



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

Monthly Village Commission Meeting

Wednesday, November 18, 2025

Date: November 18, 2025

Location: Masonic Hall, Baddeck

Start Time: 6:30 PM

Participants: Commissioner MacDonald (Chair), Commissioner Crowder, Commissioner Whyte, Commissioner A. MacDonald, Commissioner Roberts, Roman Braun-Huettner (Village Manager)

1. Call to Order

Chair Jen MacDonald called the meeting to order and provided a land acknowledgment recognizing that Baddeck is located in Mi'kma'ki, the unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

She explained that typical committee reports were deferred to allow the full meeting time to focus on the municipal terms document.

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion: To approve the agenda as presented.

Moved by: Commissioner Crowder

Seconded by: Commissioner Whyte

All in Favour. Motion carried.

3. Introductions & Declarations of Conflict

Commissioners present:

- Jen MacDonald (Chair)
- Bonnie Whyte (Vice Chair)
- Denise Roberts
- Gary Crowder
- Anna MacDonald
- Roman Braun-Huettner (Village Manager)

No conflicts of interest were declared.



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4. Approval of Meeting Minutes Oct 10, 2025

Motion: Minutes from the October regular meeting were approved.

Moved by: Commissioner Roberts

Seconded by: Commissioner Crowder

All in Favour. Motion carried.

5. Village Operational Update

Chair MacDonald provided an overview of the village's operational and financial status:

- The village is **financially stable** with a projected surplus.
 - Water and wastewater systems are functioning well; infrastructure assessments for water are complete and wastewater assessments are near completion.
 - The village is no longer under ministerial order.
-

6. Presentation: Municipal Terms Document & Background

The Chair summarized the process leading to the current meeting:

- The village previously submitted a **partnership proposal** to the Municipality of Victoria County.
- On **November 4**, the Warden delivered a written response rejecting the proposal and providing a **non-negotiable terms document** for service transfer.
- The village must respond within **30 days** (by December 4).

Key elements of the municipal terms document:

1. Sidewalk Ownership & Maintenance

- Municipality asserts the village owns sidewalks; the village notes it does **not** hold legal title and therefore cannot transfer ownership.
- The Province previously confirmed sidewalk responsibility lies with municipalities.

2. Water & Wastewater Systems

- Municipality proposes full transfer of ownership, operation, reserves, billing authority, and capital planning.



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- Commissioners expressed concern that absorbing the utilities into a county-wide system will **raise rates** for village ratepayers (e.g., municipal base charge residential meter \$109.50 vs. village base rate \$40.61).

3. **VHCC – Village leased property**

- Victoria Highland Civic Centre lease may be transferred under the proposal.
- Commissioners noted this facility serves both village and county residents.

4. **Lack of Collaborative Governance**

- The terms document explicitly establishes **no ongoing joint governance structure**.
- Terms must be accepted “in their entirety.”

7. **Public Discussion & Questions**

Sidewalk Plowing

- The village has historically plowed sidewalks, subsidizing costs far beyond the \$8,000 contributed by the municipality.
- Last year the village plowed as a **gesture of good faith**, but the municipality **did not reimburse** the invoices submitted.
- **The village confirmed it will NOT plow sidewalks this winter** unless directed otherwise at the December Commission meeting, citing lack of staff and equipment.

Liability & Insurance

- The village carried liability insurance while plowing sidewalks but clarified that insurance coverage does **not imply sidewalk ownership**.

Concerns About Tax Impacts

- Residents asked whether a transfer of utilities could raise taxes for county residents.
- Commissioners emphasized they are **not seeking full funding**—only an equitable partnership—and stressed that the sidewalk responsibility clearly lies with the municipality.

Water/Wastewater Infrastructure

- The engineering assessment for water is complete; wastewater assessment is ongoing.
- Village expressed concern that merging the village utility with county utilities could substantially increase rates.



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Boundary Expansion Question

- A resident asked whether village boundaries could be redrawn to increase revenue.
- Commissioners noted it is possible but would require **2/3 support** from residents in the proposed new area.

Financial Statements Status

- Audited financial statements have been delayed due to historic issues predating the current Commission.
- Draft statements up to 2023 are prepared; 2019/20 and 2020/21 cannot be audited due to missing historic data.
- Audited 2021/22 statements are expected soon pending MNP completion.

8. Motion Regarding Municipal Terms Document

Motion: *"That the Village Commission accept the Municipality of the County of Victoria's Terms Document as presented on November 4, 2025."*

(This motion was intentionally phrased in the affirmative to permit a vote.)

Moved by: Commissioner Anna MacDonald (for clarity of process, not endorsement)

Seconded by: Commissioner Crowder

Before voting, Commissioners reiterated:

- A **"No" vote** means declining the terms document but continuing discussions with the municipality and preparing a revised proposal.
- A "No" vote does **not** mean ending collaboration.

Vote:

- The village commission unanimously voted **against** accepting the terms.

9. Next Steps

- The Commission will communicate its formal decision to the Municipality by **December 4**.
- A follow-up meeting in December will address sidewalk operations and winter planning.

10. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM, moved by Commissioner Crowder



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Signatures:

Minutes approved

Jennifer MacDonald Dec 10/25
Com. Jennifer MacDonald Date

Minutes approved

ABSENT
Com. Bonnie Whyte Date

Minutes approved

Denise Roberts Dec 10/25
Com. Denise Roberts Date

Minutes approved

Gary Crowder Dec 10/25
Com. Gary Crowder Date

Minutes approved

Anna MacDonald 10 Dec 2025
Com Anna MacDonald Date

Certified by

Roman Braun-Huettner 2025-12-10
Roman Braun-Huettner (Village Manager) Date