SEPTEMBER 14, 2026
STELLARTON, NOVA SCOTIA

MEETING
A meeting of the Stellarton Town Council was held on Monday, September 14, 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, Police Chief Mark Hobeck, Town Engineer Blaine Murray and Town Accountant Bonnie Coulter.

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

2. Presentation: Nova Scotia's Independent Energy Systems Operator (IESO), Olivia McMackin (Communications, Government Relations & Stakeholder Engagement) and Colleen Rollings, (Procurement Project Lead)
Highlights:

- Update on progress to date
- Provide affordable electricity; NS Government's Clean Power Plan
- Renewable grid; looking at no coal usage by 2030
- Wind power as well as a backup
- Collaborative process with third party energy experts, power producers, advocates, community representatives and a range of resources and technologies
- Combination of energy storage (batteries) and fast acting generation is the most cost-effective way to address the needs of the province
- Community engagement where the sites are located
- Provincial Environment Assessment, conditional approval
- Draft procurement documents to solicit feedback and prepare final documents in July 2026
- RFP and RFQ (Request for Qualifications) for generation technologies to ensure up-to-date current commercial data
- Revised timeline to launch is October 2026 with submissions due in January 2027

Questions/Comments:
Coun. S. Eis re most affordable way to provide energy to the province; any reassurance that coal will not be replaced with natural gas.
Olivia McMackin replied that they are not for profit, no shareholders, and do not own assets; singular mandate to make the selection of the best possible cost for customers. Also, natural gas could prove viable in the short term, however in the long term, these facilities should run on cleaner fuel (non-fossil fuel).
Mayor D. Stroud re water shed concerns; pleased that this issue has been raised in the project.

3. Approval of Minutes
The minutes from July 13, 2026 Regular Council were approved on motion by Coun. S. Eis seconded by Coun. M. Fortune. **Motion Carried.**

4. Business Arising from the Minutes
There was no business arising from the minutes.

5. Presentation of the 2025-2026 Audited Financial Statements

Bonnie Coulter presented the audited consolidated financial statements for the year ending March 31, 2026, stating that the Auditors have issued a clean audit opinion; and the Audit Committee recommends approval of the statements.

Highlights:

- Cash balance has increased by $900,000.00
- Land held for resale in the business park
- Deferred revenue has decreased as the growth and renewal for infrastructure development (GRID Funding)
- Long-term debt has increased as debenture funding in the amount of $2 million was secured for the Claremont and Kirk Avenue water and sewer projects
- Overall the net financial debt position has decreased from March 2025 by $330,000.00
- There is a consolidated annual surplus of $830,000.00
- There was $2.7 million spent on Capital Assets
- The statement of operations are consistent with the prior years
- The Reserve balances are healthy

Coun. G. Pentz made motion to approve the financial statements, seconded by Coun. S. Campbell.

Mayor D. Stroud commented re decrease in the net financial debt; the Town is living within its means; services are both shared and performed solely by the Town. The cost of Public Works and Protective Services continue to be large budget items; as with water treatment operations increased costs. Council and staff are keeping a handle on costs.

Motion Carried.

Bonnie noted that the statements will be posted on the Town's website.

6. Reports from Staff: July and August 2026

a. Chief Mark Hobeck – Stellarton Police Service, highlights:

- Calls for Service = 272 in July, very busy month; and 193 in August
- 90 hours of Traffic Enforcement
- 24 hours of Foot Patrol
- 12 hours of Community Relations
- Charges: 18 Criminal Code, 2 Motor Vehicle Act, and 36 Warnings.

Coun. G. Pentz made motion to accept Police Service Reports, seconded by Coun. M. Fortune.

Mayor D. Stroud re any encampments in town. Chief M. Hobeck reported on an encampment set up by George Street; Officers engaged the individual and should be cleared now.

Motion Carried.

b. Fire Chief Mike O'Sullivan – Fire Department (absent);
CAO A. Grover highlighted Stellarton Fire Department participated in Homecoming events which included the Kids Firefighter Competition, hosting the Class of 1976 50 Year Class Reunion, the popular Pancake Breakfast serving over 1,200; the finale was the Fire Works Display.

Coun. S. Eis motioned to accept Fire Department's reports for July and August 2026, seconded by Coun. S. Campbell. **Motion Carried.**

c. Paige Draper – Marketing and Communications (absent)
CAO A. Grover highlighted:
Stellarton Homecoming Festival events
REMO Communications Team had regular meetings to re-brand REMO Pictou County; working to revamp the logo and color scheme
Upcoming Pictou County Culture Days; to coordinate an event for Pictou County Culture Days (September 18 to October 4); on Friday Sept. 25 From 6 to 8 p.m. they will be hosting Art in Allan Park

Coun. G. Pentz made motion to approve the Marketing and Communications report, seconded by Coun. S. Eis.
Coun. G. Pentz thanked Paige for the great job coordinating Homecoming.
Coun. S. Eis reiterated her appreciation for the work by Paige and her team.
Motion Carried.

d. Melanie Dash – Recreation Director
CAO A. Grover highlighted:
Equipment Loan Program had many rentals during the summer months
Interviews were conducted for a Shared MPAL position between Stellarton and Westville; the successful candidate was Tyler MacLeod
The Hike Club continued the summer guided hike series through July, hosting two hikes
Upcoming plans; Pictou County Hike Club will host 3 guided hikes in September
Hosting Art in the Park
Coun. M. Fortune made motion to approve the Recreation Director's Report, seconded by Coun. S. Campbell. **Motion Carried.**

e. Blaine Murray – Town Engineer
Update on Capital Projects:
South Foord Sanitary Replacement Project will start up in approximately 2 weeks
The Albion Ball Field Drainage Project starting next week

Coun. G. Pentz made motion to approve Town Engineer's Reports, seconded by Coun. S. Eis.
Coun. G. Pentz re North Foord Street Sidewalk. B. Murray confirmed that this project started this week.
Mayor D. Stroud re funding for the upcoming Capital Projects. CAO A. Grover stated that there is provincial funding for the Albion Ball Field; and GRID funding for the South Foord Sanitary Replacement project.
Coun. G. Pentz re water consumption reduction. B. Murray commented that there was significant rainfall this summer.
Coun. S. Eis re Geosmin testing. B. Murray commented that testing is very expensive, so reduction of testing since no detectable amounts were found in the samples. The carbon system has been beneficial.
Motion Carried.

7. Correspondence

a. Thank You:

i. Joe Earle Memorial Road Race – Thank you from the Joe Earle Memorial Road Races for our contribution.

ii. Women Alike Abreast A River – Thank you from the Women Alike Abreast A River for our donation towards their journey to a race in France.

iii. Northumberland Regional High School Educational Society – Thank you from NRHS Education Society for the Town's Oulton Trophy Award.

iv. Northumberland Regional High School Student, Delaney Dean – NRHS Student Delaney Dean sent thank you letter to Town of Stellarton as recipient of the Oulton Trophy Award.

b. Media Release, Nova Scotia Department of Justice – CAO A. Grover provided highlights from the August 27, 2026 media release: The Province is investing in stronger, more consistent critical incident response. Critical incident response may be required during situations such as armed or barricaded persons, hostage incidents, or other events involving an immediate and significant risk to the public or responding officers. The Province will fund the RCMP to provide these services to eight municipal policing agencies with a population of less than 15,000 people; those municipalities include Amherst, Annapolis Royal, Bridgewater, Kentville, New Glasgow, Stellarton, Truro and

Westville. The services are available immediately. Along with the new policing billing model, this change helps deliver on the Province's commitment to make sure appropriate policing staff levels are in place across the province as recommended in the Nova Scotia Comprehensive Policing Review.

8. Committee of the Whole Report

There is no Committee of the Whole Report this month.

9. Deer Management Bylaw, 2nd Reading

CAO A. Grover provided some background:

- There have been no formal submissions for Council's review ahead of the 2nd Reading this evening
- The Deer Management Bylaw passed 1st Reading on July 13
- It was advertised to the public following that reading within the Advocate on July 22, on our website and social media
- Next steps if approved this evening will be a signed Bylaw posted to our website and it will be filed with the Minister of Municipal Affairs
- It will be published in the newspaper as well
- How does Council wish to proceed after approval of Bylaw

Mayor D. Stroud asked for vote on the 2nd Reading to approve the Deer Management Bylaw.
Coun. S. Eis made motion to approve Bylaw, seconded by Coun. M. Fortune.
Motion Carried.

10. Resolution, Appointment of Municipal Fire Inspector

CAO A. Grover re as approved in our budget for the current fiscal year, the Town will be moving forward with a formal Fire Inspection Program. As required by the NS Fire Safety Act, Council must formally appoint the Municipal Fire Inspector. Council has been provided the requirement. CAO A. Grover read the recommendation and background ahead of the motion. The recommendation is that Council appoint Avery Withrow as a Municipal Fire Inspector for the Town of Stellarton pursuant to Section 19(1)(b) of the Nova Scotia Fire Safety Act.
Some background: The NS Fire Safety Act requires municipalities to establish a system of municipal fire inspections and appoint a Municipal Fire Inspector to carry out those inspections. The Municipality is also required to notify the Nova Scotia Fire Marshal in writing of the appointment and any subsequent revocation.
The Town is establishing a System of Municipal Fire Inspections Policy to provide a consistent, risk-based framework for the administration of municipal fire inspections. It is recommended that Avery Withrow be appointed as the Town's Municipal Fire Inspector. Mr. Withrow has the appropriate experience and qualifications to carry out the responsibilities of the position, including conducting inspections, identifying fire and life safety deficiencies, conducting follow-up inspections, and undertaking enforcement where authorized under the Fire Safety Act.
The Municipal Fire Inspector will administer the Town's fire inspection program in accordance with the Fire Safety Act, Fire Safety Regulations, applicable Fire Code requirements, and the Town's System of Municipal Fire Inspections Policy. The appointment will remain in effect until revoked by Council or otherwise terminated in accordance with applicable municipal requirements or the terms of any employment or service agreement. Following Council approval, the Chief Administrative Officer will provide the required written notification of the appointment to the Nova Scotia Fire Marshal.
The proposed motion ahead of Council is that Council appoint Avery Withrow as a Municipal Fire Inspector for the Town of Stellarton pursuant to Section 19(1)(b) of the Nova Scotia Fire Safety Act.
Coun. G. Pentz made motion to appointment of Avery Withrow as a Municipal Fire Inspector for the Town of Stellarton, seconded by Coun. Eis.
Mayor D. Stroud asked what was done in the past. CAO A. Grover replied that the Town did not have any formal fire inspection in place.
Motion Carried.

11. Open Forum

Alex McInnes asked about the deer situation in Town; what other options are being considered; relocating to rural areas.
Mayor D. Stroud referred to a recent Deer Survey; similar concerns were brought up; Deer Management Bylaw passed this evening; prohibiting the feeding of deer; Council will continue to monitor situation.
Coun. S. Eis comments re a regional approach; many meetings held with professionals; slow process but Council is moving forward.

12. Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, October 13, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.

13. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned on motion by Coun. G. Pentz.

MAYOR **CAO**