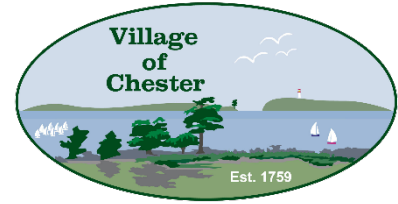


# Agenda

## Village Commission Monthly Meeting Wednesday, Feb 18, 2026 @ 6:00 pm



In-Person & Virtual Meeting

Village Commission Office, 27 Pleasant Street, Chester

Zoom Meeting 871 8016 7457, Passcode 202526 or [YouTube Live](#)

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### 1.0 Call to Order/Land Acknowledgement

- *As we meet today, we acknowledge that we live in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We are all treaty people with a responsibility to each other and to this land.*

### 2.0 Public Forum

- In-person or over Zoom: Members of the public are welcome to speak and/or ask questions of the Village Commission (10 min)

### 3.0 Approval/Amendment of Agenda p. 1

### 4.0 Approval/Amendment of Minutes

- 4.1 Monthly Commission Meeting: Jan 22, 2025 p. 3

### 5.0 Business Arising – Nil

### 6.0 Correspondence

- 6.1 Municipal Affairs: Fire Modernization Planning Session p. 9  
6.2 Invitation: Basic Income Guarantee Conversation p. 19

### 7.0 Reports and External Committees

- 7.1 Report from the Chair  
7.2 Clerk/Treasurer Report p. 20  
7.3 (a) Chester Fire Services Committee: Jan 14, 2025 p. 21  
(b) MODC Fire Advisory Committee: Jan 21, 2025  
7.4 Lunenburg County Accessibility Committee: Jan 7, 2025 p. 25  
7.5 MODC Village Planning Advisory Committee: Jan 27, 2025

### 8.0 New Business – Nil

### 9.0 Commissioner Roundtable

**10.0 In-Camera**

- Per Section 408B(2) of the *Municipal Government Act*
  - (e) contract negotiations;
  - (g) legal advice eligible for solicitor-client privilege

**11.0 Resumption of Public Meeting**

- Report in public session per Section 408B(3) of the *Municipal Government Act*, if applicable

**12.0 Adjournment****Next Meeting(s)**

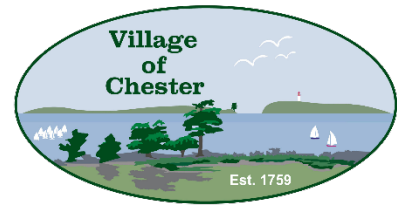
- Monthly Meeting: Wednesday, Mar 18, 2026 @ 6:00 pm
- Special Budget Meeting: TBD

# Minutes DRAFT

## Village Commission Monthly Meeting Thursday, January 22, 2026 – 6:00 pm

In-Person & Virtual Meeting  
27 Pleasant Street, Chester

Video Archive <https://www.youtube.com/@villageofchesterns>



**Present:** Geraldine Pauley, Chair  
Randall O'Malley, Vice-chair  
Laura Mulrooney, Commissioner  
Tom Mulrooney, Commissioner

**Staff:** Heather McCallum, Clerk/Treasurer (C/T)  
Maxine Veinot, Recording Secretary

**Guests:** Councillor Tom Bremner, MODC District 3  
Councillor Andre Vienotte, MODC District 1 – *briefly*

**Regrets:** Gloria Nauss, Commissioner

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### 1.0 Call to Order

Chair Pauley called the January 22, 2026 Regular Monthly Meeting of the Village of Chester Commission to order at 6:00 pm.

Chair Pauley stated the Land Acknowledgement:

*As we meet today, we acknowledge that we live in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We are all treaty people with a responsibility to each other and to this land.*

### 2.0 Public Forum

- Speaker 1: Kristina Nicoll, Central Street

Ms. Nichols presented a written statement to the Commission ([Schedule 2.0](#)).

- Speaker 2: Peggy Wilson, Main Street

Ms. Wilson read the following statement: "I am speaking to the Public Record of tonight's meeting to ensure that silence is not later interpreted

as agreement or consent for the Village Commission's proposal to move its offices into the Zoé Vallé Library Building."

The following public members repeated the above statement and asked that it be reflected in the public record:

- Barry Redmond, Highway #3
- Erin Gore, Pig Loop Road
- Diana Hancock, Union Street
- Jonathan Legate, King Street
- Deborah Lusby, King Street
- Lorraine Vassalo, King Street
- Victoria McGregor, King Street
- Rita Johnson, Golf Course Road
- Stewart Creaser, Main Street, added that he was here: "...to support the individuals that are here, have worked hard to create a space for the public, and to voice my objection to the process that is being used to remove that."
- Susan Crocker, Water Street, added that she was here: "...to support the comments and to ask that they be entered into public record and also to raise the question why would it be thought that it is not in the best interest of this community to work collaboratively to move forward on the library and why this has become a win/lose situation." She feels that is a failure of leadership.
- Emily Gore, Pig Loop Road
- Julia Creighton, King Street, added that she was here: "...to echo what everyone else has said and express her supreme heart break at what is happening with this library and to express her support for Kristina and everything she has done and to hope that we can reach something that maintains the history of this beloved building and the intention of which the original donor bequeathed this library to the community."
- Bunch Fraser, Haddon Hill
- Rene Flinn, King Street, added that he was: "...appalled to find out that the gift to the community of the library, back in 1928, was going to be turned over to an Administrative Office, and feels that was not the nature of the gift at all."
- Keith Johnson, Golf Course Road
- Alison Williams, Queen Street

Note: For more information on the Village's proposal, see Agenda items 5.1 & 5.2.

At the conclusion of their statements, most of the public left the meeting.

### **3.0 Approval/Amendment of Agenda**

**Motion #26-001:** Commissioner T. Mulrooney moved; Vice-Chair O'Malley seconded: That the Agenda of the Chester Village Commission's Jan 22, 2026 Regular Monthly Meeting be approved as presented.  
*Motion carried unanimously.*

### **4.0 Approval/Amendment of Minutes**

#### **4.1 Monthly Commission Meeting: Dec 17, 2025**

**Motion #26-002:** Commissioner T. Mulrooney moved; Commissioner L. Mulrooney seconded: That the Minutes of the Chester Village Commission's Dec 17, 2025 Monthly Meeting be approved as presented.  
*Motion carried unanimously*

### **5.0 Business Arising**

#### **5.1 Zoé Vallé Memorial Library: Report on Reply to RFP**

Commissioner L. Mulrooney read aloud Chair Pauley's report outlining the process of the Village Commission's response to the Municipality's call for proposals (*Schedule 5.1*).

The report is also available on the Village [website](#).

#### **5.2 Zoé Vallé Memorial Library: Proposal – for information**

The Village's proposal for the Library, submitted on Oct 20, 2025 and accepted on Dec 11, 2025 was attached for public information (*Schedule 5.2*). The proposal had previously been shared publicly by the Municipality on Dec 8, 2025.

The proposal is also available on the Village [website](#).

### **6.0 Correspondence**

#### **6.1 MODC: EDI Advisory Committee**

An email was received from the Municipality confirming the dissolution of

the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Advisory Committee ([Schedule 6.1](#)).

The Chair noted that this change has no effect on the 2025-2028 EDI Action Plan submitted to the Province.

## **6.2 ANSV: Staff Position Memo**

A memo was received from the President of the Association of Nova Scotia Villages (ANSV) confirming that recruitment for the staff position is going ahead ([Schedule 6.2](#)). The job ad is out now.

## **7.0 Reports**

### **7.1 Report from the Chair**

Chair Pauley reported on the partnership with the Municipality of Chester on their Beautification and Revitalizing Program ([Schedule 7.1](#)), including projects under consideration for Phase 1: the Jib Lot and replacing the weathervane on the roof of the waterfront gazebo.

A possible new stretch of sidewalk that Commissioner T. Mulrooney had raised for Water Street will be revisited. A study may be proposed for Phase 2 of the Beautification and Revitalizing program.

### **7.2 Clerk/Treasurer Report, with Q3 Budget Variance Report**

C/T McCallum presented the monthly administration and financial overview, including the 2025/26 Q3 Budget status report ([Schedule 7.2](#)).

A draft 2026/27 Village budget is planned for next month.

C/T McCallum walked through the highlights of the 2025/26 Q3 Budget Variance Report. The Village is sitting where expected for 75% of the way through the fiscal year.

### **7.3 Chester Fire Services Committee (CFSC) & MODC Fire Advisory Committee (FAC)**

The CFSC's approved minutes of Dec 3, 2025 were shared for information ([Schedule 7.3](#)). [[www.chesterfirecommittee.ca](http://www.chesterfirecommittee.ca)]

Note that the CFSC's Annual General Meeting (AGM) is being held on

Thursday, Feb 12, 2026 at 6:00 pm at St. Stephen's Community Centre.

The Municipality's FAC met yesterday, Jan 21, 2026, so no minutes are yet available.

#### **7.4 Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee (LCAAC)**

Chair Pauley reported a regular meeting was held and they are working on implementing the previous passed legislation and regulations.

The approved minutes of Oct1, 2025 were provided ([Schedule 7.4](#)).  
[[www.accessiblelunenburgcounty.ca](http://www.accessiblelunenburgcounty.ca)]

#### **7.5 MODC Village Planning Advisory Committee (VPAC)**

Vice-chair O'Malley reported that the next VPAC meeting is Jan 27, 2026. Minutes from the Dec 9, 2025 meeting were received ([Schedule 7.5 \(a\)](#)).

A notice was received from the Municipality today of an upcoming Public Hearing on setbacks re: the Old Stone Bridge ([Schedule 7.5\(b\)](#)), scheduled for Feb 12, 2026 at 8:45 am.  
[VPAC Minutes]

### **8.0 New Business**

#### **8.1 CFSC Draft 2026/27 Fire & Emergency Services Budget**

C/T McCallum presented a memo with the CFSC Draft 2026/27 Budget (v3), provided to the Commission and Municipal Council for information only at this time ([Schedule 8.1](#)). This is the draft that will be presented at next month's AGM.

Budget revisions will be completed after the AGM, and a final draft will be brought to the Village Commission and Municipal Council for formal approval in March.

#### **8.2 Rural Development Action Plan – Survey**

The Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia (AMANS) circulated a link to a [survey](#) from the Government of Canada ([Schedule 8.2](#)) open until Feb 6, 2026. Commissioners and residents may wish to respond to it to influence federal policy.

## 9.0 Commissioner Roundtable – Nil

## 10.0 In-Camera

**Agreed by consensus** that the Commission move in camera as per Section 408B (2) of the Municipal Government Act to discuss contract negotiations and legal advice eligible for solicitor-client privilege.

The Commission recessed at 7:09 pm.

## 11.0 Resumption of Public Meeting

The public meeting resumed at 8:05 pm.

There was nothing to report from in camera at this time.

## 12.0 Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.

### Next Meeting(s)

- Monthly: Wednesday, Feb 18, 2026 @ 6:00 pm – Village office & Livestream
- Monthly: Wednesday, Mar 18, 2026 @ 6:00 pm – Village office & Livestream

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Commission Chair  
Geraldine Pauley

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Clerk/Treasurer  
Heather McCallum





**Municipal Affairs  
Office of the Minister**

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PO Box 216, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3J 2M4 • Telephone 902 424-5550 Fax 902 424-0581 • novascotia.ca

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February 10, 2026

Mayors, Wardens and Village Chairs  
Sent Via Email

Dear Mayors, Wardens and Chairs:

**RE: Invitation to Participate in Fire Modernization Planning Session on February 17, 2026**

Last year, the Government of Nova Scotia invested significant time, along with firefighters and municipal fire/emergency management personnel, to understand how to effectively modernize fire services and create a safe, sustainable, and responsive system for Nova Scotians.

The results of the Fire Service Association of Nova Scotia's (FSANS) report revealed that the complexity of Nova Scotia's fire safety and services has led to significant long-standing governance, administration, training, certification, capacity, and resource challenges. Fragmentation and lack of role clarity for diverse fire service entities and municipalities have led to cost-ineffective, inconsistent, uncoordinated, and inequitable fire service provision to Nova Scotians particularly those living in rural areas.

With recommendations in hand from the Fire Service Association of Nova Scotia's (FSANS) Report of the Governance Review of Fire and Associated Services (September 2025) and the Value-for-money Audit of the Nova Scotia Firefighters School (August 2025), we are reconnecting with municipal elected officials to understand the implications of recommended next steps for municipalities and to gather your input on an implementation roadmap.

On behalf of the Department of Municipal Affairs and the Department of Emergency Management, we would like to invite all municipal elected officials and their Chief Administrative Officers to a virtual discussion on Tuesday, February 17, 2026, from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Following introductions from Ministers MacDonald (Municipal Affairs) and Masland (Emergency Management) and Greg Jones (President, FSANS) the discussion will be facilitated by the project consultant, Transitional Solutions.

Please register at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VirtualPlanningSession> by Friday, February 13, 2026. Meeting details will be provided following confirmation of your attendance. **[Note: this has been extended to 10am on February 17th.]**

We are grateful for your contributions to previous consultation initiatives led by FSANS. At the core of our efforts to modernize fire services is a commitment to ensuring that Nova Scotians are adequately protected from fire safety risks through access to high-quality fire services no matter where they live. We look forward to discussing how to achieve this goal together when we meet on February 17<sup>th</sup>.

Page 2

Your participation is critical to our efforts to modernize the fire service system for the benefit of all Nova Scotians.

Sincerely,



---

Honourable John A. MacDonald  
Minister of Municipal Affairs

Honourable Kim Masland  
Minister of Emergency Management

- c. Municipal Chief Administrative Officers  
Municipal Councilors  
Juanita Spencer, CEO, Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM)  
Victoria Brooks, President, Association of Municipal Administrators (AMANS)  
Greg Jones, President, Fire Services Association of Nova Scotia  
Paul LaFleche, Executive Deputy Minister, Department of Municipal Affairs  
Sandra McKenzie, Deputy Minister, Department of Emergency Management  
Valerie Pottie Bunge, Associate Deputy Minister, Department of Municipal Affairs  
Doug McKenzie, NS Office of the Fire Marshal

# FIRE SERVICE MODERNIZATION

## Vision and Roadmap

*Nova Scotians are adequately protected from fire safety risks through access to high-quality fire services no matter where they live.*



# QUESTIONS

## 1. Governance of Fire Service

- What are some of the potential benefits of a potential municipal-led fire service?
  - For residents?
  - For fire entities?
  - For municipalities?

## 2. Training and Level of Service

- What training or education would be helpful for **municipal administrators** and **municipal elected officials** to support a successful transition to a new service model?

## 3. Implementation

- What is the most important role of councils in the new fire service scenario?

## 4. Provincial Role & Supports

- In addition to the supports that the Province will provide including education/training for municipal elected officials, transition and procurement support, mutual aid and service agreement templates, the Fire Records Management System, and a risk-based assessment tool, what other supports would provide the **most immediate value** to municipalities?

# FAQ - Fire Service Modernization Planning Sessions

| Category                                          | Question                                                  | Answer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Governance,<br/>Structure &amp; Jobs</b>       | Will small departments be forced to close or amalgamate?  | No. The goal is to ensure every community has adequate and sustainable fire protection. Regional collaboration is encouraged where it improves safety and efficiency, but decisions must be based on community risk assessments and Council. Municipalities will still be able to use mutual aid and service agreements to deliver fire services to their residents.                                                                                      |
|                                                   | Will I have to re-apply for my position or lose my role?  | No. The focus is standardization, safety, and sustainability — not removing firefighters or Fire Chiefs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|                                                   | Who is actually in charge under the new model?            | Fire service delivery will shift from a fragmented system where there are many organizations governed in different ways to one where roles are much more clear and unified – municipalities will take the lead in delivering services. The Province will set the standards and provide oversight. This will improve fire safety and the fire services system promoting capability, capacity, consistency, and continuity for fire services province-wide. |
| <b>Liability, Legal<br/>Protection &amp; Risk</b> | Am I personally liable if something goes wrong on a call? | This is a concern we heard across the province. The new legislation is intended to include clear indemnification provisions that protect Fire Chiefs and firefighters from personal liability. This removes any uncertainty that currently exists, especially for volunteers—and ensures all are legally protected while doing their jobs.                                                                                                                |

# FAQ - Fire Service Modernization Planning Sessions

|                                            |                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Funding, Costs &amp; Sustainability</b> | <p>Who pays for meeting the new standards?</p>                                                                                                                           | <p>Fire Services will be municipally led with increased provincial oversight. This means that municipal councils will decide on the budgets to fund the delivery of services. Municipalities already have several financial tools at their disposal to support service delivery including through municipal taxation and area rates.</p> <p>The Province is exploring ways to provide short-term financial support to municipalities to support their transition to a new fire service model. Options include grants to help rural municipalities with the transition and for projects that demonstrate regional collaboration.</p> |
|                                            | <p>We spend a lot of time fundraising for fuel and basic gear. Will this change?</p> <p>Will we still be able to fundraise for items the municipality won't provide?</p> | <p>It is important that fire stations do not have to fundraise for the resources needed to provide council-approved levels of service. FSANS' recommendations indicated the need for sustainable funding models that remove reliance on fundraising for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fuel</li> <li>• Utilities</li> <li>• Routine maintenance</li> <li>• Core operational costs.</li> </ul> <p>However, stations will be free to continue fundraising for charity and to purchase non-essential fire service equipment, training or additional community benefits provided by those firefighters.</p>              |

# FAQ - Fire Service Modernization Planning Sessions

|                                                              |                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                              | <p>Our department responds to many medical calls (MFR). Will we be reimbursed?</p> | <p>We heard this concern very clearly.</p> <p>The FSANS Review recommends a formal cost-recovery process for fire departments providing Medical First Response in support of EHS. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equipment</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Operational response costs</li> </ul> <p>The Department of Health and Wellness and Emergency Health Services will be conducting an evidence-based review of notification models for the medical first responder program in 2026-2027. The review will help decide what works best and whether it helps improve health outcomes for Nova Scotians.</p> |
| <p><b>Training, Certification &amp; Time Commitments</b></p> | <p>Will I have to travel to Waverley for all my training?</p>                      | <p>No. We recognize that travel and time off work are major barriers for volunteers.</p> <p>The proposed model includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipal oversight of basic fire fighter training</li> <li>• A new central Provincial Fire Training School for specialized and advanced training</li> <li>• A network of regional training sites</li> <li>• Mobile training units that bring training closer to communities</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                |

# FAQ - Fire Service Modernization Planning Sessions

|  |                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |                                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expanded online and distance education where appropriate</li> <li>Regional testing/licensing of operators of Class 3 vehicles</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|  | <p>Will experienced firefighters be forced to re-certify?</p>                   | <p>There is a difference between qualified and certified.</p> <p>Minimum training standards will be established through legislation and regulation and will apply to all firefighters. Firefighters who are already officially certified are expected to already meet those minimum standards and will not be required to re-certify.</p> <p>Municipalities will set levels of fire service, and the level of service will define minimum training requirements. It will be mandatory to train staff to those standards.</p> |
|  | <p>Does the new framework address mental health?</p>                            | <p>Yes. Mental health is a key priority.</p> <p>The FSANS Review recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Firefighters have access to municipal health and safety resources to further support and supplement mental health resiliency, resistance, and recovery.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|  | <p>Will volunteer firefighters receive the same Workers' Compensation Board</p> | <p>That is the goal.</p> <p>The framework recommends that all volunteer firefighters have the same Workers' Compensation coverage, so they are not out-of-pocket if they are injured while doing their job.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |



# FAQ - Fire Service Modernization Planning Sessions

|                                      |                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                      | coverage as career firefighters?                        | <p>In general, this coverage already exists for employees and volunteers. However, some work-related illnesses are not clearly covered under current federal-provincial agreements for emergency services volunteers. Once the final model is confirmed, steps can be taken to fix any gaps or uncertainty about what is covered.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Dispatch &amp; Communications</b> | How will this affect our dispatch?                      | <p>The framework recommends moving toward a more consistent, province-wide fire dispatch approach that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meets National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1225 standards</li> <li>• Supports Next-Generation 9-1-1</li> <li>• Improves interoperability</li> <li>• Addresses cellular and mobile data coverage gaps.</li> </ul> <p>The Province is examining how best to deliver dispatch services that meet these challenges, and specific changes will be communicated once known.</p> |
| <b>Final Question</b>                | Is this already decided, or do our voices still matter? | <p>Your voices matter. The Province has committed to fixing issues that have been emerging for a long time.</p> <p>Legislation is expected to be tabled by September 30, 2026, and will be informed by what we hear from you in these planning sessions.</p> <p>What you share here will directly influence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulations</li> <li>• Standards</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                 |

# FAQ - Fire Service Modernization Planning Sessions

|  |  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Funding models</li><li>• Transition timelines</li><li>• Implementation supports</li></ul> <p>Your experience matters, and the modernization of fire services will only work if it reflects the realities of fire service delivery in Nova Scotia.</p> |
|--|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

JOIN THE BEYOND THE BAND-AIDS INITIATIVE  
FOR A

# BASIC INCOME GUARANTEE COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2026**

(SNOW DATE: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26TH)

**6:00 - 8:00**

REFRESHMENTS FROM 6:00-6:30

**LUNENBURG FIRE HALL**

**25 MEDWAY STREET**

**LUNENBURG**



Beyond the Band-Aids Initiative invites you to attend a community conversation about Basic Income Guarantee (BIG). This event is a follow-up gathering to the screening of the documentary ‘A Human Picture’ that showcased the impact of the BIG pilot in Ontario.

This event is open to attendees of the screening and anyone else who is interested in exploring BIG as one policy option to address poverty in our communities.

Have questions about BIG?

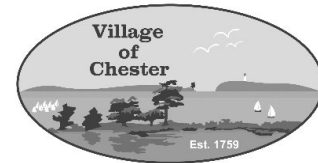
Send them to us in advance [HERE](#).

This is anonymous and will help us plan the evening.

Planning to attend or need assistance with transportation? Please confirm by emailing [Louise.Hopper@nshealth.ca](mailto:Louise.Hopper@nshealth.ca) by Monday, February 16th. This will help us plan refreshments and provide transportation support.

Funding for this event is provided by the Lunenburg County Community Health Board.

If you would like to know more about Basic Income Guarantee in Nova Scotia, please click this link <https://www.big-ns.org/>

**Schedule 7.2****Village of Chester Commission  
Clerk/Treasurer Monthly Report  
Feb 18, 2026**

- **Scotiabank:**

- The January 2026 bank statement has been reconciled. The Village main operations account opened the month with \$468,190 and ended with \$461,361.
- Snapshot: Account balances as of Feb 5th were:

|                                                      |            |
|------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Banking Accounts                                     |            |
| Daily Operations account                             | \$ 458,251 |
| Investment Accounts                                  |            |
| Operating reserve                                    | \$ 87,769  |
| Lido Pool reserve<br>(excluding GRID funding \$242K) | \$ 203,031 |
| Utilities reserve                                    | \$ 43,088  |
| EMC Building reserve                                 | \$ 28,841  |

- **Financial**

- 2026/27 Village Budget status: We are still awaiting the projected tax revenue figures from the Municipality. The annual CPI for 2025 has been released: 2.1% in Nova Scotia. Costs are coming in for new responsibilities and projects. Geraldine and I will meet later this month, then a Special Budget meeting will most likely be scheduled.
- A grant application has been submitted to Communities, Culture, Tourism & Heritage for the Recreation Facility Development Grant. This is intended for annual Lido Pool repairs – which this year will involve further work on the exterior sea wall. If successful, this grant covers up to two-thirds of the capital cost of a project to a maximum of \$150,000.
- I am proceeding with setting up new Scotiabank accounts for the Library in preparation for the transition. I'm setting up (a) a main Library chequing account, (b) a Donations savings account (e-transfer deposits will be enabled), (c) an investment account for the ZVML Trust, and (d) an investment account for the CHUMS Fund. No deposits are required to open these accounts, but it gets the paperwork out of the way. I have a meeting scheduled with the bank's advisor the morning of Feb 18<sup>th</sup>.

*Report completed by:*

Heather McCallum, Village Clerk/Treasurer



## Minutes

### Chester Fire Services Committee (CFSC) Monthly Meeting

Monday, Jan 12, 2026 at 5:00 pm

Village Commission Boardroom, 27 Pleasant Street, Chester

- Present** Colin MacDonald (via Zoom)  
Norm Countway, Vice-chair  
Kirk Collicutt, Treasurer-Secretary  
Wilson Fitt  
Nancy Hatch  
James Robert (via Zoom)
- Ex-officio** Cody Stevens, Fire Chief, Chester - Chester Volunteer Fire Department (CVFD)
- Staff** Heather McCallum, Administrator (Clerk/Treasurer, Village of Chester)  
Maxine Veinot, Recording Secretary (Admin Assistant, Village of Chester)
- Regrets** Jared MacDonald, Deputy Fire Chief, CVFD
- Guest(s)** Randy O'Malley, Chester Village Commissioner
- 

#### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Vice-chair Countway at 4:57 pm.

#### 2. Approval of Agenda

**Motion:** Moved by Ms. Hatch; seconded by Mr. Collicutt: That the Chester Fire Services Committee approves the Agenda of the Jan 12, 2026 Monthly Meeting as presented.  
*Motion carried.*

#### 3. Approval of Minutes

##### 3.1 Monthly Meeting Minutes: Dec 3, 2025

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Collicutt; seconded by Mr. Fitt: That the Committee approves the Minutes of the Wednesday, Dec 3, 2025 Monthly Meeting as presented.  
*Motion carried.*

#### 4. Business Arising – Nil

#### 5. Chester Volunteer Fire Department

##### 5.1 Activity Report

Chief Stevens reviewed the December report (*Schedule 5.1*). The department responded to thirty-one (31) incidents, with five (5) incidents happening December 24-66 26, 2025, where the firefighters had to leave their families at Christmas and respond to emergencies.

Chief Stevens spoke about fellow firefighter from Kentville Volunteer Fire Department, Captain Joel Neilly. Captain Neilly was diagnosed with presumptive cancer from firefighting and his life expectancy is only a few months. He is age 43 with young children. This confirms the need for a state-of-the-art station with proper decontamination to protect our firefighters.

##### 5.2 Evaluation Matrix re: New Fire Apparatus Procurement

Chief Stevens shared MODC's proposed evaluation matrix for the pending RFP (*Schedule 5.2*). He feels it is a reasonable matrix, and an evaluation team of firefighters will be responding to the technical side.

**Action:** The Chester Fire Services Committee asked Clerk/Treasurer McCallum to draft a letter of support to MODC regarding the timeframe of the RFP. A deposit for the successful proponent will be included in the 2026/27 Budget.

#### 6. Reports

##### 6.1 Secretary-Treasurer, incl. 2025/26 Q3 Budget Variance Report

Mr. Collicutt presented his monthly report (*Schedule 6.1*), including the 2025/26 Q3 Budget Variance Report. There are no concerns with year-to-date numbers. He noted that many large expenses are held until Q4 to ensure cashflow, such as reserve deposits.

##### 6.2 New Fire Station Project

Mr. Fitt presented his Status Report #6 (*Schedule 6.2*).

Mr. Fitt stated the 'wheels are turning' on the fire station project. The four Fire Hall tours of recent builds were good for information. The first Grey Cardinal monthly report

is attached for more information, including an updated project schedule and overall project budget.

- **Land Swap Update**

Mr. Robert reported that the swap has taken place and is now in the hands of MODC Planning to be processed, approved and registered.

Vice-chair Countway suggested that the Municipality/Province be asked that costs for land registration be waived for all fire departments when called for in the future.

### **6.3 Communications Sub-Committee**

Mr. Countway reported that the “future site of fire station” sign has been repaired. A huge thank-you to the Mahone Bay, Sambro, Hantsport, and Brooklyn Fire Departments for the tours of their facilities.

Chief Stevens reported that Deputy Chief MacDonald is working on the firefighters’ video shoot releases so that a date can be scheduled. The videos are for social media.

### **6.4 Fundraising Sub-Committee**

Mr. MacDonald had no update at this time.

### **6.5 MODC Fire Advisory Committee (FAC)**

Nov 19, 2025 minutes were distributed for information (*Schedule 6.5*). The FAC’s next meeting is Jan 21, 2026.

## **7. New Business**

### **7.1 Draft 2026/27 Fire & Emergency Services Budget - Walkthrough**

Ms. McCallum walked through the first pass at the budget completed by Chief Stevens, Deputy Chief MacDonald, Mr. Collicutt, and herself last week on Jan 7, 2026. Chief Stevens consulted with CVFD members ahead of last week’s meeting.

Ms. McCallum noted that the property tax revenue is a placeholder of last year’s assessment increase by the 2026 capped assessment rate of 2.6%. CPI increases to expenses also used the same placeholder rate. 2026 assessments and the official CPI rate will be released in late January/early February – the Budget will need to be updated accordingly.

Ms. McCallum was asked to separate the Operating and Capital Budgets into separate documents to make the link of the Capital loan(s) and fire station project clearer. It will also be re-formatted to move the budget notes to the end, etc. No issues with the numbers.

**Motion:** Moved by Ms. Hatch; seconded by Mr. Fitt: That the 2026-27 Fire & Emergency Services draft budget be approved as presented, with the formatting amendments discussed.

*Motion carried.*

**Action:** Ms. McCallum will circulate the re-formatted budget to the Committee (*Schedule 7.1 Rev*).

[Note that the draft to be shown at the AGM also needs to be shared with Municipal Council and the Village Commission by the AGM date of Feb 12, 2026 at 6:00 pm.]

**8. In-Camera – Nil**

**9. Resumption of Public Meeting – Nil**

**10. Other Business**

Mr. Fitt asked those on the fire station tours to forward any feedback to him.

**11. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:22 pm.

**Next meeting(s):**

- **Regular Monthly:** Feb 11, 2026 at 5:00 pm; Village Commission boardroom
- **Annual General Meeting:** Feb 12, 2026 at 6:00 pm; St. Stephen's Community Centre

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Kirk Collicutt  
CFSC Secretary

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Heather McCallum  
CFSC Administrator, VOC Clerk/Treasurer



Schedule 7.4

## Minutes of the Meeting of Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee (LCAAC)

Held online via Teams.

January 7, 2026, from 7-8:30pm

### **Members Present:**

Amy Chrysler, Natasha Strickland, Louise Hopper, Teresa Alexander-Arab. Councillor Gale Fullerton (TOL), Village of Chester Commission Chair Geraldine Pauley, Deputy Mayor Jennifer McDonald (TOB), Councillor Penny Carver (ToMB), Councillor Morgen Reinhardt (MODL), Councillor Abdella Assaff (MOC)

### **Staff Present:**

Dylan Heide, Tissy Bolivar, Sana Karami, Tammie Bezanson, Ellen Johnson

### **Guests Present:**

None.

### **Regrets:**

Linda Mills

### **1. Meeting Called to Order:**

The Meeting was called to order, and the land acknowledgement was read by Vice Chair, Louise Hopper at 7:00 p.m.

### **2. Acknowledgements and Protocols:**

**2.1** Louise read reminder of accessibility as a human right.

**2.2** Louise also reminded participants to please raise their hand (virtually or physically) and wait to be called on to speak and to also state their name before speaking.

### **3 Approval of Agenda:**

**3.1 MOTION TO APPROVE the agenda as circulated with the addition of introductions of new members, SO MOVED by Penny Carver, SECONDED by Abdella Assaff. ALL IN FAVOUR. MOTION CARRIED.**

#### **4. Approval of Minutes:**

**4.1 MOTION TO APPROVE PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES AS CIRCULATED FOR OCTOBER 1, 2025, MOVED BY GALE FULLERTON, SECONDED BY ABDELLA ASSAFF. ALL IN FAVOUR. MOTION CARRIED.**

#### **5. Introductions:**

A round table of introductions took place.

#### **6. Accessibility Coordinator's Update:**

- Ellen noted that she has been on vacation over the holidays and is just getting back into routine and will follow up with anyone who has reached out accordingly.
- Accessibility Advisory Board for the Province provides advice to the Provincial Government concerning standards for the Accessibility Act. The Board will be initiating public consultations for the Information and Communications and Public Transportation standards in February and March. Ellen will share more information with the LCAAC as it becomes available.

#### **7. Matters Arising:**

Update from Orientation – Took place in November, and numbers were low overall, but great discussion was had with who was there. The group in the orientation decided for a recommendation that the meetings will be virtual in the wintertime and in person during the spring, summer, fall to ensure safety and still have in person interactions that are helpful as well. Ellen will schedule accordingly.

Penny asked if a link was available for the video that was shown at the orientation event. Ellen advised that she would see what she can find and circulate for those interested. Other committee members noted that the video is very unsettling to watch with raw emotional footage causing lasting impact but extremely important. Ellen will also circulate the presentation that was used at the orientation for those who were unable to attend that would like to review.

#### **8. Draft Budget**

Ellen reminded members that one of the responsibilities of the Committee is to give recommendations to the five municipal units regarding annual budgeting for accessibility within their communities. A draft has been shared with the Deputy CAO's. Tonight, Ellen will share this with the Committee for input concerning regional actions and bigger picture review for cost spending. Ellen walked the Committee through the draft budget line items with a comparison to 2025's budget for comparison. Ellen highlighted Committee Training and Facilitation with the thought of an update that is required to the Terms of Reference this year and in the past, this has been a tricky exercise, so the budget is allowing for

support in this if needed. Committee members reminded Ellen of the challenges of inflation. The Expert Consultation/Professional Consultant had a significant jump from 3,000 to 20,000. Ellen explained that last year was planned but this year is acting out the plans agreed upon. One of the regional actions is to create a common symbol system and document the accessibility of some of the spaces within municipalities. Graduate students participated in a pilot review last summer in Bridgewater to get an idea of best practices that would be helpful to share with the public in a broad sense. Part of the 20,000 will be budgeting to hire a group to continue that work and move from the pilot phase to implementation phase. There will be flexibility within that number depending on how many facilities are documented and assessed but this money is set aside for this piece of planning. These funds would also be used to hire a consultant to develop an anti-hate and anti-discrimination policy. This policy would provide an overarching equity lens to all policies as work continues to review the many existing policies with this lens.

Ellen reminded the Committee that where her position is based in Chester, she requires their review and procurement policy as a baseline for planning. She also reminded them this is the very early development stage, and it will go to the Deputy CAO group for review before finalizing details and forming the final budget that would be presented to Councils regionally.

Ellen reminded the Committee that a website is still an action plan to ensure public engagement and education. The Committee wanted to ensure once the work is complete that there isn't a gap between the information and the public knowing how to access it. The committee agreed this is a key piece to the puzzle for making impact in our regional communities.

The Committee also strongly supported Ellen in her line item of Employee Wellness, recognizing this is an equity position and the weight of the responsibility on these roles and importance of maintaining support and wellness while they do this important work.

**MOTION TO RECOMMEND THE INCLUSION OF THE INICITAITVES AND RELEVANT BUDGETARY ALOCATIONS PRESENTED IN THE BUDGET TO BE BROUGHT FORWARD FOR APPROVAL BY THE COUNCILS MOVED BY AMY CHRYSLER, SECONDED BY PENNY CARVER. ALL IN FAVOUR. MOTION CARRIED.**

#### **9. Round Table (Popcorn Style):**

Due to time constraints the Chair opened the floor for quick comments. Gale noted the Lunenburg Band Stand will be open for Christmas.

#### **10. Date of Next Meeting: February 4, 2026**

**11. Meeting was adjourned as all items on agenda were completed.**