



NOTICE

MEETING: Committee of the Whole

DATE: Wednesday, July 6th, 2026

TIME: 5:00pm

PLACE: Council Chambers, 8296 Highway 7, Sherbrooke

Please Advise If Unable To Attend



Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

Committee of the Whole (COTW) Meeting
Wednesday, July 6th, 2026

We acknowledge that we are gathering in Mi'kmaqi the traditional unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Additions to the Agenda
4. Approval of the Agenda
5. Approval of Minutes of COTW held Wednesday June 3rd, 2026
6. Business Arising from Minutes
7. Other Matters of Business
 - a. Staff Report – Community Heroes Appreciation Event
 - b. Staff Report – Source Water Protection Plan
 - c. Staff Report – Recplex Drilled Well
 - d. Staff Report – Coastal and Watershed Planning

Adjournment



Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

Committee of the Whole (COTW) Meeting

Wednesday, June 3rd, 2026

We acknowledge that we are gathering in Mi'kma'ki the traditional unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

1. Meeting, Date & Time:

Warden Fuller called the COTW Meeting of the St. Mary's Municipal Council to order on Wednesday, June 3rd, 2026, at 5:03pm in the Council Chambers, Sherbrooke, N.S.

2. Attending:

Warden James Fuller
Deputy Warden Beulah Malloy
Councillor Dana O'Connell
Councillor Scott Beaver
Councillor Emma Tibbo

Also Attending:

Lesley McFarlane, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
Marian Fraser, Director of Finance/Treasurer
Janelle Fleet, Interim Municipal Clerk

3. Additions to the Agenda:

- There were additions to the agenda
- Item 7.c. Letter from Strait Area Chiefs, Mayors and Wardens re: Cell Service in Strait Region
- Item 8.f. Letter to Sherbrooke Village re: General Government Grants Funding Allocation

4. Approval of the Agenda:

On the motion of Deputy Warden Malloy and seconded by Councillor O'Connell, Council approved the agenda as amended.

Motion approved.

5. Approval of Minutes:

On the motion of Warden Fuller, hearing no errors or omission to the previous minutes, Council approved the minutes of the COTW Meeting held May 6th, 2026.

Motion approved.

6. Business Arising from the Minutes:

- There was no business arising from the minutes.

7. Correspondence:

- a. Letter of Support for Additional NSCC Strait Campus Student Residence
 - Council reviewed this correspondence.
 - Council directed staff to include the Municipality's name in support of the letter.

- b. Seamen's Memorial
 - Council reviewed this correspondence.

On recommendation of Councillor Beaver, seconded by Deputy Warden Malloy, Council authorize Warden Fuller to attend the 50th Annual Provincial Seamen's Memorial Service in Canso on August 9, 2026, as a representative of the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's, with mileage and related expenses reimbursed in accordance with the Municipality's Travel and Expense Policy.

Recommendation adopted.

- c. Strait Area Chiefs, Mayors and Wardens re: Cell Service in Strait Region
 - Council reviewed this correspondence.
 - Council directed staff to include the Municipality's name in support of the letter.

8. Other Matters of Business:

- a. Staff Report – REMO Shared Service Agreement
 - Please see distributed meeting materials for staff report.
 - CAO, Lesley McFarlane presented the REMO shared Service Agreement staff report.

On recommendation of Deputy Warden Malloy, seconded by Councillor Beaver, Council approve entering into the Guysborough County Regional Emergency Management Organization Shared Services Agreement as presented.

Recommendation adopted.

On recommendation of Councillor Beaver, seconded by Councillor Tibbo, Council give First Reading to the Regional Emergency Management Organization By-law and direct staff to provide notice in accordance with the Municipal Government Act.

Recommendation adopted.

- b. Staff Report – Diamond Finance System End of Life
 - Please see distributed meeting materials for staff report.
 - CAO, Lesley McFarlane presented the Diamond Finance System End of Life staff report.
 - Council inquired about the reasons for the Diamond Finance System reaching end-of-life status.
 - Council expressed support for moving to a system utilized by other municipalities to facilitate training, collaboration, and access to additional support resources during the transition period.

On recommendation of Deputy Warden Malloy seconded by Councillor Beaver, Council recommend that the CAO to be authorized to enter into an agreement with Naviline Central Square Solutions for the Municipal Finance System.

Recommendation adopted.

- c. Staff Report – Rezoning Request
 - CAO, Lesley McFarlane presented the Rezoning Request Staff Report.

On recommendation of Councillor O’Connell, seconded by Deputy Warden Malloy, the Committee of the Whole acting in the capacity of the Planning Advisory Committee recommend that Council authorize staff to schedule a public hearing for the Rezoning request for PID #37529856 at 5pm on July 15th, 2026, prior to the meeting of Council.

Recommendation adopted.

d. IDEAA Citizen Member Appointments

On recommendation of Deputy Warden Malloy seconded by Councillor Tibbo, Council appoints applicant 1, applicant 2, applicant 3 & applicant 4 to the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Hate & Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Recommendation adopted.

e. Staff Report – Pride Weekend Flag Raising Ceremony

- CAO, Lesley McFarlane presented the Pride Weekend Flag Raising Ceremony staff report.

On recommendation of Deputy Warden Malloy, seconded by Councillor Tibbo, Council recommend hosting a flag raising ceremony to kick off Pride Weekend celebrations on June 12–14, 2026, and annually in years when Pride Weekend celebrations are held.

Recommendation adopted.

f. Letter to Sherbrooke Village re: General Government Grant Funding Allocation

- Council directed staff to send this letter to York Lethbridge, Sherbrooke Village Executive Director.

Adjournment

There being no further matters of business, Warden Fuller declared the meeting adjourned at 5:45pm.

Motion approved.

Recorded By
Janelle Fleet, Interim Municipal Clerk

Approved By
Warden Fuller

Strait Area Chiefs, Mayors, and Wardens

June 9th, 2026

Honourable Fred Tilly
Minister of Public Works
PO Box 186
Halifax, NS B3J 2N2

RE: Cell Service in Strait Region

Dear Minister Tilly,

We are writing on behalf of the Strait Area Chiefs, Mayors, Wardens and CAO's to express concern regarding the cellular connectivity in our region. For years, there has been a lack of consistent cellular connectivity, and we have advocated as individual units and as regional partners for upgrades. We understand that Build Nova Scotia is responsible to address the cellular gaps. We would like to request an update on the timeline for the proposed towers and a further update on plans to expand cellular connectivity across our region.

The latest concern is the decline in existing service as the build out from 3G to 5G continues. Perhaps the change from Huawei and ZTE technologies has also contributed to the decline. Many of our residents are noticing that there are gaps now where there was service before.

What may seem like a simple inconvenience is, in reality, a serious issue affecting public safety, economic development, and the long-term sustainability of rural communities. For instance, in emergency situations, poor connectivity can have life-threatening consequences. Residents travelling rural roads, seniors living alone, volunteer firefighters, and first responders all depend on reliable communication. Furthermore, during severe weather events and power outages, which heavily impact our area, many communities are left with limited or no dependable way to contact emergency services or receive updates. The challenges extend beyond safety with more people now working remotely, attending virtual appointments, running businesses online, and relying on mobile connectivity for banking, education, and day-to-day communication.

We are asking for immediate attention to these matters and for meaningful collaboration between the appropriate governments, regulators, and telecommunications providers to identify coverage gaps and invest in long-term solutions. We want commitment that the areas that are now seeing a decline in service will also be addressed and have service upgrades through Build Nova Scotia.

HON. FRED TILLY

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Cellular connectivity upgrades were also recently identified as a recommendation in the Provincial Fire Service Review. Cellular connectivity is an essential service, and our residents, businesses and visitors deserve to have reliable service they can trust.

Sincerely,

Chair, Strait Area Chiefs, Mayors, and Wardens

On behalf of:

- Municipality of the County of Richmond
- Municipality of the District of St. Mary's
- X
- X
- X
- X
- X
- X
- X
- X
- X
- X

CC: Hon. Kim Masland, Minister of Emergency Management
Hon. Sean Fraser, MP for Central Nova
Jaime Battiste, MP for Cape Breton-Canso-Antigonish
Mike Kelloway, MP for Sydney-Glace Bay
Hon. Trevor Boudreau, MLA for Richmond
Hon. Michelle Thompson, MLA for Antigonish
Hon. Greg Morrow, MLA for Guysborough-Tracadie
Kyle MacQuarrie, MLA for Inverness
Dianne Timmins, MLA for Victoria-The Lakes



Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

PO Box 296, 8296 HWY #7 Sherbrooke, NS B0J 3C0

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June 5th, 2026

York Lethbridge, Executive Director
Sherbrooke Village
42 Main Street, Sherbrooke
NS B0J3C0

Dear York:

Subject: 2026–2027 Grant Funding Allocation

On behalf of the Council of the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's, we are pleased to inform you that your organization's application to the *Grants to Organizations* program has been approved in the amount of **\$2,000** for the 2026–2027 fiscal year. This grant is provided as requested to support Sherbrooke Village's Christmas Opening Ceremonies. This grant is in addition to Council's commitment of \$4,000 which was communicated to you in January 2026.

This funding has been approved through the Municipality's annual budget process in accordance with the General Government Grants Policy, and is intended to support the valuable contributions your organization provides to the community.

The municipality recognizes the impact that provincial budget cuts have had on operating and event funding at Sherbrooke Village. Council is deeply concerned to ensure that Sherbrooke Village is able to continue to provide valuable community contribution through its Old Fashioned Christmas programming, and recognizes that additional municipal supports may be required to enable this programming to proceed. As such, Council invites you to share plans and progress toward continuing this important programming, including clarification of what may be required to ensure this valuable programming goes forward.

Upon your written confirmation that Old Fashioned Christmas programming is going ahead, your organization will receive 80% of the approved funding. The remaining 20% will be released upon submission of a completed Grants to Organization Funding Evaluation Form, including a summary of how the funds were utilized. Please note that the evaluation form must be submitted no later than February 15th, 2027. Failure to submit the required documentation may impact eligibility for future funding.

St. Mary's Council thanks you for your application and recognizes the important role your organization plays within the Municipality.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lesley McFarlane". The signature is written in dark ink on a white background.

Lesley McFarlane
CAO

CC: Lanny Boyer, Sherbrooke Village Special Events Manager

Community Heroes Appreciation Event

SUMMARY

This Staff Report requests Council direction regarding number of awards for the upcoming Community Heroes event. Award nominations will be requested in summer 2026 from the various First Responder and Health Care organizations. The Volunteer of the Year award recipient has already been selected by Council after an open nomination process.

BACKGROUND

On March 24th, 2026, Council passed a motion to combine the Volunteer Appreciation Event, First Responder Event and the Healthcare Appreciation Event into one Community Heroes Appreciation Event.

In the past, the approaches to awards at these events were as follows:

First Responders

- Nomination form sent to 13 organizations (8 Fire Departments, EHS, RCMP, Coast Guard, Garage, Ground Search and Rescue) to nominate First Responders in categories of Valour and Outstanding Service, and to identify First Responders who have reached 10, 20, 30, 40 or more years of service

Volunteers

- Volunteer of the Year award selected by Council from amongst public nominations
- No other Volunteer awards have typically been given out in the recent past

Healthcare

- The municipality has not held a Healthcare Worker appreciation event or given out awards in this category in the recent past

Four organizations represent Healthcare workers, the Hospital, Nursing Home, and two home care professionals' organizations.

The number of nominations submitted for the First Responders awards varied significantly by Fire Department. Some submitted no nominations, and others submitted between 10 and 18 nominations. All nominees submitted by Fire Departments were given awards.

CONSIDERATIONS

The Municipality previously hosted multiple appreciation events. In addition to the long-standing Volunteer Awards Celebration, a First Responders Appreciation Event was introduced in 2024–25, and a Health Care Worker Appreciation Event was planned for 2025–26. On March 24th, 2026, Council approved combining the three events into one annual Community Heroes Event.

In 2023, the Province of Nova Scotia enacted the Act Respecting a Memorial Day to Honour First Responders, establishing May 1 as First Responders Day and defining first responders to include a broad range of volunteer and professional emergency personnel. In response, the Municipality initiated a First Responders Appreciation Event. Due to seasonal employment commitments within the lobster fishery, the event has not been held on May 1.

The scope of invitees to the First Responders Event expanded from Fire Fighters, Police Officers, and Paramedics in 2024–25 to also include Auxiliary Coast Guard Members, Ground Search and Rescue Personnel, and Tow Truck Drivers in 2025–26. The Volunteer Awards Celebration has typically been open to all volunteers, not only award recipients. All Health Care Workers, including home care workers, are intended to be invited to participate in the Health Care Appreciation Event, not only award recipients. Combined together, these three categories of appreciation may result in a fairly significant attendance, many of whom may fall into multiple categories.

The date for the event will be Tuesday, November 10th from 6:30-9:30pm. The location is yet to be finalized.

The table below depicts proposed award categories. The proposal would result in a maximum of 51 awards given out, in addition to the years-of-service award pins. Giving a maximum of three awards to each of the categories (other than the years of service awards) would allow organizations to recognize different Community Heroes each year.

Staff Report



Type of Award	Recognition by	Category
Years of Service in 10-Year Increments	Pins	First Responders (Reported by Organization) Healthcare (Reported by Organization)
Valour and Outstanding Service	Award/Plaque	First Responders (Nominated by Organization) Maximum of Three Total Nominations per Organization (13 Organizations) (Max 39 awards)
Outstanding Service and Leadership/Mentoring	Award/Plaque	Health care (Nominated by Organization) Maximum of Three Total Nominations per Organization (4 Organizations) (Max 12 awards)
Volunteer of the Year	Award/Plaque	One Award

Council approved a 2026/27 budget of \$12,000 for this event, composed of approximately \$5,000 in grant funding from the Office of Health Care Professionals Recruitment Community Fund, as well as \$7,000 from the Fire Services and Community Development and Recreation budgets.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council approve the proposed Community Heroes Appreciation Event award categories, nomination process, and number of awards per category as outlined in this report.

Source Water Protection Plan Committee Formation

SUMMARY

The municipality's Source Water Protection Plan was first developed in 2006. This document is required to be updated yearly to follow the Department of Environment and Climate Change regulations. This has not been completed in numerous years.

The purpose of this report is to recommend the appointment of a Councillor as both a member and Chair of the Source Water Protection Committee. The committee plays an important role in supporting the protection and sustainable management of municipal drinking water sources. Council representation on the committee provides a direct link between committee activities and Council priorities, ensuring effective communication and governance oversight.

BACKGROUND

Following the 2002 Walkerton and North Battleford Inquiry on contaminated municipal water sources, the Province of Nova Scotia released a comprehensive drinking water strategy. It outlined a multi-barrier approach to achieve the delivery of safe, clean drinking water to all Nova Scotians.

At that time the Municipality of the District of Saint Marys (MODS) undertook the process of developing a Source Water Protection Plan (SSWP).

The first committee was created in 2003 to provide input and advice to the water utility regarding Source Water Protection. From 2003 to 2005, the committee met once a year to provide input and advice for the draft Source Water Protection Plan. A final copy of the Source Water Protection Plan was sent to Council in 2005 and approved by the province in 2006.

In 2022 the Department of Environment and Climate Change mandated Municipalities to update their SSWP. They provided a 5-step process to follow, upon completion the new SSWP is to be sent to the Department of Environment and Climate Change.

In June 2023, the municipality adopted a Source Water Protection Advisory Committee Policy establishing the committee responsible for ongoing review and advice on the SWPP.

The committee's responsibilities include reviewing source water protection plans, monitoring implementation activities, identifying emerging risks, and providing recommendations to Council as required.

Staff Report



The committee's Terms of Reference provide for Council representation on the committee and require the appointment of a Chair to facilitate meetings, guide committee discussions, and report on committee activities to Council.

The committee was convened in 2023, and work began to update the plan, however the revised plan has not been completed and still needs to be approved by Council and submitted to the province.

CONSIDERATIONS

Source water protection is a key component of ensuring safe and sustainable drinking water for residents. Council representation strengthens communication between the committee and Council and helps align committee recommendations with municipal objectives. The Chair is responsible for leading meetings, ensuring committee business is conducted effectively, and serving as the primary liaison between the committee and Council. Appointing a Council member as Chair provides leadership continuity and demonstrates Council's commitment to protecting municipal water resources.

As per the Source Water Protection Advisory Committee Policy, Committee members are appointed each year by Council, through an invitation and application process. Aligned with the Policy, the municipality will advertise for members of the public to fill the committee's two outside member vacancies, and a local representative from the agriculture and forestry sector, as well as a technical representative from the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Renewables will be invited to join the committee. The Director of Public Works will be the technical representative from the municipality's staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council appoint _____ as a member and Chair of the Source Water Protection Committee for the remainder of the current Council term or until a successor is appointed by Council.

Recplex Drilled Well

SUMMARY

A capital project to drill a well for icemaking at the Recplex is included in the municipality's approved 2026/27 capital program in the amount of \$60,000. Of this, \$33,000 was proposed to be funded from the Provincial Rink Revitalization grant funding, with \$27,000 to be funded from the municipality's capital reserve. Due to the strategic importance of this project, Council agreed that this project would proceed with 100% of the funding to be sourced from the municipality's capital reserve, in the event that Rink Revitalization grant funding was not approved. The municipality was recently informed that Rink Revitalization grant funding was denied. However, a newly announced Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund grant program may provide up to 80% funding for this project. Council approval is requested to ratify the expenditure of \$6,500 plus HST to Strait Engineering for professional fees to prepare a submission to the Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund.

BACKGROUND

Currently, two dug wells provide the water source for ice making at St. Mary's Recplex. The current wells are vulnerable to drought conditions, a situation which is expected to increase with climate variability. In the fall of 2025, ice making was significantly delayed due to insufficient available water, and then with insufficient time for proper ice making procedures, the quality of the ice suffered for the duration of the season.

The installation of a drilled well will improve operational reliability and reduce risks associated with potential water service disruptions. As a key community hub, the Recplex supports recreation, sport, and community events, and a dedicated water source strengthens the facility's long-term sustainability and emergency preparedness. The drilled well will create operational efficiencies by:

- Reducing staff time spent managing water disruptions or coordinating emergency solutions
- Minimizing administrative work related to water supply issues
- Allowing staff to focus on programming, facility maintenance, and revenue-generating activities
- Simplifying operational planning due to a stable and predictable water source

With fewer reactive maintenance or emergency scenarios, staff capacity can be redirected toward service delivery and community engagement.

Drought conditions in the summer of 2025 had a significant impact on municipal residents. Over 27,000 litres of bottled water was distributed to residents. Over 150 households took advantage of the bottled water distribution program, which was funded by the provincial Department of Emergency Management in 2025. The province has indicated that funding for bottled water will not be provided in 2026. Going forward, across the province the approach will shift to providing increased communication

to residents who obtain their water from private wells, regarding how they can improve their water resilience. This may take the form of conservation, cisterns, drilled wells in lieu of dug wells, well financing programs, and other methods.

CONSIDERATIONS

An application was submitted to the province for Rink Revitalization grant funding to drill a well for ice making at the Recplex. Staff was informed in the first week of June that the municipality's grant funding application was denied.

On May 28, 2026, the provincial department of Environment and Climate Change announced a new provincial funding program, the Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund (SCCF), to help communities prepare for and respond to water shortages caused by drought. The deadline for pre-screening information to be submitted was June 25, with full applications due by July 23rd. A pre-screening application was submitted by the June 25th deadline.

Two aspects are being included in the municipality's SCCF application:

- Recplex Water Resiliency Solution
- Public Potable Water Filling Station

These two aspects will help address the issues that arose in 2025, and are intended to lead to a multi-year approach to increased water resilience in the municipality.

Strait Engineering was contracted to provide support in scoping and costing the municipality's SCCF submission. The cost of Strait's professional fees to provide a pre-screening SCCF submission, and a full SCCF application, totaled to \$6,500 plus HST. The scope of services includes a Background Review and Project Development, scope, cost estimates, and recommended solutions to the two project aspects. To meet the June 25th SCCF pre-screening submission deadline, on June 23rd the CAO entered into an agreement with Strait Engineering for professional fees to prepare a submission.

As per the CAO Policy, the CAO is empowered to make emergency expenditures in excess of \$6,000 for essential services, and must report the expenditure to Council for ratification at the next meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Council ratify the expenditure of \$6,500 plus HST to Strait Engineering for professional fees to prepare a submission to the Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund, to provide water resiliency for the Recplex and a public potable water filling station, to be funded from the municipality's capital reserve.

Housing Accelerator Fund – Initiative #6: Coastal and Watershed Planning with Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of the anticipated work plan for Initiative #6 under the Municipality's Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) Action Plan, for awareness of the work and engagement activities expected over the coming year.

BACKGROUND

Initiative #6, *Coastal and Watershed Planning with Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation*, supports long-term land use planning by improving the Municipality's understanding of flood risk and climate change impacts. A budget of \$15,000 has been allocated by the municipality through the Housing Accelerator Fund to complete this initiative.

Administration is working with Clean Foundation to deliver the project and identify opportunities to leverage additional technical expertise and available provincial resources.

CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed work plan consists of three sequential milestones:

1. Flood Risk Review (Target: September 30, 2026)

- Clean Foundation to review the Municipality's Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law in relation to available flood risk information and applicable provisions of the Municipal Government Act.
- Consider relevant outputs from the Eastern Shore Flood Line Mapping Project.
- Identify priority flood risk areas, planning considerations, and potential policy or regulatory issues.
- Work with Clean Foundation to identify additional resources and technical support available through provincial and other partner organizations.

2. Sea Level Rise Mapping and Community Engagement (Target: December 31, 2026)

- Develop and implement a community engagement plan.

- Conduct public information sessions supported by maps, presentations, and educational materials.
- Utilize the Province's available 3D Wave mapping communication tool, where appropriate, to help communicate potential sea level rise impacts.
- Invite relevant provincial experts to participate in engagement activities where appropriate.

3. Flood Risk Action Plan (Target: March 31, 2027)

- Develop a practical Flood Risk Action Plan informed by the technical review, public engagement, and municipal priorities.
- Incorporate recommendations arising from the planning review and other climate resilience initiatives, where appropriate.
- Present the completed Action Plan to Council for future consideration.

Clean Foundation will be invited to present findings of their review and recommendations to Council in October 2026.

Council can expect additional reports as the project progresses, including updates on public engagement activities and the final Action Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For information.