

Present: Mayor Campbell
Councillor Land
Councillor Coates
Councillor Ward-Russell
Councillor Elderkin
Councillor Jonah

Staff Present: Sean Wallace – CAO
Kim Beers – Director, Legislative Services/Clerk
Jillian Hutchinson – Treasurer
Ian Barrett – Director, Operations

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Campbell called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Councillor Elderkin proposed the addition of Public Statements and Inquiries to the Agenda.

IT WAS MOVED by **Councillor Land** and **SECONDED** by **Councillor Coates** **THAT** the amended agenda be adopted.

MOTION CARRIED (unanimously)

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

None.

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

IT WAS MOVED by **Councillor Land** **SECONDED** by **Councillor Jonah** **THAT** the Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held December 3, 2025 be approved.

MOTION CARRIED (unanimously)

IT WAS MOVED by **Councillor Coates** **SECONDED** by **Councillor Land** **THAT** the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held December 8, 2025, be approved.

MOTION CARRIED (unanimously)

IT WAS MOVED by **Councillor Land** **SECONDED** by **Councillor Elderkin** **THAT** the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held December 9, 2025, be approved.

MOTION CARRIED (unanimously)

IT WAS MOVED by **Councillor Elderkin** **SECONDED** by **Councillor Coates** **THAT** the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held December 12, 2025, be approved.

MOTION CARRIED (unanimously)

CONSENT AGENDA

None

PUBLIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENTATIONS

None

REPORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES AND PRIVATE MEETINGS

Personnel Committee – **Councillor Elderkin** advised that the Personnel Committee meeting was held December 15, 2025, during which several matters were discussed, including committee membership for the upcoming year and draft policies that will be brought forward to Council. No decisions were made at that meeting. The minutes of the meeting will be circulated once completed.

Councillor Elderkin also advised that the annual CAO performance evaluation process is commencing. An assessment package will be circulated to Council by Tammy Rampersaud, to be completed and returned within 10–14 days. The responses will be compiled and summarized for Council's review, with the intent that the Mayor and Tammy Rampersaud will present the finalized evaluation to the CAO. The goal is to complete the evaluation process by the end of January.

EMO Committee – **Councillor Coates** advised that the Emergency Measures Coordinator (EMC) for the Fundy Albert area has submitted a resignation effective January 1, 2026. As a result, the municipality currently does not have an EMC in place and will need to address the appointment of a replacement.

Mayor Campbell expressed appreciation to Mr. Jim Lindsay for his support and contributions to the municipality.

Recreation Committee – **Councillor Jonah** advised that the next meeting, currently scheduled for the following week, may need to be rescheduled due to scheduling conflicts. An email will be circulated requesting a change to a later date in January. It was also requested that administration follow up regarding the preparation of minutes from the previous meeting.

ATV Access on Roads and Streets Committee – **Councillor Coates** advised there is nothing to report.

REPORTS FROM ADMINISTRATION

Deputy Mayor

Mayor Campbell called for nominations for the position of Deputy Mayor and asked three times for additional nominations. **Councillor Jonah** nominated **Councillor Elderkin**, and **Councillor Elderkin** accepted the nomination. No further nominations were received.

IT WAS MOVED by Councillor Land and SECONDED by Councillor Jonah

THAT Council elect **Councillor Loretta Elderkin** as Deputy Mayor for the ensuing term, in accordance with By-law 2022-03 – A By-law Respecting the Proceedings of Fundy Albert Municipal Council and Committee Meetings.

MOTION CARRIED (unanimously)

Mayor Campbell expressed appreciation to **Councillor Ward-Russell** for her commitment and contributions over the past year as Deputy Mayor, acknowledging the significant role she assumed and the work completed.

BY-LAWS

None

MAYOR AND COUNCILLOR STATEMENTS

Councillor Elderkin expressed concern on behalf of Riverside-Albert residents regarding the level of Christmas lights in the area, noting it was significantly less than in other communities and that concerns raised earlier in December were not addressed. Appreciation was extended to municipal staff who volunteered to participate in the Riverside-Albert Christmas Parade and to the Riverside-Albert Fire Department for organizing the event.

Councillor Elderkin requested a future update, preferably at a Committee of the Whole, on the Alma water project, including financial status, interest charges, amounts paid to date, and outstanding balances, noting uncertainty due to the outstanding audit. Council was advised that Debenture funds previously discussed in December had been deposited back into the Riverside-Albert utility account.

Councillor Elderkin raised concerns regarding delays in completing municipal audits, potential impacts on financial planning, banking, and debentures, and the need for transparency regarding the implications moving forward into 2026. Council was advised by Mr. Wallace that a meeting is scheduled with the audit firm, and frustration was expressed with ongoing delays.

Councillor Jonah expressed appreciation to Public Works for their work on the gazebo Christmas lights, noting positive public feedback. **Councillor Jonah** also echoed previously stated concerns regarding the audit delays, indicating that the situation is serious and requires resolution.

Councillor Land expressed concerns regarding ongoing audit delays, including costs incurred to date, and lack of communication from the audit firm. It was noted that partial payment has been made, with additional billing anticipated upon completion. Administration advised that further discussion of actions or outcomes would need to occur outside the public forum.

Councillor Land echoed concerns regarding the uneven distribution of Christmas lighting across communities and noted the need for improved consistency in future years.

Councillor Land asked for clarification on utility and public works department. Administration clarified that Public Works and water operations currently fall under Public Works, with a utilities framework to be brought forward as a future proposal. Several operational matters were raised, including sidewalk snow clearing, application of winter maintenance standards at municipal facilities, and clarification of responsibilities under the snow removal policy.

Councillor Land raised resident concerns regarding winter maintenance on Grays Island Road, and administration advised that the contractor has been contacted and that the snow removal contract and policy will be reviewed for potential refinement and brought forward to Committee of the Whole if required.

Councillor Land asked for an update regarding GPS tracking. Administration advised that the implementation of GPS tracking in municipal vehicles, noting that installation has begun and that reporting design and staff training will follow, with an anticipated rollout over the next two months.

Councillor Elderkin asked for clarification on municipal snow plowing operations, administration advised that all snow and ice control is managed by Public Works staff across Hillsborough, Riverside-Albert, and Alma. It was noted that recent response times were affected by equipment availability and mechanical issues, including plow and blower malfunctions. Administration advised that additional equipment has since been deployed and that further improvements are anticipated as repairs are completed. Administration further advised that operational adjustments will be implemented ahead of forecasted storms, including assigning plow trucks to staff residing in outlying areas to improve response times. Limitations in sanding capacity were also identified due to the size of existing equipment, resulting in the use of contractors during severe icing events.

Councillor Land asked whether the Village owns a sander, administration advised that a truck-mounted sander is available; however, the control wiring and harness were removed when the original truck was sold. Administration is assessing whether the unit remains functional and whether it is cost-effective to replace the wiring harness or consider alternative equipment options. It was also noted that the existing sander has limited capacity, and options for larger-capacity equipment are being explored.

Councillor Ward-Russell continued discussion regarding winter maintenance on Grays Island Road, noting that the issue has been raised over multiple years. Concerns were expressed regarding resident access and consideration of potential compensation for private snow clearing. Administration advised the road will be included in future plowing and will review contractual options, including potential subcontracting adjustments, and report back with options.

Councillor Ward-Russell expressed concerns regarding ongoing audit delays, including lack of clear communication, shifting completion timelines, and financial risk associated with outstanding audits. Council emphasized the need for accurate information, improved communication, and a defined plan of action. Administration advised that all required information has been provided by the municipality, that communication challenges persist with the audit firm, and that Council will be updated following an upcoming meeting.

Councillor Ward- Russell noted outstanding correspondence requiring response, including inquiries from Nature Trust and other stakeholders. Administration advised it would confirm receipt and follow up accordingly.

Councillor Ward-Russell raised concern regarding winter maintenance responsibilities for provincially maintained roads in Lower Coverdale, including subcontracting arrangements through the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure (DTI). Administration advised it would seek clarification from DTI regarding responsibility, current contractors, and service expectations, and report back as required.

Councillor Coates raised concerns regarding ongoing budget pressures and the likelihood that outstanding audits may not be completed prior to the upcoming municipal election. Concerns were also raised regarding access to health services, including the discontinuation of X-ray services at the Albert County Wellness Centre and lengthy wait times for diagnostic imaging and emergency care, noting impacts on residents and emergency response. Administration advised that discussions have been initiated with the Minister of Health regarding healthcare service concerns, including diagnostic services, and that a meeting is being arranged.

Councillor Coates discussed public safety and RCMP service coverage, including the location of the Caledonia RCMP detachment and response times within Fundy Albert. It was suggested that Council meet with the RCMP to better understand service plans for the area and identify opportunities to improve coverage.

Councillor Coates advised that an upcoming EMO evacuation exercise scheduled for January 20 is scheduled.

Mayor Campbell extended New Year's greetings to residents of Fundy Albert, expressing wishes for prosperity, happiness, and economic growth in 2026.

NOTICES OF MOTION AND RESOLUTIONS

None

PUBLIC STATEMENTS & INQUIRIES

Ms. Kathy Weir requested that the municipality consider providing a clear, publicly available list or chart outlining Council and committee areas of responsibility to assist residents in knowing who to contact regarding matters such as recreation, tourism, economic development, and capacity-building initiatives.

Ms. Weir also commented on audit delays and expressed the view that more proactive follow-up is needed.

Ms. Weir shared positive comments regarding the impact of volunteer-led initiatives, including the success of the Chase the Ace licence and funds reinvested into community programs, recreation, youth activities, and local organizations.

CLOSED SESSION

IT WAS MOVED by *Councillor Jonah* **SECONDED** by *Councillor Coates* **THAT** Council have an in-camera session at 6:50 pm.

MOTION CARRIED (unanimously)

Local Governance Act 68 (1)(f) information concerning legal opinions or advice provided to the local government by its solicitor or privileged communications between solicitor and client in a matter of local government business.

Local Governance Act 68 (1) (c) information that could cause financial loss or gain to a person or the local government or could jeopardize negotiations leading to an agreement or contract.

Local Governance Act 68 (1)(j) labour and employment matters, including the negotiation of collective agreements.

IT WAS MOVED by *Councillor Elderkin* **SECONDED** by *Councillor Land* **THAT** Council return to regular session at 7:55 pm

MOTION CARRIED (unanimously)

IT WAS MOVED by *Councillor Elderkin* and **SECONDED** by *Councillor Jonah*

THAT Council authorizes the Mayor and Clerk to execute the necessary documents as discussed in Closed Session pursuant to s. 68(1)(f) of the Local Governance Act.

MOTION CARRIED (unanimously)

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by **Councillor Land** to adjourn at 7:56 pm

Mayor

Clerk