PORT HAWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL
PUBLIC MEETING
Shannon Studio
Minutes of Meeting
October 6, 2026

Present
Mayor, Brenda Chisholm-Beaton
Deputy Mayor, Todd Barrett
Councillor, Iaian Langley
Councillor, Paula Hart
Councillor, Blaine MacQuarrie
Chief Administrative Officer, Terry Doyle
Director of Finance, Brian Luciano
Director of Marketing, Recreation, Tourism and Culture, Michelle Farrow
Manager of Facilities and Operations, and Parks Gordie Snook
Director of Public Works, Jason MacMillan
Manager of Public Works & Engineering, Sajin John
Municipal Clerk, Melissa Warner

Guests
Chris Boudreau, P. Eng. – President - Strum Consulting
Hannah Benoit, P. Eng – Civil Engineer - Strum Consulting
Zack Bond, EIT - Strum Engineering

1. **Call to Order**
   Mayor Chisholm-Beaton welcomed the large crowd for the evening
   Prior to the meeting, the Mayor reviewed building procedures, including seating arrangements, emergency exits, keeping walkways clear, silencing electronic devices, and maintaining respectful conduct throughout the proceedings. The Mayor also advised that the meeting would be recorded and shared publicly, additional seating with livestream access was available in the Arts and Crafts Room, and attendees participating in person or virtually would have an opportunity to ask questions during the Public Question Period.

   Mayor Chisholm-Beaton welcomed and thanked everyone for attending, acknowledging that several agenda items were important to the community and may generate differing opinions. She emphasized the importance of listening to community concerns, respecting diverse perspectives, and maintaining respectful dialogue to ensure Council makes fair and informed decisions based on the best available information.

   A Public Meeting of the Port Hawkesbury Town Council was held in the Shannon Studio and virtually on Tuesday, October 6, 2026, and called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton.

2. **Additions to Agenda**
   - Stormwater Transformation Optimization and Resilience for Municipalities – Deputy Todd Barrett.

3. Approval of Agenda

MOVED by Deputy Mayor, T, Barrett and SECONDED by Councillor, I. Langley "That the Town of Port Hawkesbury approves, the October 6, 2026, Public Meeting Agenda as amended." MOTION CARRIED.

4. Gallery Presentations

Public Works Department – Director, J. MacMillan

Director, J. Macmillan provided Council with an overview of the significant rainfall event of September 4–5, 2026, including the impacts on residents, the Town's emergency response, infrastructure maintenance, and ongoing engineering assessments. He acknowledged the devastating effects experienced by residents, including basement flooding, sewer backups, property damage, financial hardship, and the loss of personal belongings. He emphasized that the Town recognizes the seriousness of these concerns and is committed to investigating the causes and identifying appropriate solutions.

The storm resulted in approximately 120 mm of rainfall over a 24-hour period, with upwards of 30 mm falling within the first hour, according to data collected at the Port Hawkesbury Airport. The event caused significant flooding throughout the region, resulting in damaged roads and bridges, power outages, emergency declarations, and loss of life. Prior to the storm, Town staff inspected critical infrastructure, cleared catch basins and stormwater outfalls, and ensured emergency equipment and backup generators were operational. During the event, Public Works crews responded to flooding, sewer surcharging, road damage, and debris while maintaining essential municipal services. Despite power outages exceeding 24 hours at the water treatment plant and Landrie Lake pumping station, backup systems operated successfully.

The Regional Emergency Management Organization (REMO) activated an Emergency Coordination Centre at the Port Hawkesbury Civic Centre, which operated daily throughout the emergency response. Town staff provided logistical, technical, and operational support while continuing local recovery efforts. Resident Impacts and Infrastructure Maintenance

Flooding was reported throughout Port Hawkesbury, with the greatest concentration of concerns originating in the Tamarac Heights subdivision. As for the presentation, approximately 85 residents had submitted information to the Town and its engineering consultants regarding their experiences. Residents were encouraged to continue providing information to assist with the ongoing assessments.

Mr. MacMillan outlined the Town's regular infrastructure maintenance activities, including annual sanitary and storm sewer cleaning, drainage inspections, outfall maintenance, and infrastructure repairs. He noted that while regular maintenance supports system performance, engineering assessments are necessary to determine whether existing infrastructure has sufficient hydraulic capacity to manage significant rainfall events.

He indicated that there are two major engineering initiatives are underway:

1. Strum Consulting – Tamarac Heights Stormwater Review: Retained following the September storm to conduct a focused engineering assessment of the Tamarac area, where the highest concentration of flooding concerns was reported. The review includes field investigations, infrastructure assessments, and analysis of information provided by residents. The Town is also identifying opportunities for immediate improvements where practical, including potential modifications to stormwater outfalls and drainage areas.

2. CBCL – Municipal Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Study: Initiated prior to the September storm through a successful Municipal Innovation Program funding application in partnership with Inverness County. The approximately $300,000 study examines water and wastewater infrastructure in Port Hawkesbury and Port Hastings, including system condition and capacity assessments, hydraulic modelling, wet-weather monitoring, inflow and infiltration, asset management, and long-term capital investment planning. Fieldwork is substantially advanced, with system modelling underway and asset management and capital planning scheduled for the winter.

Mr. MacMillan reviewed the work the Town has completed since the storm. Town crews completed road and driveway reinstatements, removed debris and fallen trees, and supported residents where possible. The Town also held a resident information open house on September 28 and continues to work closely with Strum Consulting to investigate reported flooding concerns.

Mr. MacMillan confirmed that engineering findings and recommendations will be presented publicly to Council. Recommendations from both engineering studies will inform decisions regarding immediate operational improvements and longer-term infrastructure investments, with consideration given to risk reduction, costs, and priorities.

During questions, Councillor Langley asked whether any immediate improvements had been identified. Mr. MacMillan advised that staff and Strum Consulting were reviewing potential modifications to stormwater outfalls and drainage areas in Tamarac to improve water flow. Mayor Chisholm-Beaton also raised concerns regarding the need for more localized communication during regional emergencies. Mr. MacMillan acknowledged the importance of municipality-specific messaging and advised that the matter would be raised during the upcoming regional emergency management debrief.

Mr. MacMillan concluded by reaffirming the Town's commitment to addressing residents' concerns, completing the necessary engineering assessments, and bringing recommendations forward to Council for public consideration

Deputy Mayor, T. Barrett asked about the CBCL when that work started – J. Macmillan noted that work started prior to the September Events. Councillor, P. Hart thanked –

Councillor, I. Langley – do the work without delay – have staff working with the strum team out in the field – looking at the storm system outfalls – they were inspected and no obstructions were witnessed – how can we reduce risk – have been extension pipes installed on one of the outfalls – have a heavy equipment come in and od some ditching. May help improve outfall flow in an area.

Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton – the regional emergency Centre – improve communications. Through the ECC – main focus is communications and the Province has control over the messaging – from the region – consistent throughout the – have a debrief session in Arichat with the regional partners.

STRUM Engineering – President, Chris Boudreau P. Eng.

Chris Boudreau, President of Strum Consulting, provided Council with an update on the engineering assessment currently underway following the September 4–5, 2026 flooding event, with a primary focus on the Tamarac Heights subdivision. He explained the complexities of municipal drainage infrastructure and outlined the investigation process, preliminary observations, and anticipated next steps to identify potential causes of flooding and recommend mitigation measures.

Mr. Boudreau explained that modern subdivisions, including Tamarac Heights, typically have two separate sewer systems: sanitary sewers, which collect household wastewater for treatment, and stormwater sewers, which manage rainfall runoff. Stormwater management also includes a minor system consisting of underground pipes and catch basins, and a major system consisting of roadways, ditches, and surface drainage routes designed to accommodate larger rainfall events. He noted that flooding can result from several contributing factors, making it important to investigate how water entered individual properties before determining the underlying causes.

The assessment focuses primarily on Tamarac Heights, where the highest concentration of flooding complaints were reported. Information collected from residents is being used to identify flooding patterns, including sewer backups, overland flooding, and water entering through foundations or basement openings.
A key area of investigation is inflow and infiltration (I&I), which occurs when stormwater or groundwater enters the sanitary sewer system through cracks, deteriorating infrastructure, manholes, or improper connections. During significant rainfall events, excess water can overwhelm sanitary sewer capacity, potentially resulting in backups into homes.
Mr. Boudreau also discussed backwater valves as a potential last line of defence against sewer backups, noting that their use varies by municipality and circumstances.
Engineering Assessment and Next Steps
Strum Consulting is currently transitioning from its initial desktop review into more detailed field investigations. Work completed or underway includes reviewing municipal infrastructure records, collecting resident information, conducting site inspections, and assessing the existing sanitary and stormwater systems.
Potential next steps include:

- Developing computer models to assess system performance and identify potential capacity concerns.
- Conducting CCTV inspections of underground sewer infrastructure.
- Undertaking smoke testing to identify improper connections and potential sources of inflow.
- Performing targeted inspections during rainfall events to identify where excess water enters the system.

- Identifying immediate operational improvements and longer-term infrastructure upgrades to reduce future flooding risks.

Mr. Boudreau indicated that some preliminary stormwater recommendations may be available sooner than those related to the sanitary sewer system. Certain improvements may be completed by Town staff, while larger infrastructure upgrades could require additional engineering, financial planning, and construction. He also explained that Strum's focused assessment of Tamarac Heights will complement the broader municipal water and wastewater infrastructure study currently being undertaken by CBCL.

Councillor Langley requested clarification on timelines for short- and long-term mitigation measures. Mr. Boudreau advised that Strum was working to finalize the next phase of investigations, including identifying contractors for potential smoke testing. He noted that some actionable improvements may be identified and undertaken before the final report is completed.

Councillor MacQuarrie questioned whether other affected areas, including MacDonald Street and Granville Street, were being considered. Mr. Boudreau confirmed that while Tamarac remains the primary focus due to the concentration of reported flooding, similar concerns in other areas are also being reviewed.

Councillor Hart expressed concern regarding residents' anxiety during subsequent rainfall events and requested greater clarity on timelines for solutions. Mr. Boudreau acknowledged these concerns and explained that improvements would likely be implemented progressively, with each identified and corrected issue contributing to reduced flooding risks.

Deputy Mayor Barrett questioned whether flooding in Tamarac and MacDonald Street could be connected. Mr. Boudreau indicated that while similar issues may exist in both areas, the systems are not directly connected, and further investigation is required.

Mr. Boudreau emphasized that identifying the causes of flooding and developing effective solutions requires a thorough engineering assessment. While a definitive timeline for completing all recommended improvements could not yet be provided, Strum Consulting will continue working closely with Town staff to identify and prioritize practical measures that can reduce flooding risks, with larger infrastructure recommendations to follow as the investigation progresses.

Town Residents Steven MacDougall & Michelle Kean

Town resident, Steven MacDougall provided a presentation on behalf of former Superintendent of Public Works, Danny MacIntosh. It was stated that Danny holds extensive experience in municipal sewer operations, regarding the history of recurring sanitary sewer backups and basement flooding in the Tamarac subdivision. Mr. MacDougall emphasized that the purpose was not to assign blame but to identify potential solutions. It was noted that the subdivision's sewer infrastructure was originally designed to accommodate approximately 500 homes, although fewer than 200 currently exist. The

presentation referenced a significant flooding event in 1975, which affected approximately 45–50 homes and led to the discovery of a major sanitary sewer blockage near Tamarac Drive and Pinecrest Drive. Following this event, the Town implemented preventative maintenance measures, including regular sewer flushing, jetting, video inspections, enzyme treatments, and the installation of cleanouts and check valves. According to Mr. MacIntosh, these measures contributed to more than 26 years without a major sanitary sewer flooding or blockage event. Mr. MacDougall had noted that Mr. MacIntosh has expressed concern that some of these maintenance practices had been reduced or discontinued following his retirement and suggested that recurring issues may be linked to the interaction between gravity-fed sewer flows from Tamarac and pumped flows from the Highway 4A pumping station, as well as stormwater infiltration through manhole covers.

The presentation outlined several recommendations, including a thorough cleaning and video inspection of the Tamarac sanitary sewer system, reinstating regular preventative maintenance, investigating the flow and pressure from the Highway 4A pumping station, addressing potential stormwater infiltration, and continuing the installation of cleanouts and backwater valves where appropriate. Additional recommendations included reviewing the Tamarac School pumping station, considering mandatory backwater valves in new residential construction, and establishing annual inspections and documented maintenance procedures. Mr. MacIntosh offered to work directly with Town staff and engineering consultants for approximately two weeks to share his historical knowledge, identify known problem areas, and assist in developing a comprehensive maintenance plan. The presenter emphasized that recurring flooding should not be attributed solely to heavy rainfall and encouraged the Town to investigate underlying infrastructure and hydraulic concerns, restore effective preventative maintenance practices, and ensure historical operational knowledge is documented and transferred to current and future staff.

Town Resident – Michelle Kean

Michelle presented concerns on behalf of residents affected by recurring flooding in Tamarac and other areas of Port Hawkesbury. She highlighted the significant financial and emotional impacts on homeowners, including repeated property damage, insurance difficulties, ongoing repair costs, and uncertainty surrounding future flooding events. Despite residents implementing preventative measures, flooding continues, raising concerns about the condition and capacity of municipal infrastructure. She referenced historical documentation from 2005 identifying drainage capacity concerns in the Hemlock and Birchwood areas and questioned whether previous recommendations had been addressed. Michelle acknowledged the Town's recent efforts to collect information from residents and engage Strum Consulting but emphasized the importance of moving beyond information gathering toward identifying causes and implementing solutions.
Residents requested that the Town complete its engineering assessments, publicly share findings, identify infrastructure deficiencies, and develop a documented action plan with

clear priorities, estimated costs, funding opportunities, and timelines. They also requested regular communication regarding progress, immediate mitigation measures where possible, and continued access to waste disposal services as homeowners complete repairs. Michelle emphasized that residents are seeking transparency, accountability, and long-term solutions rather than assigning blame. Mayor Chisholm-Beaton requested a copy of the presentation to ensure all concerns and recommendations could be reviewed and addressed. Deputy Mayor Barrett acknowledged the concerns and emphasized Council's commitment to transparency, communication, and taking action following the engineering studies.

Councillor Hart acknowledged the concerns and frustrations expressed by residents affected by flooding and recognized the professionalism and dedication of Town staff during the recent challenges. She emphasized the importance of respectful dialogue, accountability, and evidence-based decision-making, noting that Council has a responsibility to support both residents and staff while working toward solutions. She encouraged a collaborative approach focused on protecting residents, strengthening the community, and establishing a clear path forward. Councillor Hart asked residents to identify what additional actions they would like Council to take, within its authority, beyond the work already underway by Town staff.

Councillor MacQuarrie thanked the presenters for sharing residents' concerns and acknowledged the emotional impact, ongoing anxiety, and challenges faced by those affected by flooding, particularly vulnerable residents. He emphasized Council's commitment to identifying the causes, reviewing engineering recommendations, and pursuing solutions as quickly as possible, while considering the associated financial implications.

Councillor, I. Langley, thanked Ms. Kean and Mr. MacDougall for their presentations and expressed sympathy to residents affected by the flooding. Councillor, Langley outlined four key priorities moving forward: completing an independent engineering assessment through Strum Consulting, including consideration of Mr. MacIntosh's report and historical knowledge; ensuring transparency by making the engineering findings publicly available; reviewing recommendations and implementing appropriate mitigation measures as feasible; and advocating to other levels of government for disaster assistance and financial relief for affected residents.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor, T. Barrett and SECONDED by Councillor, P. Hart "to have a 10 minute recess at 8:36pm." MOTION CARRIED.

5. Acknowledgements

Mayor Chisholm-Beaton made the following acknowledgements:

- Mi'kmaq History Month – October
- Gaelic and Celtic Heritage Month – October
- German Heritage Month – October
- Canadian Islamic History Month – October
- Latin American Heritage Month – October
- Women's History Month – October
- Treaty Day – October 1st
- National Seniors Day – October 1st
- International Day of the Girl Child – October 11th
- Persons Day – October 18th

LOCAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On behalf of council, she extended birthday wishes to two Town of Port Hawkesbury Nursing Home Residents that have celebrated milestone birthdays recently:

- Violet Landry turned 98 on September 28th
- And Stella Paupin turned 99 on September 18th.

Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton recognized the Town of Port Hawkesbury's Provincial Volunteer of the Year, Karen Hood MacKinnon, who was honoured at the Provincial Volunteer Awards Ceremony held on September 28th in Halifax. The mayor also expressed appreciation for the many volunteers who contribute to the community.

Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton noted that extended Thanksgiving wishes to all residents.

The Mayor acknowledged the upcoming Celtic Colours International Festival opening concert that will be hosted in Port Hawkesbury and thanked Town staff and community volunteers for their yearly contributions to the event.

Deputy Mayor, T. Barrett extended a warm welcome to two new physicians, a husband and wife, and their young family to the Town of Port Hawkesbury.

6. Approval of Council Minutes

i. Public Meeting of Council – September 1, 2026
There were no errors or omissions.

7. Business Arising from Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

8. Council Committee Reports

Report from Committee of the Whole

There was no Committee of the Whole held in September.

9. MOTIONS FROM IN CAMERA

There were no motions coming from the In Camera Session.

10. Council Reports on Assigned Committees

Deputy Mayor, T. Barrett

June 18 – Superport Days

June 22 – Attended presentation by Mayor Chisholm-Beaton and Councillor Langley on CANSEC and Wind Europe

June 23 – Attended a meeting with an update on Reeves Street

June 29 – Met with members of the Grow Port Hawkesbury regarding aerospace development

July 8 – Chaired Grow Port Hawkesbury

July 9 – Attended Audit Committee meeting

July 10 – Attended a meeting with representatives from Invest NS

July 13 – Planning meeting with members of Grow Port Hawkesbury Committee

July 16 – Planning meeting with members of the Grow Port Hawkesbury Committee

August 6 – Attended Sports Wall of Fame Committee meeting

August 11 – Meeting with ACOA representative, members of Grow Port Hawkesbury and Town officials

August 12 – State of the Province with Premier Houston

September 2 – Chaired the Grow Port Hawkesbury Committee Meeting

September 4 – Met with the Principal of Nova Scotia Community College - Strait Area Campus to discuss opportunities

September 10 – Met with Town staff and Developer

September 10 – Virtually attended At Home Housing Association Workshop

September 13 – Prep meeting with Grow Port Hawkesbury and Town staff ahead of a meeting with a developer

September 14 – Attended virtually Cape Breton South Recruiting for Heath Care

September 15 – Attended Police Advisory Committee

September 20 – Met with members of the Grow Port Hawkesbury Committee

September 21 – Met with ACOA, Town staff, and Grow Port Hawkesbury Executive

September 27 - Met with members of Grow Port Hawkesbury

Councillor, P. Hart – Provided her report to M. Warner for the minutes.
June 17 - Joint Development commission Meeting
June 18 – Superport Days - Wind Energy Panel Planning

June 22 – Growing Port Hawkesbury Cansec, WindEurope presentation
June 23 – Reeves Street Improvements Planning Session
June 25 – Eastern District Planning Commission Committee
July 17 – Strait Area Transit Board Meeting
August 12 – State of the Strait at the Civic Centre
September 1 – Public Meeting
September 2 – Community Development
September 10 - Eastern District Planning Committee
September 15 – Police Advisory Meeting
September 16 – Community Development Meeting
September 28 - Open house

Councillor, B. MacQuarrie

August 7 – Inverness County Home Support
August 12 – State of the Province Address with Premier Houston
August 25 – Strait Area Transit – Annual General Meeting
Inverness County Home Support
September – Community Development committee
September - Open House

Deputy Mayor, I. Langley

1.) June 16, 2026, 18:00 Public Hearing, 19:00 In-Camera Meeting. 19:30 Committee of Whole
2.) June 17, 2026 15:30 17:00 Joint Development Commission
3.) June 18, 2026 08:00 – 20:00 Superport Days Event
4.) June 22, 2026 15:00-16:00 Allan J. MacEachen Regional Airport Committee
5.) June 22, 2026 18:00 – 20:00 Presentation given for WIND EUROPE
6.) June 23, 2026 16:00-17:30 Reeves Street Impro Project Planning Session
7.) July 03, 2026 15:00-17:00 Meeting with LUNR Corp
8.) July 06, 2026 10:00-10:30 ACOA
9.) July 08, 2026 18:00 – 19:30 Grow Port Hawkesbury
10.) July 10, 2026 09:00 – 09:30 Meet Municipal Staff discuss waterfront
11.) July 10, 2026 10:00 – 12:00 Invest Nova Scotia Sheldon Gillis and Wanda MacLean
12.) July 13, 2026 14:00-16:00 GPH Meeting
13.) July 14, 2026 11:00 -12:00 meet with STRUM Eng and TofPH Staff
14.) July 20, 2026 13:30-15:00 TofPH Staff and STRUM
15.) Aug 03, 2026 19:00-20:00 GPH Strat Planning ACOA
16.) Aug 05, 2026 15:00-16:00 TofPH Staff waterfront discussion STRUM/NGC
17.) Aug 11, 2026 13:30-14:30 TofPH staff & STRUM
18.) Aug 11, 2026 15:00-16:00 TofPH staff & ACOA
19.) Aug 12, 2026 11;00 14:00 State of the Province Address - Premier Houston
20.) Aug 12, 2026 14:15 – 15:00 TofPH staff & ACOA

21.) Aug 12, 2026 15:00-16:00 LUNR virtual with TofPH Staff

22.) Aug 19, 2026 16:30-18:00 EverWind Fuels CLC sent regrets from Mayor

23.) Aug 24, 2026 18:00-19:00 GPH planning session

24.) Sept 01, 2026, 18:00 In-Camera Council meeting 19:00 Public Mtg of Council

25.) Sept 02, 2026, 18:00 19:30 Grow Port Hawkesbury Meeting

26.) Sept 09, 2026, 13:00 – 14:00 Meeting with Engineering firm STRUM - Port Development

27.) Sept 11, 2026, 08:00 18:00 – Travel to HALIFAX in personal car with Mayor and met with party with interest in Port Development

28.) Sept 14, 2026, 19:00 -20:00 Debrief GPH and Staff on Halifax trip

29.) Sept 21, 2026, 14:30-16:00 Meet with ACOA Port Development

30.) Sept 23, 2026, 14:30-16:00 Dues file GPH Cochair & Contract Advisor to MP

31.) Sept 25, 2026, 15:00-16:00 Planning session for Open House

32.) Sept 27, 2026, 20:00 -20:30 – GPH strategic session Barrett and MacEachern virtual

33.) Sept 28, 19:00-21:00 – OPEN HOUSE Session Bear Head Room Sept 4/5 Storm

34.) Sept 29, 2026, 12:00-12:30 Site visit on Queen Street

35.) Oct 05, 2026, 09:00 -10:00 liaise with Contract Strategic Advisor to MP Battiste on New Dawn Rynolds Street Project

36.) Oct 06, 2026, 13:00-15:00 – GPH meeting with Contract Government Strategic Advisor to MP Battiste

Mayor B. Chisholm-Beaton

Mayor B. Chisholm-Beaton provided an overview of her committee work and community engagements, including meetings with the Allan J. MacEachen Regional Airport, Eastern District Planning Commission, Growing Port Hawkesbury, Cape Breton Regional Enterprise Network, and regional green energy initiatives. She highlighted the IDEA Committee's ongoing work on community engagement, social media initiatives and planning for future events. Additional activities included discussions with potential developers, housing and homelessness initiatives, regional economic development and provincial representatives. Significant attention was given to the September 4th storm response, including meetings with affected residents, coordination with provincial officials regarding relief efforts, and planning for public information sessions. She also attended discussions regarding the proposed rotary, EverWind developments and regional infrastructure priorities.

11. CAO Reports

The Department Reports were circulated in the agenda package. The Reports included in the package were:

- Marketing, Recreation, Tourism, and Culture,
- Facilities, Operations, and Parks
- Finance
- And Engineering and Public Works

Marketing, Recreation, Tourism and Culture

Director, M. Farrow, noted that the reports have been circulated in the packages and will cover the work over the summer.

- Strait Area Pool
- Recreation Programming
- Granville Green
- Shows & Events
- Media & Marketing

Director of Marketing, Recreation, Tourism and Culture, M. Farrow, provided an update on summer activities and fall programming. The Strait Area Pool reopened in September, with strong registration for swimming lessons and continued demand for aquatic programs. Summer day camps and recreation activities were highly successful, with many programs reaching capacity. Canada Day celebrations and Granville Green experienced strong attendance and community participation. Fall recreation programming is underway, with several concerts and events scheduled through December. The Community Development Committee continues work on the dog park, turf soccer field feasibility study, waterfront concept plan and fire hydrant art initiative. The Town's social media following also continues to grow, approaching 7,000 followers.

Facilities, Operations, and Parks

Manager, G. Snook provided an update from his department. Including updates on:

- Civic Centre
- Pools
- Parks & Fields
- Tennis courts
- Fire hall
- Food bank
- Dog Park
- Airport
- IDEA advisory committee

General Manager of Facilities, G. Snook, provided an update on Civic Centre operations, noting increased ice demand due to closures at surrounding arenas, with priority given to existing local user groups. Preparations are underway for the Celtic Colours opening concert, and pool operations have resumed successfully. The Dan Willie Field improvements and Fire Hall energy efficiency upgrades are complete, while accessibility improvements at the Food Bank are ongoing. The new dog park continues to receive positive feedback, with a safety entrance recently installed. At the airport, paving repairs remain outstanding, and the completed airfield lighting audit has identified recommended

infrastructure upgrades. Fall maintenance of parks and recreation facilities is also underway.

Finance

Director, B. Luciano, provided an update on the initiative from the finance department that included:

- Audit Process
- Procurement Study
- Property Tax
- Strait IT
- Diamond Municipal Solutions
- Landrie Lake

Director of Finance, B. Luciano, provided an update on the Town's year-end audit, noting that the Landrie Lake Water Utility audit is complete, with final consolidation underway. A local procurement study found that 78% of the Town's purchasing occurs within Nova Scotia, the highest among participating organizations. Strait IT has appointed an interim manager following the retirement of its founding director. The Town has also begun transitioning to new municipal financial software, with implementation expected to take approximately 18 months. New Landrie Lake Water Utility rates were approved, effective August 1, 2026, with further adjustments scheduled for 2027 and 2028. Staff continue pursuing provincial disaster assistance and storm-related funding to offset costs associated with September's heavy rainfall and ongoing stormwater studies.

Engineering and Public Works

Director, J. MacMillan provided a departmental update on the initiatives within his department including:

- Spruce Street Sewer Connection
- Granville Street Bridge
- 2026 Capital Paving
- Reeves Street Safety upgrades.
- Embree Island Road Access Traffic Changes
- Granville Street Bridge Climate Hazard Assessment
- Climate Ready Plans & Process – Climate Ready Assessment
- Landrie Lake Water Utility
- Surplus Equipment Tender
- Public Works Activity
- Equipment & Fleet Upgrades

An update was provided on Engineering and Public Works projects, highlighting the completion of the Spruce Street sewer extension at a cost of approximately $620,000 to support future housing developments, along with the annual capital paving program,

which included approximately 5,700 square metres of roadway improvements. Repairs to the Granville Street Bridge are progressing, with completion anticipated by the end of October. A climate resilience assessment identified full bridge replacement as the preferred long-term solution, with preliminary costs estimated at $2–3 million. The Reeves Street improvement project, in partnership with Nova Scotia Public Works, is nearing completion of the design phase, with construction anticipated in spring 2027. The project includes intersection upgrades, traffic signals, pedestrian crossings and active transportation infrastructure. Upcoming traffic changes include the permanent closure of the east end of Embree Island Road, additional turning lanes and revised access to Granville Street. A federally funded climate risk assessment and adaptation plan is also underway. Landrie Lake Water Utility completed vegetation clearing and maintenance activities, acquired equipment for reservoir monitoring and is preparing for a dam safety review. Public Works continued routine roadway, sidewalk, water and wastewater infrastructure improvements, accessibility upgrades and storm recovery efforts. Fleet upgrades and a surplus equipment tender were also highlighted. Staff confirmed that the September storm caused no significant structural impacts to the bridges and that existing access points to the Causeway Shopping Centre are expected to remain open.

12. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

13. Proclamations/Resolutions

There were no proclamations**.**

14. Other Business

i. **Data Centre – Mayor, B. Chisholm**

Mayor B. Chisholm-Beaton provided an overview of the federal and provincial principles governing responsible data centre development and discussed the proposed EverWind data centre in Point Tupper. While recognizing potential economic development opportunities, Council expressed concerns regarding water consumption, electrical capacity, environmental impacts and the protection of Landrie Lake as the Town's municipal water source. Council emphasized the importance of obtaining additional information on the proposed development, including infrastructure requirements, potential impacts on existing water commitments and benefits to the community. The Mayor recommended that staff undertake further research, seek clarification on Council's concerns and report back with options for next steps at a future Council meeting.

MOVED by Councillor, B. MacQuarrie and SECONDED by Deputy Mayor, T. Barrett "That the Town of Port Hawkesbury direct staff to collect more information, do further research and bring forward options for next steps to a future meeting for council consideration." MOTION CARRIED.

ii. **Back Flow Prevention Initiative – CAO, T. Doyle**

CAO, T. Doyle, recommended that Council consider developing an incentive program to assist residents with the cost of purchasing and installing sanitary sewer backflow preventers as a flood prevention measure. The proposed program would provide partial financial assistance, with staff reviewing similar programs in other municipalities to establish a fair and appropriate incentive.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor, T. Barrett and SECONDED By Councillor, B. MacQuarrie, "That the Town of Port Hawkesbury authorize staff to develop the program, with the final details to be brought back to Council for review and approval prior to implementation." MOTION CARRIED.

iii. **Halloween Hours – CAO, T. Doyle**

CAO, T. Doyle, presented the annual Halloween safety recommendations, permitting trick-or-treating until 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 31st. Halloween masks will not be permitted on Town streets after 8:00 p.m., and a 10:00 p.m. curfew will be in effect for youth aged 16 and under. Halloween safety tips will also be shared with the public through local media.

MOVED by Councillor, B. MacQuarrie and SECONDED by Councillor, P. Hart "That the Town of Port Hawkesbury permit Trick or Treating until 8pm on Saturday, October 31. Halloween masks will not be permitted to be worn on Town Streets after 8pm, and a 10pm curfew will be in effect for ages 16 years and under." MOTION CARRIED.

iv. **Grants & Programs for 2026 – Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton**

Mayor B. Chisholm-Beaton highlighted financial assistance programs available to residents in collaboration with MLA Kyle MacQuarrie's constituency office, including:

- Provincial Assistance Programs: Financial support for seniors and low-income households.
- Town Low-Income Property Tax Exemption: Up to $350 in tax relief for eligible homeowners.
- Efficiency Nova Scotia Home Warming Program: Free energy assessments and home efficiency upgrades for eligible homeowners.

Program information will be shared through the Town's website and social media, with residents encouraged to contact the MLA's constituency office or Town Office for assistance.

v. **Council Expenses, CAO, T. Doyle**

CAO, T. Doyle, gave an update on Council Expenses for the month of September. He reminded the gallery that Council expenses are posted on the Town of Port Hawkesbury website.

15. Approved Additions

- **Stormwater Transformation Optimization and Resilience for Municipalities**

Staff requested Council's approval to apply for the provincial Stormwater Transformation, Optimization, and Resilience for Municipalities Grant Program to strengthen the Town's stormwater management initiatives.

MOVED by Councillor, I. Langley and SECONDED by Councillor, P. Hart "That the Town of Port Hawkesbury submit an application to the Province of Nova Scotia for grant funding under the Stormwater Transformation Optimization and Resilience for Municipalities (STORM) fund." MOTION CARRIED.

16. Future Meetings

The future meetings of the Town Council are scheduled as follows:

i. Committee of the Whole - Tuesday October 20, 2026
ii. Public Meeting on Tuesday - November 20, 2026

17. Public Question Period

Mayor B. Chisholm-Beaton outlined the public question period guidelines, noting that questions must relate to the meeting's agenda and be directed through the Chair. Unanswered questions will be referred to the CAO for a written response.

Resident S. MacLean raised concerns regarding the sanitary sewer flow design in the Tamarac subdivision and questioned the accuracy of Strum's mapping of properties affected by the September storm. He noted that his property's sewer backup had not been reflected in the mapping despite providing the information and expressed concerns regarding the lack of follow-up and the need to incorporate local knowledge into the study.

Resident C. Power expressed concerns that the stormwater study appeared to focus primarily on Tamarac subdivision, noting that Summit Park has experienced longstanding flooding issues and that the mapping did not reflect all affected properties. He requested confirmation that the Town would dedicate appropriate attention and resources to addressing flooding concerns throughout the entire community.

CAO, T. Doyle, confirmed that an ongoing municipal infrastructure study is reviewing water and sewer systems throughout the Town. He emphasized that stormwater management concerns in Summit Park, MacDonald Street and other affected areas will also be addressed to ensure no areas are overlooked.

Resident C. Power questioned whether the proposed data centre would be AI-related and raised concerns regarding potential environmental impacts, resource consumption and limited employment opportunities. He asked what recourse the Town would have if the development, located in Richmond County, negatively impacted Port Hawkesbury.

CAO, T. Doyle, explained that the proposed data centre falls under Richmond County's planning authority. Should concerns or potential impacts on Port Hawkesbury be identified as the project develops, the Town would advocate on behalf of its residents with Richmond County and the Province of Nova Scotia.

Gallery participant J. Stewart raised concerns regarding the proposed data centre, particularly whether it would be an AI facility and the lack of specific regulatory requirements governing such developments. She questioned how commitments related to electricity and water consumption, cooling systems, noise levels and municipal tax revenues would be monitored and enforced if the development did not operate as initially proposed.

Mayor B. Chisholm-Beaton clarified that the proposed data centre is located in Richmond County and would not generate tax revenue for the Town. She requested J. Stewart's permission to circulate her correspondence to Council and senior staff for consideration as they determine next steps and advised that additional questions could be addressed after other residents had an opportunity to speak.

Resident G. Hume questioned whether groundwater flow was being assessed as part of the Town's stormwater investigations. He noted that historical drainage trenches and embankments in the Tamarac subdivision have deteriorated or become overgrown and suggested that restoring these drainage features could provide a relatively simple solution to reducing water accumulation.

Staff confirmed that drainage concerns in the northwestern area of Tamarac Drive have been raised by residents and discussed. While the Town cannot undertake improvements on private property, staff will investigate the possibility of constructing a drainage ditch on Town-owned property to redirect water away from residential backyards.

J. Stewart, a Richmond County resident, reiterated concerns regarding the proposed Point Tupper data centre, emphasizing that federal expectations are not enforceable regulations and raising questions about data ownership, privacy and potential implications of the U.S. CLOUD Act. She stressed the importance of addressing regulatory gaps and potential impacts on surrounding communities and asked whether the public would have opportunities to participate in future discussions as the project progresses.

Mayor B. Chisholm-Beaton explained that Council meetings and agendas are publicly advertised, with regular Council meetings held on the first Tuesday of each month and Committee of the Whole meetings on the third Tuesday. She advised that residents wishing to make a presentation to Council should contact the Town Clerk to discuss scheduling and thanked attendees for their participation before adjourning the meeting.

18. Adjournment

The Public Meeting of Council adjourned at 11:12 p.m." MOTION CARRIED.

November 3, 2026

Date	Approved by: Terry Doyle, P. Eng. Chief Administrative Officer	Recorded by: Melissa Warner Communications and Administration Officer