



Village of New Minas
Commission Meeting
March 9, 2026 @ 7:00 PM
Commission Room, LMCC
New Minas, Nova Scotia
AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest
4. Approval of Minutes:
 - a. February 9, 2026, Village Commission Meeting
5. Presentations:
6. Business Arising from Minutes:
 - a. **Strategic Planning Update**
 - b. **IT Audit Actions**
7. Comments from the Chair
8. Public Input Specific to Agenda Topics
9. Committee Reports:
 - a. Beautification Committee — No meeting since last report
 - b. Finance & Audit Committee — No meeting since last report
 - c. Access and inclusion Working Group — Draft notes not available at this time
 - d. New Minas Water Commission — Draft minutes included in package
 - e. Regional Sewer Committee — No meeting since last report
10. Staff Reports:
 - a. Clerk Treasurer/CAO — Report included in package
 - b. Director of Public Works — Report included in package
 - c. Manager of Finance — Report included in package
 - d. Director of Recreation — Report included in Package
11. New Business:
 - a. Briefing – Provincial Budget 2026-27: Impacts on Municipal Grant Programs
12. Correspondence:
13. General Public Input
14. Closed Session
 - a. Personnel
15. Adjournment



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4. Minutes



Village of New Minas
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February 9, 2026 @ 7:00 PM
Commission Room, LMCC
New Minas, Nova Scotia
DRAFT MINUTES

Commissioners Present:

- Dave Chaulk, Chair
- James Redmond, Vice Chair
- Mary Munroe
- Debra Windle-Smith
- Quentin Hill

Commissioners Absent:

Staff Present:

- Jeff Lawrence, Clerk Treasurer/CAO
- John Ansara, Director of Recreation and Community Development
- Cory Palmer, Director of Public Works

Others Present:

- Christina Sappington
- Maynard Stevens

1. Call to Order:

Dave Chaulk called the meeting to order at 7:00pm, welcoming those in attendance.

2. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest:

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. Approval of the Agenda:

Motion:

THAT the Agenda for the February 9, 2026, Commission Meeting be approved with the following additions:

- Under Presentations - 20 Years Service Recognition – Shelly Palmer
- Under New Business – Coyote Concern
- Under In-Camera – Personnel matter

M/Q. Hill

S/ J. Redmond

Motion Carried

4. Approval of Minutes:

a. January 12, 2026, Village Commission Meeting

Motion:

THAT the Minutes for the January 12, 2026, Village Commission Meeting be approved.

**M/J. Redmond
S/ Q. Hill
Motion Carried**

5. Presentations:

a. 20 Years Service Recognition – Shelly Palmer

Chair D. Chaulk presented Shelly Palmer, Manager of Finance, with a certificate recognizing her 20 years service. Chair Chaulk took the opportunity to speak to Shelly Palmer's strong work-related attributes and thanked her for her service.

6. Business Arising from Minutes:

a. Strategic Planning Update

J. Lawrence updated the Commission regarding the status of the strategic planning project.

b. IT Audit Actions

J. Lawrence updated the Commission regarding the status of the IT audit.

7. Comments from the Chair:

8. Public Input Specific to Agenda Topics:

9. Committee Reports:

a. Beautification Committee

D. Windle-Smith provided a verbal summary of the draft minutes included in the February 9th, 2026, Commission agenda package.

In addition, D. Windle spoke to welcoming the new members to the committee, the change to April 1st for the next committee meeting date, and the change in length for committee meetings from 60 to 90 minutes.

Motion:

THAT the draft minutes for the Beautification Committee be received as included in the February 9th, 2026, Commission agenda package and as verbally summarized by D. Windle-Smith.

M/D. Windle Smith

S/ J. Redmond

Motion Carried

b. Access and Inclusion Working Group

J. Ansara provided a review of the Access and Inclusion Working Group Report that is included in the agenda package.

Motion:

THAT the report for the Access and Inclusion Working Group be received as included in the February 9th, 2026, Commission agenda package and as verbally summarized by J. Ansara.

M/Q. Hill

S/ J. Redmond

Motion Carried

c. New Minas Water Commission

James Redmond provided a verbal summary of the draft minutes included in the February 9th, 2026, Commission agenda package.

Motion:

THAT the draft minutes for the New Minas Water Commission be received as included in the February 9th, 2026, Commission agenda package and as verbally summarized by J. Redmond.

M/J. Redmond

S/ Q. Hill

Motion Carried

d. Regional Sewer Committee

J. Redmond provided a verbal summary of the draft minutes included in the February 9th, 2026, Commission agenda package.

Motion:

THAT the draft minutes for the Regional Sewer Committee meeting be received as included in the February 9, 2026, Commission agenda package and as verbally summarized by J. Redmond.

M/J. Redmond
S/ D. Windle Smith
Motion Carried

10. Staff Reports:

a. CAO/ Clerk Treasurer

CAO/ Clerk Treasurer Lawrence provided a brief synopsis of the CAO/ Clerk Treasurer Report.

Motion:

THAT the CAO/ Clerk Treasurer report be received as included in the February 9, 2026, Commission agenda package.

M/D. Windle-Smith
S/ Q. Hill
Motion Carried

b. Public Works

The Director of Public Works provided a brief synopsis of the public works report.

Additional points discussed included:

- The new hire will start with the department on February 10th.
- Zack Alcorn has resigned and we will begin the hiring process to replace him.
- The advertisements for the foreman position will be posted shortly.

Motion:

THAT the Director of Public Works report be received as included in the February 9, 2026, Commission agenda package.

M/M. Munroe
S/ D. Windle-Smith
Motion Carried

c. Finance

Motion:

THAT the Manager of Finance report be received as included in the February 9, 2026, Commission agenda package.

M/ J. Redmond

S/ Q. Hill

Motion Carried

d. Recreation and Community Development

The Director of Recreation provided a brief synopsis of the recreation report.

Motion:

THAT the Director of Recreation report be received as included in the February 9, 2026, Commission agenda package.

M/ Q. Hill

S/ D. Windle-Smith

Motion Carried

11. New Business:

a. Veteran's Service Recognition Book – Advertising Support Request

J. Lawrence presented an RFD for advertising funding support for the Veteran's Service Recognition Book from the Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command of the Royal Canadian Legion.

MOTION

THAT the Village of New Minas approve the purchase of a 1/10-page full-colour business card advertisement in the 2026 Veteran's Service Recognition Book at a total cost of \$315, funded from the 2026/27 operating budget.

M/Q. Hill

S/ J. Redmond

Motion Carried

b. Coyote Concern

M. Munroe spoke to community concerns around aggressive coyotes in the area, especially during their mating season.

The CAO indicated that he would ask the Recreation Coordinator to post information regarding the concern on social media. It was suggested that the coordinator contact DNR to have them review the communicate in advance of posting.

12. Correspondence:

13. General Public Input:

a. Councillor Christina Sappington

- The recent village hosted coasting event was well received by those that participated.
- On February 12th Kings County will host a planning information meeting. A potential rezoning of the New Minas Connector Road from resource to institutional, and a potential expansion of the New Minas Growth Centre are on the agenda.
- Information regarding the NSFIM funding portal.

14. Closed Session:

Dave Chaulk indicated that there was a need for an in-camera session to deal with a personnel matter.

At 7:30pm, the Commission adjourned to move into a closed session.

Motion:

THAT the Commission adjourn to move into closed session.

M/J. Redmond

S/ D. Windle-Smith

Motion Carried

Motion:

THAT the Commission adjourn from the closed session.

M/ Q. Hill

S/ J. Redmond

Motion Carried

At 8:10pm the Commission reconvened the open session of the meeting.

15. Adjournment

There being no further business, Dave Chaulk called for a motion to adjourn at 8:12pm.

Motion:

THAT the meeting be adjourned.

M/ J. Redmond

S/ D. Windle-Smith

Motion Carried



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6. Business Arising from the Minutes



Village of New Minas
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9. Committee Reports



Draft Village of New Minas
New Minas Water Commission
March 3, 2026 @ 3:00 PM
Commission Room, LMCC
New Minas, Nova Scotia
DRAFT MINUTES

Members Present:

- Mary Munroe, Commission Member
- Bruce MacArthur, Citizen Member
- Dave Chaulk, Commission Member & Vice Chair

Members Absent:

- James Redmond, Commission Member & Chair
- Maynard Stevens, Citizen Member

Staff Present:

- Jeff Lawrence, Clerk Treasurer/CAO
- Cory Palmer, Director of Public Works

Others Present:

- None

1. Call to Order:

The Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 3:10pm, welcoming those in attendance.

2. Approval of the Agenda:

Motion:

THAT the Agenda for the March 3, 2026, Water Commission Meeting be approved as circulated

M/ B. MacArthur

S/ M. Munroe

Motion Carried

3. Approval of Minutes:

- a. January 27, 2026, Water Commission Meeting

Motion:

THAT the Minutes for the January 27, 2026, Water Commission Meeting be approved as circulated.

M/ M. Munroe

S/ B. MacArthur

Motion Carried

4. Business Arising from Minutes:

a. New Minas Water Utility Taxation Status

J. Lawrence provided a draft of a letter requested by the Water Commission at its January meeting building the case for exempting Village of New Mians water assets from municipal taxation.

J. Lawrence further noted that the letter is addressed to Kings County Council, but a similar letter would be drafted to provincial stakeholders recommending an amendment to the Assessment Act exempting Village Water Utilities from property tax.

J. Lawrence finally indicated that the original draft was shared with the Clerk Treasurers for the Village of Port Williams and the Village of Canning, and the recommendation from the Clerk Treasurer is that the letter be cosigned by all three Villages.

There was consensus around the table that the letter should be signed by D. Chaulk as Chair of the Village Commission.

J. Lawrence indicated that he would circulate the letter to Village Commissioners and ask if there were any concerns with D. Chaulk signing.

b. Water Infrastructure study

C. Palmer updated the Commission regarding the status of the study.

5. Comments from the Chair:

The Vice Chair indicated that he had no additional comments.

6. Staff Reports:

a. Water Operations Report

C. Palmer provided a review of the highlights from the water operator's report. In addition, C. Palmer spoke to the process and time required to allow public works employees to obtain their water certification as well as challenges with the Cornwallis Well motors.

Motion:

THAT the Water Operations Report be received as circulated prior to the February 24, 2026, Water Commission meeting and as verbally summarized by the Director of Public Works.

M/ B. MacArthur

S/ M. Munroe

Motion Carried

7. New Business

8. Correspondence:

There was no correspondence

9. Other Business

10. Public Input:

There was no public input.

11. Adjournment:

There being no further business, the Chair called for a motion to adjourn at 3:20pm.

Motion:

THAT the meeting be adjourned.

M/ B. MacArthur

S/ M. Munroe

Motion Carried



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10. Staff Reports

Information Report

To: Village Commission

By: Jeff Lawrence, Clerk Treasurer/CAO

Meeting Date: March 9, 2026

Subject: Monthly Report — Clerk Treasurer/CAO



Monthly Report — Clerk Treasurer/CAO

Highlights of the Past Month:

- Continue to work with administration and the Commission to complete the strategic planning project.
- With the critical components listed in the IT audit now tackled, we are finalizing the costs to address the remaining shortfalls identified in the audit and the recommended camera installation for budget purposes.

Regularly Scheduled Meetings:

In the past month, I attended the following regularly scheduled meetings:

- Individual meetings with Department Heads
- Water Commission
- Health and Safety

Other Notable Meetings:

- Advertised for the vacant Administrative Assistant position
- Held budget discussions with Jeff Hanshaw, Custom Page Media and Consulting Inc, regarding the close out of the IT upgrades project and the budget for a security camera install.
- Continued to meet with Natalie Palmer and Craig Kennedy (Peak Experience) to move forward the Village Strategic Planning project.
- Attended the Regional Sewer Technical Committee meeting
- Held discussions with solicitors regarding ongoing HR issues
- Met with CAOs/ Clerk Treasurers of Port Williams and Kingston on areas of common concern around water utility taxation
- The above CAOs/ Clerk Treasurers met with Kings County administration to discuss the taxation of water utility assets.
- Met with Kenwo representatives and the Director of Public Works to discuss the golf course's long-term plans for village water usage
- Met with local union reps regarding management/ staff relations
- Continue developing the budget

Professional Development:

- N/A

Outlook for Next Month:

The planned focus for the next month will be as follows:

- Work to finalize the strategic planning process
- Continue to work on the budget
- Secure Quotes from three vendors for a camera installation
- Attend Commission and Committee meetings
- Attend Department Head meetings (collective and individual)

Sincerely,



Jeff Lawrence

Clerk Treasurer/Chief Administrative Officer
902-681-0430 | cao@newminas.com

Village of New Minas
9489 Commercial Street
New Minas, NS B4N 3G3
newminas.com

Information Report

To: Village Commission

By: Cory Palmer

Meeting Date: March 9, 2025

Subject: Monthly Report — Director of Public Works



Monthly Report — Director of Public Works

Staff Update:

- We have received several resumes for the foreperson position. A few of the candidates appear to have the necessary skills for the position. We will be conducting interviews the week of March 9.

Current Projects/Work:

- Plowing and salting has been the bulk of the work over February.
- We have removed most of the equipment for the old chlorine gas system from the Busch Lane tank. We are trying to clean up any equipment that is no longer required.
- We are preparing for spring activities. The Public Works team met and developed a list of activities that need to be completed to prepare for spring.
- We started servicing the lawn mowers, blowers and trimmers to ensure they are ready for spring.
- All the picnic tables have been repaired and painted.

Long-Term Projects:

- Dillon Consulting is working on the water model, and they are ready for a draft presentation. The final report should be ready by last week of March.
- The sewer capacity study has been delayed again, the engineering firm said they are having some technical issues with the model. Working with them to get a new review date.
- We had 2 companies do an initial site visit to review our confined spaces, one of them has provided a quote and we are still waiting on the second company.

Professional Development:

- Shawn Cornelius will be scheduled for traffic signing course in 2026.
- Most of the employees will require confined space training in first half of 2026.
- The new employees will be scheduled for several training courses.

Outlook for Upcoming Months:

- Hire a new foreperson and start the training.
- Get the water department position posted and filled.
- Schedule training for the employees for the 2026-2027 budget year.
- Ensure we are ready for the spring activities and have all the supplies in stock.

Monthly Report — Manager of Finance

Summary:

Now that the T4's are completed and mailed out, the Finance department is focusing on year-end close and March's utility billing.

Current Tasks/Projects:

- Still working on the Bank Reconciliations, I hope to have them caught up within the near future.
- Third Quarterly Due to/from and HST, was received from the province.

Budget Update:

Property Taxes	Budgeted	Collected Year to Date February 28
• Residential	\$1,444,101	\$1,405,453.83
• Commercial	\$938,067	\$864,955.57
• Resource	\$8,570	\$7,966.87
Sewer	Budgeted	Collected Year to Date February 28
• Usage Charges	\$776,000	\$823,726.94
Water	Budgeted	Collected Year to Date February 28
• Metered Sales	\$857,000	\$861,416.15
• Sprinkler Service	\$4,999	\$5,008.79

Professional Development Summary:

Outlook for Next Month:

- Bank reconciliations
- Accounts payable
- Invoicing and receivables
- Payroll (bi-weekly)
- CRA remittance, Union fees and Pension
- RBC Pension
- PAD, tax and water

Information Report (Agenda Item 9.d.)

To: Village Commission

By: John Ansara, Director of Recreation & Community Development

Meeting Date: March 9, 2026

Subject: Monthly Report — Director of Recreation & Community Development



Monthly Report — Director of Recreation & Community Development

Summary:

- Completed and submitted RFD Grant for Milne Park playground
- Continued work on operational and capital budgets
- Participated in Village Strategic Planning session
- March Break registration on going (75% full, will likely fill over the next 2 weeks)
- Onboarded Acadia University intern, Sophie Messom for 9-week placement.
- Preparing for March 25 program registration date

Current Tasks/Projects:

- Winter Program delivery
- Planning for March Break camp
- Budget work, long term plan

Long-Term Projects:

- Recreation Dept Strategic Planning, including capital forecast
- Village strategic plan

Meetings:

- Annapolis Valley Trail Coalition – work continues to establish path forward for group
- Access and Inclusion working group – No meeting in February, next meeting March 5, 2026
- Beautification
- Valley Rec Summer Staff training (collaborative approach to training municipal recreation summer staff)
- Met with Cory Palmer to discuss park projects for next fiscal and beyond.

Professional Development Summary:

- Valley Recreation meeting – March 4, 2026 – focus on leadership development

Outlook for Next Month:

- Finish draft of operating + capital budget
- Work on spring programs, summer planning
- Deliver March Break Camp
- Mentor Acadia Student



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11. New Business

Village of New Minas

Briefing Note



Provincial Budget 2026–27: Impacts on Municipal Grant Programs

Prepared for: Village of New Minas Commission

Meeting Date: March 9, 2026

Prepared by: Jeffrey Lawrence, CAO/ Clerk Treasurer

1. Purpose

To brief the Commission on the Province of Nova Scotia's February 23, 2025, Budget 2026–27 announcement and outline implications for municipalities and villages resulting from the discontinuation of four major provincial grant programs.

2. Background

On **February 23, 2025**, the Province released **Budget 2026–27 – Defending Nova Scotia**. The Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs issued a letter on **February 24, 2025** advising that, due to fiscal pressures and reductions in the civil service and broader public sector, the Province is eliminating several discretionary municipal grant programs.

The letter states:

“Government is undertaking a number of measures including reducing the size of the civil service by 5%, reducing the size of the broader public service by 3% and reducing Government operating costs. We have also made the difficult decision to reduce discretionary grants.”

The Deputy Minister further confirms:

“For the Department of Municipal Affairs, the following programs will end:

- Flood Risk Infrastructure Investment Program (FRIIP)
- Provincial Capital Assistance Program (PCAP)
- Municipal Innovation Program (MIP)
- Growth & Renewal for Infrastructure Development (GRID)”

The letter also notes:

“These program changes do not affect funding agreements in place for previous fiscal years.”

3. Annual Provincial Budget Envelopes for Discontinued Programs

The following summarizes the typical annual funding envelopes for each program, based on provincial budget documents and program guidelines from 2021–2025.

3.1 Flood Risk Infrastructure Investment Program (FRIIP)

Annual Envelope: 25/26 Provincial Budget was \$250K

- Funding supported flood mapping, risk assessments, and mitigation infrastructure.

3.2 Provincial Capital Assistance Program (PCAP)

Annual Envelope: 25/26 Provincial Budget was \$1.69M

- One of the Province's longest-running municipal capital programs.
- Supported water, wastewater, stormwater, and drinking-water infrastructure.
- Typically funded 50% of eligible project costs.

3.3 Municipal Innovation Program (MIP)

Annual Envelope: 25/26 Provincial Budget was \$578k

- Focused on regional collaboration, shared services, and municipal efficiency projects.
- Provided up to 75% funding for approved initiatives.

3.4 Growth & Renewal for Infrastructure Development (GRID)

Annual Envelope: 25/26 Provincial Budget was \$15M

- Supported infrastructure related to growth, accessibility, and community renewal.
- Typically funded 50% of eligible project costs.

4. Implications for Municipalities and Villages

4.1 Loss of Future Provincial Funding Streams

The elimination of these programs removes several long-standing sources of capital and innovation funding that municipalities have relied on for:

- Water and wastewater upgrades
- Stormwater and flood-mitigation projects
- Regional collaboration and service-efficiency initiatives
- Infrastructure supporting growth, accessibility, and housing

4.2 Existing Agreements Remain Intact

The Deputy Minister confirms that previously approved funding agreements will continue unaffected.

4.3 Alternative Funding Sources

The Province notes that many projects previously eligible under these programs may still qualify under other funding envelopes, including:

- **Canada Community-Building Fund (CCBF)**
- **Green Infrastructure Stream (federal-provincial)**
- **Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund (SCCF)**
- **Future provincial capital programs as announced in subsequent budgets**

5. Recommended Actions

- 1. Monitor provincial announcements for replacement or transitional funding programs.**
- 2. Identify priority projects that may be repositioned for federal or alternative provincial funding.**

6. Appendices

- A. 2026-02-24 Letter – Paul Lefleche – Deputy minister – Discretionary Grants Discontinuance**
-

February 24, 2025

To Mayors, Wardens, Village Chairs:

Yesterday, February 23, the Government of Nova Scotia released Budget 2026-27 - Defending Nova Scotia (<https://novascotia.ca/budget>).

Over the past five years, Government has made significant investments in programs and services to improve healthcare, strengthen our communities and support those who need it most.

In the face of continuing global uncertainty and slower revenue growth, we need to manage expenses carefully. Government is undertaking a number of measures including reducing the size of the civil service by 5%, reducing the size of the broader public service by 3% and reducing Government operating costs. We have also made the difficult decision to reduce discretionary grants.

For the Department of Municipal Affairs, the following programs will end:

- Flood Risk Infrastructure Investment Program (FRIIP)
- Provincial Capital Assistance Program (PCAP)
- Municipal Innovation Program (MIP)
- Growth & Renewal for Infrastructure Development (GRID)

Since 2021, this Government has committed nearly \$500 million to municipalities to support critical projects such as drinking water, wastewater, disaster mitigation, accessibility, and transit. Today, the Department continues to support more than 250 active projects in communities across the province, bringing real value and ongoing benefits to municipalities.

I appreciate this may be concerning and I want you to know we continue to be focused on working with municipalities to drive growth.

Many of the projects that would have been eligible under these provincial grant programs will also be eligible for consideration under other programs.

As well, these program changes do not affect funding agreements in place for previous fiscal years. Should you have questions, I encourage you to contact Hardy Stuckless, Executive Director, at hardy.stuckless@novascotia.ca for further information.

Sincerely,



Paul LaFleche
Deputy Minister

c: Chief Administrative Officers
Village Clerk Treasurers
Juanita Spencer, NSFM
Jeff Sunderland, AMANS