tax collected is being spent in the town of Yarmouth and the municipality of Yarmouth?

A: The regional investment is 7.2% of total taxation.



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Q: Was there consideration given to increase commercial rate, and what were reasons not to do so to help offset the increase in expenses?

A: The commercial rate was unchanged for a number of reasons. 1. The rate of 2.29\$ was compared to other regions for consistency and we found the rate to be less competitive than the residential rate. Second, the commercial taxpayers were not protected by any cap on assessment. They experienced a decrease in assessment this year, thankfully, but not before seeing increases in the past two years of about 20% total. It was concluded that because of those increases, with no protection, that the rate should remain unchanged.

Q: Regarding the Mariners Centre expansion, is the issue of the proposed single-user bathroom and change area still under discussion? Will there be an opportunity for public input on this matter, and what is Council's current position on the issue? Thank you for your time and consideration.

A: The decision, along with all Mariner Centre expansion matters, was delegated to the Mariners Centre Expansion Board (MCEB), not this council.

An architect was engaged, and approximately 20 public engagement sessions were held in various communities, including Pubnico and the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth. These sessions, led by then-CEO Dorgam Hideib with Iris Communications, included significant discussion around universal change rooms, which raised both concerns and support.

The decision to proceed with the universal washroom design was made in December 2023, and construction is already underway, so further public consultation on the structure is no longer feasible. However, operational aspects of the facility can still be discussed going forward.

15. In-Camera

16. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Date Approved

Chair

Clerk/Recorder