



Rural Municipality of Belfast (RMB)

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

COUNCIL MEETING - MINUTES

Wednesday, July 15, 2026, at 7:00 PM

Upstairs Hall, Wood Islands Market

Council:	Mayor Garth Gillis (<i>Chair</i>)	Deputy Mayor Lynn Docherty
	Councillor Katherine Bryson	Councillor Trisha Carter
	Councillor Billy Gamble	Councillor James Kinnee
	Councillor Charley McGivern	
Administration:	CAO Bob Brooks	Ashley Feschuk
Also In Attendance:	MP Kent MacDonald; Monique Bisson-Gironi; Fire Belfast Firefighters	

***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 items on today’s Agenda.
3. **Approval of Agenda** – One item added to the Agenda under item 18 (an “In-Camera” HR Discussion item)

Moved by **Councillor Carter** and **seconded** by **Councillor Kinnee** to adopt the agenda as amended.

Votes for: 6 Votes against: 0 Result: **Carried Unanimously**

4. **RCMP Report for the Month of June 2026** (*Admin - Ashley Feschuk*) The number of incidents in Belfast is down slightly, including five false alarms. Full reports can be found on the RMB website www.ruralmunicipalityofbelfast.com
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. **There were two public presentations:***
 - a. **Monique Bisson-Gironi – Owner/Operator of Bar Vela Pizzeria**, requested a Letter of Support to place an additional small building onsite to make pizza dough. This structure will not be visible from the road. Council voted in favour of supporting this local business and providing them with a letter to assist with their permit application.
 - b. **MP Kent MacDonald (providing an activity update specific to this municipality):** - The MP’s office assisted RMB with its application for the Build Communities Strong Fund for the Firehall Expansion Project – now in process (waiting to hear).

- c. Also, pushing for the replacement of the Confederation Ferry, with a reliable vessel like the VMV - Northumberland, that's there now, because even the construction of one of those vessels is five or six years away. There will be a containment unit to enable dredging down at the Ferry, which will be ongoing. For a more detailed report please review the livestream available on the RMB YouTube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnqemlHzBtsOLtBkVImBQuw>

6. **Adoption of the June 17, 2026, Council Meeting Minutes** (*attached - previously distributed; all suggested changes already incorporated*)

Moved by **Councillor McGivern** and seconded by **Deputy Mayor Docherty** to approve the Minutes of the June 17, 2026, Council Meeting as presented.

Votes for: 6 Votes against: 0 Result: **Carried Unanimously**

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

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

i. **Provincial Credit Union Account Balances @ July 1, 2026:**

a. Share Acct 001	\$5.56
b. Chequing Acct 010	\$127,417.51
c. Gas Tax (CCBF) Acct 011 (<i>for approved projects</i>)	\$105,378.91
d. Reserve Savings Acct 020	\$38.35
e. Reserve Savings GICs; Acct 041	\$51,997.58
(Reserves Breakdown \$51,997.58 in GIC)	
1. Emergency Preparedness Reserve	\$10,000.00
2. Legal Reserve Fund	\$5,000.00
3. Elections Reserve Fund	\$5,000.00
4. Remaining Reserve (T.B.D.)	\$31,997.58

b) **Revenues and Expenditures Tracking (2026/27) to June 30, 2026:**

Revenues:	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>To-Date</u>
i1 – Assessment Income (Commercial & Non-Comm)	\$424,807	108,435
i2 – GPEI Rink Grant (<i>in</i>)	8,500	0
i3 – Sub-Lease Rent (<i>bi-monthly pmts</i>)	6,762	1,690.50
i4 – CCBF (<i>in</i>) (<i>for approved projects</i>)	82,000	28,137
i5 – Other (<i>HST/WCB refunds & other funding initiatives</i>)	17,000	15,000
Total	539,069	153,263
Expenditures:	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>To-Date</u>
e1 – Council Remuneration, Contracts, Payroll, Deductions	\$149,368	30,663
e2 – Travel Allowance	1,000	0
e3 – Office Admin (Supplies/Hardware/Phones/Rent/Cleaning)	27,741	8,219
e4 – Advertising, Promotion and Website	1,500	535
e5 – Audit, Financial, Bank Fees, and Amortization	8,045	674
e6 – Insurance, Legal, WCB	10,566	9,286
e7abc – Projects (MEMP/Other)	250	0
e7d – Events (Remembrance/Halloween/Christmas/Other)	1,550	69
e8 – Elections or By-Elections	5,000	0
e9 – FPEIM, FCM, Prof Fees, Conferences, Workshops	7,649	5,268
e10 – Miscellaneous	500	0
e11 – Fire Protection Grant	165,000	41,250
e12 – GPEI Rink Grant	8,500	0
e13 – Community Grants	66,400	31,100
i4 – CCBF (<i>out</i>) (<i>for approved projects</i>)	82,000	28,137
e14 – Contingency	1,000	1,726
e16 – Warming Ctr Operations (Belfast Rec Ctr/WIADC)	3,000	0
Total	539,069	157,081

Change in Fund Balance (Net)

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\$0.00	-\$3,818
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All 2026/27 Community Grants are on track with a payment schedule, to pay out early. All revenues and expenditures are on track to-date. The deficit currently shown will start to disappear soon, as the non-recurring Community Grants are all paid out. As in past years, RMB is trying to finish the fiscal year with a better-than budget surplus.

8. **CAO Sub-Committee Update** (*Chair/Mayor Garth Gillis*) – The CAO Sub-Committee met again on Wednesday, July 8th for its sub-committee meeting. Two major items were discussed: the Moving Forward to Recommendation item was deferred to the next CAO Sub-Committee meeting, where it's expected to have a recommendation to Council at the August Council meeting; and secondly, committee moved into In-Camera to discuss confidential HR specifics. The meetings are going well.
9. **Belfast Days ...** (*Deputy Mayor Docherty*) "June 27th and 28th saw some of the best turnout ever and memories were made for residents of Belfast. The weather was perfect, which brought out all ages to enjoy the activities. The car show showcased vintage classic vehicles, many food vendors, the soccer galley, chickadee fried chicken, along with loaf & ladle. Great prizes were handed out with an honourable mention to our most creative parade entry, the Gillis Lodge, with their NFL holiday island. The fireworks were the most spectacular. On June 28th, we saw many miniature horses trot around. The winning horse was Levi Sonic, and the driver, Tom Wolridge. There are a few donations expected for make the wish before we announce a toll collected for the event and an update will be provided in August. Also happy to announce that \$500 was for our local fire department. Organizers, want to thank the Belfast Fire Department for their assistance and presence for the event, funding sponsors, prize sponsors and all the volunteers. As always, this is a very busy endeavour behind the field, and it takes a lot of planning and funding. Save the date for 2027, June 26th and 27th, see you next year!"
10. **Fire Department as a Separate Line-item/Process for RMB's Fire Protection Services** (*Deputy Mayor Docherty*) RMB's administration was asked to look into some of the other models for providing the Fire Department with the annual funds for Fire Protection Services. The CAO committed to looking into other models, including models that would guarantee the Fire Department a certain amount annually.
11. **Wood Islands Playground** (*Deputy Mayor Docherty*) The concept of having a small playground constructed on behalf of RMB in cooperation with the Wood Islands Area and Development Corporation is being revisited. Progress to date and next steps will be discussed at the next Council meeting.
12. **Medical Clinic/Nurse Practitioner for Residents of Belfast** (*Deputy Mayor Docherty & Admin Ashley Feschuk*) In honor of Councillor Mary Mecher-Carlson who passed away early this summer, this topic is being brought forth again. Councillor Carlson was a huge advocate for making healthcare for the resident of Belfast her top priority. Now that there is a suitable office space, meetings have been set up to see if there is Provincial support to assist RMB in establishing a clinic to help better serve our residents and alleviate some pressure off the Fire Department and Montague hospital. The idea is that the clinic would operate once a week and be able to assist with things like blood pressure etc. Updates to follow.
13. **Calgary Foundation Grant (In/Out for Belfast Rec Centre)** (*Admin – Ashley Feschuk*) Council is being asked to authorize the Municipality to act as the qualified conduit and authorize the appropriate signing authority to accept the annual grant on behalf of the Belfast Rec Centre.

Moved by **Councillor Bryson** and seconded by **Councillor Gamble** to act as the grant recipient on behalf of the Belfast Rec Centre.

Votes for: 6 Votes against: 0 Result: **Carried Unanimously**

14. **Belfast Rural Fire Department – Monthly Update** – A copy of this report can be found on the RMB website www.ruralmunicipalityofbelfast.com Councillor Bryson committed to a draft letter to FPEIM regarding negotiated fire department rates across PEI.
15. **Belfast Rural Fire Department – Firehall Funding Update** (*CAO – Bob Brooks*) ... as reported last month, fundraising efforts continue to be successful for the estimated \$1.322 million Firehall Expansion project: Funds committed from the Fire Department, Canada Community Building Fund (CCBF), Rural Municipality of Belfast (RMB), and the Rural Growth Initiative (RGI). The Fire Dept and RMB are currently working on a funding application with the Government of Canada through our MP Kent MacDonald. If successful, that may cover the remaining required funds. RMB and the Fire Department are also working on the eventual financing 'ask' from Finance PEI (to be confirmed in August). A Bylaw will be brought forward to provide a mechanism for supplying funding to the Fire Department for the financing repayment schedule as the Guarantor for the financing.
16. **A Harassment Policy for RMB – Progress to-date** (*Admin – Ashley Feschuk*) It is a legal requirement that RMB have a written workplace harassment policy. The requirement comes from the *Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Workplace Harassment Regulations*. Eastern Kings just had their policy vetted by their legal team and it is now in RMB Council's hands for review. Further updates at the next Council meeting.
17. **A Reserve Policy for RMB – Progress to-date** (*Admin – Ashley Feschuk*) ... As discussed at other meetings, it was confirmed that RMB should have a Bylaw that describes the current **RMB Reserve**, currently sitting as a GIC. This Bylaw would cover: the *Emergency Preparedness Reserve (\$10,000)*, the *Legal Reserve (\$5,000)*, the *Elections Reserve (\$5,000)*, and the *Remaining in Reserve (currently at \$31,977.58 and growing)*. As above in item 15, it will also provide the mechanism for the RMB supplying the Firehall Project Financing. Municipal Affairs has provided a model, which RMB is currently adapting to be an RMB Bylaw.
18. **In Camera Discussion:** (*per Agenda Item 3 above*):

Moved by **Councillor McGivern** and seconded by **Deputy Mayor Docherty** to move "in-camera" for an HR discussion.

Votes for: 6 Votes against: 0 Result: **Carried Unanimously**

Moved by **Councillor McGivern** and seconded by **Deputy Mayor Docherty** to move out of "in-camera".

Votes for: 6 Votes against: 0 Result: **Carried Unanimously**

19. **Next Meeting:**
 - a) **Special Council Meeting** – Thurs. July 30, 2026: 8pm – RMB Office, Wood Islands
 - b) **Regular Council Meeting** – Wed. Aug. 19, 2026: 7pm – RMB Office, Wood Islands
20. **Adjournment** – As there is no further business...

Moved by **Councillor McGivern** to adjourn the meeting at: **9:01pm**

Minutes Approved: **Aug 19, 2026** Mayor Gillis: **Sig. & Seal on file** CAO Brooks **Sig. & Seal on file**

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