



Amalgamation Steering Committee Meeting
December 3, 2025 | 2:30 pm
Municipality of Shelburne | 414 Woodlawn Drive | Room 114

Those in Attendance:

Mayor Derek Amalfa, Chair TOL
Warden Penny Smith, Vice Chair MDS
Mayor Stan Jacklin, TOS
Deputy Mayor Craig Hillen, TOL
Deputy Warden Heidi Wagner, MDS
Councillor Terese Cruz, TOS
June Harding, Clerk TOL
Warren MacLeod, CAO MDS
Sarah Mattatall, CAO TOS
Erin Hartley, Deputy CAO MDS
Nicole Blades, Recording Secretary MDS
Members of the Public

1. Call to Order

Erin Hartley, Acting Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:31pm.

It was noted this was the first meeting for the Amalgamation Steering Committee and the purpose of the committee is to have a formal avenue for exploration and education of the amalgamation process.

2. Welcome and Introductions

Committee members and staff support introduced themselves around the table.

3. Approval of Agenda

3.1. December 3, 2025

*Being duly moved and seconded, the agenda for December 3, 2025 was approved.
Motion carried.*

4. Election of Officers

4.1. Chair

Erin Hartley, Acting Chair, called for nominations of Chair. Mayor Derek Amalfa, Town of Lockeport, was nominated and accepted the nomination of Chair for the Amalgamation Steering Committee. There being no further nominations, Mayor Amalfa was acclaimed as Chairperson.

4.2. Vice Chair

Mayor Derek Amalfa, Chair, called for nominations of Vice Chair. Warden Penny Smith, Municipality of Shelburne, was nominated and accepted the nomination of Vice Chair for the Amalgamation Steering Committee. There being no further nominations, Warden Smith was acclaimed as Vice Chairperson.

5. Approval of Terms of Reference

Being duly moved and seconded, the Terms of Reference were approved as presented. Motion carried.

6. Presentations

6.1 Lisa Wallace, Chief Clerk, Nova Scotia Regulatory and Appeals Board

Chair Amalfa welcomed Lisa Wallace, Chief Clerk, and Paul Allen, Executive Director, with the Nova Scotia Regulatory and Appeals Board.

Ms. Wallace provided an overview of the key steps involved in the process of amalgamation or dissolution including filing of application, the preliminary hearing, preparing and filing studies, the hearing held on merits, and the board decision and order.

The importance of public consultation, financial implications to consider, potential changes to polling districts and number of councillors, and the timeline of the process were also outlined.

A discussion was held and clarification was given on costs associated with filing, financial assistance available from the province, conducting studies internally, the difference between amalgamation and dissolution, and opportunity to withdraw the application.

Chair Amalfa thanked Ms. Wallace and Mr. Allen for presenting.

7. New Business

7.1 Discussion with Brian Cullen, CAO, Municipality of Pictou County

Chair Amalfa welcomed Brian Cullen, CAO of Municipality of Pictou County.

Mr. Cullen shared the experience of Pictou County's amalgamation of four units in 2016 including the reasoning on their decision to move forward, outcomes of studies completed, separation of tax rates, financial modelling, and provincial funding negotiations and commitments.

During the process, external consultants were hired to conduct a staff review. Sixteen positions were eliminated with eight positions being eliminated when amalgamation was completed and eight positions dissolving after an employee vacated the position.

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Fire services were examined. Rural and town fire departments would continue as they were with the cost area rated back to the residents being served. No changes were necessary with RCMP services.

Council members were reduced from thirty-one elected officials to eleven. A Mayor at large with ten council districts was decided upon with annual savings of \$220,000. Districts would be reviewed four years after.

A plebiscite was held in each unit in which the results were that three of the four units didn't support the amalgamation. Each council respected residents concerns and sent letters to the Board to consider the withdraw of the application.

A combination of financial concerns, economic decline in the area, decision making, political environment and really wanting to grow the county with a common vision is what drove the decision to initiate amalgamation.

A discussion was held regarding cost overruns, reasons for having a plebiscite, importance of community engagement early on and throughout the entire process, sharing financial projections and study findings with residents, educating the public on the need for amalgamation and report timeline.

Mr. Cullen provided an update on the current day morale of the units. It was noted there was a decline in cooperation amongst the units in the beginning, but relationships are improving. Items such as delays on capital infrastructure projects in certain units contributed to the situation.

Chair Amalfa thanked Mr. Cullen for presenting.

7.2 Discussion on high level costs

CAO Warren MacLeod, Municipality of Shelburne, reviewed estimated amalgamation costs gathered by staff for the committee. The document is included with the minutes.

Town Clerk June Harding, Town of Lockeport advised the committee of a meeting with the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Honorable John A. MacDonald regarding the Municipal Innovation Program Funding (MIP). Ms. Harding reviewed the information received regarding MIP. The document is included with the minutes.

CAO Sarah Mattatall, Town of Shelburne advised the committee of a recent conversation with Kevin Latimer, Transition Coordinator for the Windsor/West Hants municipal consolidation project. Mr. Latimer suggested hosting a workshop with all three Councils before going any further in the amalgamation process.

A discussion was held and the Committee agreed to make the recommendation for Ms. Mattatall to contact Mr. Latimer to schedule the workshop for January 2026.

Being duly moved and seconded, that the Amalgamation Steering Committee recommend to Councils to hire Kevin Latimer to meet with the full Councils to conduct a workshop to decide upon potential next steps. Motion carried.

8. Date/Time of Next Meeting

A discussion was held and the committee agreed future meetings will be held the first Wednesday of each month at 6:00pm at the Municipality of Shelburne administration building. Due to the holidays, the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 4th, 2026.

Being duly moved and seconded, that the Amalgamation Steering Committee meet the first Wednesday of the month at 6:00pm. Motion carried.


9. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 4:01pm.

Nicole Blades, Executive Assistant MDS
Recording Secretary



Mayor Derek Amalfa, Chair



Warden Penny Smith, Vice Chair

February 4, 2026
Date