



Rural Municipality of Belfast (RMB)

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

COUNCIL MEETING - MINUTES

Wednesday, November 19, 2025, 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 (<i>Excused Absence</i>)
	Councillor Billy Gamble	Councillor Charley McGivern (<i>Regrets</i>)
	Councillor James Kinnee	
Administration:	CAO Bob Brooks	Ashley Feschuk
Public:	Evan Young (Fire Dept), Josh Lewis (Eastern Graphic Reporter)	
Livestream:	8 Live Viewers and 261 Views 12 Hours After Meeting	

***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.***

Item Order of Business

1. **Call to Order** – Council Meeting 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** – No members of Council declared a conflict of interest with any items on today’s Agenda.
3. **Approval of Agenda** – Additional items added to the agenda (*placed under Item 14*)

Moved by Councillor Carter and seconded by Deputy Mayor Docherty to adopt the agenda as presented/amended.

Votes for: 4 Votes against: 0 Result: **Carried Unanimously**

4. **RCMP Report for the Month of October** (*Admin - Ashley Feschuk*) Council were all given a copy of the latest RCMP report with their Agenda package. RCMP reports are available for public review on the Rural Municipality of Belfast website. Sadly, our numbers this month are higher than usual and speeding is the reason for the increased numbers. Please slow down, winter is coming.
5. **Public Presentations (if any)** – There were no public presentations.
6. **Adoption of the October 15, 2025, Council Meeting Minutes** (*attached - previously distributed; all suggested changes already incorporated*)

Moved by Councillor Gamble and seconded by Deputy Mayor Docherty to approve the Minutes of the October 15, 2025, Council Meeting as presented.

Votes for: 4 Votes against: 0 Result: **Carried Unanimously**

7. **Business Arising from the Oct. 15, 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 @ November 3, 2025:**

a. Share Acct 001	\$5.52
b. Chequing Acct 010	\$67,816.93
c. Gas Tax (CCBF) Acct 011 (for approved projects)	\$31,129.79
d. Reserve Savings Acct 020	\$38.19
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:	Budgeted	To-Date
i1 – Assessment Income (Commercial & Non-Comm)	\$407,697	240,170
i2 – GPEI Rink Grant (in)	8,500	0
i3 – Sub-Lease Rent (starting July 1, 2025)	5,635	1,127
i4 – CCBF (in)	57,624	0
i5 – Other (a HST & Govt, b Govt Programs, c. Foundation) (in)	1,900	17,941
Total	481,356	259,238

Expenditures:	Budgeted	To-Date
e1 – Council Remuneration, RMB Payroll, Deductions	\$133,759	73,547
e2 – Travel Allowance	1,500	331
e3 – Office Admin (Supplies/Hardware/Lease/Cleaning)	30,157	14,039
e4 – Advertising, Promotion & Website	2,119	0
e5 – Audit, Financial, Bank Fees, Amortization	7,876	4,302
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	271
e8 – Elections or By-Elections	500	0
e9 – FPEIM, FCM, Prof Fees, Conferences, Workshops	5,750	1,857
e10 – Miscellaneous	500	0
e11 – Fire Protection Grant	120,000	70,000
e12 – GPEI Rink Grant (out) & BAWG & Pantry (out)	8,500	196
e13 – Community Grants	106,860	105,860
i4 – CCBF (out)	57,624	0
e14 – Contingency	1,000	0
e16 – Warming Ctr Operations (Belfast Rec Ctr/WIADC)	3,000	3,000
e17 – New Office (New)	19,586	6,039
Total	513,138	289,115

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Change in Fund Balance (Net)	-\$31,782	-\$29,877

Community Grants are on track per payment schedule. Better than expected Expenditures savings are currently being recognized, especially with the bulk of the major expenditures already realized. RMB now has a goal to try and reach a break-even for the fiscal year, rather than the budgeted shortfall (which was budgeted to use the reserves to cover). Part of the reason for the better bottom line, is the additional Municipal Funding provided by the Province at \$15,000; while the other half is being realized through careful spending or less than expected or unspent costs.

9. **Update on Dog Act research (Ashley Feschuk)** Council has a draft copy of a letter addressed to the Hon. Darlene Compton – Member of the Legislative Assembly for Belfast- Murray River. The letter seeks provincial support and assistance to help create a coordinated provincial approach to ensure consistent enforcement, improved public safety and more humane outcomes for animals across communities like Belfast. Council was also informed that administration has a scheduled call with Satya Sen, Executive Director of Federation of Prince Edward Island Municipalities on Friday, November 21st. Council was encouraged to provide some questions to contribute to this discussion and assist with the focus of the call. Further updates to follow in 2026.
10. **Social Media Stats update (Ashley Feschuk)** RMB has a total of 899 Followers, which is close to half of our population. Our most recent post regarding the Belfast/Vernon River Pantry (food shortage) had 2,158 views. The post made in regards to Halloween and the weather-related concerns had 7,489 views. The numbers continue to increase reaffirming the value of this communication tool and its overall effectiveness with our residents.
11. **2026 Regular Council Meeting Calendar + (CAO – Bob Brooks):** For planning purposes and as required by the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*; a Regular Council Meeting Calendar must be publicly posted for the upcoming 2026 Regular Council Meetings. This Calendar is posted on RMB’s Website, announced on RMB’s Facebook page, posted on various Bulletin Boards, included within the Belfast Newsletter, and included within the Annual Belfast Lions Club Calendar. This motion follows the tradition of having at least 10 scheduled meetings on the 3rd Wednesday of each month (except July and December). For 2026 however, RMB is listing three additional meetings for Council’s and the Public’s information (Election Day, New Council Orientation and the 1st meeting of the new Council. Reminder: Council also has the option to call Additional or Special Council Meetings, throughout the year (if required and as requested). The proposed calendar dates for 2026 are as follows:
 - 1) **Wednesday, January 21, 2026**
 - 2) **Wednesday, February 18, 2026**
 - 3) **Wednesday, March 18, 2026**
 - 4) **Wednesday, April 15, 2026**
 - 5) **Wednesday, May 20, 2026**
 - 6) **Wednesday, June 17, 2026**
 - 7) **Wednesday, August 19, 2026**
 - 8) **Wednesday, September 16, 2026**
 - 9) **Wednesday, October 21, 2026**
 - 10) **Monday, November 2, 2026 – Municipal General Election Day for RMB**
 - 11) **Tuesday, November 10, 2026 – Orientation Meeting for Newly Elected Council**
 - 12) **Wednesday, November 18, 2026 – Last Meeting of Outgoing Council**
 - 13) **Wednesday, December 9, 2026 – First Meeting of New Council/Swearing In**

Moved by Councillor Carter and seconded by Deputy Mayor Docherty to approve the **2026 Regular Council Meeting Calendar** as presented.

Votes for: 4 Votes against: 0 Result: **Carried Unanimously**

12. **Motion for Excused Absences (Councillor Trisha Carter) (CAO – Bob Brooks)**
 At the October 15th Council Meeting, Councillor Carter informed Council that due to unforeseen personal circumstances, she would be seeking some excused absences, until the end of her Council term. The CAO asked if Councillor Carter could provide the CAO with the exact dates, to prepare a motion for Council consideration. The CAO noted that this motion was not technically required for this request; however, Councillor Carter wished to have the motion presented for transparency reasons, with dates as follows:
Dates for Excused Absence:
 * February 18, 2026 * April 15, 2026 * June 17, 2026 * August 19, 2026 * September 16, 2026.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Docherty and seconded by Councillor Gamble to approve the five excused absences (as listed above) for Councillor Trisha Carter.
Votes for: 4 Votes against: 0 Result: Carried Unanimously

13. **Additional Canada Community Building Fund (CCBF) Resolution (CAO – Bob Brooks)**
During the August 20, 2025 Regular Council Meeting – Council approved Resolution **RES2025-001**, which is a resolution to award the CCBF funding for the 2024-2029 funding cycle. In discussions with the Canada/PEI Infrastructure Secretariat and the Belfast Rural Fire Dept, it was recommended that the final application also include another resolution from Council re: fund commitments, and a commitment letter from the Belfast Rural Fire Dept (*letter attached*). These commitment documents are to be provided by December 7th.

RESOLUTION # RES2025 – 002: A Resolution for the Canada Community Building Fund (CCBF) regarding funding commitments

November 19, 2025

Whereas: The Council of the Rural Municipality of Belfast (RMB) has decided to allocate all of the Notional Funding that is available to the municipality through the CCBF - Canada Community Building Fund for 2024-2029 to the Belfast Rural Fire Department, and

Whereas: Upon submission of the CCBF application in August, the Canada/PEI Infrastructure Secretariat has requested an additional Commitment Letter from the Belfast Rural Fire Department (*which is attached*) that outlines its funding commitments, and

Whereas: Council has also been asked to acknowledge its funding plans and commitments to the project, which are as follows:

To complete this project, many funding sources will be sought, including:

- **CCBF** – for planning and foundation expenses,
- **RMB** – for Community Grant contributions,
- **Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency** – for emergency equipment, go green initiatives and construction funding to strengthen rural community life,
- **Rural Growth Initiative (PEI)** – for rural and regional development initiatives and construction funding,
- **Federation of Canadian Municipalities (Green Funds)** – for energy efficiency and other “green” components,
- **Province of PEI** – for Firehall development funding,
- **Fire Department Fundraising and Sweat Equity**,
- and finally, for any remaining funds required to complete the project, the Fire Department will seek **Private Financing**. The Fire Department will explore the options necessary for paying the monthly payment of the loan, including collaboration with RMB.

Therefore, be it resolved: That the Rural Municipality of Belfast commits that it will assist the Belfast Rural Fire Department to acquire the funding for its Firehall Expansion Project through the means, as listed above, and

Also be it resolved: That in addition to RMB assisting the Fire Department in finding funding for this project, RMB will work with the Fire Department, the Province and the lending institution (if required), to explore the options necessary for paying the monthly payment of the loan.

Moved by Councillor Gamble and seconded by Councillor Carter to approve **Resolution # RES2025-002** as presented above.
Votes for: 4 Votes against: 0 Result: Carried Unanimously

14. **New Business for the Agenda** (*as discussed in Approval of Agenda, Item 3 above*).
- a) **Wood Islands Ferry Services Update** (*Councillor Carter*) There is a new Ferry Advisory Panel being established by the Northumberland Ferries. The purpose is to bring together a range of dynamic and influential voices to provide community informed guidance, share ideas, help shape ferry operations and service delivery. The new committee is expected to meet quarterly for ninety-minute sessions. The first meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 20th at 3pm. Both Councillor Carter and Councillor Bryson have been invited to attend and will provide Council with ongoing updates.
 - b) **Maritime Electric Awareness Campaign** (*CAO – Bob Brooks*) Maritime Electric asked for an additional reminder to **“Please Do Not Plant Trees Near or Under Power Lines”**, to help alleviate power outages, especially during storm events.
 - c) **Holiday Tree-Lighting Event** (*December 6th starting at 6:pm*) (*Ashley Feschuk*) – RMB intends to light up the Wood Islands Market Courtyard, sing Christmas carols with musical guest Montague Guitar Coach – Steve Zaat, a Snowflake Decorating Competition, Facepainting with the “Little Island Artist”, ornament decorating with Belfast Area Watershed Group (*starting at 4:30pm in the RMB Office*), the Belfast Rural Volunteer Fire Department will be escorting a very special guest to help make the season bright – everyone welcome! Cesar and Heather at Island Express Café will be open for this event along with The Sweet Company – And a big thank-you to all Council members and their families who participated in the **“Lighting Work Party”** to help make this a special event for the municipality.
 - d) **Reminder – There is No Regular Meeting of Council – scheduled for December 2025** (per the MGA Council Calendar). The RMB Office closes over the Christmas Break from December 22nd through to January 2nd.
 - e) **Belfast Signs** (*Ashley Feschuk*) Administration met with the Department of Roads and arranged to have the installation of the RMB Welcome signs on Thursday November 20th and Friday November 21st.
 - f) **Belfast Area Watershed Group – BAWG** – BAWG is applying for funding to create a climate action project called Tides to Trees: Youth for Climate Action! As they prepare for this initiative, they are reaching out to parents of homeschoolers who may be interested in taking part. BAWG is looking to connect with families who value climate and environmental experiential learning. If your homeschooler loves hands-on nature activities, science exploration, and real-world learning, they would love to hear from you. At this time, BAWG is creating a list of those interested and will follow-up with a planning session upon acceptance of our grant proposal. Connect with **Sherry at bawgpei@gmail.com** to express your interest and any questions.
15. **Next Meetings:**
- a) **No Regular Council Meeting for December 2025**
 - b) **Council Lighting Work party** – Saturday, November 29th and 30th (*if necessary*)
 - c) **Holiday Tree-Lighting** – Saturday, December 6, 2025 @ 6:pm Wood Islands Market Courtyard
 - d) **Next Regular Council Meeting** – January 21, 2026 Upstairs at Wood Islands
16. **End of the public portion of this Council Meeting.**

17. **Motion to Move In-Camera for a Confidential HR Matter – (No minutes are taken, and no decisions made during In-Camera Sessions):**

Moved by **Councillor Carter** and **seconded** by **Deputy Mayor Docherty** to move into In-Camera for a Confidential HR Matter.

Votes for: 4 Votes against: 0 Result: **Carried Unanimously**

Moved by **Councillor Gamble** and **seconded** by **Councillor Carter** to move out of In-Camera from the Confidential HR Matter.

Votes for: 4 Votes against: 0 Result: **Carried Unanimously**

18. **No decision required out of this In-Camera item:**

19. **Adjournment** – As there is no further business...

Moved by **Councillor Carter** to adjourn the meeting at: **9:10pm**

Ashley/Bob

Minutes Approved on **January 21, 2026**

Signature and Seal on File

Mayor – Garth Gillis

Signature and Seal on File

CAO – Bob Brooks

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