

Minutes

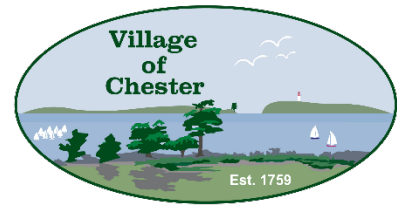
Village Commission Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, Mar 18, 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
Gloria Nauss, Commissioner

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

Guests: Councillor Tom Bremner, MODC District 3
Kirk Collicutt, Treasurer, Chester Fire Services Committee
Norm Countway, Vice-chair, Chester Fire Services Committee

1.0 Call to Order

Chair Pauley called the Mar 18, 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 and asked for it to be placed in the meeting minutes. Ms. Nicoll left the meeting after her presentation.

3.0 Approval/Amendment of Agenda

Commissioner T. Mulrooney added scheduling of AGM and Election.

Motion #26-010: Commissioner T Mulrooney moved; Commissioner Nauss seconded: That the Agenda of the Chester Village Commission's Mar 18, 2026 Regular Monthly Meeting be approved as amended.
Motion carried unanimously.

4.0 Approval/Amendment of Minutes

4.1 Monthly Commission Meeting: Feb 18, 2026

Motion #26-011: Commissioner O'Malley moved; Commissioner L. Mulrooney seconded: That the Minutes of the Chester Village Commission's Feb 18, 2026 Monthly Meeting be approved as presented.
Motion carried unanimously.

4.2 Monthly Commission Meeting: Feb 25, 2026

Motion #26-012: Commissioner L. Mulrooney moved; Commissioner T. Mulrooney seconded: That the Minutes of the Chester Village Commission's Feb 25, 2026 Special Meeting be approved as presented.
Motion carried unanimously.

5.0 Business Arising

5.1 CFSC: 2026/27 Fire & Emergency Services Budget

Guests: Kirk Collicutt, Treasurer; Norm Countway, Vice-Chair

Mr. Collicutt presented a Request for Decision and the 2026/27 Budget final draft v.5 (*Schedule 5.1*).

Motion #26-013: Chair Pauley moved; Commissioner Nauss seconded: That the Village of Chester Commission approves the Chester Fire Services Committee's 2026/27 Fire & Emergency Services Budget and its proposed fire tax rate of 0.1340 per \$100 of assessment.
For: Chair Pauley, Vice Chair O'Malley, Commissioners L. Mulrooney and Nauss
Against: Commissioner T. Mulrooney
Motion carried.

The Chester Fire Services Committee members departed after their presentation.

6.0 Correspondence

6.1 Minister of Emergency Management: Fire Services Modernization Q&As

A letter from the Minister and question-and-answer document were provided for information ([Schedule 6.1](#)).

6.2 Service Nova Scotia: New FOIPOP Regulations Consultation

An update to proposed new regulations for the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act was provided for information ([Schedule 6.2](#)).

6.3 Assoc. of Nova Scotia Villages: Board Meeting Mar 19, 2026

An email was received from ANSV reminding member villages of the upcoming board meeting tomorrow ([Schedule 6.3](#)). The key item on the agenda is the recommendation for hiring of the new staff person.

7.0 Reports

7.1 Report from the Chair

Chair Pauley reported on the Beautification & Revitalization proposal to the Municipality ([Schedule 7.1](#)).

Chair Pauley reported on the work proposed to be completed at the Jib Lot. If approved, MODC Economic Development will contribute \$5,000 to the proposed improvements. Chair Pauley is hopeful that the Village Commission can also allocate funds in its upcoming budget.

She also reported that the hazardous rotted tree at the Jib Lot (with the large limb that came down in a storm this winter) has been safely removed.

7.2 Clerk/Treasurer Report

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

Motion #26-014: Commissioner Nauss moved; Vice Chair O'Malley seconded: That the Chester Village Commission will close its office to the public on March 30-31, 2026 to allow for the office move to take place. *Motion carried unanimously.*

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

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

(b) Minutes from the Municipality's FAC meeting on Jan 21, 2026 were shared for information (*Schedule 7.3(b)*).

7.4 Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee (LCAAC)

Draft minutes of the Feb 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 reported that the March meeting was cancelled. Minutes from the VPAC Meeting of Jan 27, 2026 are not yet available. [[VPAC Minutes](#)]

8.0 New Business

8.1 Request for Decision: Operational Spending Pre-approval

The Clerk/Treasurer presented a Request for Decision regarding accounts payable continuity between Apr 1st and the new budget passage (*Schedule 8.1*). This is specifically regarding employee wages, utilities, bank charges, janitorial, maintenance, and office supplies.

Motion #26-015: Commissioner L Mulrooney moved; Commissioner Nauss seconded: That the Chester Village Commission pre-approve payment of 2026/27 regular and ongoing operational costs in advance of final 2026/27 Village Operational & Capital Budgets' approval. *Motion carried unanimously.*

8.2 Request for Decision: Capital Repairs at 63 Regent Street

Chair Pauley discussed the Request for Decision to repair the front entrance to the building (there is currently a temporary access permit only), and an ask from the librarians to install a protective backing to all the shelves in the original front collection room due to water damage to the books (*Schedule 8.2*). As an option, she also asked that an inoperable door at the rear of the Club Room be removed – it is shingled over on the outside – and the wall repaired.

Estimated costs:

- Front walkway and entrance stairs: up to \$10,000
- Install bookshelf backing: up to \$4,200
- Remove door: up to \$1,000

Motion #26-016: Vice Chair O'Malley moved; Commissioner T. Mulrooney seconded: That the Chester Village Commission approve the proposed capital repairs to the front building entrance, the walls of the adult collection room, and the removal of the inoperable Club Room door at 63 Regent Street. Funding for the repairs, estimated at \$15,200 + HST, to come from the Zoé Vallé Trust account.
Motion carried unanimously.

8.3 Request for Decision: Surplus Furniture

C/T McCallum commented that this Request for Decision was meant to be an emailed vote on Mar 11, 2026 in the interests of time. However, there was only one response, so it has been brought forward to this meeting (*Schedule 8.3*).

Discussion was held.

Motion #26-017: Commissioner Nauss moved; Commissioner L. Mulrooney seconded: That all surplus Village office furniture go into storage space that MODC Public Works has provided for us temporarily. When it has to be moved, the question will be revisited.
Motion carried unanimously.

8.4 Draft 2026/27 Village Operating & Capital Budget: Status and Scheduling

The Commission normally reviews the budget in Committee of the Whole to allow for more time with nothing else on the agenda.

Chair Pauley and C/T McCallum met on Mar 16th for a preliminary

review, and a budget meeting must now be scheduled.

The Commission agreed by consensus to schedule a Committee of the Whole meeting for Monday, Mar 23, 2026 at 2:00 pm.

The Commission agreed by consensus to reschedule the April Commission meeting to Apr 22, 2026 at 6:00 pm.

8.5 Annual General Meeting and Election Scheduling

Commissioner T. Mulrooney suggested scheduling the 2026 AGM and Election Day now.

The AGM must be held before Jul 1st, per the Municipal Government Act. The annual election must be held the first Tuesday after the AGM, per the Village's Election By-law.

The Commission agreed by consensus to schedule the June monthly meeting at 5:00 pm on June 17, 2026, and the 2026 Annual General Meeting on June 17th at 6:30 pm, to be held in the Club Room of the Library. The 2026 Election will be held on Tuesday, June 23, 2026.

9.0 Commissioner Roundtable – Nil

10.0 In-Camera

Motion #26-018: Vice-chair O'Malley moved; Commissioner L. Mulrooney 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 7:43 pm.

11.0 Resumption of Public Meeting

The public meeting resumed at 8:00 pm. There was nothing to report from the in-camera meeting.

12.0 Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Next Meeting(s)

- Committee of the Whole (Budget #1): Monday, Mar 23 @ 2:00 pm
- Committee of the Whole (Budget #2): Tuesday, Apr 21 @ 2:00 pm
- Monthly: Wednesday, Apr 22, 2026 @ 6:00 pm

Commission Chair
Geraldine Pauley

Clerk/Treasurer
Heather McCallum

Submission to the Village Commission of Chester
Regarding Governance and the Zoé Vallée Library

Submitted by:

Kristina Nicoll

In my personal capacity as:

Most Recent Director, Zoé Vallée Library and
Resident of the Village of Chester

Date: March 18, 2026

Statement to the Village Commission of Chester, Nova Scotia
March 18, 2026

Good evening.

Kristina Nicoll, Chester.

I am speaking as a resident and as the most recent volunteer Director of the Zoé Vallée Library.

I am providing documents tonight and speaking to facts evidenced by FOIPOP records and public meetings. I ask that these documents, along with my statement, be entered into the written record, circulated to the Commission, reflected in the minutes, and included in next month's agenda package so they are readily accessible to the public.

First, an October 7, 2025 letter addressed to the Chair from South Shore Public Libraries was included in the Village Commission's RFP proposal for the Zoé Vallée Library. On October 10, after consulting with the SSPL Board, the author withdrew the letter and requested: "Please delete and destroy the earlier letter I sent you." The letter nevertheless remained in the proposal. [**VOC NOTE:** This is incorrect. See note on Attachment A.]

This raises a serious concern under section 6(1) of the Code of Conduct under the Municipal Government Act, which requires village commissioners to be truthful and forthright.

Second, in an internal Village Commission email dated November 28, 2025, the Chair wrote that Council had decided both RFP respondents must attend its December 11 meeting to make a public presentation. The same email states that a majority of MODC Council wanted that discussion to occur publicly before making its decision, showing that Council itself saw value in allowing that discussion to occur in public. It is therefore deeply concerning that no such public discussion took place, particularly given the Chair's email stating that the Commission's "only recourse" was to decline the public presentation and that avoiding that public forum was the "prime

directive.” This raises further concerns about fairness and transparency.

Under the transparency provisions of the Code of Conduct, village commissioners are required to be responsible for their decisions, accountable for their actions and outcomes, and to communicate information openly to the public.

Third, after residents spoke respectfully against moving Village offices into the library, the Chair said publicly and on the record, “I literally don’t care.” That remark is difficult to reconcile with the standards of professionalism, respect, and public responsibility expected of elected office.

Taken together, these records describe a pattern of decision-making and conduct in which the Chair played a direct and documented role.

You took oaths to uphold your offices. Those oaths are not ceremonial. They are meant to govern how power is exercised and how decisions affecting this village, its residents, and the use of their tax dollars are made. Public office does not give unlimited discretion to any one office-holder. It imposes duty. I will let the record stand as to whether your oaths have been honoured.

Thank you.

Attachment Index

Attachment A. South Shore Public Libraries letter dated October 7, 2025, as included in the Village Commission's RFP proposal for the Zoé Vallée Library, submitted to MODC and the Trustees on October 20, 2025.

Attachment B. Attachment Index to the Village Commission's RFP proposal, as submitted to MODC on October 20, 2025.

Attachment C. October 10, 2025 email from the author of the October 7, 2025 letter stating that SSPL did not see it as its role to weigh in on individual proposals and requesting: "Please delete and destroy the earlier letter I sent you."

Attachment D. Official South Shore Public Libraries letter to MODC stating that SSPL hoped to partner with whomever took over the library. The only letter sanctioned for use and signed by the SSPL Board for entry into the public record.

Attachment E. November 28, 2025 internal email regarding the Council decision and proposed public presentation, including the quoted passages referenced in this statement.

Attachment F. Source reference for the Village Commission Monthly Meeting of January 22, 2026, including timestamp 1:06:48 and the recorded remark: "I literally don't care."

Attachment G. Relevant excerpts from the Village Commission Code of Conduct, including section 6(1) and the general transparency provisions requiring commissioners to be responsible for the decisions they make, to be held accountable for their actions and outcomes, and to make every effort to accurately communicate information openly to the public.

Appendix 2

South Shore Public Libraries: Partnership Potential

DATE: October 7, 2025

TO: Geraldine Pauley; Heather McCallum

It was so nice meeting with you both yesterday. I'm really excited about the potential opportunity to provide SSPL services in the Zoe Valle.

Here are some figures for you to consider:

Our smallest branch (Greenfield) is open 10 hours a week, Liverpool 42, Lunenburg 49, and Bridgewater 56.

Our bookmobile serves New Ross, Barss Corner, and New Germany (combined) for 4.5 hours on Tuesdays, and Chester and Chester Basin for 6 hours on Wednesdays.

All of these branch and bookmobile hours are covered by the contributions from each municipal unit with which we have an agreement. More specifically, annual funding contributions for the 2025-26 fiscal year are:

Region of Queens	84,000
Municipality of Chester	85,700
Municipality of Lunenburg	199,700
Town of Bridgewater	66,500
Town of Lunenburg	18,600
Town of Mahone Bay	7,800

The Lunenburg Library branch, for example, is accounted for by the TOL contribution, as well as a portion of the MODL contribution, as each Town library branch serves residents of the surrounding areas (Riverport, Blockhouse, etc.). Same with the Bridgewater library, which serves residents of Hebbville, Wileville, Oak Ridges, etc.

To staff with one highly skilled, trained SSPL staff person, **each operational hour costs \$1,200 annually**. At the Zoe Valle, we could offer something along the lines of the following:

Two four-hour shifts per week (for example, 4-8 Tuesday evening and 10-2 Saturday morning, just as an example) for \$9,600/year in operational funding.

You can scale the hours from there, for example, if you wanted an additional morning, afternoon, Sunday hours, etc. of SSPL-provided staff.

We will investigate the possibility of a self-checkout machine to increase access outside these hours when Village staff are present; however, our Integrated Library System (i.e. the SSPL staff computer and the customer database program on it) are, legally, only available to SSPL staff (not Village staff or community volunteers). This is due to privacy agreements, licensing, and so on.

A.

We are proposing that the collection costs (purchasing, cataloguing, processing), circulation technology (barcode scanners, access to Same Page network of libraries, Libby eBooks and eAudiobooks), and programming costs would all come out of the existing SSPL operational budget.

Again, I'm so excited about the potential here and look forward to working with you [if awarded]!

Ashley

Ashley Nunn-Smith *(she/her)*
CEO & Chief Librarian
South Shore Public Libraries
Bridgewater, Nova Scotia



Contents

Proposal Submission Requirements

Page

Table of Contents	2
Vocabulary Notes	3
a) Cover Letter – Statement of Interest	4
b) Organizational Profile – History, Mission, Governance Structure	5
c) Experience and Capacity – Relevant Track Record	6
d) Governance Plan – Structure, Policies, Accountability	8
e) Operational Plan – Staffing, Volunteers, Programs, Services	10
f) Infrastructure & Compliance Plan – Safety and Code Measures	13
g) Financial Plan – Budget, Fundraising, Endowment Stewardship	14
h) Community Engagement Strategy – Stakeholder Involvement	17
i) Transition Plan – Handover from Current Trustees	18
j) References 1. Chester Municipal Heritage Society 2. Nateleen Zinck, Long-time ZVL Donor and Supporter 3. Jocelyn Cameron, Librarian and ZVL Volunteer	19
Appendices 1. VOC Budget Projection 2. South Shore Public Libraries: Partnership Potential	23

From: Ashley Nunn-Smith
To: Geraldine Pauley; Heather McCallum
Subject: Update on letter of support
Date: October 10, 2025 8:58:43 AM

Hi Geraldine,

In the spirit of full transparency, the SSPL Board held a Special Meeting yesterday afternoon. We are now aware of multiple proponents to the open Call for Proposals. Instead of supporting one proponent over another, the Board passed a motion to write a letter directly to MODC, supporting our desire for equitable, sustainable library service at the Zoe Valle and expressing our desire to partner/collaborate with whomever the successful proponent will be.

As a public library board, we feel it's not our role to weigh in on the value of the individual proposals themselves, but rather express our hope for vibrant library service and leave the decision-making entirely up to the MODC Council. I hope you understand our position on this.

You may still include in your proposal that you hope/plan to partner with SSPL, as our current letter draft is very clear that we hope to partner with whomever takes over the library (which is true). Please delete and destroy the earlier letter I sent you; as I mentioned, I got ahead of myself there. :-)

If you are the successful proponents, I look forward to working with you!

Sincerely,
Ashley

Ashley Nunn-Smith (*she/her*)
CEO & Chief Librarian
South Shore Public Libraries
Bridgewater, Nova Scotia



*My work hours may not be your work hours.
Please don't feel obligated to respond outside of your normal work day.*



Read. Discover. Learn. Share.

Library Administration
135 North Park Street, Unit B
Bridgewater, NS B4V 9B3

902-543-2548
info@ssplibraries.ca
southshorepubliclibraries.ca

October 10, 2025

To:

The Municipality of the District of Chester
151 King Street
P.O. Box 369
Chester, NS B0J 1J0

Re: Support for Accessible and Sustainable Library Service at the Zoe Vallé Library

Dear Members of Council,

South Shore Public Libraries (SSPL) appreciates the opportunity to express our strong support for the continued development of accessible, high-quality library service in the Chester area, particularly through the present Call for Proposals for the Zoe Vallé Memorial Library. The Municipality's leadership in undertaking this process demonstrates a genuine commitment to transparency, community engagement, and the long-term vitality of public services in the district.

As the regional library system serving Lunenburg and Queens Counties, SSPL is deeply committed to ensuring that all residents have equitable access to information, technology, lifelong learning, and community connection. Libraries are essential community infrastructure—places that promote literacy, bridge the digital divide, and provide welcoming, inclusive spaces for people of all ages and backgrounds. We believe that a vibrant, well-supported public library in Chester is vital to the cultural and social health of the community and complements our existing regional services, including the SSPL Bookmobile, which already serves many Chester residents and surrounding communities.

Our hope is that the future operation of the Zoe Vallé Library will embody the values at the heart of public library service: openness, collaboration, inclusion, and community-driven learning. A successful library in Chester should not only serve as a place to borrow books, but as a true hub for connection—where residents can learn new skills, access digital tools, attend programs, and feel a sense of belonging.

We also recognize the importance of sustainability in library service delivery. With provincial funding for public libraries remaining limited, it is increasingly important that we find creative,

efficient, and cooperative ways to deliver service. Sustainable library models depend on collaboration—between municipalities, community organizations, and the public library system—and, increasingly, even the business community and individual citizens. When all sectors share in the effort to support learning and connection, we strengthen local capacity, ensure resources are used responsibly, and build a truly equitable foundation for the future.

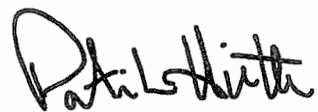
SSPL strongly supports approaches that balance fiscal responsibility with the need to maintain the high standards of access, inclusion, and quality that Nova Scotians expect from their public libraries. Our Board and management stand ready to collaborate with whichever organization is selected through this process. We are eager to explore partnerships that will strengthen local service delivery, share expertise and resources, and create a seamless connection between regional and local library services. Our team brings a deep understanding of community engagement, collection management, programming, and technology—expertise that we are committed to sharing in ways that support sustainable, equitable service for Chester residents.

We commend the Municipality for its thoughtful and transparent approach to planning the future of the Zoe Vallé Library. This process represents an opportunity to build a stronger, more resilient library network—one that reflects both the values and the aspirations of the community it serves. SSPL looks forward to supporting the successful proponent in creating an inspiring, welcoming, and enduring library space for all.

Sincerely,



Ashley Nunn-Smith
CEO & Chief Librarian
South Shore Public Libraries



Patrick Hirtle
Board Chair
South Shore Public Libraries

CC: Zoe Vallé Memorial Library Board of Trustees

E

E

From: Geraldine Pauley
To: Randy & Kathy O'Malley; Randall O'Malley; Laura Mulrooney; Tom Mulrooney (tj.mulrooney@gmail.com); Tom Mulrooney; Gloria Nauss
Cc: Heather McCallum; Gloria Nauss
Subject: Zoe Valle Library Setback
Date: November 28, 2025 5:13:49 PM

Hello, fellow Commissioners:

I titled this email a "setback," although if truth be told, it is probably a full stop. Although we have not officially been informed as yet, the Council decided during their in-camera session that both the Commission and the other RFP responder must come to Council at their next meeting on Dec. 11th to make a public presentation.

The basis for their thinking is not known at this time. Were there insufficient facts? If so, we will be happy to answer them in a private setting. I suspect the alternate group did some substantial lobbying, since a majority of the Council refused to decide between the RFPs without adding the public presentation.

However, to make a public presentation opposite a citizen group is to place the Commission in conflict with its own constituents, perhaps even to be perceived as a bully. It is one thing to make a business-like proposal in a confidential reply to a Request for Proposals. That is neutral ground, where facts are the only factor.

The public forum puts too many emotional factors into play. You can be sure that the other group will ensure a large contingent of supporters. We are an elected government, and it is entirely inappropriate for us to counter that with a "crowd" of our own. Again--the bully factor. We simply cannot put the Commission in a position where applause is more important than either facts or well-developed intentions for the future of ZVL.

I have thought about this very carefully. Our only recourse is to write to the Council and decline the invitation to make a public presentation. The following text is so raw that I cannot even call it a draft. It is just some word-smithing to give you all a heads-up about the situation and how I propose to reply. I welcome your thoughts, and especially your contrary opinions. There are five of us, and we need to reach a consensus we are all comfortable with on this important matter.

Preliminaries: thank you for your letter, etc. etc.

The Commission cannot, in all conscience, be seen to be in public conflict with what are, essentially, our own citizens. The Commission will gladly answer any questions the Council may have, should they be asked in committee or in camera, if it will help them make a

E

decision. However, it is entirely inappropriate for an elected government to seem to be in conflict with well-intentioned citizens.

We have to assume that the Council has carefully reviewed both RFP responses. Now they seem to have determined both responses have equal value for the stewardship of the Zoe Valle Library, and that both responders will be thoughtful, fiscally responsible, and loving guardians of the library's future role in our wider Chester community. Under these conclusions, it seems they have concluded that only a public presentation will help them make a decision.

The Commission considers it entirely inappropriate for an elected government to be a participant in this kind of public debate. The format in a public forum is one where emotions often overcome facts, and the Zoe Valle Library's future deserves careful and fact-based consideration. Therefore, we will leave it to the good judgment of the Council to make the correct choice of guardian for the library going forward.

Clearly, I need to work on this draft, but the "prime directive" is stated. Please give me your thoughts. We will likely need to reply on Monday.

I will be at the VIC at Station 20 on Sunday from 9:30 to 2:30, representing the Commission at the Christmas Wreath event. If you have time, do stop in for a talk about this and the lease--that subject is coming in a separate email.

Thanks everybody,
Geraldine

F. . . F

Village Commission of Chester, Nova Scotia Monthly
Meeting January 22, 2026

YOUTUBE [https://www.youtube.com/live/qpxs4Ejpl_U?
si=_ikCZlMr5RzeRvQm](https://www.youtube.com/live/qpxs4Ejpl_U?si=_ikCZlMr5RzeRvQm)

Time stamp 1:06:48

9

Collegiality: village commissioners must work together to further the best interests of the village in an honest and honourable way.

Respect: village commissioners must demonstrate respect towards one another, the democratic decision-making process and the role of staff. Village commissioners must not act in a manner that negatively impacts the village or tarnishes the village's reputation.

Integrity: village commissioners must act lawfully and adhere to strong ethical principles by prioritizing the village's interests over individual interests.

Professionalism: village commissioners must create and maintain an environment that is respectful and free from all forms of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. Village commissioners must show consideration for every person's values, beliefs and contributions, and support and encourage others to participate in commission activities.

Transparency: village commissioners must be truthful and open about their decisions and actions and make every effort to accurately communicate information openly to the public.

Responsibility: village commissioners are responsible for the decisions that they make and must be held accountable for their actions and outcomes. Village commissioners must demonstrate awareness of their own conduct and consider how their words or actions may be perceived as offensive or demeaning.

General conduct

6 (1) A village commissioner must be truthful and forthright and not deceive or knowingly mislead the commission, the clerk and treasurer, staff or the public.

(2) A village commissioner must show respect for chairs of commission meetings, chairs of committee meetings, colleagues, staff and members of the public that present during commission meetings or other meetings of the village.



REQUEST FOR DECISION

Report to: Village of Chester Commission
Date: March 13, 2025
From: Chester Fire Services Committee
Subject: 2026/27 Fire & Emergency Services Final Draft (v.5) – for Approval

SUMMARY

The Chester Fire Services Committee (CFSC)'s final draft 2026/27 Fire & Emergency Services Budget (v.5) is attached for the consideration and approval of the Village Commission.

BACKGROUND

The previous working draft (v. 3) and proposed tax rate was presented at the Committee's Annual General Meeting. This was held on Thursday, February 12, 2026 for the ratepayers of the Chester Volunteer Fire Department's service area in Districts 3, 7, and part of 1. Several members of Municipal Council and the Village Commission were in attendance at the meeting. The same draft was provided for information to Council and the Commission in advance of the AGM.

An updated draft was approved by the CFSC at their Monthly Meeting of March 11, 2026.

At time of writing, the CFSC's Treasurer is scheduled to walk through the budget document and answer any questions for the Village Commission on March 18, 2026 and for Municipal Council on March 26, 2026.

With regard to the New Fire Station capital project, this is currently in Phase 2 Final Design, which is anticipated to be completed in Summer 2026. Tenders for the Phase 3 Build are scheduled to be issued in September 2026.

Therefore, the CFSC will be back in late Spring (tentatively scheduled for May) with an ask to approve and guarantee borrowing for a capital loan for the build costs and payment plan. The build estimate is TBD at this time. A Class B estimate is scheduled to be available in May, with the final Class A estimate at the end of the Phase in summer. Municipal Affairs is being kept informed on the CFSC's planning.

OBLIGATIONS

Under the provisions of the Intermunicipal Fire Services Agreement 2022, the following timeline is required for the budget – see excerpts below:

- Clause 16: “An annual meeting of the electors shall be held by the Committee before February 15 each year.”
- Clause 18: “The Committee members shall, at the annual meeting of electors, present a report of the proceedings of the preceding fiscal year, the proposed operating and capital budgets.”
- Clause 31: “On or before the 15th day of February, each and every year, the Committee shall forward the draft Operating and Capital Budget to both the Village and Municipality for their consideration and approval.”
- **Clause 32: “The Municipality and the Village shall have until the 1st day of April in each and every year to review, discuss and approve the Operating and Capital budgets as presented, or as amended by them.”**

DRAFT MOTION

That the Village of Chester Commission approves the Chester Fire Services Committee’s 2026/27 Fire & Emergency Services Budget and its proposed fire tax rate of 0.1340 per \$100 of assessment.

ATTACHMENTS

- 2026/27 CFSC Fire & Emergency Services Draft Budget (v.5 | March 13, 2026)



	Budget 2026/27 (Fire rate 0.1340)	Index	Description
REVENUE			
PROPERTY TAX & OTHER REVENUE	1,618,455	p. 2	Allocation: Operations \$541,926 / Capital \$1,076,529.
TRANSFER FROM BUILDING RESERVE	100,000	p. 5	Unspent 2025/26 loan re-payments budget.
FIRE STATION PROJECT LOAN	985,978	p. 5	Remainder of Phase 2 Design capital loan \$1.3M; Phase 3 Build is TBD.
TOTAL REVENUE	\$2,704,433		
EXPENSES			
OPERATIONS EXPENSES	541,926	p. 2	Operations + Operating Reserve \$TBD (previous year's surplus)
CAPITAL EXPENSES & RESERVES	1,109,905	p. 5	Capital + Capital Reserves \$650,000
NEW FIRE STATION PROJECT	985,978	p. 5	Remainder of Phase 2 Design consultants \$1.3M; Phase 3 Build is TBD.
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,637,809		

BUDGET NOTES p. 7

COLOUR KEY

* Items in **BLUE TEXT** are to highlight the New Fire Station capital loan and the project costs it directly funds.

Chester Fire Services Committee
2026-27 Fire & Emergency Services Budget - OPERATIONS
DRAFT v.5 | March 13, 2026

		<i>YTD Actual to Feb 28th (8.33% remaining)</i>	<i>Budget 2025/26 (Fire rate 0.1140)</i>	<i>Budget 2026/27 (Fire rate 0.1340)</i>	
<u>OPERATIONS BUDGET REVENUE</u>					
	Property Tax Revenue				1.01
4110	Village Fire Tax	617,058	615,337	784,012	
4120	Outside Area Fire Tax	665,448	663,990	834,442	
	Subtotal Property Tax Revenue	1,282,506	1,279,327	1,618,455	1.02
	Other Revenue				
4640	CVFD Extraordinary Revenue	0	0	0	
	Total Other Revenue	0	0	0	
	TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE	\$1,282,506	\$1,279,327	\$1,618,455	
<u>OPERATING EXPENSES DETAILS</u>					
	OPERATIONS				
	Administration				
5011	Mgmt & Admin - Fees	22,624	38,200	39,130	1.03
5012	Mgmt & Admin - Overhead	3,741	6,000	5,000	1.04
5013	CFSC Committee - Overhead	421	5,000	5,000	
5020	Audit Fees	5,193	5,000	5,200	
5021	Legal Fees	2,890	2,000	4,000	
5022	Liability Insurance	8,650	8,650	9,515	1.05
5023	Bank Charges	283	500	500	
5024	Business Fees & Licences	66	100	100	
5031	Annual General Meeting (Feb)	262	550	550	
5032	Advertising	340	2,000	2,000	
5035	Office Supplies	3,267	3,500	4,500	1.06
	Administration Total	47,737	71,500	75,495	
	Firefighting Force				
5110	Firefighters Honorarium	50,000	50,000	50,000	
5120	In Lieu of Fundraising	15,000	15,000	15,000	
5130	Uniforms	4,048	3,000	5,000	
5150	24hr Firefighter Accident Insurance	8,137	8,500	8,500	
5151	24hr Family Insurance	6,475	6,500	6,500	
5152	EAP Program	1,944	4,000	4,000	
5160	Annual Firefighters Banquet	0	2,500	2,500	
	Firefighting Force Total	85,605	89,500	91,500	
	Training & Education				
5210	Training	18,508	30,000	30,000	
5220	Fire Prevention & Education	3,443	5,000	5,000	
5230	Chief's Conference	0	2,500	2,500	
5240	CVFD Bursary	2,000	2,000	3,000	
	Training & Education Total	23,951	39,500	40,500	

		<u>YTD Actual</u> to Feb 28th (8.33% remaining)	Budget 2025/26 (Fire rate 0.1140)	Budget 2026/27 (Fire rate 0.1340)	
Firefighting Equipment					
5310	Medical Supplies	949	2,000	2,000	
5320	Tools & Equipment	6,446	7,500	10,000	
5321	Hoses	11,217	1,000	1,000	
5330	Flashlights/Camera/Batteries	0	1,000	1,000	
5340	SCBA Masks	0	2,000	2,000	
5350	CVFD Vehicle Insurance	14,914	14,975	16,425	1.07
Firefighting Equipment Total		33,527	28,475	32,425	
Personal Protective Equipment					
5360	General PPE	16,022	30,000	30,000	
5380	Bunker Gear	0	30,000	30,000	1.08
Personal Protective Equipment Total		16,022	60,000	60,000	
Communication					
5410	Communication Contract (Radios)	5,114	5,000	5,000	
5420	Communications General Repair	0	1,000	1,000	
5430	Communications Upgrades	49,769	52,000	25,000	1.09
5440	Mobile Radio Service Plan	374	1,500	500	1.10
Communication Total		55,257	59,500	31,500	
Maintenance					
5510	Apparatus Pump Test	527	0	1,500	
5515	Small Engine Maintenance	1,224	500	1,500	
5520	Extinguisher Maintenance	83	850	1,000	
5525	SCBA Fill Station Maintenance	3,027	8,250	8,250	
5530	Bunker Gear Inspection & Repair	6,301	5,000	5,000	
5535	Ladder/Harness Inspections	1,730	1,200	1,200	
5540	Jaws of Life	1,464	1,500	1,500	
5565	Total Vehicle Fuel Expense	6,671	8,000	11,200	1.11
5590	Total Vehicle Maintenance	63,046	30,000	50,000	
Maintenance Total		84,073	55,300	79,650	
Fire Station Building					
5710	Telephone & Alarm	9,247	11,500	11,500	
5715	Building Utilities	16,666	15,000	15,000	
5720	Taxes & Collection Fee - 4070 Hwy 3	28	2,000		1.12
5725	Fire Station Janitorial	6,158	6,600	6,855	
5730	Fire Station Maintenance	15,212	15,000	50,000	1.13
5735	Fire Station Insurance	18,875	21,800	21,000	1.14
5740	Consumables	1,159	4,500	4,500	
5745	Storm Event Supplies & Rentals	0	2,500	2,500	
5750	Waste Removal (Dumpster)	5,825	7,085	8,000	1.15
Building & General Total		73,170	85,985	119,356	
Fire Boat					
5650	Inshore Boat Equipment	76	1,500	1,500	
NEW	Municipal Water Rescue Small Boat Program			10,000	1.16
Fire Boat Total		76	1,500	11,500	
SUBTOTAL OPERATING		\$419,418	\$491,260	\$541,926	

	<i>YTD Actual to Feb 28th (8.33% remaining)</i>	<i>Budget 2025/26 (Fire rate 0.1140)</i>	<i>Budget 2026/27 (Fire rate 0.1340)</i>	
OPERATING RESERVE (Planned)				1.17
Emergency Operating Reserve Deposit	82,000	TBD	TBD	1.18
Reserves Total	82,000	TBD	TBD	
SUBTOTAL RESERVES	\$82,000	\$0	\$0	
CAPITAL ALLOCATION				
Property Tax Revenue - Allocation to Capital			1,076,529	1.19
Capital Allocation Total			1,076,529	
SUBTOTAL CAPITOL ALLOCATION			\$1,076,529	
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$501,418	\$491,260	\$1,618,455	
DIFFERENCE (+surplus or -deficit)				0 1.20

Chester Fire Services Committee
2026-27 Fire & Emergency Services Budget - CAPITAL
DRAFT v.5 | March 13, 2026

		YTD Actual to Feb 28th (8.33% remaining)	Budget 2025/26 (Fire rate 0.1140)	Budget 2026/27 (Fire rate 0.1340)	
<u>CAPITAL BUDGET REVENUE</u>					
Property Tax Allocation					
	Area Fire Tax - Allocation for Capital			1,076,529	2.01
	Transfer from Building Reserve			100,000	2.02
	Total Property Tax Revenue			1,176,529	2.03
Capital Loans (New Station Project)					
4670	Capital Fire Station Phase 2 Design Funding	314,022	1,300,000	985,978	2.04
NEW	Capital Fire Station Phase 3 Build Funding			TBD	2.05
	Total Capital Loans	314,022	1,300,000	985,978	
TOTAL CAPITAL REVENUE		\$314,022	\$1,300,000	\$2,162,507	
<u>CAPITAL EXPENSES DETAILS</u>					
CAPITAL EQUIPMENT					
NEW	Thermal Imaging Cameras			18,000	2.06
5817	Existing Fire Station Repairs	5,231	31,260		2.07
5826	Solid Bore Nozzles	8,000	8,000		2.08
5870	Vehicle Purchase: 541 (Deposit)	0	100,000	200,000	2.09
	Capital Equipment Total	13,231	139,260	218,000	
NEW STATION PROJECT					
5810	Capital Project Consultants - New Station Design	314,022	1,300,000	985,978	2.10
NEW	Capital Project Build - New Station			TBD	2.11
5811	Loan Repayments - New Station	0	100,000	200,000	2.12
5815	Other Fees/Consultants - New Station	17,058	30,000	30,000	2.13
5816	Administration - New Station	6,364	14,650	11,905	2.14
	New Station Project Total	337,444	1,444,650	1,227,883	
CAPITAL RESERVES (Planned)					2.15
5920	Fire Apparatus Reserve Deposit	300,000	300,000	350,000	
5930	Building Reserve Deposit	200,000	200,000	300,000	
	Reserves Total	500,000	500,000	650,000	
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENSES		\$850,676	\$2,083,910	\$2,095,883	
DIFFERENCE (+surplus or -deficit)				66,624	2.16

OPERATING BUDGET NOTES

- 1.01 Updated figures: Based on actual 2025 assessment estimate from MODC x \$0.02 higher fire rate.
- 1.02 Tax Revenue allocation: Operations \$541,926 / Capital \$1,076,529. See note 1.16.
- 1.03 2026 Village staff costs (25% management & 50% admin assistant salaries).
- 1.04 Based on 25% of rent allocation for 27 Pleasant St re: meeting space, files, equipment, etc.; to be re-evaluated next fiscal due to Village office move.
- 1.05 Actual 2025 insurance cost x 10%.
- 1.06 Increased to reflect annual office equipment purchases.
- 1.07 Actual 2025 insurance cost x 10%.
- 1.08 These items have been ordered in 2025/26 but will not be invoiced until 2026/27.
- 1.09 The method of broadcast needs to be assessed and repaired/replaced (may or may not be radio tower).
- 1.10 Reduced because TMR (trunk mobile radio) now coordinated and paid for by Province.
- 1.11 Increased fuel costs by 40% due to international situation impact on gas prices.
- 1.12 Removed because fire departments no longer pay property tax as of 2025.
- 1.13 Separate Capital line item 5817 is removed and consolidated here. Includes a placeholder for exterior painting.
- 1.14 Fire station building insurance \$2,544.38 to come from Village (per Intermunicipal Agreement). Actual 2025 insurance cost x 10%.
- 1.15 Quoted cost of \$453.08/month + fuel surcharge (currently 35.02% but is variable) + HST. Includes 5% contingency.
- 1.16 Placeholder for CVFD's share of the new annual \$44K cost for the new Municipality-wide Water Rescue Small Boat Program.
- 1.17 Per CFSC's Reserves & Investment Policy.
- 1.18 Budget surplus from previous year is transferred to the Operating Reserve (not a budget cost for current year). Municipal Finance recommends this reserve account hold at least 20% of Operating budget, and the CFSC meets this threshold.
- 1.19 Captures the amount of property tax revenue allocated to the Capital Budget, with Operating Budget balanced.
- 1.20 Surplus/deficit for entire budget shown here. Subject to change through fiscal year.

CAPITAL BUDGET NOTES

- 2.01 Updated figures: Based on actual 2025 assessment estimate from MODC x \$0.02 higher fire rate.
- 2.02 Allocation of tax revenue funds to Capital Budget, after Operations Budget is balanced.
- 2.03 In 2025-26, \$100K was allocated for loan payments which was unspent. The funds went into the Building Reserve, for use in the 2026-27 Capital Budget for the same purpose (loan payments).
- 2.04 Tax Revenue allocation: Operations \$541,926 / Capital \$1,076,529. See note 1.16.
- 2.05 Figures include full 14% HST. The unspent portion of the Phase 2 loan of \$1.3M - no draw-downs required in 2025/26. Draw downs are in installments of min. \$100K.
- 2.06 The figure needed for the Phase 3 Build is unknown until near the end of Phase 2 Design, i.e., the amount of loan required. The Phase 2 loan matures the end of July 2026. (The Phase 2 loan debt to be combined with Phase 3 loan when the time comes.) Phase 3 loan approval package to be prepared for MODC & VOC partners and Minister in May, using Class B cost estimate. Note that there is a FIRM ceiling of no more than \$20M for the entire project.

- 2.07 New capital project under consideration for thermal imaging cameras.
- 2.08 Separate Capital line item is removed and consolidated with Operations line item 5730.
- 2.09 10% of anticipated \$2M cost for a new truck with a two-year timeline. Request for Proposals has not yet been issued. If the successful applicant does not require a deposit, this will go to the Apparatus Reserve.
- 2.10 Phase 2 total consultant costs for Design & Project Management is (\$1,406,175). The extra \$106,175 in PM fees will be captured in the Phase 3 budget.
- 2.11 See note 2.06. Includes project management fees of \$106,175 (Phase 2) and \$254,804 (Phase 3).
- 2.12 Loan payments (interest only) commence with first draw-down, which is pending and may or may not arrive by end of 2025/26. 2026/27 cost based on estimates from the lender. Partially funded from the 2025/26 budget via the Building Reserve (see note 2.03).
- 2.13 Includes costs for communications (website and social media), surveying, land transfer and legal fees, etc.
- 2.14 2026 Village staff management costs (15% of salary). Last year included funds for CVFD bookkeeping for donations, but was not required. Village staff handled donation logistics.
- 2.15 Per CFSC's Reserves & Investment Policy.
- 2.16 Subject to change through fiscal year.

Schedule 6.1

Letter from Honorable Minister Kim Masland - February 19, 2026

Hello,

Over the past year, we have taken an honest look at the state of fire services across Nova Scotia. We asked firefighters, chiefs, and fire service coordinators what's working, what isn't, and what needs to change; and they answered.

Through the value-for-money audit of the Nova Scotia Firefighters School, and through the Fire Service Association of Nova Scotia's (FSANS) governance review, we heard consistent concerns: governance and safety gaps, the need for safer and more consistent training, aging infrastructure and equipment, regional inconsistencies, and the growing complexity of emergency response. We also heard about the strain these pressures place on both volunteer and career firefighters.

We are now engaging with fire chiefs, deputy chiefs, fire service coordinators, and municipal leaders to determine how best to implement the recommendations from the FSANS report.

Our goal is to ensure that any changes work in practice, not just on paper. Implementation will take place over three years, in phases that are achievable and sustainable. These changes are intended to strengthen, not disrupt, the vital services you provide.

There are many misconceptions about what the modernization of fire services in the province will entail. Attached to this letter are some Q&As that address the misinformation we've heard, in addition to general questions and answers about what we are working towards. The Q&A can be found by clicking the following link: [\[Attached\]](#)

There is a valued role for every volunteer firefighter in the province. Our goal is to establish standards that support the full range of responsibilities required at an emergency, recognizing the important contributions of interior, exterior, and support firefighters alike.

We recognize the complexity of this transition and the many factors that must be considered. That is precisely why we are taking a measured, multi-year approach.

This represents a significant shift, but it is a necessary one to ensure everyone in Nova Scotia receives consistent fire services. The objective is clear: a stronger fire service that better supports firefighters, modernizes infrastructure, and improves service to the public.

Meaningful change of this scale requires planning and collaboration. That is why your continued input is essential. We look forward to continuing to work with fire services and municipalities through the transition to create a new model for fire services in Nova Scotia. I encourage you to provide your feedback to your FSANS Director, to ensure your voice is heard.

Thank you,
Kim Masland

Fire Services Modernization Q&As

WHY MODERNIZATION IS NEEDED

Q: Why are you making all these changes?

- Over the past year, we've taken a hard, honest look at the state of fire services across the province.
- These changes reflect the recommendations coming out of the Fire Service Association of Nova Scotia's (FSANS) governance review last year.
- Firefighters told us loud and clear what's working, what's not, and what needs to change. They want:
 - Better governance
 - Safe training
 - Standardized services.
- For far too long, the sector has been struggling under a patchwork of funding, governance arrangements with municipalities, and service levels around the province have been inconsistent.
- So, we're tackling it head on, by working *with* the fire service sector and municipalities.
- Over the last few months, our staff have met with over 300 fire chiefs and deputy chiefs, municipalities, fire service coordinators, and fire commission leaders to figure out how to implement the 40 recommendations from the recent FSANS report.
- Together with the sector, we'll build a sustainable, effective and safe sector for our firefighters.

Q: Did you consult with firefighters on these changes?

- Yes, in 2025, firefighters told the Fire Service Association of Nova Scotia exactly what they needed in the governance review.
- There was also a value-for-money audit of the Nova Scotia Firefighters Training School, which also revealed governance and safety issues.
- In September 2025, the Department of Municipal Affairs introduced legislation that put the framework in place to have the Fire Modernization Act in place by September 2026.
- In January of this year, we began extensive engagement sessions with fire chiefs, deputy fire chiefs, fire commissioners, fire service coordinators and municipal CAOs across the province to figure out how to implement the recommendations coming out of that FSANS report.
- As of now, we have held over 13 sessions with participation from more than 300 participants across the Province.

Q: How much will this cost?

- Work is underway to estimate what the transition to a new model of governance for fire services and a new approach to training will cost over three years.

Q: Will municipalities have to pay for this transition?

- At least 50% of municipalities (25) already provide fire services.
- For those that don't there will be a period of support to help fire departments and municipalities with the governance, legal and financial transition.
- Changes will happen in a phased approach over the next three fiscal years, giving municipalities time to prepare for the full implementation by January 1, 2029.

Q: When will these changes be implemented?

- We know this change will take time.
- Changes will happen in a phased approach over the next three fiscal years, with full implementation by January 1, 2029.

Q: What were the results of the value-for-money audit of the Nova Scotia Firefighters School?

- The findings of the report were troubling.
- They show a consistent failure to uphold a culture of safety, and serious, unaddressed safety-related deficiencies.
- The report also identified a dysfunctional governance structure, outdated bylaws, non-existent committees, lack of strategic planning and a decline in infrastructure.
- As a result, the Province cut ties with the training school, and established the Fire Training Advisory Committee, which is tasked with building out standardized training for firefighters across the province.

Q: What were the results of the broader fire services review by FSANS?

- There were common themes noted across the province.
- They were:
 - Sustainable funding models
 - Standardized and accessible training
 - Improved recruitment and retention supports
 - Clearer governance structures
 - Consistent and coordinated dispatch systems
 - Enhanced health and safety measures
 - Equitable access to equipment and infrastructure
 - Defined levels of service based on risk assessments
 - Stronger interoperability and mutual aid arrangements
 - Sustainable approaches to medical first response.

Q: Who contributed to the fire services review?

- FSANS can speak to the details of who helped inform the review, but we know that hundreds of firefighters and fire service leaders participated in the process.
- In their final report, FSANS reported that the recommendations were based on conversations with hundreds of firefighters at 30 in-person meetings and 400 responses to a consultation survey.
- NSFM and AMANS also provided feedback on behalf of their members.

Q: What is the goal of these changes?

- The commitment of all partners is to ensure that:
 - Nova Scotians are adequately protected from fire risks through access to high-quality municipally led fire protection services no matter where they live
 - Firefighters are shown the respect they deserve by ensuring they have equipment and training they need to stay safe
- The Legislation being introduced in the House creates the Office of the Fire Commissioner, rolls out regional firefighter training, and supports fire departments and municipalities to transition to a new fire services structure.

GOVERNANCE

Q: What would an Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC) be responsible for?

- An OFC was one of the recommendations coming out of the FSANS report.
- The feedback received by FSANS in its report imagines the OFC to be responsible for investigations and compliance along with the Fire Marshal, training and certification, and municipal relations, policy and legislation.
- The OFC could also oversee all aspects of fire safety and services and provide clear, consistent direction to municipalities and all fire service stakeholders through standards and regulations.
- It could also lead the development of a new training model that provides accountability, oversight, and equitable access to training resources and professional certification.

Q: What would a new governance model look like?

- A new model could see a single model of governance for fire services that is municipally led, with new levels of support and oversight from the Province.
- In a model like this, all municipal units including regional and rural municipalities, towns and villages would be required to provide fire services.
- They would have the ability to provide these services either directly, through mutual aid, or through services agreements and regional collaboration.
- A provincial Office of the Fire Commissioner would provide province-wide oversight.
- The Office would engage subject matter experts and key organizations as needed, rather than through standing committees.

Q: What will happen to fire service entities, like commissions, brigades and associations?

- FSANS told us that there is a lot of fragmentation in the governance of fire services.
- In the recommendations, existing fire service entities (such as Commissions) and statutory fire safety committees will be dissolved over a three-year period and integrate into municipal operations.
- Fire service entities, like commissions, brigades and associations play an important role in supporting local fire service delivery through local knowledge and good relationships.

- We have committed to bring Fire Commissions, Fire Safety Committees and municipalities together during the transition period to work out what role the Commissions and Committees can play in the new municipal model.

Q: Will village fire departments be required to integrate into a larger municipal unit?

- No, because villages are considered to be a municipal unit under the Municipal Government Act.
- If a village commission decides to provide fire services to residents, they can do so, or they can partner with other municipal units.

Q: Will the new model impact everyone in the same way?

- No, for at least 25 municipalities that currently provide fire services directly to their residents, this modernization process will have moderate impacts.
- There will be many positive benefits including greater clarity and collaboration, better access to safe, high-quality training for firefighters, and more consistent services to Nova Scotians regardless of where they live.

Q: Do these amendments affect DNR's wildland firefighters?

- No. These amendments only affect volunteer and career firefighters.

Q: Who will be the most affected by these amendments?

- This will mostly affect those fire departments or commissions who are not currently tied to their municipality. This includes societies, associations, brigades and commissions.
- Of the **275** fire service entities in the province, at least 17 municipalities do not directly provide fire services to residents which means that commissions and associations are currently providing those services on a volunteer basis for Nova Scotians.
- These municipalities are:

Name
Annapolis Royal
Clark's Harbour
Kentville
Lockeport
Annapolis
Antigonish
Chester
Clare
Digby
East Hants
Inverness
Pictou

Richmond
Shelburne
St. Mary's
Victoria
Yarmouth

Q: How would new fire protection service standards be enforced? What would happen if a municipality doesn't meet standards?

- The focus would always be on collaboration, support and continuous improvement.
- The province would work with municipalities to help them set levels of service, and help them understand what standards they need to meet and the levels of training required for firefighters.
- Municipalities would be given time, guidance and tools to meet new standards through a phased implementation.

Q: What do you say to Commissions or fire departments who do not want to undergo such drastic changes?

- We know that change is difficult, and we know that it will not happen overnight.
- We are working to address long-standing challenges that are impacting residents, especially those living in rural areas.
- This will be a phased approach, with a transition period of about three years.
- That timeline is intentional.
- Meaningful change – especially change of this scale – requires planning and collaboration.
- We understand that this is a significant shift. But it's a necessary one to ensure that Nova Scotians, no matter where in the province they live, know that they will receive the same minimum levels of service from their fire department.

IMPACT ON MUNICIPALITIES

Q: How will the legislation affect municipalities?

- A legislated responsibility to provide a service can be considered a public law duty to the residents.
- To provide protections to the municipalities ahead of the January 1, 2029 transition, the FMA will propose provisions to limit municipal liability for an act, omission, or failure to provide a fire protection service if it meets provincially set fire service standards.
- Further protections can be provided to prohibit actions against a municipality mandated to provide fire protection service for a grossly negligent action of employee or volunteer firefighters.

Q: What role will municipal councils play in the new model? Will Fire Chiefs report directly to municipal council?

- Municipal council would play an important role in the new model.
- Council will be the decision-makers on fire service levels.
- Councils do not have to be experts in fire protection services. As with other areas of municipal jurisdiction, council will receive evidence-based advice from municipal staff and fire chiefs to help inform their decisions.
- CAOs may appoint a municipal fire chief or a fire services coordinator to work with a fire department in their area.

Q: How will these changes impact municipal taxpayers and fire rate payers (for rural areas where services are not provided by a municipality)?

- No decisions on taxation or rate payers have been made.
- Municipal taxation is the responsibility of municipalities, and the province will not be making any decisions on this.
- Municipalities will have three years to assess the financial implications of the change and to come up with solutions that work well for their residents.

IMPACT ON FIRE DEPARTMENTS AND FIRE FIGHTERS

Q: Will training standards be set so high that we lose volunteers?

- There is a role for everyone in Nova Scotia's fire services
- The FSANS Standards Committee is actively working on developing policies for minimum standards for the Nova Scotia Fire Service. See their work here: <https://www.fsans.ns.ca/documents-forms/standards>
- FSANS advocates for Firefighter service levels in structural firefighting:
 - Exterior (Defensive) Firefighter
 - Interior (Offensive) Firefighter
 - Support/Other Roles
 - These levels determine the risk, training requirements, and equipment allowed for firefighters at a scene.
- The new regional training model will ensure that firefighters can access training to achieve the level they desire, close to home and delivered in a hybrid environment through on-line classes for appropriate sections of the curriculum.
- Firefighters will be engaged in standardizing the colour code for the service level tags.

Q: Will these changes result in job losses, given disparate fire departments will cease to exist?

- The three year transition period will help us work together to implement a plan where there is a role for everyone in the new model.

Q: Will municipalities take the equipment that we fund-raised for and re-distribute it?

- No. There is no intention of putting all equipment on the table and re-distributing it.
- Equipment that belongs to the fire department will be grandfathered. New equipment moving forward will belong to the municipality.

- Having said that, many firefighters have identified that there is an unevenness in access to equipment across the fire service, with many departments driving end-of-life trucks and apparatus while others have new trucks and equipment. They have suggested many ways to work together to address these disparities including re-homing equipment. These opportunities will be worked out through the transition period.

Q: Will we lose our financial assets?

- There is no intention of asking fire departments to turn over financial assets.
- Fire departments have fund-raised and saved for equipment and structures. These assets will remain with the fire departments with the understanding that they support fire services in their area.
- Transitioning to a new municipally led fire service, will build on these assets as a foundation for the future.

Q: Will we still have to fund-raise for equipment and buildings?

- We have heard from many fire fighters that they are tired of having to fund raise for breathing apparatus and bunker gear.
- Bingos, Chase the Ace and other fund raisers take time and there is a dwindling number of volunteers to do the work.
- Provincial standards for equipment and training will ensure that in municipally led fire services, fund-raising for a set standard of equipment will no longer be required.
- Having said that, firefighters are unanimous in wanting the 50/50 and other forms of fundraising to stay in place.

Q: Will departments still be able to fundraise for other things?

- Yes.
- Municipally-led fire departments will be able to fundraise for 'extras', and for community-based needs and requirements.
- However, fundraising for standard equipment for safety and training will no longer be needed.

Q: Volunteer firefighters and GSAR members often have difficulty being released from their regular duties to act in their volunteer roles. How will this new fire services model help?

- We value our volunteer firefighters and GSAR members and have heard about this issue from them.
- We are currently looking at how this is being addressed in other jurisdictions and will work with other departments such as Labour, Skills, and Immigration to explore options.

CERTIFICATION / TRAINING

Q. Will legislation require all firefighters in Nova Scotia to be Level 1 certified?

- We continue to work with the fire service across Nova Scotia to ensure the legislation and standards are achievable across the province.
- Our objective is to ensure standard baseline.

- Achieving Level 1 certification will be a choice for individual firefighters to make, but it will not be a requirement.
- We want to be clear that there is place for every volunteer firefighter in the province.
- Firefighters in exterior or support positions may opt to only complete the required components of Level 1 training, as defined by their role.
- In developing new Training and Certification Standards, the Province will ensure that a variety of training options are provided in alignment with the roles that volunteers want to play.

Q. Will there be one central fire training school in the province?

- Through the FSANS report, it was recommended that training centres be established regionally so firefighters can train locally and avoid excessive travel.
- We will work toward a hub-and-spoke model for a central training facility for higher-level firefighter training and Incident Command training, with more basic training being offered locally, as recommended by the FSANS report.

Schedule 6.2

From: CAO on behalf of [Nick Ruder](#)
To: cao@municipal-website-venture.com
Subject: **[CAO] New FOIPOP Act (Bill 150) - Regulations Engagement**
Date: March 3, 2026 3:33:44 PM
Attachments: [NewFOIPOP-RegConsultations 2026-03-25.pdf](#)

Good afternoon everyone,

Service Nova Scotia is in the process of creating regulations for the new Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPOP) Act which will come into force on April 1, 2027. They have scheduled an engagement session for Wednesday, March 25, 2026 from 10am to 12pm with CAOs and/or staff who may specialize in access to information/privacy.

The session is seeking input on key areas of regulation development. See attached deck for more background.

If you or your staff are unable to attend but have feedback you'd wish to provide, you can provide written input by March 31 to Becky Thomson, Director, IAP Services, Service Nova Scotia at rebecca.thomson@novascotia.ca. If you have already been invited to a similar session in another capacity, please choose the session that is most convenient for you.

I will shortly send you the Teams invite for March 25. Please add to your calendar or share with your appropriate staff person that should attend the session.

Thanks,

Nick



Nick Ruder
Senior Policy Advisor

Association of Municipal Administrators, NS
nruder@amans.ca | (902) 423-2215 x6
1 Kingswood Drive, Suite 211
Hammonds Plains, NS B4B 0P4
amans.ca

A new FOIPOP Act – Regulations Engagement

MARCH 25, 2026

Background

- ▶ Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPOP) has undergone its first major update in 25 years
- ▶ Comes into force April 1, 2027, consolidating PIIDPA, PRO, MGA Part XX and FOIPOP into one modern Act
- ▶ Regulation authority in new Act will provide further details on requirements (work is underway)
- ▶ Engagement efforts on the Acts themselves were undertaken with public, public bodies, municipalities in 2023
- ▶ Today's engagement aims to gather input on key areas for regulation development

Regulations – Key Areas

1. Common or integrated programs
2. Data linking and data-linking programs
3. Access and storage outside of Canada
4. Privacy assessment requirements
5. Privacy policy requirements
6. Privacy breach notifications
7. Access regulations

Common or integrated programs

a program or activity that

- a. Provides one or more services through
 - i. A public body and one or more other public bodies or partner agencies, working collaboratively, or
 - ii. One public body working on behalf of one or more other public bodies or partner agencies; and
- b. Is confirmed, in the manner provided by the regulations, as being a common or integrated program or activity;

- ▶ Do you have programs within your organization today that need to share PI across them to provide services? Or outside your organization?
- ▶ What challenges do you face today with information sharing in this situation that you hope the new Act and regulations will help alleviate?
- ▶ Will the provision to have common or integrated programs help to address this?
- ▶ Should they be confirmed as a common or integrated program in a written agreement? Anything that should or should not be in that agreement?
- ▶ What guidance would you like to see in regulations? In supporting materials?

Data-linking/data-linking programs

"data linking" means the linking, temporarily or permanently, of two or more data sets through the use of one or more common keys;

"data linking program" means a program of a public body that involves data linking where at least one data set in the custody or under the control of a public body is linked with a data set in the custody or under the control of one or more other public bodies or partner agencies without the consent of the individuals whose personal information is contained in the data set;"

s. 77 A public body conducting a data-linking program shall comply with the regulations, if any, made for the purposes of this Section.

- ▶ What is your experience with data-linking and data-linking programs? Or data requests or usage?
- ▶ What are you hoping the regs will do/not do?
- ▶ What do you think should be required (e.g., written agreement, security measures, governance structures)?
- ▶ Any other guidance you would like to see in regulations? In supporting materials?

Access/storage outside of Canada

s. 76 A public body may not
 (a) disclose personal information outside of Canada;
 (b) store personal information outside of Canada; or
 (c) permit personal information in its custody or under its control to be accessed from outside of Canada, unless the disclosure, storage or access is in accordance with the regulations.

- ▶ What challenges, if any, do you face today with PIIDPA requirements?
- ▶ What are you hoping the regs will do/ not do?
- ▶ On what should we base the decision to allow access/storage/disclosure outside of Canada? (e.g., consent, necessity, approval from head of public body, risk-based/tied to PIA)?
- ▶ Any thoughts on data travel/data in transit?

Privacy assessments

s. 53 (1) A public body shall

- (a) before undertaking or instituting a project, program, system or other activity involving the collection, use or disclosure of personal information, conduct a privacy assessment of the project, program, system or activity; and
- (b) before substantially changing a project, program, system or other activity involving the collection, use or disclosure of personal information, conduct a privacy assessment of the project, program, system or activity that reflects the anticipated change.

(2) A privacy assessment must comply with any requirements prescribed by the regulations.

- ▶ What is working well with current privacy assessments? What challenges do you face?
- ▶ What are you hoping the regs will do (or not do)?
- ▶ How scalable and flexible should the assessments be? Are there any key elements that should be included or excluded?
- ▶ Who should approve them?
- ▶ Should joint PIAs be allowed? If so, are there any unique risks or responsibilities of individual parties that need to be addressed?

Privacy policies

s. 52 (1) a public body shall establish and maintain a privacy policy meeting the requirements prescribed by the regulations.

- ▶ Any general thoughts on this requirement?
- ▶ Anything you hope the regs will require (not require)?

Privacy breach notifications

s. 78 (1) defines a "privacy breach" and "significant harm"

(2) Subject to subsection (4), upon becoming aware that a privacy breach has occurred, the head of the public body shall, where it is reasonable to believe that an affected individual could experience significant harm as a result of the privacy breach, notify that individual and the Commissioner.

(6) A notification under subsection (2) must be made in the manner prescribed by the regulations.

- ▶ Anything you hope the regs will require?
- ▶ How should the notification be made?
- ▶ Key elements to include in the notice?
- ▶ Is guidance needed on indirect notification?

Access regulations

- ▶ Expect access regulations to be similar to current
- ▶ Is there anything in current access-related regs that is problematic or missing?
- ▶ Are there areas where regulations could provide further direction?

Anything we missed?

- ▶ Is there anything we didn't touch on today that you hope regulations will cover?
- ▶ Is there anything else we should be aware of?

Next steps

- ▶ Drafting and finalizing of regulations
- ▶ Creating templates and support material
- ▶ Training and education

Thank you!

Schedule 6.3

From: Mitchell Bell
To: [Ansv Directors](#); [Ansv](#)
Subject: Meeting Reminder - ANSV Board Meeting - Thursday, March 19, 2026, at 1:00pm
Date: March 12, 2026 8:26:41 AM
Attachments: BH Logo_FullColour_Sc875136-494b-4131-b471-97fb0ee9c51a.png
SocialLink_Facebook_32x32_beed2837-9517-4231-b353-cf8f22d7e641.png
SocialLink_Instagram_32x32_1610939a-6431-4346-950f-2dda9d198e9a.png
SocialLink_Linkedin_32x32_3410268c-9341-4457-b0af-21e95ee2477d.png
1024px-Microsoft Office Teams (2018present).svg 9b4375c2-a816-4e10-8918-473fe51ad392.png

(Sending on behalf of Donna Van Kroonenburg, ANSV Secretary) **Note: Interviews for the new staff person are complete and there is a recommended candidate for approval at this meeting.**

Good morning:

A reminder that the next ANSV board meeting will be held next week on Thursday, March 19, at 1:00pm.

The meeting will be held in a **virtually** via Microsoft Teams (no software download needed – just your computer and a microphone if you wish to participate)

A calendar invite for the meeting was previously sent for this meeting. The link to attend virtually can also be found below.

The meeting agenda will be circulated prior to the meeting.

Could you please take a moment to:

- **Reply with any topics you wish to be added to the meeting agenda as soon as possible**
- **(Directors) Confirm by reply email whether or not you will be attending** (for purposes of understanding meeting quorum and space requirements)
- **(Clerk and Treasurers) Forward this email to your Village Commissioners** who may be interested in attending

Thank you.

Donna

Donna Van Kroonenburg

Secretary

secretary@ansv.ca

Association of Nova Scotia Villages

Microsoft Teams [Need help?](#)

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 263 346 971 819 5

Passcode: kK3Gy6mr

Dial in by phone

[+1 647-794-6122, 264675154#](#) Canada, Toronto

[Find a local number](#)

Phone conference ID: 264 675 154#

For organizers: [Meeting options](#) | [Reset dial-in PIN](#)

Mitchell Bell, CPA, CA

Clerk and Treasurer • Chief Administrative Officer



Village of Bible Hill

67 Pictou Road
Bible Hill, Nova Scotia
B2N 2R9

email: mitchell.bell@biblehill.ca

office: [902.893.8083](tel:902.893.8083)

www.biblehill.ca



Balance is important. Please do not feel pressure to read, respond, or take action on this email outside of your normal working hours.

This email and any attachments may contain privileged or confidential information and is subject to the Government of Nova Scotia's MGA Part XX privacy requirements. The privilege or confidentiality attached to this email and attachments is not waived by reason of mistaken delivery. If you are not the intended recipient, you must not use, disclose, retain, forward or reproduce this message or any attachments. If you receive this message in error please notify the sender by return email or telephone and destroy and delete all copies. Unless specifically stated, this email should not be construed as a purchase order or an arrangement to provide a service. Opinions in this email do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Village of Bible Hill. Please consider the environment before printing this message.

Schedule 7.1

From: Geraldine Pauley
To: Brian Webb (He/Him); Ashley Marlin (she/her)
Cc: Heather McCallum
Subject: **Beatification & Revitalization Proposal**
Date: February 27, 2026 1:17:42 PM
Attachments: Beautification Draft 1.docx

Good afternoon, Brian & Ashley:

We just managed to skid in on the last working day of February as you requested! The estimate for the Jib Lot came in this morning at \$5,000. I made it clear to the contractor, Stephen Collicutt, that we understood it to be a very rough estimate since it is winter and hard to get a good look at the lot. We may need to adjust the activities when he is able to provide a more accurate estimate, but the approach remains the same.

What I am sending along today is the roughest of rough drafts, but represents in round terms what the Chester Village Commission hopes to achieve. There are two sections, both of which will be managed by the Village. The Jib Lot will be funded under the B&R Program, while the Parade Square Lot will be funded (if approved at budget time) by the Commission.

Sadly, we have pushed the weathervane on the Gazebo to a later phase of the project. Unfortunately, Tom is away and not replying to texts or emails, so I was unable to give him a heads-up. That makes me sad, but it is unavoidable from both a budget and a Phase 1 project parameters point of view.

Let me know how we proceed from this point forward.

Regards,
Geraldine

*Geraldine Pauley
Chair
Chester Village Commission
902-204-0013*

Elements: Phase 1--Outline

- **Primary Locations**
 - **The waterfront triangle including:**
 - **The waterfront lot at 10 Parade Square with the Lido Pool, public washrooms, and a large open space overlooking the harbour;**
 - **The Jib Lot overlooking the harbour with the Fire Department Memorial;**
 - **Parade Square & Gazebo (not included in Phase 1)**
- **Elements considered: public areas to attract and keep people in the space**
 - **Will it make the area more attractive?**
 - **Will it cause people to linger?**
 - **Can we build on it in future years?**
 - **Affordable to install & maintain?**
 - **Inclusive, safe and welcoming?**
- **Phase 1: Cheap & Cheerful**
 - **Natural elements: plantings, rocks (painted), native species, food forests.**
 - **Street furniture.**
 - **Landscaping.**
 - **Lighting.**
 - **Activation/partnership with community groups.**
- **Estimated Cost of proposed projects:**
 - **10 Parade Square (Lido Pool lot) +/- \$5,000—Commission financial contribution**
 - **Painted rocks, large planters, a new path and picnic/viewing area landscaped for accessibility.**
 - **42 Victoria Road (Jib Lot) +/- \$5,000—MOC financial Contribution**
 - **Improved access to lot entryway; rock wall around FD monument; a path and picnic/viewing area overlooking the ocean; improved aspect of the sewer mechanism.**
 - **Commission may add a partial fence in the front of the Jib Lot entry if budget permits.**

Phase 1 Project Details: the Waterfront/Lido Lot 10 Parade Square

- **Part A: The parking lot and path to the Public Washrooms and Lido Pool**

Current state: the parking lot is gravel and not deemed to be accessible. The Village is in the process of creating an accessible parking area and path to the Lido Pool and Public Washrooms.

- **Phase 1: Proposed Beautification & Revitalization Project:**
 - **Large Rocks & Student Painting Project:** Line the presently rough area on the water side of the newly paved parking area with large rocks, and have a rock painting project for the elementary or middle school;
 - **Planters:** place 3 or 4 extra large waist high built wooden plant containers along the path to the pool and washrooms in an attractive manner.
 - The planters will be cedar so not paintable. However, we may be able to source large ceramic pots to go inside the planters, that can be a student painting project.
 - Invite the Chester Garden Club to design and manage the planters, but at the Commission's expense.
- **Phase 2: Proposed Continuation of Phase 1 activities**
- - Create a raised bed garden strip about 4 feet wide from the parking area up along the lot to Parade Square.
 - Install appropriate lighting for evening strolls.
 - Plant food items useful to the Food Bank, with ornamental flowers.
 - Good signage.
 - Create a summer student job to tend and harvest the garden, and do social media and other communication projects for all the Beautification and Revitalization Program

- **Part B: The Area opposite Market Square at 10 Parade Square**
- **Current state:** the top of the lot is hilly but overlooks a beautiful view of the back harbour. There are some tired picnic tables and benches, but the terrain makes them awkward to access. The property edge along Parade Square is always lined with cars during the summer season, so projects must keep this in mind.
 - **Phase 1: Proposed Commission Project:**
 - **Path and picnic area overlooking harbour with large planters:**
 - create a path starting from the corner of Smith & Victoria Streets to an area overlooking the harbour, but away from the parked cars.
 - If feasible, this path will be accessible, as will the picnic area to which the path leads.
 - Level an area large enough to accommodate one or two picnic tables. A local craftsperson is prepared to build new benches & wheelchair friendly picnic tables if needed and budget friendly.
 - Add several extra-large planters in the picnic/benches area(s), again in partnership with the Chester Garden Club if they are amenable.
 - **Phase 2: Proposed Continuation of Phase 1**
 - Add a second levelled picnic/viewing area with new viewing benches & accessible picnic tables.
 - More landscaping.
 - Add lighting for evening use of the area.

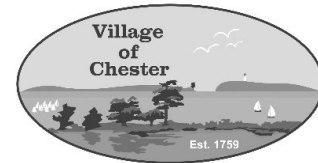
Phase 1 Project: The Jib Lot 42 Victoria Street

- **Current State of the Lot:** this property faces the harbour and provides a potentially large area for picnics and leisurely viewing of the ocean. At present the lot is steep, so most the lot is not amenable to widespread enjoyment of the property and the ocean view. The lot features a large memorial to members of the Fire Department, a smaller plaque remembering the original members, and a plaque noting the gift of the lot to the Village by Clarissa Anderson Gibbs.
- The Commission will seek approval from the members of the Chester Volunteer Fire Department before any alterations are made on the lot that might affect the FD memorials.
 - **Phase 1: Project estimated by Stephen Collicut at \$5,000)**
 - Level the current entry way in front of the large Fire Department plaque. This area had gravel placed at some point, but it is very ragged now, and not level. We hope to make this area accessible, but that is still under discussion.
 - Build a low stone wall around the large memorial and the plaque celebrating the found FD members.
 - Create a path (the former paths are now overgrown and not visible) from the area in front of the new stone wall to a space to the left of the memorial (if facing the memorial with one's back to the ocean).
 - This area will be leveled to accommodate one or two picnic tables, and several viewing benches.
 - Build a larger wall on one side of the sewer maintenance device facing the picnic area. This may be a paintable item, suitable for a fund student project.
 - The present fence does not disguise the device, which is not particularly attractive. We discussed this with the people who service the device and were given guidance on what can or cannot be done. This must be followed up with Permit discussions with Public Works.

- Perhaps, depending on cost, the Commission will begin to replace the fence with a short section on each side of the memorial to replicate the original design of the fence (not included in the \$5K estimate).
- **Phase 2: Proposed Commission Project**
 - **Replace the fence around the Jib Lot.**
 - The original fence was in very poor condition and needed to be removed in 2025.
 - This is an expensive project for this large lot and may need to be done in stages over one or two years.
 - Continue to create level viewing spaces easily accessed from the roadway to improve use of the oceanfront property.
 - Install lighting for evening usage.
 - Landscaping as appropriate with native plantings that are generally perennial and low maintenance.

Schedule 7.2

Village of Chester Commission Clerk/Treasurer Monthly Report Mar 18, 2026



- **Scotiabank**

- The February 2026 bank statement has been reconciled. The Village main operations account opened the month with \$461,361 and ended with \$441,927.
- Snapshot: Account balances as of Mar 2nd were:

Banking Accounts	
Daily Operations account	\$ 438,646
Investment Accounts	
Operating reserve	\$ 88,087
Lido Pool reserve (excluding GRID funding \$242K)	\$ 203,708
Utilities reserve	\$ 43,154
EMC Building reserve	\$ 28,885

- **Financial**

- 2026/27 Village Budget status is on tonight's Agenda under New Business.
- Grant applications: The Village is waiting responses from Canada Summer Jobs (lifeguards and VIC student), Young Canada Works (library student), and the Recreation Facility Development Grant (Lido repairs).
- Note that some of the casualties to the Provincial budget include grants the Village has benefitted from, including grants for accessibility, the Recreation Facility Development Grant above, and the Growth & Renewal for Infrastructure Development program, which will not be continued after this year.

- **ZVML Financial**

- "Zoe Valle Library" is a registered charity with Canada Revenue

Agency (CRA) since 1967, with a business number. The public search currently shows “Directors/Trustees and Like Officials” as Cynthia Lamson, Derek Wells, Colin MacDonald, Thomas Bremner, and Barbara Fry.

There is annual reporting in the form of a charity return and trustee info sheet. Tim Topping, MODC Finance Director and ZVL Treasurer, will update CRA to change the agent from him to me.

- There is no record of the organization in the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stock Companies. Mr. Topping thinks that may just be a long-standing oversight. Something to do in the fullness of time.
- The process for transferring the ZVML accounts from MODC ownership to the Village is in progress and will be effective Apr 1st.

Commissioners will be asked to go to the Chester Scotiabank to sign documents for signing authority following our established procedure of two to sign – I will provide instructions when I get them from the bank.

- As you know, Library accounts and records must be separate from Village accounts and records. It will be set up as a separate company in Sage.
- There are two existing accounts at Scotiabank:
 - The chequing account, which has the full endowment fund of \$201,993 (as of Mar 2, 2026), with bills still to be paid through the end of the month. This account will continue with a change in ownership.
 - An investment account with a \$0 balance that was previously used for the CHUMS fund and will be again. The CHUMS fund is valued at \$4,713 (as of Dec 31, 2025). This account will also continue.
 - To provide greater security and interest for the bulk of the endowment fund, I am investigating the pros and cons of either a second investment account vs. the Community Foundation of Nova Scotia. (The fund is not a true registered trust/endowment and is called that in the vernacular sense.) I will report back with a recommendation.

- There is a donations link on the existing ZVL website which leads to a Canada Helps page for donations. I was able to confirm this sends alerts to Mr. Topping as the current Treasurer.
- A new policy around ZVML finances will be drafted to align with the Village's stated intentions and, of course, following Provincial/Federal public sector and charitable requirements.
- I would also prefer to change the ZVML fiscal year from Jan-Dec to Apr-Mar to better align the budgets. Something to address after CRA is updated.
- Staff are working with the Municipality on notifying utilities of the changes in billing as of Apr 1st.

- **Office Move**

- An electrician will be doing some repairs/upgrades at 63 Regent Street. The electrical panel, for one. There appear to be ample electrical outlets, as long as they all work.
- The Village's IT supplier, G23, will go in around Mar 20th to install the infrastructure for the Village and Library operations, including a separate Wi-Fi for the public to use. G23 will come back when Ms. Veinot and I are in to test everything.
- Anything not needed immediately is going to storage – many archival files are already there, and furniture will follow starting tomorrow. The move for Ms. Veinot and I will be on Monday, Mar 30th, with any last-minute removals on Mar 31st. The new tenants move into 27 Pleasant Street on Apr 1st.
- Community organizations that have been using the Village Boardroom for meetings have been invited (and accepted) to move with us and use the dining room. This includes the Chester Fire Services Committee, which meets the second Wednesday of the month at 5:00 pm, and the Chester Merchants Association, which meets the first Friday of the month at 9:00 am.

- **Requested Motion**

- Staff request that the Village office be officially CLOSED for the move.

Draft motion:

The Chester Village Commission will close its office March 30-31, 2026 to allow for the office move to take place.

- **Community Grants**

- Reminder that the annual deadline for community grants is Apr 1st per the Grant Policy (attached), and decisions are to be made in May.
- As of writing, applications have been received from the Chester Arts Centre, Chester Farmers & Artisans Market, and the Chester Merchants Assoc., and emails indicating intention to apply from the Chester Municipal Heritage Society.

Report completed by:

Heather McCallum, Village Clerk/Treasurer



Minutes

Chester Fire Services Committee (CFSC) Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, Feb 11, 2026 at 5:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

Present	Norm Countway, Vice-chair Kirk Collicutt, Treasurer-Secretary Wilson Fitt Nancy Hatch
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)
Regrets	Colin MacDonald James Robert
Guest(s)	Randy O'Malley, Chester Village Commissioner

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Vice-chair at 5:03 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

Norm added a New Business item re: "Nova Scotia Fire Modernization Virtual Planning Session".

Motion: Moved by Ms. Hatch; seconded by Mr. Collicutt:

That the Chester Fire Services Committee approves the Agenda of the Feb 11, 2026 Monthly Meeting as amended.

Motion carried.

3. Approval of Minutes

3.1 Monthly Meeting Minutes: Jan 12, 2025

Motion: Moved by Mr. Fitt; seconded by Ms. Hatch:

That the Committee approves the Minutes of the Monday, Jan 12, 2025 Monthly Meeting as presented.

Motion carried.

4. Business Arising

4.1 Annual General Meeting – Discussion

The Agenda for the AGM was reviewed. The presenters ran through their slides and speaking points for tomorrow night's meeting.

5. Chester Volunteer Fire Department

5.1 Activity Report

Chief Stevens reviewed the November report (*Schedule 5.1*).

He will share Fire Captain Joel Neilly's cancer story at the AGM. Captain Neilly wants his story out there as a cautionary tale.

Chief Stevens also flagged that the RFP for the replacement 541 truck is still pending. He explained the risk to property owners in the entire Municipality on their insurance rates should the truck not be replaced in time to maintain the Superior Water Shuttle certification.

Action: A letter will be drafted from the CFSC to the Municipality expressing concern about the delay.

5.2 Globe & Mail article "For firefighters, dual health crises smoulder"

The article was shared for information (*Schedule 5.2*).

6. Reports

6.1 Secretary-Treasurer

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

Motion: Moved by Ms. Hatch; seconded by Mr. Fitt:

That the Chester Fire Services Committee deposit any unspent budget for "Loan

Repayments – New Station” (line 5811) to the Building reserve at the end of the 2025-26 fiscal year for use in the 2026-27 fiscal year.

Motion carried.

6.2 New Fire Station Project

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

He also reported on a potential timing mismatch: On the project schedule, the final Class A estimate is scheduled to be ready the end of July and then we are to immediately turn around and issue the tenders. Tenders can't be issued until the big loan is in place, which requires approvals from the partners and the Minister, which could take 2-3 months altogether. We don't want a big gap in the schedule with the clock running on our consultants.

As a workaround, Ms. McCallum noted that we expect a Class B estimate in May that she will use to assemble the package for loan approvals and hope the approving bodies will accept that basis and not want to wait for the Class A.

Action: Ms. McCallum will brief our new Advisor from Municipal Affairs, and advance notify the Municipality and Village that this request is coming. Scotiabank will also be kept apprised of the timing.

6.3 Communications Sub-Committee

Mr. Countway plans to get back to the firefighter testimonial videos after the AGM. He and the Deputy Chief will talk to coordinate dates.

6.4 Fundraising Sub-Committee – Nil

7. New Business

7.1 Nova Scotia Fire Modernization Virtual Planning Session

Vice-chair Countway reported on the Feb 10th online meeting with Municipal Affairs that he and Ms. Hatch attended. He and Chief Stevens provided a few highlights from the meeting.

- Both Minister John MacDonald and Deputy Minister Sandra MacKenzie were in attendance.

- Their (the Province) objective is to unify all the fire departments in the province with standardized training, equipment, and funding based on risk assessments for the communities being served. This was the result of Fire Chief input from the around the province where some departments have little to no resources while other have more.
- How will they do this?
 - The Province plans the change wording in the *Municipal Governance Act (MGA)* from “municipalities **MAY** provide fire service” to “municipalities **SHALL** provide fire service”
- What does it mean?
 - Fire commissions will no longer be required. Fire departments will no longer be required to manage finances, HR, etc.
 - Risk assessments (to be completed by the municipalities) to determine the level of service and equipment made available. Apparently, this is the model used in Kings County.
- How will it be implemented?
 - A new government office called the Office of the Fire Commission will be created with a fire chief and 3-4 deputy chiefs for each provincial region.
 - There were no details on the number of support staff needed for the office. It will set the standards for training, equipment and procurement for the entire province.
- The municipalities will be required to handle all aspects of the fire service except for the actual volunteers, their duties, and the submission of their budget request.
- What is the time line?
 - A phased approach over three years. It is unclear when the three-year period commences.
- How does this effect CFSC?
 - At the current time I see no reason to change course on the direction of the new fire hall build. If we decide to wait and see what shakes out from this new governance and plan it could be far into the future before the new hall is a reality.
 - UPDATE: Chief Stevens and Ms. McCallum specifically asked the Province at subsequent sessions about CFSC’s governance model. No change, and we may even be a model for other units.
- There will still be a fire service, provincial training for all departments, ensure municipalities will support fire services for more consistency. Example of some departments that receive no money from municipalities, so their entire budget is sourced by fundraising.

- Pro-board certification was previously done by firefighter school, which the Province will no longer support. They bought two mobile burn trailers for training, which has been useful. A new certification model is to be determined.

8. In-Camera – Nil

9. Resumption of Public Meeting – Nil

10. Other Business – Nil

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:01 pm.

Next meeting(s):

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

Kirk Collicutt
CFSC Secretary

Heather McCallum
CFSC Administrator, VOC Clerk/Treasurer

Schedule 7.3(b)

MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF CHESTER FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING (Policy 112)

**Wednesday, January 21, 2026 - 7:00 p.m.
Forest Heights Community School, Chester Basin
Meeting Minutes**

"We respectfully acknowledge that we live and work in Mi'kma'ki as a steward of the ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We are all treaty people."

Committee Members:

Chuck Bennett, Blandford Commission	Len Stevens, Chester Basin Commission
Stuart Hirtle, Martins River Commission	Stephen Bond, Chester Basin Fire Department
Cody Stevens, Chester Fire Department (Teams)	Scott Rafuse, Martins River Fire Department
Robert Williams, Chester Basin Fire Department	Tim Morash, Hubbards Commission
Tim Lilly, Martins River Commission	
Dale Broome, New Ross Commission	
Jared MacDonald, Chester Fire Department	
Lyle Russell, New Ross Fire Department	
Chris Turpin, Blandford Fire Rescue	
Jared Swinemar Western Shore Fire Department	
Clary Coolen, Hubbards Fire Department	

Guest:

Andrea Shortt

Councillors:

Councillor Tom Bremner
Councillor Clarissa Coolen

Staff:

Erin Lowe, Deputy CAO
Emily Lennox, Executive Secretary

Regrets:

Colin MacDonald, Chester Fire Services
Bruce Blackwood, Fire Services/Safety Coordinator

1. **Meeting called to order** by the Chairperson: Chair, Len Stevens called the meeting to order at 6:58 p.m. and the land acknowledgement was read.
2. **Review and Approval of Agenda/Order of Business:**
MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AND ORDER OF BUSINESS AS PRESENTED MOVED BY ROBERT WILLIAMS, SECONDED BY CODY STEVENS. ALL IN FAVOUR – MOTION CARRIED.

3. **Introduction-** A brief round table introduction took place.
4. **Approval of previous meeting minutes** – November 19, 2025:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES NOVEMBER 19, 2025 AS PRESENTED. MOVED BY CODY STEVENS, SECONDED BY STEWART HIRTLE. ALL IN-FAVOUR- MOTION CARRIED.

5. **Matters Arising-**

5.1 Sub Committee Reports:

Dry Hydrants/Water Supply – A brief discussion took place around the report and questions circulated by Bruce. Not all committee members realized this document was circulated in advance and decided to defer this discussion and any direction for the subcommittee until the next FAC meeting date. The subcommittee noted they plan to meet in February.

Apparatus/Equipment

No report

Training

No report

Recruitment and Retention (Status: Chuck Bennett) – The subcommittee (Andrea & Chuck) advised that three meetings have taken place since the last FAC meeting in November. Unfortunately, the commitment to uptake has not been successful to date. Andrea noted she plans to connect with Municipal staff to explore alternative outreach options, i.e. mailouts with tax bills or flyers with the objective of educating community members with data re: response calls per year averages, and schedule upcoming meet & greets. The subcommittee also feels a singular information phone number should be used in advertising, so the same information is available throughout the seven districts. Overall, the turnout to these subcommittee meetings has been disappointing. Tim Lilly stepped forward noting he would be happy to be the central point of contact for phone calls. Municipal staff also noted that the tax bills have already been mailed out but encouraged Andrea to connect with the Municipal Communications Officer to utilize the Municipal newsletter for advertising, education, and promotion.

6.

5.3 Governance Review: The committee revisited the discussion concerning provincial governance changes. Municipal staff advised the committee of the upcoming provincial Emergency Services Forum for CAO's/Deputy CAO's, and EMC's to better understand next steps and engage in round table discussions. Chief meetings have been scheduled; everyone was encouraged to participate. Cody Stevens noted the letter received from Danielle Barkhouse, MLA titled Special Advisory Department Emergency Management and asked it to be included with the meeting minutes for reference. Cody also noted a letter received from Paul Maynard and requested it to be included for reference. He continued the discussion concerning governance and advised that the province wants to hear what the chiefs and members want the outcome of this review to be. The provincial meetings for fire department members will be scheduled for

February, once the dates and locations are confirmed and they requested this information be circulated so turn out is best as possible and our departments have strong representation. The province is planning to meet with Municipal Councillors after the fire fighter meetings are complete. The general feeling is that Municipalities will need to determine how to govern their fire departments. A lot of responsibility will fall to the Fire Chiefs, examples of annual report requirements and the unfortunate cut of the Rural Fire District Act and how concerning these changes will be. The Commissions were also encouraged to make their voices heard and the importance of the FAC in keeping Council informed of what is happening behind the scenes. The Fire Commissions agreed to meet prior to the next FAC meeting.

Councillor Bremner suggested inviting FSANS for a question-and-answer activity. Committee members agreed and felt that moving forward the FSANS representative should be a standard agenda listing for FAC meetings and be invited to all meetings moving forward. FAC requests that Bruce contact Arthur to ensure this is communicated and coordinated. The committee also would like Danielle Barkhouse to be invited to the next meeting, as it would be helpful for provincial perspective, especially with questions that will likely emerge from the upcoming emergency management meetings.

7. New Business –

Fire Smart:

The committee was advised that Tara McCurdy has moved on to a new position and that Ken Cox is the new Wildfire Prevention Officer with DNR. Discussion continued, and the FAC members agreed that DNR should also be invited to the next FAC meeting to provide an update on their department's changes and discuss operations in the year ahead. Bruce is asked to communicate and coordinate two separate presentations: 1. Prevention 2. Operations and noted it would be ideal if the first was with Jacob and the second with Ken and not both at the same FAC meeting but spread out.

8. Roundtable-

Upcoming budgets were discussed, and members were encouraged/reminded to budget the amount the Municipality agreed for the agreement recently made.

New Ross noted several emails were received from the independent fire school and noted that the perception is that they are trying to rebrand themselves. They noted that until they make improvements for transparency and safety the costs for their programs are concerning and lack confidence. Lyle will explore alternative options and advise FAC on findings at future meetings.

9. **Adjournment-** The meeting was adjourned at 8:19 p.m. The Chair confirmed the next FAC Meeting would be scheduled for **March 18, 2026**, and save the date calendar hold would be circulated. All committee members were encouraged to contribute ideas or recommendations on discussion topics to the next agenda.

MOTION TO ADJOURN MOVED BY SCOTT RAFUSE, SECONDED BY JARED SWINEMAR. ALL IN FAVOUR. MOTION CARRIED.

Hi Danielle,

Please see response below:

Last fall, the Province established the Firefighter Training Advisory Committee, made up of fire service leaders from across Nova Scotia, as part of efforts to modernize fire services. This work will help inform the structure and implementation of Bill 158.

The intent is not for the Province to assume control of the fire service, but rather to establish standards in collaboration with municipalities and fire departments across Nova Scotia. This is the purpose of the upcoming outreach sessions. As you know, our Fire Training Advisory Committee (FTAC) is currently supporting fire departments and municipalities with training in the absence of a fully functioning fire school

During a meeting last weekend, concerns were raised about the introduction of new training standards and the potential impact on existing volunteers who may not wish to complete additional training. Once consultations with the fire service and municipalities conclude, government will be advised on options for addressing training requirements, including potential transitional approaches for existing volunteers and updated standards for new volunteers.

To be clear, the government is **not** proposing to remove firefighters who are not NFPA certified by September, as has been suggested in recent rumors=

.

It is important to allow this consultation process to fully play out and for frank, open discussions to take place. Once feedback has been gathered from this committee of fire leaders across the province, the Minister will be advised and decisions will be made based on that input.

Regards

Special Advisor to the Minister

Department of Emergency Management

Danielle Barkhouse, MLA (She/Her)

Chester-St. Margaret's

Email: BarkhouseMLA@gmail.com

Phone: 902-275-2501 or 1-833-275-2501

Hi Chief,

Thanks for the chat this morning. I just wanted to follow-up with an email regarding the concerns raised at your membership meeting.

The intent is not for the Province to assume control of the fire service, but rather to establish standards in collaboration with municipalities and fire departments across Nova Scotia. This is the purpose of the upcoming outreach sessions. As you know, our Fire Training Advisory Committee (FTAC) is currently supporting fire departments and municipalities with training in the absence of a fully functioning fire school.

In consultation with the fire service and municipalities, the Province will determine future training standards. We anticipate that these standards will align with the recent FSANS guidance on interior, exterior, and support firefighter roles. It remains our position that firefighters should be trained in basic firefighting (Level 1) to a qualification standard, and those who wish to pursue ProBoard certification may do so through that separate process established through the Office of the Fire Marshal.

Hope this helps to explain any concerns your membership may have.

Take care,
Paul



Paul C. Maynard, BSc., DIM, COM L/T
Director, Fire Service Training and Strategic Initiatives
Department of Emergency Management
5251 Duke Street, Halifax, NS B3J 3S1

 (902) 223-3194
 paul.maynard@novascotia.ca

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

Held online via Teams.

February 4, 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 , Councillor Morgen Reinhardt (MODL), Councillor Abdella Assaff (MOC), Linda Mills,

Staff Present:

Dylan Heide, Tammie Bezanson, Ellen Johnson.

Regrets:

Deputy Mayor Jennifer McDonald (TOB), Councillor Penny Carver (ToMB), Tissy Bolivar, Sana Karami.

1. Meeting Called to Order:

The Meeting was called to order, and the land acknowledgement was read by Chairperson, Lora Church at 7:00 p.m.

2. Acknowledgements and Protocols:

2.1 Lora read the reminder that accessibility as a human right.

2.2 Lora 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 Geraldine Pauley SECONDED by Amy Chrysler. ALL IN FAVOUR. MOTION CARRIED.

4. Approval of Minutes:

4.1 MOTION TO APPROVE PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES AS CIRCULATED FOR JANUARY 7, 2026, MOVED BY Gale Fullerton, SECONDED BY Geraldine Pauley. ALL IN FAVOUR. MOTION CARRIED.

5. Introductions:

A round table of introductions took place.

6. Accessibility Coordinator's Update:

- Ellen noted that tonight's meeting has a light agenda with some municipal updates and information. She reminded members that it is budget season and that most of the Municipal Units are working on their budgets for finalization and approval.
- Each of the Municipalities is working on what they need to do to prepare for the Accessibility standards and regulations that come into effect on April 1st.
- Chester is working on its Recreation facility, MODL is working on parks, Mahone Bay is working on Accessibility crosswalks and Ellen has been working with each unit to provide the accessibility lens and expertise to these discussions.
- Ellen advised that there is little bit of money in the budget for books and resources on topics related to accessibility and is open to suggestions to compile a list for future purchases. She noted one of the challenges she continues to face is the culture around accessibility so anything that touches on that would be welcome as well. Suggestions are welcome via round table discussion or via email. The Committee also suggested opening this catalog up to audio books, or other formats to ensure inclusion.

7. Matters Arising:

The Chairperson opened the discussion to any additional presentation topics they would like to have added. A member suggested adding the Epilepsy Association of the Maritimes for a future presentation.

Follow Up from past meeting:

- Ellen reminded the committee of the process for budget approval. She has since met with the Deputy CAO's and they helped address how to fit everything in appropriately. The final draft is almost complete, once format is finalized it will be presented to Councils for approval.
- The committee asked if Ellen is feeling any concerns or constraints this year. She advised that so far everything is still broken down into three categories – Administrative, the Committee Costs, and the Public Engagement/Projects based on Action plan initiatives. The budget is not exorbitant and falls in line with expectations. We will know more once Council reviews. ‘
- The Committee was reminded that Ellen shared the link for These Four Walls Documentary for viewing. The Chairperson advised that donations are welcome, and Ellen noted it would be within policy out of the budget. Committee members agreed that if the funds are available a donation should be made accordingly. The

Chairperson advised that People First is a movement that started in the 70's in BC there's international, national and local chapters. The consensus was that a donation should be made. The Chairperson asked members to jot down any takeaways they may have after watching to discuss at next meeting.

9. New Business:

Annual Progress Update will be ready to be presented to Councils in April, and ideally Ellen would like to share this report with members in April for input and next steps.

Access Awareness Week: May 31st – June 6th this year. Ellen is open to opportunities to partner with groups within communities and noted there is a small budget available for planning to begin. The committee agreed that awareness is key in participation and engagement. They agreed starting within the Municipal Units and going from there. The committee suggested the living library platform or other unique engagement opportunities would be welcome. The committee also suggested acknowledging businesses or groups with awards for accessibility awareness and support if appropriate through nominations.

Linda Mills, committee member, advised that they will be moving and relocating to Ontario. Ellen will initiate the process to fill the resulting vacancy.

Louise Hopper advised that there is a conversation happening on Feb 19th re: basic income guarantee at the fire hall in Lunenburg. It will be open to the public. More information will be circulated for anyone interested.

She also advised that a new Quality of Life survey will be circulated to everyone in the communities via Engage NS with enhanced questions concerning disability.

Dylan Heide advised that their Council will consider a recommendation for new revised streets and sidewalks bylaws to set the standards for sidewalk installations going forward.

Gale Fullerton advised Lunenburg just approved their Capital Budget. Money is being invested into Town Hall Upgrades, Town Centre Upgrades (entrances and exits to community center), and sidewalk design with better accessibility at the forefront of these projects. She also noted the Back Harbour Trail will have upgrades as well removing stairs. She also advised REMO is set to explore some emergency accessibility issues in their budget.

Tammie Bezanson advised some audits that will be taking place within Chester to identify areas that could benefit from improvements. If all goes to plan, 4 new sidewalks will be installed.

Councillor Assaff advised he attended the new house opening at Bonny Lea Farm with accessibility for aging residents. It's a good new story for our area.

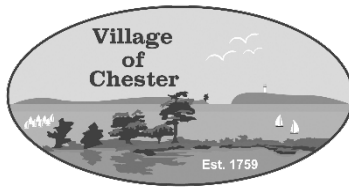
Lora Church noted that some upcoming webinars are coming up and more information can be circulated for those who are interested.

Ellen will circulate information on upcoming sessions about public transportation; all are welcome to participate.

10. Date of Next Meeting: March 4, 2026, and a change was discussed for April 8, 2026 (week later than usual due to a conflict). Ellen will make an invitation to confirm if this change works for everyone.

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

Schedule 8.1



Village of Chester Commission Request for Decision Mar 18, 2026

RE: 2026/27 Operational Spending Pre-Approval

Issue Summary

The 2026/27 Village Operating & Capital Budgets are unlikely to be finalized before the start of the fiscal year on April 1, 2026. This is not at all unusual for municipalities and villages.

Staff are requesting pre-approval to pay basic operational invoices so that accounts do not fall behind or incur late payment charges.

Background and Description

The intention behind this bit of “housekeeping” is for regular, ongoing costs such as:

- Employee wages
- Electricity and heat
- Telephone, internet and IT
- Bank charges
- Janitorial and maintenance
- Office supplies and equipment (including moving expenses)

Note that purchase orders or contracts cannot be issued on new operational, seasonal, or capital projects until the passage of the budget.

Options

1. The Commission can authorize the requested pre-approvals for ongoing operational expenses, as outlined above.
2. The Commission can amend the list above for pre-approvals.
3. The Commission can decline to authorize any 2026/27 spending prior to passage of the budget.

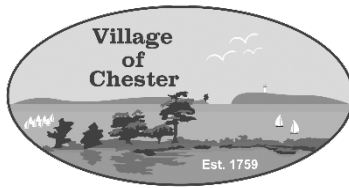
Recommendation

Staff recommend Option 1.

Draft Motion

That the Chester Village Commission pre-approve payment of 2026/27 regular and ongoing operational costs in advance of final 2026/27 Village Operational & Capital Budgets approval.

Schedule 8.2



Village of Chester Commission Request for Decision Mar 18, 2026

RE: Capital Repairs at 63 Regent Street

Issue Summary

There are two key capital repairs that must be completed as soon as possible at the Zoé Vallé Memorial Library building. Capital repairs come from the ZVML Trust account, and approval is needed from the Village Commission to expend the funds.

Cost estimates are pending as of writing but should be available by the meeting.

Background and Description

- A. The first capital repair needed is for the entrance to the building. As we know, the front entrance is currently unsafe, contravening the Building Code. We have a temporary permit for a temporary step to get in the front door. This entrance must be corrected.
- B. The SSPL librarians report that there is water damage from damp to books in the adult collection front room. They have requested a protective backing be applied to all four walls in the room.

Options

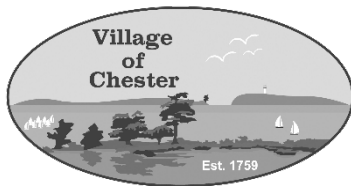
- 1. The Commission can authorize the repairs to be funded from the Zoé Vallé Trust account, as is appropriate for capital repairs.
- 2. The Commission can authorize the repairs with alternative funding.
- 3. The Commission can decline to authorize the repairs (not recommended).

Recommendation

Staff recommend Option 1.

Draft Motion

That the Chester Village Commission approve the proposed capital repairs to the front building entrance and the walls of the adult collection room of 63 Regent Street. Funding for the repairs, estimated at \$_____ + HST to come from the Zoé Vallé Trust account.



Village of Chester Commission
Request for Decision
March 11, 2026

RE: Surplus Furniture at 27 Pleasant Street

Issue Summary

Most of the current Village office furniture at 27 Pleasant Street will either not fit or not suit the environment at the new location of 63 Regent Street. The Commission is asked to decide whether to declare some or all of the items surplus to be sold, and/or temporarily store some or all of the items.

Background and Description

There is a list attached with specifications and photos of the furniture under consideration including:

- Boardroom: 5 tables, 8 leather chairs – *too big for 63 Regent St*
- Clerk/Treasurer's office: desk and credenza – *too big for 63 Regent St*
- Reception: 2 desks, display unit – *in poor condition and not suitable for the ground floor; could consider using for community office space on 2nd floor?*
- Other: corner desk w shelves, boardroom mini-fridge, 8 + 5 guest chairs – *not needed*

Because the furniture was purchased with public funds, items must be publicly sold and the proceeds go into general funds to offset replacement purchases.

No assessment for pricing has been done at this time.

Time is running short, so if the Commission would like items removed where they sit right now, we could approach the landlord to see if the new tenants can use any of it, see if Gerald's Buy & Sell would buy the boardroom tables back, approach the Fire Department, or simply list on Facebook Marketplace/Kijijii.

Alternatively, the Commission may prefer to be cautious to see how the Village office being in the Library goes, and could choose to defer a decision and re-evaluate after perhaps six months or so. Some or all of the furniture could be put into storage in the meantime. If the merger does not go as expected, alternative office space may again be needed.

In this case, please note that:

- a) Should the Commission office leave the Library, the tax rate would need to be increased by 1-2¢ to cover the costs of the Library building plus a new commercial lease and utilities.
- b) Access Storage in Chester has large units on sale until March 31st: see attached pricing on the most suitable units.
- c) If a move away from the Library building is preferred after re-evaluation, purchasing new furniture could cost more than a storage unit.

Options

1. Declare some or all of the furniture on the attached list surplus, and instruct staff to have it sold immediately “as is, where is”. (Note that everything may not be removed before moving date.)
2. Declare some or all of the items on the attached list surplus, but put all of it into storage to deal with once we are settled in the new space.
3. Defer a decision on the furniture for a set period of time (six months or a year), pending re-evaluation of how the relocation is working. The furniture would go into storage in the meantime.
4. Declare items in poorer condition surplus and sell those immediately, and defer a decision on items in better condition, pending re-evaluation of how the relocation is working.

Recommendation

Staff have no recommendation, other than to caution that storage may be needed regardless for at least a short period. Please note that staff will need direction on pricing.

Draft Motion

That the Chester Village Commission declare the following items of furniture surplus:

- Tbd
- Tbd
- Tbd

and instructs staff to sell the items “as is, where as” as soon as possible. If needed, a large storage unit for ____ weeks may be rented.

Attach

- DRAFT Surplus Furniture List (p. 2)
- Access Storage – large unit pricing (p. 8)

Potentially Surplus Furniture

27 Pleasant Street

Boardroom Furniture

- 5 boardroom tables
 - Mohagany veneer, wheeled, top can fold down
 - 60" wide x 30" deep x 29" high
 - Excellent condition
- 8 boardroom chairs
 - Black leather, wheeled, adjustable
 - Seat 19x20", adjustable height 17-21", 3 ½" thick padded seat, 3" padded back, capacity 275lbs
 - Excellent condition

Manager's Furniture

- Large desk
 - Mohagany wood veneer, 6 drawers, wiring access points, keyboard tray
 - 72"wide x 30" deep x 29" high
 - Excellent condition
- Large credenza
 - Mohagany veneer, two long filing drawers, 2 x 2-door cupboards
 - Bottom piece: 72"wide x 24" deep x 29" high
 - Top piece: 72"wide x 15" deep x 36" high
 - Excellent condition

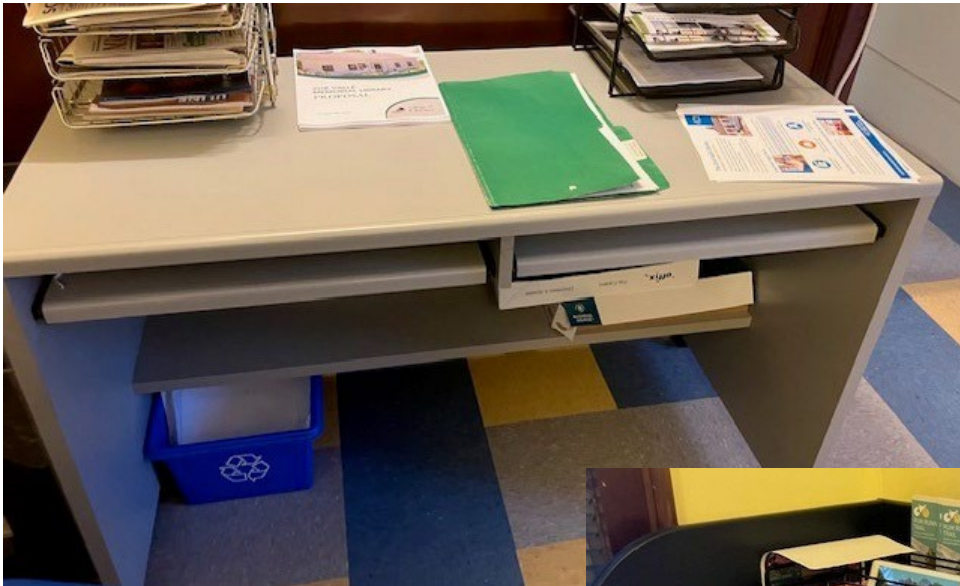


Reception Furniture

- Reception desk
 - Grey veneer, 4 drawers, keyboard tray
 - 60"wide x 30" deep x 30" high
 - Fair condition
- Side desk
 - Grey veneer, 4 drawers, keyboard tray
 - 47"wide x 21 1/2" deep x 30 3/4" high
 - Fair condition
- Display unit
 - Corner unit, dark wood veneer, 2 curved shelves
 - Each side is 24"wide, shelf centre depth 24", unit height 42"
 - Good condition

Other Furniture

- Corner desk w shelves
 - L-shaped, dark wood veneer, 0 drawers, keyboard tray in centre, 1 removable shelving unit with 2 static and 2 adjustable shelves
 - Desk: each wing is 60"wide x 24" deep x 29 1/2 " high
 - Shelves: 36"wide x 10" deep x 41 1/4" high
 - Very good condition
- Mini fridge
 - Note: no freezer
 - 20 1/2" wide x 21" deep x 33" high
 - Good condition, works perfectly
- Guest chairs x 8
 - Cream fabric upholstery, black wooden frame
 - Seat 19x19", padded seat and back rest, 28" height
 - Fair condition
- Guest chairs x 5
 - Typical hotel banquet chair, beige/black pattern fabric upholstery, metal frame, stackable
 - Seat 16x17", padded seat and back, 37 3/4" height
 - Fair condition (fabric needs cleaning)







★★★★★ 4.9 205 reviews >

Chester-Mahone Bay

Located near **Highway 2** our Access Storage Chester-Mahone Bay facility offers drive-up storage units, interior units, climate control, heated storage and outdoor oversized parking.

Top Features

[See all >](#)

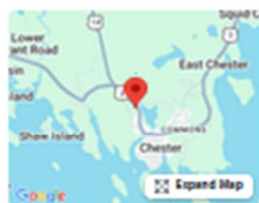
- Heated
 Interior Units
- Drive-up
 Outdoor Parking
- Climate Controlled Units
 Free Cancellation

Date Access Open 24 hours ▾

Office Hours Open 9am - 5pm ▾

4171 Mary 2, Chester MD 21510

902-700-6294



Long-term Deal

10% OFF 52 WEEKS

Online Exclusive

Size Help

Large Units | 10' x 20' - 10' x 30'

Self Storage

- ☐ Featured Units
- ☐ Small Units
- ☐ Medium Units
- ☒ **Large Units**
7-14 bedrooms houses

Vehicle Storage

- ☐ Outdoor Parking
- ☐ Indoor Car Storage

Commercial

- ☐ Office Space

Unit Features

- ☐ Climate Controlled
- ☒ **Heated**
Protected from harsh winter
- ☒ **Drive-Up**
Accessible from the outside

	10' x 20' Heated Drive-Up	75% OFF 6 WEEKS Ends Mar 10 ▾		\$47 \$188 / wk* RESERVE 3 units left
	10' x 25' Heated Drive-Up	50% OFF 12 WEEKS Flash Sale ▾		\$120 \$239 / wk* RESERVE
	15' x 20' Heated Drive-Up	50% OFF 12 WEEKS Flash Sale ▾		\$126 \$251 / wk* RESERVE
	20' x 25' Heated Drive-Up	50% OFF 12 WEEKS Flash Sale ▾		\$128 \$255 / wk* RESERVE

Less —