

## **Valley Regional Services Board of Directors Meeting**

**Wednesday, March 18, 2026, 10:00 a.m.**

**Valley Waste-Resource Management Board room with Virtual Attendance Option**

### **APPROVED MINUTES**

A meeting of the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors was held on Wednesday, March 18, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., based in the Valley Waste-Resource Management board room with a virtual attendance option.

#### **Board Members in Attendance:**

| <b>Municipality / Town</b>          | <b>Board Members</b>                                                                | <b>Others in Attendance</b>                                 |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Municipality of Annapolis County    | <b>Dianne LeBlanc, Warden</b> Virtual                                               | Rob Frost, CAO Virtual                                      |
| Town of Annapolis Royal             | <b>Amery Boyer, Mayor</b> Virtual                                                   | Sandi Millett Campbell, CAO Virtual                         |
| Town of Berwick                     | <b>Mike Trinacty, Mayor</b> In Person                                               | Jen Boyd, CAO Regrets                                       |
| Town of Kentville                   | <b>Andrew Zebian, Mayor</b> Virtual                                                 | Chris McNeill, CAO In Person                                |
| Municipality of the County of Kings | <b>Dave Corkum, Mayor</b> In Person                                                 | Scott Conrod, CAO In Person                                 |
| Town of Middleton                   | <b>Gail Smith, Mayor</b> In Person                                                  | Ashley Crocker, CAO Virtual                                 |
| Town of Wolfville                   | <b>Jodi MacKay, Mayor</b> Regrets<br><b>Jennifer Ingham, Deputy Mayor</b> In person | Glenn Horne, CAO In Person                                  |
| Municipality of Digby               | <b>Linda Gregory, Warden</b> Regrets                                                | Tyler Pulley, CAO Regrets                                   |
| Tidal Transit                       |                                                                                     | Meg Hodges, General Manager In Person                       |
| Valley Waste                        |                                                                                     | Andrew Garrett, General Manager In Person                   |
| Tidal Transit & Valley Waste        |                                                                                     | Dan L'Abbe, Director Finance & Corporate Services In Person |
| Recording Secretary                 |                                                                                     | Andrea Garrett, VWRM In Person                              |
|                                     |                                                                                     |                                                             |

#### **Agenda Item No. 1 –Welcome and Call to Order**

Chair Corkum welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. including Deputy Mayor Ingham, sitting in for Mayor MacKay.

#### **Agenda Item No. 2 – Approval of Agenda**

**ON MOTION OF MAYOR SMITH and seconded by MAYOR TRINACTY that the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors approve the March 18, 2026, agenda, as circulated.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

#### **Agenda Item No. 3 - Approval of the Minutes**

##### **Agenda Item No. 3.1 – Approval of the Meeting Minutes held February 18, 2026**

**ON MOTION OF MAYOR TRINACTY and seconded by MAYOR SMITH that the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors approve the February 18, 2026, Meeting Minutes.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

## **Agenda Item No. 4 – Tidal Transit Authority**

### **Agenda Item No. 4.1 – General Manager's Report**

As circulated in the meeting package, General Manager Meg Hodges presented the Tidal Transit Authority General Manager's Report. Key highlights included:

- Public Transit Appreciation Day was recognized. Mayor Corkum signed appreciation cards for transit staff, and posters are displayed on buses.
- Fleet status:
  - Bus #74 is expected to enter service soon and will be the first bus branded as Tidal Transit.
  - Bus #59 is undergoing transmission repairs and will return to service.
  - Bus #65 has returned to service and Bus #63 is nearing retirement.
- Fuel costs are being monitored due to rising diesel prices linked to the U.S./Iran conflict.
- A Request for Proposals for hybrid buses has been issued and closes May 1.
- Ridership data is under review due to data entry errors; corrected data will be reported in April.
- Staffing is now at full complement.
- An extended bus rental for a production company has generated additional revenue.
- Logo development for Tidal Transit is underway.
- PTAP funding has been successfully re-established.
- A new customer service employee has joined the organization.

In response to Board questions:

- Hybrid buses are more costly than diesel buses due to battery technology.
- A strategic plan will be considered once the fleet is stabilized. The importance of having a plan was noted.
- A press release on the Tidal Transit name change and hybrid buses will be issued once the logo is finalized.
- Of 11 buses total, 6 are typically available daily and 7 are required to operate all routes, resulting in the continued suspension of the G2 route.

**ON MOTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR INGHAM and seconded by MAYOR TRINACTY that the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors receive the March 18, 2026, Tidal Transit Authority General Manager's Report.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

### **Agenda Item No 4.2 – Tidal Transit Authority – Request for Decision, Building Redesign – Needs Assessment and Option Analysis**

The Board considered a Request for Decision regarding a proposed needs assessment and options analysis for upgrades to the Tidal Transit depot located in New Minas.

General Manager Hodges advised that the facility, originally constructed as a car dealership, requires upgrades to improve energy efficiency, address infrastructure deficiencies, and increase storage capacity. It was noted that ICIP Phase 2 funding may be applied to support this work.

General Manager Hodges further advised that, through CANOE procurement, a quote was received from Colliers to undertake a needs assessment and provide recommendations for potential building upgrades. Direction was requested from the Board regarding whether to proceed with the quote, issue a public Request for Proposals, or defer the matter for further consideration.

In response to questions, it was noted that:

- A specific budget amount was not provided when the quote was requested; the submission was based on information provided by Tidal Transit.
- Project costs would be accommodated within existing budget allocations for rebranding and consultant services, with additional funding available for design fees.
- The proposed needs assessment would focus on options to renovate and improve the existing building rather than replacing it.

Discussion arose regarding issuing a public Request for Proposals to further ensure due diligence, transparency, and best value. The Board agreed not to move forward with a motion at this time. Staff were directed to return to a future meeting with additional information and revised options, clearly outlining scope, process, and financial considerations, to enable further review and decision making.

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## **Agenda Item No. 5 – Valley Region Solid Waste-Resource Management Authority**

### **Agenda Item No. 5.1 – General Manager’s Report**

As circulated in the meeting package, General Manager Andrew Garrett presented the Valley Waste-Resource Management General Manager’s Report. Key highlights included:

- Divert NS met with the Regional Chairs Committee to confirm the Diversion Credits funding for fiscal year 2026–2027. Funding has been set at \$7.5 million. Annual allocations are based on 70% of Divert NS net revenues, adjusted using a smoothing formula to reduce year-to-year fluctuations.
- A new online procurement portal is now on the Valley Waste website to allow electronic submissions of Requests for Proposals and tenders. The system, developed by the Municipality of East Hants, has been adopted for broader use.
- Vendors have been notified of a 5% increase in tipping fees, effective April 1st. Public advertising and updated signage are currently underway.
- Valley Waste has been recognized by Call2Recycle for the second consecutive year as a “Leader in Sustainability” for its responsible battery management. In 2025, 14 tonnes of batteries were recycled through the Management Centres.
- Draft revisions to the solid waste bylaw are underway to reflect the new recycling regulations, bulky waste collection requirements, tipping fee changes, and additional updates to modernize the bylaw.
- Following safety concerns raised at the February Board meeting, conditions at the Western Management Centre scale were reviewed by the Operations Manager and Health and Safety Coordinator. A new customer procedure has been implemented, and replacement of the outgoing scale will be considered in a future budget.
- Construction of the hazardous household waste covered structure in Lawrencetown is ongoing; fabrication of the steel structure has not yet commenced.
- The education team hosted four battery drop-off events in Bear River, Cornwallis Park, Berwick, and Canning with plans to expand in the future.
- The transition to bi-weekly collection is underway with bi-weekly bulky item collection beginning in two weeks. Direct communication is being provided to private roads not accessible by large collection vehicles and alternate arrangements are being coordinated at public road intersections to ensure twice-annual collection for affected properties.

In response to the questions:

- Alternating weekly collection (garbage one week, recycling the next) could be considered in the future if it proves more efficient, but all materials will continue to be collected on the same day at this time.

- Development of a strategic plan was identified as necessary, as it has been many years since the last plan and one has not been undertaken by the current Board.
- Tonnage data for bulky items and garbage will be monitored to assess the impact of bi-weekly bulky item collection on landfill diversion. While some private roads can accommodate large collection vehicles, others cannot. Affected residents are being notified, and feedback to date has been positive.

**ON MOTION OF MAYOR SMITH and seconded by MAYOR TRINACTY that the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors receive the March 18, 2026, Valley Waste-Resource Management General Manager's Report.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**Agenda Item No. 6 – In Camera Sessions**

**Agenda Item No. 6.1. - Valley Waste in keeping with Section 22(2)(e) of the Municipal Government Act**

**ON MOTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR INGHAM and seconded by MAYOR TRINACTY that the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors move to an In Camera session for Valley Waste-Resource Management in keeping with section 22(2)(e) of the Municipal Government Act at 10:52 a.m.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

The March Regular Monthly Meeting of the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors was called back to open session at 11:32 a.m.

**MOVED BY MAYOR TRINACTY and SECONDED BY MAYOR SMITH that the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors do not award the contract for the provision of Janitorial Services and instead approve the hiring of a term part time position effective April 1, 2026, to fulfill Janitorial duties.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Agenda item No. 6.2. - Tidal Transit in keeping with Section 22(2)(e) of the Municipal Government Act**

**ON MOTION OF MAYOR TRINACTY and seconded by DEPUTY MAYOR INGHAM that the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors move to an In Camera session for Tidal Transit Authorities in keeping with section 22(2)(e) of the Municipal Government Act at 11:34 a.m.**

The March Regular Monthly Meeting of the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors was called back to open session at 11:57 a.m.

**MOVED by MAYOR TRINACTY seconded by DEPUTY MAYOR INGHAM that the Tidal Transit Authority Board approve entering into a 60-month lease agreement with option to renew with Sunset Tides Developments Ltd. for the Cornwallis Park transfer station at a starting rent of \$1,000 per month with a 2% annual increase and authorize staff to proceed with leasehold improvements totaling \$175,000 funded through capital reserves as presented in the 2026-2027 Tidal Transit budget.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Agenda Item No. 7 – Correspondence**

No correspondence at this time

**Agenda Item No. 8 – Next Meeting**

The next Regular Monthly Meeting of the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors will be held on **Wednesday, April 15, 2026, beginning at 10:00 a.m.** in keeping with the normal meeting schedule.

**Agenda Item No. 9 – Adjournment**

As there was no further business to bring forward, Chair Corkum called the March 18, 2026, regular monthly meeting of the Valley Regional Services Board adjourned at 11:59 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Andrea Garrett

Recording Secretary

Administration Manager, Valley Waste-Resource Management