



# Region of Queens Municipality Regular Council

## Tuesday, January 27, 2026

### 6:00 p.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

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Mayor Christian called the meeting to order at 3:57 p.m.

## 2.0 Approval of Agenda

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**It was moved by Councillor Carver and seconded by Councillor Amirault:**

**THAT** the Council of Region of Queens Municipality approve the January 27, 2026 agenda as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 3.0 In Camera

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

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality move to Closed Session to discuss four items:

- 3.1 Personnel
- 3.2 Personnel
- 3.3 Personnel
- 3.4 Personnel

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

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

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality return to open session.

***The meeting recessed at 4:46 p.m. and resumed at 5:30 p.m.***

Mayor Christian called the Public Session to order at 5:30 p.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.

## 4.0 Adoption of Minutes

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

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality approve the January 13, 2026 Regular Council Meeting minutes as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 5.0 Public Comment

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### 1. Shelley Stevens, Port Medway

Ms. Stevens, a resident of Port Medway, spoke in opposition to the development application for 72 Fostertown Road, noting that she resides immediately adjacent to the subject property. Ms. Stevens advised that the application seeks amendments to the Land Use Bylaw to permit four fixed-roof overnight accommodations. She noted that the Planning Advisory Committee reviewed the application and recommended that it be denied.

Ms. Stevens further advised that residents of Fostertown Road and surrounding area oppose the application, citing concerns including road safety due to the one-lane nature of the road and its inability to accommodate additional traffic or parking. She raised concerns regarding water supply and septic servicing, noting that the area relies on drilled wells that are known to run dry and that the septic plan lacks clarity. Ms. Stevens indicated that the application does not clearly identify

the number of occupants, building sizes, layouts, or proposed garbage and parking arrangements.

She further expressed the view that the proposed zoning change is inappropriate for the area, would set an undesirable precedent, and would negatively impact a community characterized by full-time residents who value safety, privacy, and a quiet rural environment. Ms. Stevens stated that approval of the application would fundamentally alter the character of the community and reduce its liveability.

Ms. Stevens urged Council to deny the rezoning application for 72 Fostertown Road and submitted a petition from local residents in opposition to the development to the Municipal Clerk.

## 2. Denaige McDonnell, Liverpool

Dr. McDonnell expressed concern that the Strategic Planning staff report being presented at this meeting does not adequately represent the Municipality as a whole, noting that only a small percentage of residents participated in the Town Hall engagement sessions. They suggested that the document reflects primarily the perspectives of those who attended these sessions and does not capture broader community input. She further commented that low public engagement may reflect broader dissatisfaction and perceived inaction by the Region.

Dr. McDonnell characterized the plan as containing general intentions rather than a clear, actionable work plan, and noted the absence of a jurisdictional review and long-term visioning. She expressed concern that, without clearer direction and measurable outcomes, the plan may not succeed and may represent an inefficient use of public funds. She also commented on the roles of Council and administration, suggesting that Council should establish clearer expectations and provide stronger direction to staff.

In closing, Dr. McDonnell emphasized the importance of defining a long-term vision for the Municipality and encouraged Council to regroup and determine clear priorities, including consideration of what the Region of Queens should look like in the next 20 years.

## 6.0 Delegations and Presentations

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There were no Delegations or Presentations today.

## 7.0 Unfinished Business

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There was no Unfinished Business today.

## 8.0 Staff Reports

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### 8.1 2026-2029 Draft Strategic Priorities Plan

Deputy Chief Administrative Officer Hirtle presented the draft 2026 - 2029 Strategic Priorities Plan, which was developed by staff based on direction from Council and input received during extensive community consultation conducted in the fall of 2025. He advised that a Strategic Plan is an important pillar of sound municipal governance, and is intended to guide Council decision making, staff work planning, and budget development for the 2026 - 2027 fiscal year and throughout the remainder of the Council term.

Mr. Hirtle outlined that the community engagement process included seven in-person public sessions held across Queens County, along with both online and in-person surveys. He noted that approximately 165 residents participated through in-person sessions or written submissions, with an additional 79 online survey responses received. Engagement activities focused on identifying priorities within four strategic pillars: Governance, Economic Development, Community Wellness, and Environment and Infrastructure.

Mr. Hirtle summarized key findings from the consultation, noting that Economic Development emerged as the highest overall priority for residents, with the top Economic Development priority being the development and implementation of an Economic Development Plan. Within the Governance pillar, transparency and accountability ranked

highest. Strengthening partnerships with community-based organizations was identified as the leading priority under Community Wellness, and repairing and replacing aging infrastructure ranked highest within the Environment and Infrastructure pillar.

He advised that, if approved, the Strategic Priorities Plan would be used as a guiding document for staff in the development of departmental workplans and the 2026 - 2027 operating budget. He further noted that staff would report quarterly to Council on implementation progress and that the plan would be reviewed annually to ensure it continues to reflect Council and community priorities.

**It was moved by Councillor Wentzell and seconded by Councillor Carver:**

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality approve the draft 2026 - 2029 Strategic Priorities Plan as amended with Council's suggestions, and direct staff to use it as a guiding document in budget preparation and workplan development for the 2026 - 2027 fiscal year.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 8.2 Fixed Roof Overnight Accommodations – Port Medway

Director MacLeod presented a report advising that the Municipality has received a request to amend the Land Use Bylaw to permit the establishment of a fixed-roof overnight accommodation operation at 72 Fostertown Road, Port Medway. He noted that the property is located within the Hamlet Residential zone, where this use is not currently permitted.

Director MacLeod explained that, in order to consider the application, Council would be required either to rezone the subject property or to enter into a development agreement permitting the proposed use. He further advised that the Planning Advisory Committee had reviewed the request and, following discussion, was not supportive of proceeding with the application at this time.

**It was moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Amirault:**

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality deny the application to allow for a four (4) unit fixed-roof overnight accommodation operation on property located at 72 Fostertown Road in Port Medway and identified as PID # 70090691.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

### 8.3 Funding Request – Queens Neighborhood Co-operative Housing Ltd.

Councillor Fancy declared a conflict of interest and withdrew from the table at this time.

Director Veinotte presented a report regarding a funding request from Queens Neighbourhood Co-operative Housing Ltd. (QNCH) in the amount of \$750,000. She advised that the request relates to the Lawrence Street Affordable Housing Project which represents the first phase of QNCH's broader neighbourhood co-operative housing model.

She further explained that the requested funding could be fully supported through donation revenue recently received by the Municipality, specifically a \$750,000 donation from the J&M Murphy Foundation, which expressed interest in supporting local housing initiatives. As a result, there would be no impact on the Municipality's operating budget, with the funds to be charged to the Grants to Organizations budget line and offset by sundry revenue.

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

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality approve the funding request from Queens Neighborhood Co-operative Housing Ltd (QNCH) for \$750,000, to be funded with the donation from the J & M Murphy Foundation.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

Councillor Fancy returned to the table following the conclusion of the item.

## 9.0 Bylaws and Policies

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### 9.1 First Reading – Bylaw 14 – Tax Exemptions

Director Veinotte presented a report to Council outlining amendments to Bylaw No. 14, which is reviewed annually by Council and provides property tax exemptions for eligible properties in accordance with criteria set out in the *Municipal Government Act*. This report outlined the proposed list of exempt properties and identified any changes resulting from exemption requests received by staff. Council was requested to review the proposed exemptions and consider approval of Bylaw No. 14.

**It was moved by Councillor Amirault and seconded by Deputy Mayor Charlton:**

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality gives first reading to Bylaw No 14 - Tax Exemptions as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

### 9.2 Amendment – Administrative Policy 9 – Tax Exemptions

Director Veinotte presented a report outlining that the *Municipal Government Act* provides Council with the authority to adopt policy granting property tax exemptions for low-income residents. Staff are recommending that the current policy be updated for the 2026–2027 fiscal year.

The proposed amendment is intended to expand eligibility in a manner that would benefit the greatest number of low-income residents. The financial impact of the recommended change is estimated at an additional \$15,000 per fiscal year. Council was requested to consider and approve the updated policy.

**It was moved by Councillor Jenkins and seconded by Councillor Fancy:**

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality adopts the amendments to Administrative Policy No. 9 – Tax Exemptions as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

### 9.3 Amendment – Operational Policy 11 – Community Investment Fund

Ms. Sereda, Community Economic Development Officer, presented proposed amendments to Operational Policy 11 – Community Investment Fund. The recommended changes are informed by staff's experience administering the program, engagement with community organizations, and consultation with funding partners and past Fund administrators.

The proposed amendments are intended to improve clarity, accessibility, and administrative efficiency, while maintaining appropriate governance and accountability. Council was requested to consider and approve the proposed policy amendments to ensure the Community Investment Fund continues to effectively support community organizations and provide meaningful benefit to the community. Council was requested to consider and adopt the proposed changes to the policy.

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

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality adopts the amendments to Operational Policy 11 – Community Investment Fund as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 10.0 Correspondence for Action

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There was no Correspondence for Action today.

## 11.0 Correspondence for Information

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There was no Correspondence for Information today.

## 12.0 Report from In Camera

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There were four (4) motions arising from In Camera discussion to make.

### 3.1 – Personnel

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

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality directs staff to engage a third party to review the current salary grid, employee schedules, and on-call system to identify opportunities for wage parity across the organization.

**MOTION CARRIED with seven (7) in favour, and one (1) against.**

### 3.2 – Personnel

**It was moved by Councillor Amirault and seconded by Councillor Jenkins:**

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality directs staff to proceed with the personnel matter as directed during the closed session.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

### 3.3 – Personnel

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

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality directs staff to proceed with the personnel matter as directed during the closed session.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

### 3.4 – Personnel

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

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality accepts the resignation of Stew Horton from the Citizens Advisory Committee on Council Remuneration, and appoints the next-ranked candidate, Tara Druzina, in his place.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 13.0 Mayor's Report

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Mayor Christian presented his report outlining his meetings and activities undertaken in January 2026.

The Mayor advised that on January 16, he met with representatives of the Astor Theatre Society to continue discussions regarding collaboration opportunities, improvements to the Arts and Cultural Centre, and organizational stability. He further noted that contact was made with the office of MP Fancy to obtain an update on the status of Green and Inclusive Community Buildings (GICB) funding.

The Mayor reported that a meeting scheduled for January 19 in Caledonia to discuss service gaps and opportunities to better support the North Queens community was postponed and has been rescheduled for January 30, 2026.

He advised that on January 21, he met with the Chief Administrative Officer of the Native Council of Nova Scotia to initiate discussions on potential collaboration related to housing and renewable energy initiatives.

The Mayor reported that on January 22, he attended a session on economic development in Atlantic Canada with Deputy CAO Hirtle, featuring Don Mills and David Campbell. He noted that the session included discussion on positioning Queens within the South Shore economic region and the importance of population growth and retention.

The Mayor further advised that on January 23, the RCMP District Commander and Superintendent delivered a workshop outlining the role of plain-clothes units and the rationale for establishing such a unit within the Queens RCMP detachment.

The Mayor concluded by noting that on January 26, he met with film producers interested in undertaking a small-scale film production in Queens County in the spring, and that staff would be working with the

Economic Development team to explore opportunities to promote the Municipality as a destination for rural film production.

## 14.0 Council Business

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Councillor Wentzell requested that an item be added to Council Business, being Item 14.2 - Report on Cameron's Corner. The Mayor advised that a two-thirds majority of Council was required to add the item to the agenda. Council unanimously agreed to add the item.

### 14.1 College Street Safety Concerns – Deputy Mayor Charlton

Deputy Mayor Charlton raised concerns regarding pedestrian and vehicular safety on College Street, specifically the section between Waterloo Street and the point where sidewalks end. She noted that this corridor is a primary access route for students travelling to the high school and experiences significant pedestrian traffic. She brought the matter forward at this time in recognition that the Mount Pleasant Service Exchange project includes work in this area, and to inquire whether interim measures could be considered to improve pedestrian safety prior to completion of the project.

Director Grant advised that, in the short term, a water line installation is planned for the upper portion of College Street, being the provincially owned section that currently includes an asphalt sidewalk, and that this work is anticipated to occur by the end of the current calendar year. In the longer term, Director Grant explained that a comprehensive water infrastructure project is planned for College Street, which would include street rehabilitation, sewer and stormwater upgrades, and the incorporation of sidewalks. He further noted that additional road acquisition may be required to maintain two lanes, or alternatively, Council may wish to consider conversion to a one-way street. This work is estimated to occur approximately six to seven years from now.

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

**THAT** Council for Region of Queens Municipality direct staff to return with options to improve pedestrian safety on College Street, as interim measures while awaiting the sidewalk and road upgrades to be delivered as part of the Mount Pleasant Service Exchange project.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 14.2 Report on Cameron's Corner – Councillor Wentzell

Councillor Wentzell reported that the conversion of Cameron's Corner to an all-way stop has resulted in effective traffic calming in the area. He advised that constituent feedback has been largely positive, notwithstanding negative commentary on social media. Councillor Wentzell noted that residents have reported significantly reduced vehicle speeds for east–west traffic at the blind corner, and improved safety as vehicles are no longer required to edge into the intersection to gain sightlines on Old Port Mouton Road. He further advised that members of the Liverpool Fire Department have expressed support for the change.

## 15.0 New Business

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There was no New Business to discuss today.

## 16.0 Adjournment

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The Meeting was adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

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Mayor Scott Christian, Chair

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Angela Green, Municipal Clerk

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_