



# Region of Queens Municipality Special Council

## Tuesday, March 17, 2026

### 10:00 a.m.

## Minutes

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

**Regrets:** Councillor Courtney Wentzell

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

## 1.0 Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement

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Mayor Christian called the meeting to order at 10:00 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.

The Mayor noted that regrets had been received from Councillor Wentzell and that the absence was accepted.

## 2.0 Approval of Agenda

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

**THAT** the Council of Region of Queens Municipality approve the March 17, 2026 agenda as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 3.0 Delegations and Presentations

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### 3.1 Queens County Transit

Paul Deveau and Donna Croft appeared before Council as representatives of Queens County Transit (QCT) and presented an overview of the organization's activities for the 2025–2026 year. The presentation highlighted QCT's operational activities and the continued importance of transit services to residents of Queens County.

Representatives requested that Council consider the following:

1. That the annual operating grant provided to Queens County Transit be increased from \$50,000 to \$65,000; and
2. That a one-time contribution of \$20,000 be provided to assist with the purchase of a new vehicle.

## 4.0 Correspondence for Information

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Council received correspondence for information regarding the Draft 2026–2027 Operating Budget. Letters of support were received from the Queens Association for Supported Living (QASL), the Community Food Resource Network, the Queens County Food Bank, and the Queens Community Health Board, each respectfully requesting that Council retain the \$50,000 allocation for the development of a Community Wellness Strategy in the Draft 2026–2027 Operating Budget.

## 5.0 Staff Reports

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### 5.1 2026 Conference Attendance – Cost Summary and Council Direction

Staff presented a report outlining the municipal conferences available for attendance in 2026 and their associated estimated costs, seeking Council's direction on attendance. Six conferences were identified: the NSFM Spring Conference in Yarmouth (April 29 – May 1, estimated \$7,200 for four attendees); the NSFM Fall Conference in Halifax (November 3 – 6, estimated \$12,000); the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Annual Conference in Edmonton (June 4 – 7, estimated \$10,000, open to up to three members of Council including the Mayor or designate, with the CAO and DCAO ineligible per Administrative Policy 17); the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA) Annual Conference in Whistler (May 25 – 27); and the AMANS Spring Conference in Digby (June 10 – 12) and Fall Conference in Dartmouth (October 13 – 16). The total estimated cost of attendance across all six conferences, as proposed, is \$50,200.

Council was presented with five options ranging from approving attendance as proposed, to approving selected conferences only, reducing attendee numbers, deferring a decision, or declining all conference attendance for 2026. Staff noted that early registration may be required for some events to secure preferred accommodation and registration rates. Council was asked to provide direction identifying which members would attend each conference, whether proposed attendee

numbers are approved as presented, and any budget considerations or restrictions to be applied.

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

**THAT** Council approve attendance the selected conferences, and that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Conference be removed from the Draft Budget, as no Council members have expressed interest in attending in 2026; and that the calculations for the 2026 Fall Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) Conference be revised to reflect the addition of one (1) attendee.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

*Council recessed at 10:54 a.m. and resumed at 11:03 a.m.*

## **5.2 2026 – 2027 Operational Budget Discussion**

Staff presented the third draft of the 2026–2027 Operating Budget, incorporating revisions directed by Council at the March 10, 2026 Regular Meeting along with additional information requested at that time. The report introduces two versions of the draft for Council's consideration. Version 3 (V3) reflects a proposed tax rate increase of 14.0 cents per \$100 of assessment, a reduction of 1.8 cents from the second draft presented on March 10. Version 3.1 (V3.1) reflects a more significantly reduced proposed increase of 5.4 cents per \$100 of assessment, achieved through line-by-line cost reductions generally limiting budget increases to 2.6% over the prior year, the removal of the proposed QPEC Custodian and Play Coordinator positions, and a reduction of \$150,000 in transfers to reserve. Staff noted that achieving the V3.1 tax rate will likely affect levels of service and the completion of projects associated with Council's Strategic Priorities.

Key cost drivers informing both versions include mandatory cost increases in RCMP policing (including the \$450,000 for two additional officers approved by Council on February 24, 2026), Education, Property

Valuation Services, the Provincial Road Levy, and anticipated membership in a Regional Emergency Measures Organization (REMO) at \$70,000. Council compensation increases approved at the March 10 Regular Meeting, estimated at \$176,450 including medical benefits, have also been incorporated. Additional cost pressures include South Queens Pool operating and staffing costs based on a July 1, 2026 opening, and updated garbage collection costs reflecting the contract awarded at the March 10 meeting. Staff recommended that Council receive the report for information and provide further direction as needed.

### Motion 1 – Retain the 5 Cent Calculation for Fire Services

**Moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Amirault:**

**THAT** the funding for Fire Services continue to be calculated based on 5 cents on the tax rate.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

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### Motion 2 – Restore Bylaw Training Budget

**Moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Carver:**

**THAT** the training budget for Bylaw Enforcement be restored to \$3,500.

**MOTION CARRIED 6-1, with Councillor Fancy against.**

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### Motion 3 – Restore \$60,000 Economic Development Funding

**Moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Carver:**

**THAT** the \$60,000 Economic Development Funding be restored.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

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### Motion 4 – Increase Staff Training to \$25,000

**Moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Roy:**

**THAT** staff training under general administration be increased to \$25,000.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

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### Motion 5 – Grant Funding for NQAL Reverted to Original Ask

**Moved by Councillor Carver and seconded by Deputy Mayor Charlton:**

**THAT** the grant funding for North Queens Active Living be reverted to the original ask of \$19,500.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

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*Council recessed at 1:06 p.m. and resumed at 1:48 p.m.*

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### Motion 6 – Establish J-Class Roads Reserve Fund (District 1-12)

**Moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Carver:**

**THAT** Council direct staff to establish a J-Class Roads Reserve Fund.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

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### Motion 7 – Reduce J-Class Roads Contribution to Reserve to \$100,000

**Moved by Councillor Fancy and seconded by Councillor Amirault:**

**THAT** the contribution to the newly established J-Class Roads Reserve be reduced to \$100,000 from \$250,000.

**MOTION DEFEATED 1-6, with Councillor Fancy in favour.**

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## Motion 8 – Reduce Funding for Additional Two RCMP Members

**Moved by Councillor Amirault and seconded by Deputy Mayor Charlton:**

**THAT** Council direct staff to reduce the proposed funding for two additional GIS officers from \$450,000 to \$225,000, allowing for one additional officer at this time.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

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## Motion 9 – Deny \$20,000 in Additional Funding for QCT

**Moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Amirault:**

**THAT** Council denies the request for \$20,000 in additional funding for a new vehicle, and directs staff to gather additional information from Queens County Transit about additional federal funding that they may receive for vehicle replacement.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

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## Motion 10 – Receive the Report for Information

**Moved by Deputy Mayor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Carver:**

**THAT** Council receive the report titled “2026 – 2027 Operational Budget Discussion” for information.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

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## 5.3 2026 - 2027 Water Utility Budget Discussion

Staff introduced the 2026-2027 Water Utility Budget for Council to review.

**Moved by Councillor Carver and seconded by Councillor Amirault:**

**THAT** Council receive the report titled “2026 – 2027 Water Utility Budget Discussion” for information.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 6.0 Adjournment

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The Meeting was adjourned at 2:54 p.m.

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Mayor Scott Christian, Chair

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Angela Green, Municipal Clerk

Date Approved: March 24, 2026