



Rural Municipality of Belfast (RMB)

Mayor: Garth Gillis; Chief Administrative Officer: Bob Brooks; *Incorporated 1972*

COUNCIL MEETING - AGENDA

Wednesday, January 21, 2026, at 7:00 PM
Upstairs Hall, Wood Islands Market

Council:	Mayor Garth Gillis (<i>Chair</i>)	Deputy Mayor Lynn Docherty
	Councillor Trisha Carter	Councillor Katherine Bryson
	Councillor Billy Gamble	Councillor Charley McGivern
	Councillor James Kinnee	
Administration:	CAO Bob Brooks	Ashley Feschuk

***Please Be Aware: RMB Council Meetings are Livestreamed to facebook.com/belfastpei
Livestream Comments are not monitored in real time during the Council Meeting.
Visitors – Please remember to sign in – thank you.***

Happy New Year

Item Order of Business

1. **Call to Order** – Council Meeting to be called to order by Mayor Gillis at 7:00 PM.

“In the spirit of Reconciliation, we acknowledge that the land upon which our organization stands is unceded Mi’kmaq territory. Epekwitk (PEI), Mi’kma’ki, is covered by the historic Treaties of Peace and Friendship. We pay our respects to the Indigenous Mi’kmaq People who have occupied this Island for over 12,000 years; past, present, and future.”

2. **Declarations of Conflict of Interest** – Do any members of Council have a conflict of interest with any items on today’s Agenda?
3. **Approval of Agenda** – Any other suggested Agenda Items for today’s meeting? (*to be placed under Item 15*)

Moved by _____ and seconded by _____
to adopt the agenda as presented/amended.
Votes for: ____ Votes against: ____ Result: _____

4. **RCMP Report for the Month of November/December 2025** (*RCMP Sgt. Robinson or Admin - Ashley Feschuk*)
5. **Public Presentations (if any)** – *Members of the public are offered five minutes to make a presentation to Council. Reminder should any member of the public wish to speak on any issue on today’s Agenda, this is the time allotted for that. All other Agenda items are reserved for Council Participation. Are there any public presentations?*
 - a. ??? _____

6. **Adoption of the November 19, 2025, Council Meeting Minutes** (*attached - previously distributed; all suggested changes already incorporated*)

Moved by _____ and seconded by _____ to
approve the Minutes of the November 19, 2025, Council Meeting as presented.
Votes for: ____ Votes against: ____ Result: _____

7. **Business Arising from the Nov. 19, 2025 Council Minutes** (*dealt with in today's agenda*)

8. **CAO Report** (*CAO – Bob Brooks*)

a) **Financial/Variance/Planning Report**

i. **Provincial Credit Union Account Balances @ January 5, 2026:**

a. Share Acct 001	\$5.52
b. Chequing Acct 010	\$76,576.12
c. Gas Tax (CCBF) Acct 011 (<i>for approved projects</i>)	\$31,054.33
d. Reserve Savings Acct 020	\$38.23
e. Reserve Savings GICs; Acct 041	\$50,887.26
(Reserves Breakdown \$50,887.26)	
1. RMB Expansion Reserve	\$18,012.26
2. Emergency Preparedness Reserve	\$10,000.00
3. Legal Reserve Fund	\$1,250.00
4. Elections Reserve Fund	\$500.00
5. Remaining – (for Budget Shortfall)	\$21,125.00
6. (FYI) Remaining Funds in ShopBelfastPEI	\$523.01

b) **Revenues and Expenditures Tracking (2025/26) to October 31, 2025:**

Revenues:	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>To-Date</u>
i1 – Assessment Income (Commercial & Non-Comm)	\$407,697	308,790
i2 – GPEI Rink Grant (<i>in</i>)	8,500	0
i3 – Sub-Lease Rent (<i>starting July 1, 2025</i>)	5,635	3,381
i4 – CCBF (<i>in</i>) (<i>New Projection w 2026 CCBF Approval</i>)	57,624	134,342
i5 – Other (<i>a HST & Govt, b Govt Programs, c. Foundation</i>) (<i>in</i>)	1,900	17,941
Total	481,356	464,454
Expenditures:	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>To-Date</u>
e1 – Council Remuneration, RMB Payroll, Deductions	\$133,759	97,199
e2 – Travel Allowance	1,500	530
e3 – Office Admin (Supplies/Hardware/Lease/Cleaning)	30,157	19,224
e4 – Advertising, Promotion & Website	2,119	1,083
e5 – Audit, Financial, Bank Fees, Amortization	7,876	4,601
e6 – Insurance, Legal, WCB	11,208	9,673
e7abc – Projects (MEMP/Com.Plan/ShopBelfastPEI/Other)	750	0
e7d – Events (Remembrance/Halloween/Christmas/Other)	2,450	1,531
e8 – Elections or By-Elections	500	0
e9 – FPEIM, FCM, Prof Fees, Conferences, Workshops	5,750	2,880
e10 – Miscellaneous	500	300
e11 – Fire Protection Grant	120,000	90,000
e12 – GPEI Rink Grant (<i>out</i>) & BAWG & Pantry (<i>out</i>)	8,500	196
e13 – Community Grants	106,860	106,260
i4 – CCBF (<i>out</i>) (<i>New Projection w 2026 CCBF Approval</i>)	57,624	134,342
e14 – Contingency	1,000	95
e16 – Warming Ctr Operations (Belfast Rec Ctr/WIADC)	3,000	3,000
e17 – New Office (<i>New</i>)	19,586	14,039
Total	513,138	484,955
Change in Fund Balance (Net)	-31,782	-20,501

Community Grants are on track per payment schedule. Better than expected Expenditures savings are currently and additional GPEI revenues are now being realized. RMB now has a goal to try and reach a break-even or better for the fiscal year, rather than the budgeted shortfall.

9. **Update on *Dog Act* research (Ashley Feschuk)** Activities to-date...
10. **Belfast Rec Centre – Community Arena (???)** A public meeting was held on January 15th to explore the possibilities of a New Ice Rink in Belfast. The RMB Council were invited to attend – any reports from Council?

Discussion: _____

11. **Canada Community Building Fund (CCBF) – Firehall Application Approved (CAO – Bob Brooks):** On January 5, 2026, RMB received confirmation that the CCBF Project Review Committee agreed that the Firehall Project was eligible for funding and provided conditional approval. The conditions will be outlined in Schedule A of the Funding Agreement (*confirmation letter attached*). This decision was expected in early December, however, RMB did not get any notification until early January 2026. RMB is now waiting to receive the Funding Agreement to review and sign the document, before the Project is officially underway. Congratulations to the Belfast Rural Fire Department and the residents of Belfast on this significant step forward.

Update Moving Forward:

- Once RMB receives the Funding Agreement from the Province and is signed (barring unforeseen unacceptable conditions), the Belfast Fire Department will be authorized to move forward with the Firehall Expansion Project (31.3.1).
- RMB representatives (Mayor Gillis and CAO Brooks) will then meet with the Fire Department about proceeding.
- Once the Funding Agreement is approved/signed, the Province will then allocate Year 1 (\$82,232.68) and Year 2 (\$52,108.74) totalling \$134,341.42. The Year 3 allocation of \$52,108.47 will be released in April of 2026.
- With the Year 1 and 2 funding in place, the Fire Department will finally be able to start the Planning and Design Phase, estimated at \$125,000, which will give them the architectural drawings and costing of all the components. At this point the estimate for the expansion is approximately \$1.4 million. The costing plan will confirm or change that.
- Once the expansion is costed, the Fire Department and RMB will meet again to discuss the results, and options for moving to completion.
- Additionally, once the expansion is costed, RMB and the Fire Department can start applying for funds from other sources.
- The plan is to find as much contributed funds as possible, to reduce the amount that may need to be financed.
- Regarding assistance from RMB to help the Fire Department with debt servicing; we will not know that need until the costing is complete and the progress or likelihood of other applications is known. Expected to have a better idea in late 2026.
- For the upcoming 2026/2027 Budget Session, the CAO is suggesting that RMB start setting up a reserve for Firehall Debt Finance Servicing. Amount is unknown at this time and is speculative, however, it is reasonable to assume that some significant assistance will be required. For discussion and concurrence of Council.

Discussion: _____

12. **Update of the *Municipal Elections Bylaw* for the 2026 Municipal General Election (Ashley Feschuk).** Over the next few months, RMB will be looking at our current Elections Bylaw, to ensure it is up-to-date, in preparation for the upcoming General Municipal Election taking place on Monday, November 2, 2026. RMB will be confirming with the Province on its most recent bylaw model.

Discussion: _____

13. **2026/2027 Community Grants Call/Process** (*Admin - Ashley Feschuk*). Administration and procedures are now upon us for the 2026/2027 Community Grants Program cycle. The call for Community Grants Proposals and Applications will be placed on the RMB Website following this Council Meeting, and Facebook site and various Bulletin Boards around our municipality. Applicants have until noon on Friday, March 6th to submit their grant applications. All applications will be checked to ensure eligibility, and the Community Grants Committee will review the applications on Wednesday, March 11th for a recommendation to Council for a Council decision on Wednesday, March 18th.
14. **Notice of 2026/2027 Budget and Financial Plan Meetings** (*CAO – Bob Brooks*). Notice is hereby given, that RMB will be holding open public meetings on **February 18th and March 18th** to discuss and ratify RMB’s 2026/2027 Budget, Financial Plan and Capital Plan for the upcoming fiscal year. Everyone is welcome to attend. Any member of the public wishing to be placed on the agenda in this regard; should contact the RMB Office to make arrangements.
15. **New Business Items** (*per Agenda Item 3 above*):
- a) **New Public Transit Service Lobby to service the Municipality of Belfast area** (*Councillor Kinnee*). A request came into RMB looking for a follow-up to RMB’s earlier lobby for a Public Transit Service for the RMB area from Mr. Josh Lewis, Reporter for the Easter Graphic. Councillor Kinnee suggested, that since it had been a while since we discussed this topic, Council should discuss it again before granting an interview.
For Discussion: _____
 - b) **Ferry Advisory Panel – Update Re: Easter Chamber of Commerce** (*Councillor Bryson*).

 - c) **Ferry Impact Report – Update Re: Easter Chamber of Commerce** (*Councillor Bryson*).

 - d) **Welcome Signs Now Complete and Installed** (*CAO – Bob Brooks*) Just wanted to give a shout-out to Deputy Mayor Docherty for kickstarting the Welcome Signs Project. The signs are now in place in four difference locations heading into the Municipality, and apparently Mayor Gillis is famous on Facebook, having his picture in front of one of them. Let us know if Council would like an official group photo in front of one of them.
 - e) **???:** _____
16. **Next Meetings:**
- a) **Regular Council Meeting and 1st Public Meeting on the RMB Budget –**
Wednesday, February 18, 2026: 7:pm – Upstairs Meeting Hall, Wood Islands
 - b) **Community Grants Committee Meeting –** Wednesday, March 11, 2026:
7:pm – RMB Office, Wood Islands Market
 - c) **Regular Council Meeting and 2nd Public Meeting on the RMB Budget –**
Wednesday, March 18, 2026: 7:pm – Upstairs Meeting Hall, Wood Islands
17. **Adjournment** – As there is no further business...

Moved by _____ to adjourn the meeting at: _____

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