

ATTENDING

Mayor Mike Trinacty, Chair
Deputy Mayor Johanna Kwakernaak
Councillor Ty Walsh
Councillor Justin Serino
Councillor Adam Lutz - arrived at 6:57 pm
Councillor Derrick Jamieson
Councillor Chris Goddard
Jen Boyd, Chief Administrative Officer
Lisa Walsh, Director of Finance
Aaron Dondale, Director of Public Works
Katie Verrette, Manager of Community Development
Krista Longmire, Executive Assistant

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

2 members of the public

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED AS CIRCULATED.

MOTION CARRIED

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 10, 2026, COUNCIL MEETING WERE ACCEPTED AS CIRCULATED.

4. REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS

CAO Boyd reviewed the Action items as presented.

5. COUNCILLOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Deputy Mayor Kwakernaak – The Town’s Beautification Committee will be meeting with the Fire Services Committee to discuss the new flower bed at the entrance to Town on the Town/Fire Commission owned property. All of the planters have been adopted by Town residents. The Committee will require the support of Town staff for the planter placement.

Mayor Trinacty– The Sport Hall of Fame selection process has been completed, and all nominees have accepted their nominations.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. RFD005-2026: Valley Waste TBR Partner Guarantee

CAO Boyd reviewed the Temporary Borrowing Resolution Guarantee from Valley Waste Resource Management.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT Council approve the Town of Berwick's loan guarantee as requested by the VWRM, in the amount of \$11,632 or 2.71% of the VWRM's Temporary Borrowing Resolution (in the amount of \$428,825) per attached loan guarantee schedule.

MOTION CARRIED

b. Budget 2026/27 Discussion

Feedback from a previous evening's public budget session was discussed, including questions about grants to organizations, particularly the Valley Wildcats, the KMCC agreement requirements, the compliance/bylaw officer position, and concerns about reserve funding and the annual losses of the fitness center.

CAO Boyd also presented a tax rate comparison showing the Town of Berwick's tax rates (both commercial and residential) compared to other Nova Scotia towns' average, with residential rates trending below the provincial average.

Staff presented updated projections and recommendations, emphasizing the need to balance infrastructure needs with financial constraints. Council considered deferring some projects, like Foster Street, to better align with the town's financial capacity while maintaining essential services and infrastructure. They also discussed adjusting the town's contribution to reserves and debt repayment to ensure long-term financial sustainability.

Council will review an updated budget at the Committee of the Whole meeting on the 24th, and if necessary, March 31st has been tentatively booked for passing the 2026/27 budgets.

One member of the public left the meeting at 8:39 pm

c. Provincial Grant Reduction Impact

CAO Boyd and Manager Verrette reviewed the grant reduction impacts recently announced by the provincial government. Due to an announcement today, there may be some changes to the Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage grants, and an update will be reported at the next Council meeting.

8. MAYOR'S REPORT – as circulated.

Mayor Trinacty highlighted the meeting that members of staff and Council had with Colonel Vachon and Chief Warrant Officer Harper from 14Wing Greenwood on the upgrades and expansion happening at the base.

9. IN-CAMERA

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL BE ADJOURNED TO INCAMERA AT 8:53 PM.

MOTION CARRIED

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE INCAMERA SESSION BE ADJOURNED TO THE REGULAR MEETING AT 10:04 PM.

MOTION CARRIED

Council directed staff to keep the compliance/bylaw officer in the 2026/27 budget, increase the residential tax rate by \$0.02 and increase the commercial rate to \$4.07, which is the Nova Scotia Town's average in 2024/25 as presented during the budget discussions.

10. ADJOURNMENT

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE REGULAR MEETING BE ADJOURNED AT 10:12 PM.

MOTION CARRIED

Approved by Town Council, April 14, 2026
As recorded by Krista Longmire, Executive Assistant