



Region of Queens Municipality Regular Council

Tuesday, February 10th, 2026

9:00 a.m.

Minutes

Present: Mayor Scott Christian, Chair
Deputy Mayor Maddie Charlton
Councillor Roberta Roy
Councillor Courtney Wentzell
Councillor Vicki Amirault
Councillor Jack Fancy
Councillor Stewart Jenkins
Councillor Wanda Carver

Staff: Willa Thorpe, Chief Administrative Officer
Angela Green, Municipal Clerk

1.0 Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement

Mayor Christian called the meeting to order at 9:13 a.m. and acknowledged that we have the privilege to live and work in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We are all treaty people and have responsibilities as treaty people.

2.0 Approval of Agenda

Councillor Amirault requested the addition of Item 13.2 – Brooklyn Area Rate to Council Business. Mayor Christian consented to the addition.

It was moved by Councillor Jenkins and seconded by Councillor Carver:

THAT the Council of Region of Queens Municipality approve the February 10th, 2026 agenda as revised.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

3.0 Adoption of Minutes

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Wentzell:

THAT Council for Region of Queens Municipality approve the January 27th, 2026 Regular Council Meeting minutes as presented.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

4.0 Public Comment

1. Bruce McInnes, Labelle

As a representative of the Greater Molega Lake Lot Owners Association, Mr. McInnes addressed Council regarding the proposed Private Road Maintenance Charges Bylaw. He advised that the Association has been involved in the bylaw process since 2022 and expressed concern that, given the timing in mid-February, there may be insufficient time to pass the bylaw by mid-March. He indicated that liens are not a concern for the Association and, in fact, are a primary reason for requesting the bylaw, as some lot owners do not pay their fees. He stated that he does not believe additional consultation with lot owners is necessary, nor that a low-income rate provision should be included in the bylaw, noting that such provisions are not present in other private road fee bylaws in the province. He further commented that those who pay their fees should not bear the costs of those who do not. The representative advised that the Association has already completed billing for the current year but does hope the bylaw will be in force by July in advance of their annual general meetings.

2. Al Moore, Molega

As the Director of the Hanley Lake Property Owners Association, Mr. Moore addressed Council and commented that the current draft represents a significant improvement over the version presented last year. He questioned why the Region would be collecting HST under the proposed bylaw and asked whether it would be possible to structure multiple payment dates throughout the year, for example, 25% in the fall, 50% in the spring, and the remaining 25% in June, to better align with association budgeting needs. He further stated that he believes low-income considerations should be addressed by government programs rather than through the bylaw itself.

3. Scott Jeremy, Greenfield

Mr. Jeremy, speaking as a member of the Jud Freeman Road Association, provided comments respecting proposed Bylaw No. 27. He raised questions regarding how the bylaw would apply to informal associations, roads that extend through two counties, and the proposed fee collection process. He also expressed concern that road associations may be compelled to enter into agreements under the bylaw and suggested that additional consultation should occur prior to first or second reading.

Mayor Christian clarified that participation under the proposed bylaw is entirely voluntary and that associations would not be required to apply.

The meeting recessed at 10:22 a.m. and resumed at 10:29 a.m.

5.0 Delegations and Presentations

5.1 Property Valuation Services Corporation

Council received a presentation from the Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC) regarding the 2026 Assessment Roll for the Region of Queens.

PVSC advised that it is a municipally funded, not-for-profit organization responsible for assessing all properties in Nova Scotia in accordance with the *Assessment Act*. Property assessments reflect market value as of the base date of January 1, 2025, and the state of the property as of December 1, 2025.

The total 2026 Assessment Roll for Queens is \$2,550,937,700, with a total taxable value of \$1,494,566,800. The 2026 Capped Assessment Program (CAP) rate is 2.6%, based on the Nova Scotia Consumer Price Index.

The presentation also outlined reassessment analysis, including qualified sales data, permit activity, and recent appeal volumes. Property owners may appeal their 2026 assessment by February 12, 2026, through a three-level appeal process.

Council was encouraged to direct constituent inquiries to PVSC's Contact Centre.

5.2 North Queens Active Living

Council received the 2026 Annual Progress Report from North Queens Active Living (NQAL), a community-led non-profit organization established in 2021 that promotes active living and community wellbeing in North Queens.

NQAL reported that 26 activities and partnerships were supported in North Queens over the past year, including youth sports camps, recreation programming, and community-led initiatives. Updates were provided on the NQCS Playground Project, with Phase One fully funded and Phase Two underway. Construction is in progress with substantial provincial and municipal funding secured, and completion anticipated in summer 2026.

NQAL presented its 2026/27 operating budget of \$27,500, with funding contributions from the Region of Queens Municipality, the Regional Centre for Education, fundraising, and user fees. Continued partnership and support from the Municipality were acknowledged and appreciated.

6.0 Unfinished Business

There was no Unfinished Business today.

7.0 Staff Reports

7.1 Nature Conservancy of Canada Proposal - Path Lake Lands

Council considered a staff report regarding a proposal from the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) to acquire Municipal property identified as PID 70067921, a 160-acre parcel located at 242 East Port L'Hebert Road, for \$1.00.

The NCC proposes to protect and steward the lands in perpetuity, incorporate the property into the Port Joli Nature Reserve, and assume all associated transaction costs. The 2025 assessed value of the property is \$61,900.

Council previously gave notice of intent to enter into a purchase and sale agreement and scheduled a Public Hearing for February 10, 2026, in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act*.

It was moved by Councillor Jenkins and seconded by Councillor Roy:

THAT Council enter into a purchase and sale agreement with the Nature Conservancy of Canada respecting the transfer of Municipal lands identified as PID 70067921 and located at 242 East Port L'Hebert Road in the community of East Port L'Hebert to the Nature Conservancy of Canada for \$1.00;

AND THAT the transfer of title incorporates a commitment from the Nature Conservancy of Canada to protect and steward the lands forever;

AND THAT all costs associated with this transaction be borne by the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

AND THAT the Mayor and Chief Administrative Officer be authorized to execute all documents necessary to give effect to this transaction.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.2 Municipal Heritage Designation - Bethany United Church

Council considered a staff report regarding an application to designate Bethany United Church, located at 31 Medway River Road, Mill Village (PID 70105515), as a Municipal Heritage Property.

The church, constructed circa 1816 and recognized as the first place of worship in Mill Village, continues to be used by the United Church congregation. The Heritage Advisory Committee reviewed the application and recommended support for the designation.

Council was asked to serve Notice of Recommendation and schedule a public hearing to allow the property owner an opportunity to comment on the proposed designation.

It was moved by Councillor Wentzell and seconded by Councillor Amirault:

THAT Council serve Notice of Recommendation upon the owners of the property identified as PID 70105515 and located at 31 Medway River Road, known as Bethany United Church, regarding the proposed registration of the property in the Municipal Registry of Heritage Property;

AND THAT Council schedule a public hearing for April 14, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. in the Council Chamber of the Municipal Administration Building, 249 White Point Road, Liverpool, Nova Scotia, to provide the property owners an opportunity to make representations respecting the proposed designation.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.3 Water Utility Rate Decision

Council received a staff report providing an overview of the Nova Scotia Regulatory and Appeals Board decision approving updated water utility rates for the Region of Queens Municipality. The approved rates, resulting from a formal rate study and public hearing process, reflect adjustments to support cost recovery and sustainable operation of the Utility. The Board's order also included changes to financial practices, capital funding, and reporting requirements. Staff advised that public notice would be provided regarding the rate changes and available support programs for residents.

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Jenkins:

THAT Council receive the report titled 'Water Utility Rate Decision' for information.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.4 RFP for Insurance and Risk Management Services

Council considered a staff report regarding the Request for Proposals for insurance and risk management services. Following evaluation by the Audit and Internal Control Committee, AON Reed Stenhouse Inc. was recommended as the preferred provider for the 2026–2027 fiscal year, with an option to renew for up to four additional years. The recommendation was based on comparable coverage and services, with AON's proposal offering significantly lower pricing and continuity of service. Contracting with AON is expected to reduce overall insurance costs while maintaining appropriate coverage for municipal operations and affiliated emergency service organizations.

It was moved by Councillor Jenkins and seconded by Councillor Wentzell:

THAT Council award the contract for the Municipality's insurance and risk management services to AON Reed Stenhouse for the period April 1, 2026 to March 31, 2027, with the option to renew annually for up to four additional years, as recommended by the Audit and Internal Control Committee, and authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to execute the agreement.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.5 Active Transportation Trail – Dr. John C. Wickwire Academy to “The Lot” / Liverpool Library

Council considered a staff report regarding the proposed development of an active transportation trail connecting Dr. John C. Wickwire Academy to the Liverpool Library and “The Lot” through municipal land. The project was identified through community engagement as a priority to improve safe and accessible connectivity for students and residents. Council considered supporting a Connect 2 Active Transportation funding application, which could fund up to 75% of project costs, and allocating municipal matching funds. The proposed trail would enhance connectivity, accessibility, and integration with existing active

transportation infrastructure, while supporting community safety and active living.

It was moved by Councillor Roy and seconded by Councillor Amirault:

THAT Council provide a letter of support for the Connect 2 funding proposal, direct staff to proceed with trail construction if funding approval is received from CCTH, and direct staff to include \$25,000 in the 2026–2027 Operating Budget as matching funds toward the project.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.6 Municipal Services Building HVAC Study

Council received a staff report presenting the results of a mechanical investigation into heating, ventilation, and cooling improvements at the Municipal Services Building. The assessment, conducted by DUMAC Energy Limited, recommended installation of a new system to improve heating, provide mechanical cooling, and enhance ventilation in key areas including the auditorium, offices, and staff spaces. The proposed upgrades, included in the approved Capital Investment Plan, are intended to improve energy efficiency, address operational challenges related to temperature control, enhance occupant comfort, and support the building's use as a comfort centre.

It was moved by Councillor Fancy and seconded by Councillor Carver:

THAT Council receive the report titled 'Municipal Services Building HVAC Study' for information.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.7 Council Implementation Report

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Roy:

THAT Council receive the report titled 'Council Implementation Report' for information.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

8.0 Bylaws and Policies

8.1 First Reading – Bylaw 11 – Public Sewer Systems

Council considered a staff report regarding proposed updates to Bylaw No. 11 respecting Public Sewer Systems and introduced the bylaw for first reading. The proposed revisions modernize and restructure the existing bylaw, last updated in 2009, to improve clarity, incorporate current operational practices, and address emerging issues such as mandatory connections, RV connections, service lateral provisions, easements, wastewater discharge monitoring, and the introduction of a wastewater betterment charge for new connections. The updated bylaw is intended to strengthen the Municipality's ability to regulate sewer system use, protect infrastructure, and support sustainable wastewater management.

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Wentzell:

THAT Council give First Reading to Bylaw No. 11, A Bylaw Respecting the Regulation of Discharges to Municipal Sewerage Systems.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

8.2 Introduction – Bylaw 27 – Private Road Levy

Council considered a staff report regarding Draft Bylaw No. 27, which proposes a framework allowing the Municipality to collect private road maintenance levies on behalf of Lot Owners Associations or Small Community Applicants through the property tax billing process. The bylaw would enable the Municipality to collect and remit funds for private road maintenance and improvements, with such charges enforceable in the same manner as property taxes and area rates. Staff noted the importance of further engagement with Lot Owners Associations to ensure the bylaw reflects community needs, addresses potential financial impacts on property owners, and aligns with best practices in neighbouring municipalities. Council was presented with options including proceeding with readings of the bylaw, conducting further research, or deferring implementation to allow additional consultation.

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Carver:

THAT Council directs staff to conduct additional research to recommend material changes to the draft bylaw as presented and present a revised version of the draft bylaw at a future Regular meeting of Council.

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Carver:

THAT the motion on the floor be amended to read:

THAT Council directs staff to conduct additional research to recommend material changes to the draft bylaw as presented in consultation with Lot Owner Associations and present a revised version of the draft bylaw at a future Regular meeting of Council by June 2026.

MOTION TO AMEND CARRIED unanimously.

MOTION CARRIED with six (6) in favour, and two (2) against.

The meeting recessed at 12:18 p.m. and resumed at 12:27 p.m.

9.0 Correspondence for Action

There was no Correspondence for Action today.

10.0 Correspondence for Information

There was no Correspondence for Information today.

11.0 Report from In Camera

There was one (1) motion arising from *In Camera* discussion to make.

11.1 Liverpool Business Development Centre - New Tenant Agreements

Council considered a staff report regarding proposed lease agreements for office space at the Liverpool Business Development Centre with the Lunenburg County Home Support Services Society and the Nova Scotia Department of Public Works for use by the Department of Emergency Management. The leases would provide space both to support delivery of home care services in Queens and establish a regional emergency management presence in Region of Queens Municipality. Entering into the agreements would allow the Municipality to utilize vacant space and generate lease revenue while supporting service delivery and provincial collaboration.

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Jenkins:

THAT Council enter into lease agreements for the provision of office space at the Liverpool Business Development Centre with the Lunenburg County Home Support Services Society and the Nova Scotia Department of Public Works, Real Estate Division.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

12.0 Mayor's Report

Mayor Christian took a moment to honour the life of Paul Cunningham, a Region of Queens employee who had recently passed away. The Mayor noted that he had ordered the Municipality to enter a period of mourning and directed that flags be lowered to half mast. Members of Council and those present observed a moment of silence in his memory.

The Mayor also reported on several recent meetings and community events, including a January 30 meeting in Caledonia hosted by the Queens Community Health Board to discuss gaps in youth supports in North Queens and opportunities for municipal involvement in connecting community resources.

The Mayor attended a February 9 regional meeting with Mayors, Wardens, CAOs, and Deputy CAOs from Lunenburg County and Queens, where discussions focused on regional housing strategies, the transformation of fire services, and storm response and communications with Nova Scotia Power.

The Mayor further recognized the organizers of the George Fletcher Tournament and Queens Place Emera Centre staff, noting the upcoming minor hockey tournament scheduled for February 13 - 16.

13.0 Council Business

13.1 Correspondence Referral to Heritage Advisory Committee

Councillor Wentzell brought forward correspondence received by the Mayor from a resident suggesting that municipally owned land at the Old Burial Ground be considered for potential use as green space. He then made the motion to refer this matter to the Heritage Advisory Committee for review and comment.

It was moved by Councillor Wentzell and seconded by Councillor Roy:

THAT Council refer correspondence from a resident respecting the potential repurposing of municipally owned land at the Old Burial Ground for green space use to the Heritage Advisory Committee for review and comment.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

13.2 Brooklyn Area Rate Public Consultation and Vote

Councillor Amirault reminded residents of the upcoming Public Consultation and Area Rate Vote scheduled for February 11 and 13, noting that the process is required by policy in the second year of Council's mandate. She advised that the vote relates to renewal requests from the Brooklyn Recreation Committee and the Brooklyn Cemetery Committee and highlighted eligibility requirements for residents to participate.

14.0 New Business

There was no New Business to discuss today.

15.0 In Camera

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Carver that the proceedings move to Closed Session at 12:42 p.m. to discuss the following item:

15.1 Personnel

It was moved by Councillor Roy and seconded by Deputy Mayor Charlton that the proceedings exit Closed Session at 12:46 p.m.

15.3 Appointment of Accessibility Committee Member

It was moved by Councillor Roy and seconded by Councillor Carver:

THAT Council for Region of Queens Municipality appoint Joel Zwicker to the Accessibility Advisory Committee, for a term to expire on October 31, 2027.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

16.0 Adjournment

The Meeting was adjourned at 12:46 p.m.

Mayor Scott Christian, Chair

Angela Green, Municipal Clerk

Date Approved: February 24, 2026