



Village of Baddeck

492 Chebucto Street
Unit 5, P.O. Box 63
Baddeck, Nova Scotia B0E 1B0

Monthly Village Commission Meeting

Wednesday, January 22, 2025

Village of Baddeck Office 492 Chebucto St, Baddeck.

Participants: Jennifer MacDonald (Chair), Bonnie Whyte, Denise Roberts, Dan McNeil, Gary Crowder, Roman Braun-Huettner (VM)

Online:

Regrets:

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM by Com. MacDonald.

Com. MacDonald reads the land acknowledgment to the Mi'kmaq People.

1. Approval of/Additions to the Agenda

- a. *Agenda was distributed on January 17, 2025.*
- b. *Agenda was approved as distributed.*

2. Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

- a. *No conflicts of interest*

3. Approval of the Minutes from previous regular meeting: December 11, 2024

- a. *Minutes from the regular meeting in December were distributed on January 07, 2025.*
- b. *Corrections were made regarding misspellings. No other errors, omissions, or additions were stated. The minutes were approved as amended.*

4. The swearing-in of Commissioner Crowder.

- a. *During the nomination period, only one individual was nominated: Gary Crowder. As a result, Gary Crowder was acclaimed. Anna McDonald was present to officiate the swearing-in ceremony.*
- b. *We would like to officially thank Commissioner MacKinnon for his service on the Village Commission. He has been a valuable asset, especially in matters related to finances, and he will certainly be missed.*

5. Sidewalk plowing

- a. *The municipality has removed the \$8,000 contribution for sidewalk plowing, which had historically been provided to the Village. As a result, Public Works has been*



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clearing and salting the sidewalks, leading to budgetary impacts due to overtime and staff adjustments. This was not initially planned for in the current year's budget.

- b. The issue of communicating this change to residents was raised, as no formal communication has been sent yet. A newsletter will likely be issued to inform the public and gather feedback on whether the service should continue, considering potential impacts on local taxes.*

6. The strategic direction of the Village of Baddeck

- a. The Village's strategic direction was discussed, emphasizing the importance of revisiting the strategic plan.*
- b. A public meeting to discuss the area tax rate, sewer rate, and water rate was proposed. The meeting is scheduled for **February 19th at 6:00 PM**.*
- c. Topics to be addressed include upcoming projects, maintenance costs, and the financial implications on the water and sewer systems, particularly in light of the municipality's non-investment in water and wastewater infrastructure.*
- d. Commissioners agreed on the importance of informing residents through a maildrop, which will be sent out and posted in advance with relevant details for the meeting.*

7. Committee Appointments and Changes

- a. **Waterfront Committee:** Commissioner Crowder will take Commissioner Whyte's place. All meetings are open to the public.*
- b. **Community Club Property Committee:** No changes; waiting for the Department of Transportation's response on road allotment.*
- c. **Accessibility Committee:** Commissioner Roberts remains on the committee.*
- d. **Audit Committee:** Commissioner Whyte and Commissioner Crowder are added to the committee. Commissioner McNeil resigned from the Audit Committee. A community member is needed for this committee; a call for volunteers will be included in the next newsletter.*
- e. **Source Water Protection Committee:** No changes; Commissioner MacDonald will remain in place.*
- f. **Mooring Authority:** Commissioner Whyte will assume responsibility for this committee.*
- g. **Baddeck Area Advisory Committee:** Two commissioners are needed. Commissioner MacDonald will remain, Gary Crowder will join the committee.*

8. Approval of Accessibility Plan

- a. Village Manager provided an update regarding the accessibility plan for the Village.*



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- b. *The Accessibility Plan has been reviewed and is now compliant with the necessary regulations. An official approval from the Commission is required to move forward with submission.*
- c. *There is a deadline for an accessibility grant application by February 14th, with opportunities for funding, including projects to improve accessibility on the Wharf.*
- d. *The Commission will continue working on the accessibility plan and review it again at the end of April, when additional provincial requirements for anti-racism and equity will also need to be included in the document.*
- e. *Further discussion about the involvement of the Lions Club and accessibility efforts at the beach.*

Commissioner Whyte moved a motion to approve the Accessibility Plan. Seconded by Commissioner Crowder. All in favor – motion carried.

9. Strategic Direction and Communication with the Municipality

- a. *Regarding communication between the village and the municipality, the department of Municipal Affairs advised that issues should be routed through the District 3 Councillor. The village is requesting that any village-related issues be added to the agenda of the Victoria County Municipality meetings in advance, so they can provide input if necessary.*
- b. *The Commission hopes that moving forward, communication can improve, and information can be shared in a timely manner.*
- c. *Official communication from the Commission will be sent to the Councillor, who will share the information with other Councillors and staff as appropriate.*

10. Mandatory Training on Code of Conduct

- a. *Mandatory training for the new code of conduct for elected officials will take place in February. Commissioner Crowder will need to sign the document now that he is an official member.*
- b. *A reminder was given that training dates will be distributed, and it is mandatory for all members to attend.*

11. CBCL presentation

- a. *Holly Sampson, Project manager CBCL presents the status of the infrastructure assessment for the water and sewer utility to the Commission.*
- b. *Concerns were raised about the capacity of the water treatment plant and the impact of adding new users. The addition of more wells would require significant upgrades, including potential costs for extending chlorine contact time.*
- c. *A PRV (pressure reducing valve) is being considered to control high pressure across the system. The solution would not perfectly balance pressures across all areas, but it would be a step forward.*



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- d. *Priority should be given to replacing transit lines and small water mains. The idea is to focus on areas with frequent breaks and those critical for fire flow capacity.*
- e. *Work has begun on the wastewater system. The focus is on mapping out and assessing the distribution and collection system.*
- f. *A power outage at the wells led to discussions about adding backup power for the wells. A mobile generator is suggested due to accessibility issues during winter.*
- g. *The next water rate study will incorporate these new considerations, including short, medium, and long-term goals, alongside the costs for various upgrades.*
- h. **Recommendations:** *Short-term improvements include adding spare pumps for wells, backup power for remote wells, and repairing leaks in the system. Medium-term recommendations include increasing water production capacity and potentially adjusting pump controls.*
- i. *There was a suggestion to install a Pressure Reducing Valve (PRV) chamber, which could help lower system pressures and reduce water loss.*
- j. *The water treatment plant building is facing some long-term issues due to its age, and there were discussions about whether to upgrade it or consider building a new, smaller, more energy-efficient building.*
- k. *Some immediate investments, like turbidity meters, are already on the radar and have been included in the budget.*
- l. *CBCL will provide further updates as their work progresses. Their reports, along with relevant details, will be available for public review.*

12. Reports

a. **PW Report**

- i. *Included in VM Report.*

b. **Accessibility Advisory Committee**

- i. *No Report*

c. **VM Report**

- i. *Presented by Roman Braun-Huettner*
- ii. **Insurance** *for volunteers is now in place, starting on December 3rd.*
- iii. **New Water Hookups:** *There was a request for water hookups outside village boundaries.*
- iv. *The 2025 PVSC assessment file was received, but the coding for district properties has changed.*
- v. **Grant Applications:** *A grant application for backup power at the water and wastewater treatment plants has been submitted. Another application for the accessibility grant (due February 14th) is under consideration.*



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- vi. **Training:** *The village is now a member of the American Water and Wastewater Association, allowing for discounted training. Public works staff will start Level 1 wastewater treatment training.*
 - vii. **Public Works Updates:** *The VPN setup was delayed due to illness, but it should be finalized soon. There's also progress in updating the SCADA system, and regular meetings are scheduled with the public works crew.*
 - viii. **Water Meter Readings:** *The water meter readings have been completed and bills sent out. The new system has made it easier to handle customer concerns about water usage by reviewing data logs.*
 - ix. **Hiring and Cleaning Service:** *Job applications are in progress for 20-hour positions, and there's a potential contractor for cleaning services at various facilities.*
 - x. **Trail Federation Membership:** *The village was approached to join the Nova Scotia Trails Federation but decided against it as trails are outside of the village's strategic focus.*
- d. Financial reports**
- i. *Reconciled statements and bank statements were shared with the Commission.*
 - ii. *The financial statements and budget have been reviewed. Accounts receivable were at \$350K at the end of December, with the water bills sent in January.*
- e. Waterfront Baddeck Committee**
- i. *There is no one present to present the report.*
 - ii. *The Oct 25th Waterfront Baddeck Committee meeting minutes were distributed by email.*
 - iii. *On November 8th, there was a Zoom call to update the Commission on the boardwalk project.*
 - iv. *A meeting was held on November 19th with Municipal department heads for tourism and economic development, recreation, senior safety, accessibility, a representative from EDPC, and Council members.*
 - v. *NSP did not approve the plan to remove the cable and switch to solar Kidston Island.*
- f. Audit Committee:**
- i. *The next meeting will be on February 26, 2025.*
- g. Wharf Manager**
- i. *No Report*

Motion to accept all reports as presented, moved by Com. McNeil, and seconded by Com. Crowder – All in favour – motion carried



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13. Correspondence

- i. **Social media:** *The municipality has a policy for social media posts that prevents public comments due to limited staff capacity. Emergency updates are posted by staff, but regular posts require Commission approval. There's a push to formalize this policy and possibly draft an official social media policy, especially given the challenges faced with managing engagement.*
- ii. *The Commission has been receiving emails from non-residents about various issues such as snow plowing and water funding. These concerns are forwarded to councillors.*
- iii. **Special Council Meeting Regarding Waterfront Committee:** *Minutes from a Council meeting to discuss an invitation to attend a WFB meeting about the boardwalk were reviewed. The minutes indicated that there was concern around the content of the meeting, and the communication between WFB, the Commission and the Council. A staff member from Council was appointed to attend the meeting, and the Commission and WFB will continue to try to engage with Municipal staff and Council effectively.*
- iv. *There were suggestions to improve the village's signage and garden areas, particularly the garden near the village sign. Some gardens around the village have been maintained by residents, but there's a need to formalize the process for care and updates to these areas.*
- v. *There was discussion about the complexity of approving water and sewer line connections, particularly regarding the detailed documentation needed for permits. It was emphasized that proper documentation of these infrastructure projects will be critical for maintenance and future reference.*

Meeting adjourned at 6:10 by Com. MacDonald, next meeting is February 12, 2025



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Signatures:

Minutes approved

Jennifer MacDonald Feb 12/25
Com. Jennifer MacDonald Date

Minutes approved

MB Feb 12/25
Com. Bonnie Whyte Date

Minutes approved

Denise Roberts Feb 12/25
Com. Denise Roberts Date

Minutes approved

Daniel McNeil Feb 12/25
Com. Daniel McNeil Date

Minutes approved

Gary Crowder Feb 12/25
Com. Gary Crowder Date

Certified by

Roman Braun-Huettner Feb 12/25
Roman Braun-Huettner (Village Manager) Date