

APRIL 13, 2026
STELLARTON, NOVA SCOTIA

MEETING

A meeting of the Stellarton Town Council was held on Monday, April 13, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

PRESENT

Mayor Darren Stroud, Couns. Sandra Eis, Mark Fortune, Susan Campbell and Garry Pentz. Also present was CAO Alanna Grover.

1. AGENDA

The Agenda was approved, on motion by Coun. G. Pentz, seconded by Coun. S. Campbell. **Motion Carried.**

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from March 9, 2026 Regular Council were approved on motion by Coun. M. Fortune seconded by Coun. S. Campbell. **Motion Carried.**

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

4. Presentation: Suzanne Adshead, Area Manager, Department of Natural Resources, Re: Deer Issues; Highlights:

- Providing assistance to all Pictou County such as wildlife complaints; injured, sick and distressed wildlife; deceased wildlife; surveys; and sustainability
- Ease of food main reason for deer in town; unintentional and intentional feeding
- Less predators in town
- Deer are born in town now
- Harm injuries to the deer and people
- Destruction of property concerns; getting hit by vehicles; ticks
- Need to stop feeding deer
- Bears are in towns as well; green bins food supply
- Coyotes and raccoons

What can the towns do:

- Relocating deer not an option nor effective
- Culls are not effective
- Determining the population size
- Educate residents most important

Discussion;

Fines for “feeding wildlife”. Suzanne commented re towns can implement their own rules / regulations.

Mayor D. Stroud asked if there was a best practice for the deer population in Stellarton; what are other towns doing? Suzanne replied that Truro and New Glasgow has a “No Feeding Wildlife” bylaw. The premise is less food sources, the less deer numbers. Mayor D. Stroud thanked Suzanne for presentation.

5. Presentation: Rayann Toner, Executive Director, Tearman Society – Sent regrets.

6. Presentation: Floyd and Ruby Rudolph, Re: Viola’s Place

Troy Washington, on behalf of Viola’s Place, addressed Council looking for support for the continuation of Viola’s operation; feeding and housing homeless, education, long-term support. He recognizes the various concerns about the current location. He presented petition for additional signatures in support of Viola’s Place. There was a survey of 92 people in the surrounding area of the shelter to get some feedback.

Approximately, half commented that the problem was more due to lack of affordable housing, shortages in mental health supports and addiction issues. Only 8% expressed frustration and concern regarding Viola's Place. The situation is common all over the province / country, especially with the cost of living and affordable housing. The need is real and community support is vital. Mayor D. Stroud accepted petition and Council will review this matter.

7. Reports from Staff: February

- a. Chief Mark Hobeck – Stellarton Police Service
Police Chief Mark Hobeck highlighted – 220 Calls for Service in March; most common occurrences were Motor Vehicle Act violations; charges included Criminal Code, Motor Vehicle Act, Winter Parking, Litter Act and Warnings issued; continued attention to community presence and pro-acting policing. Coun. S. Eis re the YMCA housing update. Chief Hobeck stated that calls have been down at those locations; citizen concerns reason for tracking occurrences.
Coun. G. Pentz made motion to accept Police Service Report, seconded by Coun. S. Eis. **Motion Carried.**
- b. Fire Chief Mike O'Sullivan – Fire Department
Chief Mike O'Sullivan presented report for March highlighting; Responded to 5 calls; practices were held weekly with the exception of March 19; and crews completed hall clean-up and equipment checks.
Coun. G. Pentz motioned to accept Fire Department's report for March 2026, seconded by Coun. M. Fortune.
Mayor D. Stroud and Coun. S. Eis re mutual aid calls. Chief O'Sullivan explained the process of alerting other departments for aid or standby; reports are submitted to the fire marshal and records are kept. **Motion Carried.**
- c. Paige Draper – Marketing and Communications
Paige presented report, no changes to initial report.
Coun. S. Eis made motion to approve the Marketing and Communications report, seconded by Coun. S. Campbell.
Mayor D. Stroud re any interest in the Heritage Committee. P. Draper stated that the Committee is working on a Terms of Reference prior to seeking volunteers to sit on the Committee. **Motion Carried.**
- d. Blaine Murray – Town Engineer
B. Murray absent.
Coun. G. Pentz made motion to approve Town Engineer's Reports, seconded by Coun. S. Eis.
Coun. G. Pentz re closure of the library for two weeks. CAO A. Grover confirmed that there was an electrical issue at the library; will follow up with the Engineer for Council's information.
Motion Carried.

8. Correspondence

- a. **Letter from Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library, Re: 2026/27 Budget** –
CAO A. Grover highlighted letter:
 - Board met and set the budget for the fiscal year 2026/27
 - The Provincial Government did not cut the core library grant received; remains at the same level for a 7th year.
 - The Board requested that emergency funding received for the last 3 years to help fund minimum wage increases and inflation be included with the grant; it was not included leaving the Board with a reduction of \$143,600 in provincial income from last fiscal year.
 - The Board approved the following actions to balance the budget and protect core services:
 - Lower salaries by attrition
 - Reduced funding to support the Adopt-a-Library program

- Board generated income will increase from 3% of the operating budget to 10%
- The Board is not requesting a municipal grant increase for this current fiscal year
- Antigonish and New Glasgow libraries will be closing on Sundays effective this month.

Mayor D. Stroud comments re awareness for library funding.

b. Letter from Mayor Mike Bartlett, Town of Digby, Re: Coalition to End Poverty – CAO A. Grover re letter of support addressed to Premier Houston; concerns raised by the Antigonish Coalition to End Poverty; the Town of Digby supports the call for a meaningful increase to social assistance and disability support rates, with the goal of ensuring that Nova Scotians are able to meet their basic needs and live with dignity.

- c. Healthy Pictou County, Re:** March 2026 Report – CAO Grover highlighted:
- successful launch of the SimLab space in their 360 Hub
 - Unveiling of their refreshed website
 - Launched the Aberdeen Medical Staff Physician Award nominations and planning of the awards Gala for June 2026
 - Began intake for the planned arrival of their new general surgeon and two ER physicians this summer

9. Committee of the Whole Report – No Report this month.

10. Application to the Nova Scotia Regulatory and Appeals Board, Proposed Water Rate Study

CAO A. Grover provided information to Council; this is a motion to go to the NS Regulatory and Appeals Board regarding water rates, fire protection, and rules and regulations for Stellarton residents for the water utility. She stated that residential meters are installed; most issues have been addressed; staff have been monitoring process; it looks like we are in a good position to move forward with this application to the Board. There was a special meeting at the Committee of the Whole with the Consultants and Council to discuss relevant information. If motion is approved, next step will be for the Board to set date for hearing and a Public Hearing. Mayor D. Stroud read motion (copy attached);

“Motion of the Town of Stellarton at a duly called meeting of the Town held April 13, 2026: That the Town of Stellarton apply to the Nova Scotia Regulatory and Appeals Board for the changes in its rates for water and water service, fire protection to the Town and changes to its Rules and Regulations for customers served by the Town of Stellarton Water Utility, as set out in the Water Rate Study prepared by G. A. Isenor Consulting Limited in association with Blaine S. Rooney Consulting Limited.”

Coun. G. Pentz made motion to approve application to the NS Regulatory and Appeals Board, seconded by Coun. M. Fortuned.

On the question:

Coun. G. Pentz re process of the billing of consumption and what are the timelines.

CAO A. Grover confirmed that this is the process and looking at an early fall date for consumption readings; a “mock bill” in October for residents to demonstrate what their futures bills will look like.

Motion Carried.

11. Open Forum

No one spoke at the Open Forum

12. Next Council Meeting: Monday, May 11, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.

13. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned on motion by Coun. G. Pentz.