

**PORT HAWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL  
SPECIAL PUBLIC MEETING  
Minutes of Meeting  
January 15, 2025  
Shannon Studio**

**Present**

Mayor, Brenda Chisholm-Beaton  
Deputy Mayor, Iaian Langley  
Councillor, Todd Barrett  
Councillor, Paula Hart  
Councillor, Blaine MacQuarrie  
Chief Administrative Officer, Terry Doyle  
Director of Finance, Erin MacEachen

**Regrets**

**1. Call to Order**

A Special Public Meeting of the Port Hawkesbury Town Council was held in the Shannon Studio on Wednesday January 15, 2025, and called to order by Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton at 3:30 p.m.

**2. Additions to Agenda**

- BMO Letter of Notice – Mayor B. Chisholm-Beaton
- In Camera Session following the Special Public Meeting.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

**MOVED** by Councillor, T. Barrett and **SECONDED** by Councillor, P. Hart “That the Town of Port Hawkesbury approves the Special Public Meeting Agenda as amended.” **MOTION CARRIED.**

**4. Motion to Move In Camera**

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**5. Motion to Move From In Camera**

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**6. Motions from In Camera**

There were no motions coming forward from In Camera.

**7. Strategic Plan**

CAO, T. Doyle noted that there was a Strategic Planning Session held in December with Ian McNeil in conjunction with the Cape Breton Partnership. T. Doyle presented the key points from the session to Council and had a discussion around the priorities. He

reviewed the vision and the mission that came from the Strategic Planning Session. Mayor B. Chisholm-Beaton noted that there was a desire to talk about some of the key points that Council heard at doors earlier in the Fall.

Deputy Mayor, I. Langley listed some of the areas of concern that were brought forward to him at the doors. By-law enforcement, safety, Housing, Strait Area Transit, Water metering for those that do not have (in the trailer parks), poor road and sidewalk conditions, making Port Hawkesbury more attractive to business, close proximity to forests due to the climate change (forest fires) , etc.

Councillor, B. MacQuarrie – same list that Deputy Mayor has brought forward along with housing has been heard for the past three elections, waterfront development/attraction.

Councillor, P. Hart – surrounding developments due to climate change, senior support, beautification, recreation concerns – more recreation offerings, taxes etc.

Councillor, T. Barrett – some economic development as a driver for growth as well as the items that Deputy Mayor also mentioned.

Mayor B. Chisholm-Beaton – providing opportunities in Port Hawkesbury for resident retention, population growth and focus on housing.

CAO, T. Doyle noted some of the core values that were identified during the Strategic Planning Session: Welcoming, Collaborative, Forward Thinking Accountable and Adaptable, Inclusivity, Optimistic and Innovation and Creativity.

Councillor, B. MacQuarrie noted that he was happy with how Ian McNeil and the Cape Breton Partnership presented the Strategic Planning Report. Identified page 11 of the plan – asked for the CAO, T. Doyle to explain the business plans. He noted that it is typically within the budgetary process and that can be something that staff can look at and develop as the year goes on.

CAO, T. Doyle asked if Council could review and get a consensus on the priorities and reviewed the list that was in the strategic plan:

- Community Development

Deputy Mayor, I. Langley questioned the order they are presented in – He would have Economic Development listed first.

- Housing Availability
- Economic Development
- Organizational Excellence and Leadership

CAO, T. Doyle reviewed the list of Council Advisory Committees including the mandatory committees that Council is required to have which are: Planning, Financial Audit, and Accessibility. . He reviewed each priority that has been identified and some of the factors that would fall within each committee. He presented two options to Council on the Town Advisory Committee for their consideration. There was a discussion around the options that were presented. CAO, T. Doyle, noted this time of year staff typically put out a call out for volunteers for the committees that are established. The Mayor suggested that Council host an event for interested volunteers for the advisory committees where committee mandates will be reviewed as well as a brainstorming session for community input. Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton reviewed the Accessibility Committee and indicated that the Accessibility Plan must to be updated by this Spring. Director of Finance, E. MacEachen reviewed the Financial Audit Committee and the membership and the frequency of the meetings. CAO, T. Doyle reviewed the Planning Advisory Committee, the membership and frequency of the meetings which are held around demand of development.

Mayor, B. Chisholm – Beaton asked Council which options they would like to consider structuring around their strategic goals.

Councillor, B. MacQuarrie, noted that in the Strategy Session there was a mention that the Towns Municipal Planning Strategy would need to be modernized, which may cause council to be more active within the Planning Advisory Committee and being proactive instead of reactive.

**MOVED by Deputy Mayor, I. Langley and SECONDED by Councillor, T. Barrett “That the Town of Port Hawkesbury approve the formation of the Town Advisory Committees as presented in Option Two at the Special Public Meeting held on January 15th.” MOTION CARRIED.**

CAO, T. Doyle noted that there will be an ad asking for volunteers for membership in Advisory Committees and inviting interested persons to an open . The Open House will be held on February 4<sup>th</sup> and a Combined Public Meeting and COW on February 18<sup>th</sup> which will include a list of volunteer members to be appointed to committees.

**Council took a recess at 5:24p.m.**

**Council resumed at 6:04p.m.**

## 8. Bylaw & Policy

CAO, T. Doyle reviewed the process for forming and amending Municipal Bylaws and policies including the steps of how to create or amend bylaws and policies. He reviewed some of the issues that have come up over the past few years, Parks, Emergency Measures, Backyard Chickens, Vending Bylaw and the Dog Bylaw. He reviewed a list of Bylaws older than 1980 and he indicated that the most important within that list for staff was Rules of Council as well as the bylaws to be replaced with policy or to be repealed. He asked for Council's direction.

There was a consensus on reviewing the Committees & Board Policy.

The CAO noted that there is not one dedicated person assigned as a bylaw enforcement but there are persons that do assist enforce By-Laws and Policies. The responsibility for enforcement Planning and Building Inspection By-Laws including the Dangerous and Unightly Premises By-Law is assigned to The Eastern District Planning Commission. Each year specific EDPC staff appointments are approved through motion of council. Parking is enforced by the RCMP. He commended the cooperation of the RCMP with their assistance on the recent dog issue. There is currently no dog bylaw enforcement officer at this time. Dog By-Law enforcement is complex due to various resources required. The staff recommendation with respect to this issue is to partner with Inverness County or Richmond County through an intermunicipal agreement which would include a fee. Backyard Fires - The Port Hawkesbury Volunteer Fire Chief has assisted with enforcement. There are improvements that could be made with respect to solid waste collection, but GFL is assisting with this enforcement. Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton, noted enforcement should be reviewed at future Bylaw and Policy Meeting.

## 9. Approved Additions

BMO Branch – Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton

Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton reviewed a letter from BMO notifying that they will be vacating their branch in Port Hawkesbury as of July 25, 2025. She indicated that she received some concerns from residents. Deputy Mayor, I. Langley asked if any Town funds are located there.

**MOVED by Councillor, P. Hart and SECONDED by Deputy Mayor, I. Langley “that Town of Port Hawkesbury send a letter to Deanne Chaulk, Regional Vice President, to express concerns and ask for reconsideration of the decision to close the BMO Bank of Montreal, Port Hawkesbury Branch.” MOTION CARRIED.**

## 10. Adjournment

**MOVED by T. Barrett and SECONDED by Councillor, B. MacQuarrie “The Town of Port Hawkesbury adjourned the Special Public Meeting at 6:37p.m.”**

**February 18 2025**



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Date

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Approved by:  
Terry Doyle, P. Eng.  
Chief Administrative Officer

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Recorded by:  
Melissa Warner  
Communications and  
Administration Officer