

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2026 @ 1:00 P.M.
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
GUYSBOROUGH MUNICIPAL BUILDING

Warden Paul Long called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

ATTENANCE

Warden Paul Long
Deputy Warden Janet Peitzsche
Councillor Mary Desmond
Councillor Dave Hanhams
Councillor Susan Cashin

OTHERS PRESENT

Sean O'Connor, CAO
Shawn Andrews, Deputy CAO
Danita Imlay, Director of Finance
Glen Avery, Director of Public Works
Christina Bowie, Manager of Special Initiatives & Communications
Deborah Torrey, Development Officer
Angie Cleary, Director of Recreation
Ashley Cunningham-Avery, Executive Director GDBP
Jeff Myers, Recreation Programming & Facility Manager
Nathan Sparks
Juanita Byard
Lakesha Borden
Clifford Desmond
Rosie MacLellan
Sabrina Skinner
Terry Fraser-Desmond
Heather Manuel
Cindy Malcolm
Natashia Farrell, RCMP
Members of the Public

REGRETS

Councillor Neil DeCoff
Councillor Hudson MacLeod
Councillor Fin Armsworthy

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

26-02-30897

MOVED: Deputy Warden Janet Peitzsche
SECONDED: Councillor Mary Desmond
MOTION: **THAT** Council approve the agenda as presented.
MOTION CARRIED

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

INTRODUCTIONS

PROCLAMATION

26-02-30898

MOVED: Councillor Mary Desmond

SECONDED: Councillor Dave Hanhams

MOTION: **WHEREAS** the Government of Canada has deemed February as African Heritage Month;

WHEREAS people of African ancestry contributed significantly and positively to the shaping of our Canadian society for 150 years;

WHEREAS people of African ancestry have been residents of Nova Scotia for more than four hundred years;

WHEREAS the United Nations declared 2015-2034 as the second International Decade for People of African Descent, to promote and protect the rights of people of African descent;

WHEREAS African Nova Scotians and people of African descent have made significant contributions to our municipality and our province while facing discrimination and the lasting effects of racism;

WHEREAS the Municipality of the District of Guysborough is committed to promoting justice, equality, and opportunities for African Nova Scotians and people of African descent and supports the Decade;

WHEREAS the Municipality of the District of Guysborough is provincially recognized as one of more than 52 African Nova Scotian communities in the Province of Nova Scotia;

WHEREAS the Municipality of the District of Guysborough values and celebrates the rich cultural diversity of its community; and salutes the sacrifices and leadership of our African Nova Scotian citizens of Guysborough and across the province;

WHEREAS this year's theme is "Strength in Unity; Moving Forward with Purpose, Prosperity, Power and Progress" speaks to the collective power that emerges when African Nova Scotians and people of African descent come together with shared vision and intention. Unity is not passive, it is an active force that strengthens our communities, advances justice, and creates pathways for opportunity and growth.

THEREFORE, I, Warden Paul Long, of the Municipality of the District of Guysborough do hereby proclaim the Month of February 2026 as African Heritage Month and our support for the United Nations second, International Decade for People of African Descent until 2034 and reaffirm our commitment to recognizing and uplifting African Nova Scotians and all people of African descent.

MOTION CARRIED

BUSINESS ARISING FROM LAST YEARS MEETING

UPDATE SUNNYVILLE ROAD

Ms. Sabrina Skinner stated that the community residents were wondering when more work would be completed on Sunnyville Road noting that the part of the road that is remaining is the most dangerous and most treacherous section of road in Sunnyville.

Mr. Sean O'Connor updated members on J Class Roads and the classification of Sunnyville Road including a review of the work that was already completed to date.

Ms. Sabrina Skinner stated that Lincolnville Loop has been redone twice with only one small section being done in Sunnyville during the same time period.

Councillor Mary Desmond clarified the classification of Upper Big Tracadie Road for the information of the members present.

Councillor Dave Hanhams suggested that community members reach out to Provincial officials to stress the importance of having this work completed.

MORE INVOLVEMENT BY MODG WITH EVENTS

Councillor Mary Desmond stated that since the last meeting there has been some improvement with this concern with various events as well as the formation of the EDIA Committee, etc. Councillor Desmond noted that she is hopeful that improvements will continue to be made.

The various avenues used for getting information out to residents on events throughout MODG were reviewed for the information of members present. It was also mentioned that residents could reach out to the Recreation Department at any time to inquire about what is happening throughout the Municipality.

HIRING, DIVERSITY WITH MODG

Mr. Nathan Sparks reviewed the proclamation that was read earlier in the meeting and then questioned how the Municipality is responding to hiring and diversity in the Municipality.

Warden Paul Long spoke about difficulty in offering training for specific positions in MODG and how the Municipality does provide grants to encourage further education through the school system.

Mr. Sean O'Connor spoke about the proposed development projects and the type of training and employment opportunities with those companies.

Ms. Sabrina Skinner spoke about two youths who had worked for MODG in the past and did not get an interview for the PACY program. Ms. Skinner stated that overlooking these students was not being equitable and inclusive.

Ms. Angie Tavares stated that at that time, they had a large quantity of applications so only grade 11 and grade 12 students were interviewed.

Councillor Mary Desmond questioned if MODG has a section on our employment application form to self identify if they are African NS Members.

Mr. Sean O'Connor stated that this is a gap in MODG's ability to track self-identification of potential candidates during the hiring process and this is something that will be worked on through the EDIA Committee. MODG is considering creating an application form with a voluntary self-identification section.

SKATING RINK BOOKING

Ms. Sabrina Skinner stated that she wants to promote the CLC during ANS Heritage Month but the cost of busing, etc. is very expensive. Ms. Skinner suggested that the special skating event that was held this year be opened up and held during a school day to try to attract more people to the event.

Mrs. Angie Tavares noted that there are many school bookings this year during the month of February which is followed by a visit to the ANS Friendship Centre at the school. Mrs.

Tavares stated that having said that, she is more than willing to work with the schools to expand on this.

Warden Paul Long stated that he has reached out to the SRCE about having the ANS Friendship Centre open during the summer months so that it is accessible to the public which includes residents and tourists. Warden Long noted that he will continue to work on this.

MODG BUILDINGS, REFLECTION OF ANS

Councillor Mary Desmond stated that at their recent EDIA meeting they agreed that they need to incorporate some ANS, Acadian & Indigenous artwork in MODG buildings, the Hospital, etc. The Committee will continue to work on this matter.

REPRESENTATION ON CBA COMMITTEE

Ms. Rosie MacLellan stated that they would like more representation on the CBA Committee noting that they are underrepresented. Ms. MacLellan stated that their community should have a say in what takes place.

Ms. Juanita Byard questioned what the CBA Committee was about.

Councillor Mary Desmond provided an explanation for the members present of CBA's and the UBT Wind Project. Councillor Desmond stated that she includes information on the wind project in her newsletter. Councillor Desmond noted that she has also gone door to door with Mark Stewart in UBT community to discuss this project with residents.

Ms. Sabrina Skinner stated that she attended the EverWind meetings and there is supposed to be money available to the community of Lincolnville, but no funding has been provided to the community to date. She also noted that they have not provided any updates in relation to the Environmental Assessment and that they should come back to the community to discuss this.

Councillor Desmond noted that EverWind did in fact come back to the community.

Mr. Sean O'Connor provided clarification on the status of the wind projects in MODG noting that January 2027 will be the first year that some funding will be available through a CBA.

NEW BUSINESS

EDIA COMMITTEE/POLICY COMMUNITY UPDATE

Mrs. Christina Bowie provided an update on the EDIA Committee for the information of members. Mrs. Bowie noted that she will start providing the minutes from the Committee meetings with the regular email mailout that she sends to ANS Members who have provided their contact information. Mrs. Bowie stated that she will also start providing Council with an update on a monthly basis.

SHEPPARD LAKE

Mr. Clifford Desmond thanked MODG for the new washrooms that were installed at the Sheppard Lake Park. Mr. Desmond stated that he would like to see this be more accessible to the public. Mr. Desmond suggested that the trail be cleared up as there are a lot of fallen dead trees, etc. Mr. Desmond stated that this park and trail need some beautification. Mr. Desmond stated that this work could include some work at the lakeside as well.

Ms. Terry Fraser-Desmond stated that the Sheppard's Lake sign also needs to be reinstalled as it was taken down when the road work was being completed.

ANS HOUSING/LAND INITIATIVE

Ms. Juanita Byard questioned if there are any programs that MODG can offer to assist with home repairs noting that there has not been any new housing in their communities since the 1970's. Ms. Byard also questioned where MODG sees the three ANS Communities in the next 10 years.

Warden Paul Long reviewed MODG's role with housing. Warden Long noted that he would like to see growth in all areas of MODG.

Deputy Warden Peitzsche questioned if the Housing Department still has the NS Housing Repair Program.

Nancy O'Regan briefly reviewed the NS Housing Repair Program and the problems with that program.

Ms. Sabrina Skinner questioned if MODG was going to adopt a well drilling program like other municipalities have as a result of the situation with dry wells.

Mr. Sean O'Connor commented on a well drilling program and the legislation concerns related to the program which requires Municipalities to register liens against properties that participate. Mr. O'Connor noted that MODG are going to continue to discuss possible options including continuation of the water voucher program similar to last year if drought conditions occur again.

Ms. Skinner reported on a well testing program she is involved with for the ANS communities noting that some of the wells that were tested came back showing contamination. Ms. Skinner noted that following the testing program, they are now looking at options for treatment, etc.

Councillor Susan Cashin reported that Community First: Guysborough County Housing Association is currently looking at a housing project in Sunnyville.

ADJOURNMENT

26-02-30899

MOVED: Councillor Dave Hanhams

MOTION: **THAT** the Special Council meeting of February 11, 2026 stand adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED (2:15 pm)

WARDEN

DEPUTY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

DATE