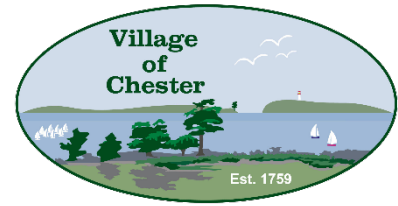


Agenda

Village Commission Monthly Meeting Wednesday, May 20, 2026 @ 6:00 pm



In-Person & Virtual Meeting

Village Commission @ Zoé Vallé Library, 63 Regent Street, Chester

Zoom Meeting ID #846 0723 2487, passcode 202627 or [YouTube Live](#)

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 to the Village Commission on any village matter:*
 - *Comments are to be directed to the Chair.*
 - *Each person must state their name and civic address.*
 - *Each person is limited to a maximum of 5 minutes, with the entire session not to exceed 15 minutes.*

3.0 Approval/Amendment of Agenda

p. 1

4.0 Approval/Amendment of Minutes

4.1 Monthly Commission Meeting: Apr 22, 2026

p. 3

5.0 Business Arising – Nil

6.0 New Business

6.1 Request for Decision: Chester Fire Station Build Loan
Kirk Collicutt, Norm Countway, Wilson Fitt, Colin MacDonald

To come

6.2 By-law/Policies Required for Annual Review:

(a) Tax Exemption for Non-Profit Organizations By-law p. 8

(b) Property Tax Exemption Policy p. 12

(c) Reimbursement Policy p. 15

(d) Hospitality Policy p. 18

7.0 Correspondence – for information

7.1 Municipal Affairs: Overview of Legislative Amendments p. 21

7.2 Emergency Management: 12 Months' Notice p. 22

8.0 Reports and External Committees

- 8.1 Report from the Chair
- 8.2 Clerk/Treasurer Report p. 24
- 8.3 (a) Chester Fire Services Committee: Apr 8, 2026 p. 28
(b) MODC Fire Advisory Committee: Nil
- 8.4 Lunenburg County Accessibility Committee: Apr 8, 2026 p. 31

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

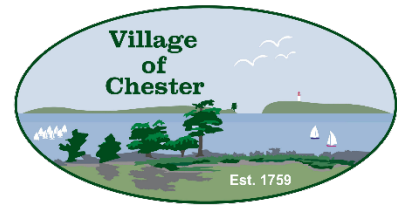
Next Meeting(s)

- Monthly: Wednesday, Jun 17, 2026, 5:00 pm @ 63 Regent St.
- Annual General Meeting: Wednesday, Jun 17, 2026, 6:30 pm @ 63 Regent St.

Minutes DRAFT

**Village Commission Monthly Meeting
Wednesday, April 22, 2026 – 6:00 pm**

In-Person only
27 Pleasant Street, Chester



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

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

Note: Due to technical difficulties, there was no livestream this meeting therefore there is also no video archive.

1.0 Call to Order

Chair Pauley called the April 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

- Kristina Nicoll - [REDACTED] Central Street:
Ms. Nicoll read a prepared statement, noted she would send the text by email, and asked for it to be placed in the meeting minutes. [Note: This has not yet been received, but will be shared when available.]

3.0 Approval/Amendment of Agenda

Motion #26-019: Commissioner Nauss moved; Vice-chair O'Malley seconded: That the Agenda of the Chester Village Commission's April 22, 2026 Regular Monthly Meeting be approved as presented.
Motion carried unanimously.

4.0 Approval/Amendment of Minutes

4.1 Monthly Commission Meeting: March 18, 2026

Motion #26-020: Commissioner T. Mulrooney moved; Commissioner Nauss seconded: That the Minutes of the Chester Village Commission's Mar 18, 2026 Monthly Meeting be approved as presented.
Motion carried unanimously.

5.0 Business Arising

5.1 2026/27 Village Budget

The Commissioners discussed Draft v. 5 of the Village Budget (*Schedule 5.1*).

Motion #26-021: Commissioner L Mulrooney moved; Vice-chair O'Malley seconded: That the Village of Chester Commission approves the Village of Chester Commission's budget for 2026/27 fiscal year.
For: Chair Pauley, Vice Chair O'Malley, Commissioners L. Mulrooney and Nauss
Abstained: Commissioner T. Mulrooney
Motion carried.

5.2 Jib Lot: Suggested Landscape Plan

This suggested plan will be considered for Year 2 of MODC's "Beautification & Revitalization" program, and is included for information at this time (*Schedule 5.2*).

6.0 Correspondence

6.1 Assoc. of NS Villages: Coordinator

C/T McCallum reviewed an email from the Association that Doug Boudreau has been hired as the staff person (*Schedule 6.1*). His start date was April 1, 2026.

6.2 NS Dept. of Emergency Management: Update on the Support for Fire Protection Services Act

Notification was received from the Deputy Minister of the NS Department

of Emergency Management to make it known the “Support for Fire Protection Services Act” has been passed (*Schedule 6.2*).

7.0 Reports

7.1 Report from the Chair

Chair Pauley reported that approved minutes are included from the last Accessibility Committee (*Schedule 7.1*).

Chair Pauley’s noted that her main focus this past month has been on getting the Library set-up and organized for re-opening, as well as liaising with South Shore Public Libraries (SSPL) on their preparations.

7.2 Clerk/Treasurer Report

C/T McCallum presented the monthly administration and financial update (*Schedule 7.2*).

7.3 (a) Chester Fire Services Committee (CFSC) & (b) MODC Fire Advisory Committee (FAC)

(a) The CFSC’s approved minutes of March 11, 2026 were shared for information (*Schedule 7.3(a)*). [www.chesterfirecommittee.ca]

(b) Nil

7.4 Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee (LCAAC)

Draft minutes of the Mar 4, 2026 meeting were provided for information (*Schedule 7.4*). [www.accessiblelunenburgcounty.ca]

7.5 MODC Village Planning Advisory Committee (VPAC)

Vice-chair O’Malley shared that MODC Council has moved ahead with consolidating the Municipal Planning Advisory Committee, Village Planning Advisory Committee, and Heritage Advisory Committee into one. The former committee memberships are dissolved and anyone interested must re-apply. He noted that there is no designated seat on the new committee for the Village Commission, unless an application is accepted by Council.

8.0 New Business

8.1 Community Grant Disbursement: 6 Applicants

Discussion was held on the applications (*Schedule 8.1*) and on the process for approval. It was agreed to proceed with awarding the grants similar to how they were awarded in 2025.

Motion #26-022: Commissioner Nauss moved; Vice-chair O'Malley seconded: That the Village of Chester Commission approve the Grants as stated below:

Chester Arts Centre	\$2,000.00
Chester Farmers Market	\$1,000.00
Chester Merchants Association	\$2,000.00
Chester Municipal Heritage Society	\$2,000.00
Chester Playhouse	\$2,000.00
Chester Yacht Club	\$1,000.00

Motion carried unanimously.

9.0 Commissioner Roundtable – Nil

10.0 In-Camera

Motion #26-023: Commissioner T. Mulrooney moved; Commissioner Nauss seconded: That the Commission move in camera as per Section 408B(2) of the Municipal Government Act to discuss legal advice eligible for solicitor-client privilege.

Motion carried unanimously.

The Commission recessed at 6:31 pm.

11.0 Resumption of Public Meeting

The public meeting resumed at 7:18 pm.

- **Snowbank Removal: Action Discussion**

It was decided by consensus that the Village Commission will send a letter to MODC Council requesting that the Municipality's former snowbank removal policy (over 6") be re-instated due to public safety and emergency vehicle access.

- **Other**

Because the livestream was unavailable this evening, the Clerk/Treasurer will post “Meeting Highlights” online so that there is some record of the key points released prior to the adoption of the Minutes.

12.0 Adjournment

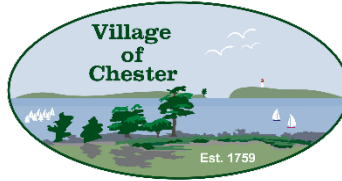
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:20 pm.

Next Meeting(s)

- Monthly: Wednesday, May 20, 2026 - 6:00 pm at 63 Regent St.
- Monthly: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 - 5:00 pm at 63 Regent St.
- Annual General Meeting: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 – 6:30 pm at 63 Regent St.

Commission Chair
Geraldine Pauley

Clerk/Treasurer
Heather McCallum



Village of Chester Tax Exemption for Non-Profit Organizations By-law

A By-law of the Village of Chester, in the Province of Nova Scotia, to authorize a tax exemption for property of a non-profit community group pursuant to the provisions of the ***Municipal Government Act***, article 71.

WHEREAS the Commission of the Village of Chester has the powers of a municipality to make by-laws pursuant to the Municipal Government Act, article 429(1) for tax reductions, exemptions, and deferrals; and

WHEREAS the Commission of the Village of Chester has authority to pass a bylaw to exempt non-profit organizations from taxation pursuant to article 71(1) of the Municipal Government Act; and

BE IT RESOLVED that the following By-law is hereby approved as the Tax Exemption By-law for the Village of Chester,

NOW THEREFORE PURSUANT to the provisions of the Municipal Government Act, Chapter 21, the Commission of the Village of Chester, Nova Scotia, in regular session duly assembled, enacts as follows:

1. Severability

If any provision of this by-law is declared invalid because of any word, phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section of this by-law or any documents which form part of this by-law or an application thereof to any person or circumstance is declared invalid, the remaining provisions shall not be affected thereby, but shall remain in force.

2. Real Property

- 2.1 This by-law allows for non-profit organization exemptions in full or in part from the Village of Chester's Property Tax levy for General Government Services only.
- 2.2 An exemption to the Property Tax levy for Fire and Emergency Services is not permitted under this by-law.

- 2.3 Subject to this by-law, the non-profit organizations named in Appendix A shall be granted full or partial exemptions from the Village Commission's Property Tax as listed therein.
- 2.4 When the named non-profit organization(s) cease to occupy the property cited, then the exemption from taxation shall cease and the owner of the real property shall immediately be liable for the real property tax on such real property for the portion of the year unexpired.
- 2.5 A registered non-profit organization that is not named in Appendix A may apply to the Commission for consideration using the form in Appendix B.
- 2.6 The Appendices may be amended by Commission motion.

3. Eligibility

- 3.1 To be eligible the organization must be incorporated as:
- A registered society or a registered non-profit cooperative under the Societies Act (Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stocks Companies); or
 - A registered not-for-profit corporation under the Canada Not for Profit Corporations Act (Industry Canada); or
 - A registered Canadian charity (Canada Revenue Agency); or
 - An organization incorporated by an Act of the Nova Scotia Legislature or the Parliament of Canada
- 3.2 The organization must be located within the boundaries of the Village of Chester.

4. Effective Date

This amended by-law shall come into force and effect commencing in the Fiscal Year on April 1st, 2024.

5. Repeal and Replace

Previously adopted versions of the Village of Chester's Tax Exemptions for Non-Profit Organizations By-law are hereby repealed and replaced upon the effective date of adoption of this amended by-law.

Village of Chester
Clerk's Annotation for Official By-law Book
Re: Tax Exemption for Non-Profit Organizations By-law (Amendment)

Date of first reading: December 13, 2024

Date of advertisement of notice of intent: January 3, 2024

Date of second/final reading: February 21, 2024 (Motion #24-008)

Date of advertisement of passage of by-law: March 6, 2024

Date of mailing to Provincial Minister a certified copy of the by-law: March 1, 2024

I certify that this by-law was adopted by the Village Commission and advertised as indicated above.



Nancy Hatch
Commission Chair



Heather McCallum
Clerk/Treasurer



Appendix A

List of Approved Organizations for Tax Exemption

Subject to the ***Tax Exemption for Non-Profit Organizations By-law***, the following non-profit organizations shall be exempt from the Village Commission's Property Tax as follows:

- Chester Garden Club
Civic address: Water Street, Chester
Exemption: 100%
Municipal account number: 10858615
- Our Health Centre
Civic address: 3769 Highway #3, Chester
Exemption: 50%
Municipal account number: 05053455

Schedule 6.2.b

Village of Chester Property Tax Exemption Policy (2025)

The *Municipal Government Act*, Section 69, permits a Municipality to grant a tax exemption for low-income earners. Sections 429 and 440(1) permit a Village to do the same.

1.0 Scope

It shall be the policy of the Village of Chester to have clear terms and conditions to provide annual partial property tax relief for low-income property owners.

1.1 Income means a person's total income (total income before deductions) from all sources for the calendar year preceding the fiscal year of the Village of Chester, excluding any allowances paid pursuant to the War Veterans Allowance Act (Canada) or Pension paid pursuant to the Pension Act (Canada) and includes:

- i. The income of all assessed owners, their spouse(s), including common law spouses who occupy the property as their principal residence;
- ii. The income from members of the same family residing in the same household, who contribute to the household expenses; and
- iii. Those who hold an interest in the property and contribute to the household expenses.

1.2 Owner and those who hold an interest in the property includes:

- i. The person assessed for the property;
- ii. A person who holds title including a part owner, joint owner, tenant in common, or joint tenant of the property; and
- iii. A person with a life interest in the property; and
- iv. A person with a matrimonial interest.

Not included are those with a leasehold interest and those with an interest under an agreement of purchase and sale.

1.3 Principal Residence is the ordinary place of residence for a greater part of the year of an owner as well as an owner in a hospital or nursing care facility, unless that person has not slept at the property for a period of two (2) years or more, or unless the property has been rented to paying tenants, in either of which event, the property shall be deemed to cease being the owner's ordinary place of residence.


- 1.4 Same family in section 1.1(ii) defined as including, but not limited to children, or stepchildren connected to at least one of the legally married or common-law couples included in 1.1(i).
- 2.0 The Director of Finance of the Municipality shall grant an exemption as follows:
- i. For owners with an income Level of \$20,000 or less the exemption shall be the lesser of \$536 or the tax on the Village of Chester area rate only.
 - ii. For owners with an income Level of \$20,001 to \$29,999 the tax exemption shall be the lesser of \$374 or the tax on the Village of Chester area rate only.
 - iii. For owners with an income Level of \$30,000 to \$40,000 the tax exemption shall be the lesser of \$268 or the tax on the Village of Chester area rate only.
- 3.0 A person or persons applying for an exemption must:
- i. Make an affidavit:
 - a) Regarding his/her income from all sources in the calendar year preceding the Municipal taxation year for which the exemption is sought. Satisfactory verification of income must be presented to substantiate the exemption. Exemption form attached as Schedule "A".
 - b) Verify that any person who either holds an interest in the property or are family members residing in the same household, whose income is not included in household income pursuant to clause 1.1 (ii), does not contribute to paying household expenses.
 - c) Provide satisfactory verification of income to substantiate the exemption. Satisfactory evidence includes a CRA notice of assessment, GST/HST credit notice, and copy of tax return prepared by a third-party tax preparer.
 - ii. Apply for the exemption each year prior to March 31st of the Municipal taxation year.
- 4.0 The exemption shall only apply to a property where at least one of the assessed owners occupies it as his/her principal residence.
- 5.0 Prior to an exemption being granted, all outstanding debts to the Municipality, which are not a lien on the property, shall be paid in full. This would include any fees such as building permit fees, landfill tipping fees, recreation fees, etc.
- 6.0 A refusal to grant an exemption pursuant to this Policy may be appealed to Village Commission.

7.0 Annually, tax exemption income levels and the exemption amounts will be adjusted as follows:

- i. Annual adjustments in the income levels, below which an exemption for taxation is granted, will be adjusted by either the annual increase in CPI for Nova Scotia or to the extent that Village Commission considers appropriate.
- ii. Annual adjustments in the scale of exemption amounts granted will be adjusted by either the annual increase in the average residential tax bill for the general tax rate, and waste collection and disposal area rate, and the tax on the Village of Chester area rate, or to the extent that village Commission considers appropriate.

Approved: Jul 8, 2020	Motion # 20-230
Amended: Sep 24, 2020	Motion # 20-259
Amended: Oct 13, 2021	Motion # 21-132
Amended: Oct 12, 2022	Motion # 22-117
Amended: Nov 8, 2023	Motion # 23-115
Amended: May 21, 2025	Motion # 25-044

I certify that this Policy was adopted by the Village of Chester Commission as indicated above.



 Clerk/Treasurer

May 23, 2025

 Date



Village of Chester Commission Reimbursement Policy (2024)

1.0 Purpose

The Village of Chester will provide for the reimbursement of travel expenses incurred by a commissioner or employee while conducting Village business away from their regular office/workspace or the community.

2.0 Policy Statement

This policy provides direction for the reimbursement of commissioners and employees for all reasonable and appropriate expenses for travel, meals, and accommodations incurred in the course of carrying out their duties and responsibilities and attending meetings, courses, seminars, or conferences approved by the Commission.

3.0 Guidelines

- 3.1 The Clerk/Treasurer shall be responsible to implement and adhere to this policy.
- 3.2 Individuals must submit an Expense Claim to receive reimbursement.
- 3.3 Travel Expense Claims including receipts must be submitted within 30 days of completion of the travel.
- 3.4 Alcohol purchases are not an allowable expense for commissioners or employees of the Village while travelling for Village business and will not be reimbursed, except under provisions of the Village Hospitality Policy.
- 3.5 Entertainment/hospitality expenses are deemed to be unreasonable and will not be reimbursed, except under provisions of the Village Hospitality Policy.

4.0 Meal Allowances

- 4.1 A reasonable out-of-pocket costs will be reimbursed for personal meals while travelling on Village business attending meetings. Itemized receipts are not required when claiming the maximum meal rate.
- 4.2 The cost of breakfast may be claimed only when travelling for more than one hour before the recognized time for the usual start of the day's work.
- 4.3 The cost of dinner may be claimed only when traveller is not expected to return home before 6:30PM.

4.4 Per diem maximum without receipts rates:

Breakfast	\$15.00
Lunch	\$20.00
Dinner	\$35.00
Incidentals	\$10.00
Total	\$80.00 per day

5.0 Eligible Vehicle Expenses

- 5.1 Where car travel is indicated as the most suitable mode of transportation, an employee may use their own vehicle and be reimbursed at the current Government of Nova Scotia Kilometrage and Transportation Allowance Rate ([kilometrage-and-transportation-allowance-rates-government-and-public-sector-body-employees-en.pdf \(novascotia.ca\)](#))
- 5.2 Car rental reimbursement will be made for rental of economy type cars at destination.
- 5.3 All parking expenses and bridge, highways, or ferry tolls will be reimbursed as appropriate (receipts required).

6.0 Travel Advances


- 6.1 Estimates for travel, meals, and accommodations in excess of \$150.00 may require an advance paid to the traveller.
- 6.2 All travellers must complete and sign a Travel Advance Expense Claim prior to the issuing of a cheque.
- 6.3 Reconciliation of Travel Advance and actual Travel Expenses must be completed within 15 days on return.

7.0 Reporting Requirements

- 7.1 In accordance with the *Municipal Government Act*, an Expense Report that describes all the expenses incurred by Commissioners and the Clerk/Treasurer will be prepared for each fiscal quarter and posted on the Village website within 90 days of the end of each quarter.
- 7.2 By September 30th of each year, prepare and file an annual summary report of the previous fiscal year with the Minister of Municipal Affairs.
- 7.3 The Village Commission shall review this policy annually for presentation at the Annual Public Meeting and either re-adopt or amend the policy.

Approved: January 15, 2020	Motion # 20-159
Amended: June 22, 2022	Motion # 22-280
Amended: June 5, 2023	Motion # 23-070
Amended: May 27, 2024	Motion # 24-037
Amended:	Motion #

I certify that this Policy was adopted by the Village of Chester Commission as indicated above.



 Clerk/Treasurer

May 28, 2024

 Date



Village of Chester Commission Hospitality Policy (2024)

1.0 Purpose

The Village of Chester recognizes that gifts and hospitality related activities are, at times, appropriate and legitimate expenses to support the Village's strategic and business objectives. The offering of gifts and hospitality will be done in such a manner to safeguard the appropriate use of public funds.

2.0 Policy Statement

This policy provides direction and guidance with respect to the offering of hospitality in an accountable and economical manner for the facilitation of government business and/or for reasons of diplomacy, protocol, business development, or promotional advocacy and not provide any personal benefit to commissioners or employees of the Village.

3.0 Hospitality

3.1 "Hospitality" and "hospitality event" is defined in this policy as a reception, ceremony, conference or other group event that involves hosting individuals from outside the Village. Hospitality may be offered under the following circumstances:

- a) Hosting dignitaries;
- b) Engaging in official public matters with representatives from other governments;
- c) Hosting business, industry/labour leaders, or other community leaders;
- d) Sponsoring or hosting conferences;
- e) Hosting ceremonies or recognition events; and
- f) Other official functions, as approved by the Village Commission.

3.2 "Hospitality expense" is defined in this policy as the cost of meals/catering and beverages, rented meeting space/accommodation, gifts, event staffing, and other expenses associated with the act of holding, hosting, or sponsoring a hospitality event.

3.3 Alcohol

- a) While the standard for hospitality is the provision of non-alcoholic beverages, the provision of alcohol in the context of hospitality is deemed an acceptable expense in limited circumstances. Any request for approval to serve alcohol at a hospitality event requires prior approval by the Village Commission.
- b) All representatives and employees of the Village are expected to act responsibly in the care and well-being of themselves and their guests with respect to the provision of alcohol. Food must be served at all events where alcohol is provided for hospitality purposes, and non-alcoholic beverages must also be available.
- c) All applicable liquor laws and licensing requirements must be adhered to in addition to the principles of this policy.
- d) Per the Reimbursement Policy, alcohol is not an allowable expense for commissioners or employees of the Village while travelling for Village business.

3.4 Gifts

- a) For reasons of diplomacy, protocol, business development, or promotional advocacy, the giving of token gifts to individuals who are not employees or representatives of the Village is sometimes appropriate.
- b) Any giving of individual gifts exceeding \$50 in value requires prior approval by the Village Commission.

4.0 Prior Authorization

- 4.1 Subject to this policy, all hospitality events require prior authorization by the Village Commission. A hospitality event requires the following information for prior authorization:
 - a) Rational/purpose of the event;
 - b) Estimated number of attendees and their respective affiliations;
 - c) If alcohol is to be provided at the event, reasons the provision of alcohol is appropriate and warranted in the circumstances; and
 - d) Estimate itemized hospitality expenses, including gratuities and supplementary expenses.

4.2 In instances where a hospitality event has been held without prior approval, claims for reimbursement must provide the details outlined above and a document outlining the reasons prior approval was not possible.

5.0 Submission of Expenses

5.1 It is preferred that hospitality expenses shall be incurred directly by the Village by way of direct billing or use of the corporate credit card and not by way of reimbursement of expenses incurred by a commissioner or employee.

5.2 Any hospitality expenses incurred by individuals must be submitted on a Hospitality Expense Claim form. The completed expense claim must be submitted to the appropriate signing authority within 30 days after the hospitality event, along with a copy of the approved authorization documentation or explanation, per clause 4.1 and 4.2.

6.0 Reporting Requirements


6.1 In accordance with the *Municipal Government Act*, a Hospitality Expense Report that describes all the hospitality expenses incurred by the Village will be prepared for each fiscal quarter and posted on the Village website within 90 days of the end of each quarter.

6.2 By September 30th of each year, prepare and file an annual summary report of the previous fiscal year with the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

6.3 The Village Commission shall review this policy annually for presentation at the Annual Public Meeting and either re-adopt or amend the policy.

Approved: Jun 18, 2024	Motion # 24-047
Amended:	Motion #

I certify that this Policy was adopted by the Village of Chester Commission as indicated above.



 Clerk/Treasurer

Jun 19, 2024

 Date



**Municipal Affairs
Office of the Minister**

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

April 22, 2026

Dear Mayors, Wardens and Village Chairs:

I am writing to provide an overview of the legislative amendments approved this spring in the House of Assembly that relate to municipal governance. These changes were a part of Bill 212 ([c001.pdf](#)). We are sharing this information to ensure Council has clarity on the intent and scope of these changes, as well as next steps.

Amendments to the *Municipal Government Act* and *Halifax Regional Charter Act*:

- Clarify the oversight relationship between councils and Chief Administrative Officers, affirming council's discretion to exclude the CAOs from meetings related to CAO performance (effective immediately).
- Enable councils to delegate CAO performance oversight to a committee (effective immediately).
- Clarify council's authority in approving CAO participation in external organizations and delegating responsibilities during CAO absences (effective immediately).
- Introduce mandatory onboarding training for newly elected councillors to support strong governance and informed decision-making. Will become effective after details are established in regulations.

These amendments are intended to strengthen municipal governance and support councils in their leadership and accountability roles.

We appreciate the support that you have shared for these changes either directly, through your MLA or through your associations. If council has questions or would like additional clarification, your municipal advisors would be pleased to assist.

In the coming months, the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) will be seeking your input on what mandatory training for newly elected councillors will look like in Nova Scotia. Our intention is that councillors feel equipped to fulfill their important responsibilities, how to work effectively with their colleagues and the staff of the municipality, and how to best deliver on the priorities of their constituents, the municipality and our beautiful province. Regulations will establish the minimum standards for mandatory training, such as the types of training, the timelines for completion, and key responsibilities. We will look to you to shape these requirements, through the work of NSFM.

Thank you for your continued partnership.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John A. MacDonald".

Honourable John A. MacDonald
Minister of Municipal Affairs

c: CAOs (please share with your councillors)
Village Clerks
Juanita Spencer, CEO, Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities
Jeff Sunderland, Executive Director, Association of Municipal Administrators Nova Scotia

Schedule 7.2



Emergency Management Office of the Minister

Suite 601-1871 Upper Water Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3J 1S8 • Telephone 902-424-5620 • Minister.EmergencyManagement@novascotia.ca

May 8, 2026

David Mitchell
President, Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM)
Suite 1304, 1809 Barrington Street
Halifax, NS B3J 3K8
Via email: david.mitchell@bridgewater.ca

Dear David Mitchell and NSFM Members:

Recently, my team had the pleasure of connecting with many of you at the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) Spring Conference in Yarmouth (April 29- May 1). We deeply value the diverse perspectives of our municipal partners and have been listening intently to your feedback and questions. This ongoing dialogue will continue to help shape how we will strengthen fire services, together.

On May 2, 2026, my colleague, Minister John A. MacDonald, sent a letter to Mayor David Mitchell, President of the NSFM. This letter provides notice of any provincial legislation, regulation, or administrative actions that could have the effect of decreasing revenues or increasing the required expenditures of municipalities. This letter provides advance notice of these changes for the **fiscal year 2027-2028** and beyond.

With the introduction of the *Act to Provide Support for Fire Protection Services*, the Department is providing one-year notice that all municipalities – whether they oversee fire services or not – will be required to:

- conduct a fire protection service review to ensure municipalities and fire service providers make evidence-based decisions about the services they provide to their community,
- ensure that local firefighter competencies, training, and personal protective equipment meet the service standard required by the fire protection service review, and
- participate in a common records management system.

These requirements **will not take effect this fiscal year** (2026-2027). Over the next three years, my team will be working closely with our municipal and fire service partners to support the design and completion of fire service reviews beginning in 2027-2028 and to develop regulations and standards.

To establish the groundwork for fire service reviews our first steps – to be completed this year - will be to design and roll-out an online risk-based assessment tool to gather information and facilitate decision-making about fire protection service levels that are aligned with recommended training and assets requirements.



Emergency Management Office of the Minister

Suite 601-1871 Upper Water Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3J 1S8 • Telephone 902-424-5620 • Minister.EmergencyManagement@novascotia.ca

This tool will be provided free of charge to all municipalities and fire service providers in Nova Scotia. Training and support to use the tool will be provided by DEM.

To clarify, the tool and the fire protection service review are not separate requirements. At this time, the Province does not anticipate any significant expense to be accrued by municipalities as result of using the tool to inform fire service reviews which will be required in the next fiscal year.

In addition to standing up the new Office of the Fire Commissioner, this year's focus builds on the Province's ongoing commitment to strengthen the fire service sector through:

- access to specialized firefighter training and the certification process,
- education/training for municipal elected officials,
- procurement support,
- mutual aid and service agreement templates,
- design and roll-out of the online risk-based assessment tool, and
- the new Fire Records Management System.

Meaningful change requires planning and collaboration. That is why your continued input is essential. We look forward to continuing to work with you to create a better model for fire services in Nova Scotia. Please reach out to firemodernization@novascotia.ca if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kim Masland".

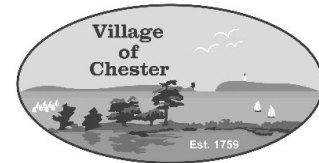
Honourable Kim Masland

Minister of the Department of Emergency Management

- c. Honourable Minister John. A MacDonald, Department of Municipal Affairs
 Executive Deputy Minister, Paul LaFleche, Department of Municipal Affairs
 Associate Deputy Minister, Valerie Pottie Bunge, Department of Municipal Affairs
 Juanita Spencer, CEO, NSFM
 Victoria Brooks, Chair, Association of Municipal Administrators (AMANS)
 Jeff Sunderland, Executive Director, AMANS

Schedule 8.2

**Village of Chester Commission
Clerk/Treasurer Monthly Report
May 20, 2026**

**Scotiabank**

- The April 2026 bank statement is pending reconciliation. The Village main operations account opened the month with \$376,234 and ended with \$464,487.
- Snapshot: Village account balances as of May 1st were:

Banking Accounts	
Village Operations account	\$464,085
Investment Accounts	
Village Operating reserve	\$105,018
Village Lido Pool reserve (excluding GRID funding \$242K)	\$211,675
Village Utilities reserve	\$44,615
Village EMC Building reserve	\$28,989

Financial

- We are still awaiting the decision for the Recreation Facility Development Grant (Lido repairs).
- We also still have to provide a cost proposal to GRID for the re-direction of the Lido accessibility project to the Library. Drawings have been prepared by the consultant architect and are currently being adjusted from feedback with Municipal Planning. The estimating is in progress.

2025/26 Audit

- Lawrence Lake and a colleague were here on May 1st for site work on the audit.
- The first Audit Committee meeting took place on May 20th (to be confirmed). The second meeting is still to be scheduled, pending availability of Mr. Lake and the citizen member of the Audit Committee. The audit is presented at the June 17th AGM, so it would ideally happen the week prior.
- The 2025/26 Q4 Budget Variance report is pending adjustments that will be directed by the auditor. Some important information is still outstanding, including the final tax reconciliation from MODC.

Lido Pool/Washroom

- The lifeguards have all been hired, with the assistance of Nevaeh, our 2026 lifeguard manager. This will be her fourth season with the Lido as a lifeguard and having her managing the schedule and being on-the-spot for the other guards will be a big improvement.
- Darcy Stevens has confirmed her swimming lessons begin on Monday, June 29th – so that will be the Lido’s opening day.
- The Public Washroom re-opened May 1st. I’m in negotiations with All Outdoors to set dates for them to finish the accessible parking space and entrance path/landing/front door.

Visitor Information Centre

- The summer student has been hired for the season. Kiley is a recent graduate of Saint Mary’s University and is home for the summer before moving abroad for graduate school.

ZVML Financial

- Snapshot: Library account balances as of May 15th were:

Banking Accounts	
ZVML Fund account	\$190,309
Investment Accounts	
ZVML CHUMS reserve (pending)	
ZVML Fund reserves (TBD)	

- I’m still unable to see the ZVML accounts on our ScotiaConnect. I’ve got an investigation open to see what the delay is. In the meantime, I get the balances from our representative in Commercial Banking.
- I met with Tim Topping, MODC’s Director of Finance, last week to go through remaining “to-do’s” and the spreadsheets for the 2025 financial statement. He has now provided the final file for 2025, but we still need Jan-Mar 2026. He will also be submitting the Library’s charitable tax return.
- In order for the Village to be recognized as the ZVL charity’s contact with Canada Revenue, a letter must be submitted signed by the former Trustees whose names are on the account (Tim is not).
- Tim has contacted Canada Helps to change the contact from him to me on the ZVL donation page.

- As you know, the announcement that the ZVL is re-opening on June 1st has gone out. You can see the activities and events scheduled to date on the [Library Calendar](#) on our website.

Annual General Meeting

- The standard government newspaper advertisements for the AGM (Jun 17th) will run in the South Shore Bulletin in the May 27th and Jun 3rd issues. The meeting will be held in the Club Room here at the library.
- A draft Agenda is included for consideration.
- We have a flyer in the budget for the AGM. I suggest rather than a separate mailout, we publish a Summer Newsletter and include the announcement text for the AGM and Election in there? This would also share the dates of re-openings of the pool, VIC, library, summer compost collection, etc.

Village Election

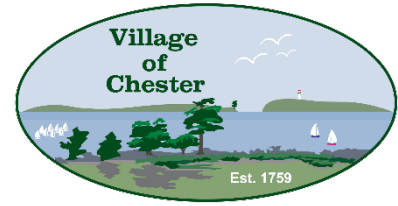
- The List of Electors for the Village was received from the Province on May 15th. While not required for villages as it is for municipalities, I will open a revising period for amendments to the list from June 1st.
- The Village website's [Elections](#) page was updated last month with the most current information and the 2026 nominations package available for download.
- Key dates are:
 - Nomination deadline: Wed Jun 10, 2026 by 5:00 pm
 - Proxy Voting application deadline: Thu Jun 11 by 5:00 pm
 - Advance Poll: Sat Jun 20, 2026 from 11:00 am – 7:00 pm
 - Election Day: Tue Jun 23, 2026 from 9:00am – 7:00pm

Report completed by:

Heather McCallum, Village Clerk/Treasurer

Agenda DRAFT

Village Commission Annual General Meeting Wednesday, Jun 17, 2026 @ 6:00 pm



In-Person & Virtual Meeting

Village Commission @ Zoé Vallé Library, 63 Regent Street, Chester

[Zoom Meeting](#) (Meeting ID 869 9680 6954, Passcode 202627) or [YouTube Live](#)

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 Approval/Amendment of Agenda

3.0 Auditor's Report – Lawrence Lake, Morse Brewster Lake

- 3.1 2025/26 Village Financial Statements

4.0 New Business

- 4.1 Approved 2026/27 Village Commission Budget – *for information*
- 4.2 Annual Review of Reimbursement Policy
- 4.3 Annual Review of Hospitality Policy

5.0 Reports

- 5.1 Chair's 2025/26 Report
- 5.2 Clerk/Treasurer's 2025/26 Report
- 5.3 Chester District Swim Program 2025 Report
- 5.4 Chester Fire Services Committee 2025/26 Report

6.0 Public Forum

- *In-person or over Zoom: Members of the public are welcome to speak and/or ask questions of the Village Commission on any village matter:*
 - *Comments are to be directed to the Chair.*
 - *Each person must state their name and civic address.*
 - *Each person is limited to a maximum of 5 minutes.*

7.0 Adjournment



Minutes

Chester Fire Services Committee (CFSC) Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at 5:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

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

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Chair MacDonald at 5:00 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

Chair MacDonald asked if there were any additions/amendments to the agenda

Motion: Moved by Ms. Hatch; seconded by Mr. Collicutt: That the Chester Fire Services Committee approves the Agenda of the April 8, 2026 Monthly Meeting as presented.
Motion carried.

3. Approval of Minutes

3.1 Monthly Meeting Minutes: March 11, 2026

Motion: Moved by Mr. Robert; seconded by Ms. Hatch: That the Committee approves the Minutes of the March 11, 2026 Monthly Meeting as presented.

Motion carried.

4. Business Arising - Nil

5. Chester Volunteer Fire Department

5.1 Activity Report – Chief Cody Stevens

Chester Volunteer Fire Department responded to twenty-seven emergency calls in February. Training was held on radio communication best practices, as well as a tour of the Maibec mill in East River.

Chief Stevens thanked everyone for their efforts and support while he served the community as Chief of the CVFD. Chief Stevens said he will be close by to help the next Chief with a smooth transition.

5.2 Status of Replacement Unit 541 RFP

The RFP is still in progress. Chief Stevens now has the information to go through, and he stated that Wilson Fitt was a tremendous help with putting the RFP together.

6. Reports

6.1 Secretary-Treasurer

Mr. Collicutt presented his monthly report (*Schedule 6.1*).

Financials from all accounts were reviewed.

Reserve deposits were made for:

Emergency Operating Reserve - \$82K budget variance surplus 2024/25

Apparatus Reserve - \$300K per budget

Building Reserve \$200K per budget

Reserve deposits to be made pending cash flow (first quarter taxes)

Apparatus Reserve - \$100K unspent truck deposit

Building Reserve - \$100K unspent loan payments

6.2 New Fire Station Project

Mr. Fitt is away this week.

6.3 Communications Sub-Committee

Vice-chair Countway said the next step is to campaign with a view to encouraging donations.

6.4 Fundraising Sub-Committee – Nil

6.5 MODC Fire Advisory Committee

Chief Stevens stated that the CFSC model is seen as a great model with two levels of governments involved in the Fire Services.

7. New Business

8. In-Camera – per Section 22/408B (2) of the Municipal Government Act - Nil

9. Resumption of Public Meeting – Nil

10. Other Business – Nil

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:41 pm.

Next meeting(s):

- **Regular Monthly:** Wed, May 13, 2026 at 5:00 pm

Kirk Collicutt
CFSC Secretary

Heather McCallum
CFSC Sr. Administrator, VOC Clerk/Treasurer

Schedule 8.4

Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee Minutes from a Meeting held on 08 April 2026 at Mahone Bay Town Hall

Members present:

Teresa Alexander Arab
Councillor Penny Carver (TOMB)
Amy Chrysler
Lora Church
Councillor Gale Fullerton (TOL)

Louise Hopper
Deputy Mayor Jennifer MacDonald (TOB)
Councillor Katherine McCarron (TOMB)
Councillor Morgen Reinhardt (MODL)
Natasha Strickland

Staff present:

Tammie Bezanson
Tissy Bolivar
Dylan Heide

Ellen Johnson
Sana Karami

Absent:

Councillor Abdella Assaff (MODC)
VOC Commission Chair Geraldine Pauley

Minutes Recorded by:

Councillor Gale Fullerton

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was held in in-person and online through Teams and was called to order at 19:03.

2. Acknowledgements and Protocols

The meeting opened with a land acknowledgment and a statement reminding us that accessibility is a human right. Meeting protocols were reviewed, and all were welcomed.

3. Approval of Agenda

The agenda for the meeting was approved by Louise, seconded by Amy, and all were in favour.

Introductions were made around the table.

4. Approval of Minutes

The minutes recorded at the March 4th LCAAC Meeting were accepted as presented by Teresa, seconded by Natasha, and all were in favour.

5. Accessibility Coordinator's Report:

Ellen provided an update of accessibility activities in the region since the March meeting.

A. Hirtle's Beach (Kingsburg) accessibility upgrades are underway with work being done on extending the boardwalk and an accessible bench.

B. NSCC is offering a the Disability Support Professional program, at several campuses in 2026 throughout the province and plans to offer the course part-time at the Lunenburg Campus in 2027. The Nova Scotia Government is offering full bursaries to those taking this course. For more information, please visit this link: [Disability Support Professional | NSCC Programs | NSCC](#)

C. NSCC is also offering accessibility micro-credentials. These are short courses on disability using a human rights focus. Once they are open to the public, they may be a good fit for municipal staff and Councils, to expand their knowledge and awareness and help them plan their future workforce strategies. For more information, please visit the link below.

D. The LCAAC budget, along with the larger regional accessibility budget, is in progress of being reviewed by Lunenburg County municipalities as part of their budget deliberations.

E. Ellen and Tammie attended the Rick Hansen Foundation conference recently and brought back their observations from the event, which included a noticeable shift in the narrative from why accessibility in communities is important, to how and when accessibility improvements are being planned. They also noted that nation-wide standards are being considered, and that CMHC reported new materials are available to assist developers in delivering "accessible-ready" housing units in newly constructed buildings. The focus is moving to accessible and inclusive by design.

6. Guest Speaker

Ellen noted that the guest speaker from CNIB who planned to join had sent regrets for this meeting.

7. Matters Arising:

A. Ellen confirmed that a donation from LCAAC had been made to People First of Canada for providing access to the film "These Four Walls," and asked if LCAAC members had viewed the film previously discussed. Some had not. The link to view the film has expired, but you can request a new link here: [These Four Walls – People First of Canada](#).

B. Ellen purchased and provided copies of several printed books as educational resources for this group. Discussion followed about checking regional libraries for availability of the titles, which included –

- "Demystifying Disability: What to Know, What to Say, and How to be an Ally" by Emily Ladau
- "Let the Good Times Roll" by Veronica Post
- "Making a Home" by Jen Powley
- "Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice" by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarashna

C. Ellen confirmed that the 2026 dates for Access Awareness Week are from May 30th to June 5th, and she is assembling a full calendar of events to be shared.

D. Once the theme of this years Awareness Week is announced by the provincial Accessibility Directorate a public space information session will be organized. Ellen, Jennifer, and Lora agreed to work together on an agenda for the event, which may include a panel discussion. More information will follow on this item.

E. LCAAC presentations to each participating municipal unit are being planned to start in late May. Lora will be sharing information about the committee's role and seeking feedback from the municipal units about the value LCAAC can provide in the context of projects the municipal units would like to work on and how LCAAC can help.

F. In governance matters, the group agreed that LCAAC's Terms of Reference should be reviewed by all and updated as needed.

8. New Business:

A. The group agreed to meet in-person with an option of online participation for the months of May and June. A meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 17th as a follow-up to Accessibility Awareness Week, and the group will likely take a recess for the summer months. The meeting location will be announced at a later date.

B. Paul Tingley will be the Guest Speaker for the September meeting, date to be confirmed. Paul is well known as a paralympic keelboat sailor and advocate for accessibility. His work is with the provincial Ministry of Community, Culture, Tourism and Heritage, as a Program Fund Manager for accessibility projects.

C. the Built Environment Accessibility Standard Regulations were implemented last year, and a one-year grace period to comply has now passed. Discussion followed about non-compliance complaints and that they should be directed to the provincial Accessibility Directorate. At this point, the Directorate is taking a position of collaboration and education to effect compliance, not fines, as well as a measured response based on the severity of the non-compliance complaint. A question arose about authority and jurisdiction when complaints are registered against recreation facilities such as parks.

D. In terms of provincial standards, the next focus will be on education, employment, and Goods and Services.

9. Round Table:

A. An item from New Business C. noted that more than one municipal unit has planning for parks and recreation facilities on its radar, including accessible park benches and picnic tables, and a comment supported that all facilities, indoor and outdoor, should be accessible for everyone.

B. Jennifer shared an experience that demonstrated the impact of invisible disabilities to the individuals and families impacted by them.

C. Experiences by residents and visitors in community facilities at events, and experiences by visitors in the region's hotels and registered short-term accommodations were discussed, as well as the need for upgraded information about the level of accessibility visitors can expect here.

D. NS Health recently released its Accessibility Plan, and shortfalls have been identified in many facilities.

E. Tammie recommended that folks plan to attend the Rick Hansen Foundation event in 2027, stating that it was very educational and inspiring.

10. Next Meeting Date:

Wednesday, May 6th, 2026, at 19:00 hours,
Municipality of the District of Lunenburg Offices
(or online)

11. Adjournment:

Following the Round Table, with all items on the agenda completed, the meeting was declared adjourned (approximately 20:30.)