



**Village of Belledune
Committee of Whole Council Meeting
August 11, 2026**

Time: 1:00 PM
Place: Belledune Council Chambers
Deputy Mayor, Cynthia Robinson
Councillor, Ron Bourque
Present: Councillor, Dawn Hickey
Councillor, James Carrier
Mayor, Mario LaPointe
Councillor, Brenda Cormier
Absent:
Late:
Staff Present: Chief Administrative Officer, Landon Lee
Clerk Treasurer, Angela Buckle
Staff Absent:
Staff Late:

Call to Order & Welcome

- Acknowledgement of "Treaties of Peace and Friendship"
- Reaffirm Oath of Office

Adopt Agenda

M 2026/08/11-88

**Brenda Cormier moved that the Agenda be Adopted as Presented, seconded by Ron Bourque.
MOTION CARRIED.**

Statements of Conflict of Interest

Presentations / Petitions / Delegations

Business

- 2026 Budget Discussion

Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle stated that the purpose of the meeting is to review the 2026 budget so that everyone is aware of what is in it. She went on to say that there are a lot of line items that we don't have control over and used policing, regional service commission, insurance and hydro as examples. She believes that a lot of what this meeting will be is Council wanting more detail on actual expenses for 2026, where she will have to take items away and get back to Council.

Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle also provided a breakdown of some items from 2025 where services are provided by the Village but the Village loses money on them. Examples include the arena, campground, salmon barrier, fitness programs, Belledune Days, and senior's suppers. This was provided as additional information for Council when thinking about the upcoming 2027 budget where some hard decisions will have to be made.

Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle gave an overview of how the budget for 2026 was built, indicating how the amounts in various line items were determined. She also reviewed the format of the report that was being shown on the screen, and went on to explain what goes into the line items.

Fire Services Revenue

Councillor, Bourque questioned the Fire Services Revenue. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle said that more information came in after they had finalized the budget to indicate that they would be receiving more than \$25,000 in 2026.

Other Revenue

Councillor, Cormier asked about the amount in Other Revenue related to the PMHP Program and whether it was related to the current year. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle replied that it was related to the previous year.

Lane Marking Revenue

CAO, Lee explained the Lane Marking Revenue line saying that we pay the full amount to the contractor and then we recover a component of the provincial roads back. A portion of Route 134, Jacquet River Drive and Turgeon Road get compensated by the province. Councillor, Cormier noted that the expense for lane marking had increased and asked if the rate had increased to the province. CAO, Lee said that he noticed that the amount that the province was reimbursing us was more than what we were submitting for.

Campground Revenue

Councillor, Cormier wanted to know about the campground and if there is mostly seasonal rentals. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle replied that there are about 10 seasonal campers and confirmed that they paid upfront.

Arena Revenue

CAO, Lee commented on the arena revenue that it is usually heavier at the beginning of the year as there are schools that rent the ice in the spring. Councillor, Cormier asked if we are breaking even or making money on the schools. CAO, Lee replied that there is nothing that we do in the arena that makes money, but we are closer to breaking even with these schools because they block out substantial amounts of ice time. Councillor, Bourque stated that the hockey school programs that go on in our arena is the biggest waste of money that he has ever seen. He went on to say that even to do the hockey school to break even makes no sense, if we aren't making money at it then we shouldn't do it. He continued by saying that our arena is not geared to be running in May and June and starting up in August and September. He feels that the arena should be for Belledune and the only reason people come from other areas is because we have the cheapest ice in Northern New Brunswick and they are taking advantage of our situation. Councillor, Cormier agrees with Councillor, Bourque. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle stated that she doesn't believe that we offer the hockey schools a subsidized rate, they are given the minor hockey rate, which is still low, however that's for Council to decide and set those rates. CAO, Lee commented that the arena is not open later for the hockey schools. The arena opens mid-September and closes at the end of April. If Council would like to re-establish the dates that the arena is open, that would be a good exercise to go through. Councillor, Cormier would like to know what the hours of rental are on a weekly basis compared to the hours of operation.

Councillor, Robinson stated that it is on the Service Commission's table to add the Belledune Arena as a shared infrastructure. She wanted Council to know that is in the works so we will get money back as a shared infrastructure. The only way they will do this is if we maintain the extended season. CAO, Lee stated that this came up at the last service commission meeting for shared infrastructure and that they were under the impression that the arena operates year-round. The arena would have been considered a unique infrastructure if it operated year-round. Councillor, Robinson stated that when they had discussed it, it was the extended season that qualified. Councillor, Cormier stated that we would still have to compare the funding that we would receive from the regional service commission to what it costs us to keep the arena open for the extended season. CAO, Lee stated that he would follow up with the service commission to see where they are on the shared infrastructure.

Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle mentioned that if Council is considering opening the arena later in the season, then that's something that needs to be decided sooner rather than later as the season is coming up. Councillor, Cormier stated that the falls that we have been having have still been warm which is hard on equipment. Councillor, Cormier went on to say that she would be in favour of starting the arena on October 1st and opening on October 15th. Mayor, LaPointe said that he supports this. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle stated that she believes that there are already bookings for the arena so this would have to be decided at the next meeting. CAO, Lee said that it could be decided at this meeting. He also stated that there were some things that he wanted to raise but is hesitant as he feels that they should be raised in a closed session.

Health and Wellness Revenue

Councillor, Cormier stated that she would like to see numbers to see what the participation is in these programs. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle said that on a good week there might be seven participants and on a bad week maybe two or three and they are paying \$5.00. She went on to say that HST needs to be removed from that \$5.00. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle advised Council that in 2025 yoga generated \$643.53

in revenue and we paid the instructor \$4,000.00. Zumba generated \$467.00 in revenue and cost \$4,500. The senior's fitness program generated \$700.00 in revenue and paid out \$5,400.

Councillor, Bourque asked if any of the instructors were local and Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle said that she believes that they come up from Bathurst.

Councillor, Cormier stated that this program was started years ago and just keeps continuing. It hasn't improved any, it hasn't got more people out. People can go to Dusty Sneakers which costs nothing, except that the Village buys them each a note book each year, and they get on average 20 people attending their classes. She went on to say that we have these programs that cost the Village \$14,000 and we took in \$1,800 with only about seven people taking advantage of the programs. Councillor, Cormier would like to investigate other ways to do programs that's accessible to people, but there has to be a cheaper way to do it.

Councillor, Robinson stated that she is always surprised at how little these programs are used. She wants to know if it's lack of promotion and awareness. She wants to know what kind of promotion is being done for these programs. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle replied that it is posted in the Messenger and there is an activity calendar that is posted on Facebook, but she isn't sure of anything beyond that. Councillor, Robinson stated that there is no active recruitment of participants. Mayor, LaPointe said that he believes that is correct and said that the best way to promote that is to have active events on Facebook.

Councillor, Cormier believes that these programs have been going on long enough that people know about them. She believes that some of the classes might be too strenuous if they are geared toward aging people, or maybe the times aren't suitable. She feels that we need to think differently about what programs we offer, how we get the word out, how we initiate and engage people to participate, we need to think about it differently and in a more financially viable way.

Councillor, Robinson stated that the people who are doing zumba are working during the times that it is offered. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle replied that zumba is in the evening, senior's fitness is during the day, and she believes that yoga was in the evening but was moved to during the day because the people that were participating were seniors who preferred it during the day.

- Council members vacated the Council Chambers at 1:44pm and returned at 2:47pm

M 2026/08/11-A

Ron Bourque moved BE IT RESOLVED that Council continue its meeting in a closed session to discuss matters under the Local Governance Act, section 68 (1) (j) labour and employment matters including the negotiation of collective agreements, seconded by James Carrier. MOTION CARRIED.

- Continuation of 2026 Budget Discussion

Councillor Mileage and Expenses

Councillor, Cormier asked why this line item had increased from the previous year. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle replied that this line was bumped up in anticipation of a new Council coming in. New laptops

and phones would need to be purchased along with clothing and possibly additional seminars for new Council members.

Insurance

Councillor, Cormier said that she noticed that the expense for insurance was quite a bit lower than the budget. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle replied that it's because our insurance runs from August to July and we haven't received the invoice for the second installment yet, that should come in the next month or so.

Solicitor

Councillor, Cormier asked if there was a breakdown of legal fees by file. Clerk/Treasurer said that was provided by general category.

Councillor, Cormier asked why RTIPPA requests have to go through the lawyer. She went on to say that it's specific in the Act what the process is so she doesn't understand why it has to go through the lawyer. CAO, Lee replied that he does not have RTIPPA training, our Administrative Assistant is the head of RTIPPA. He reviewed our process for receiving an RTIPPA request. It goes to our Administrative Assistant, she notifies our lawyer as a formality, she gathers all of the information, and our lawyer reviews it before it is sent. CAO, Lee stated that he isn't sure why our lawyer is involved, he can only assume that he's always been part of the process, and some of the requests that we've received in the past couple of years have been very extensive, but most of the work was done by Administration and our lawyer was involved to review it.

Councillor, Bourque doesn't believe that this Council will have to deal with RTIPPA issues as the last Council had. There was information coming down from legal that made it more difficult on some subjects. He believes that we will see a reduction in that.

Dues and Fees

Councillor, Carrier asked if the dues and fees line would be going up because we talked about joining the Francophone Association. Clerk/Treasurer replied that yes, we would have to increase that line for 2027 because the dues and fees associated with joining the Francophone Association would fall into that line.

Fire Department Costs

Councillor, Bourque asked if we would be discussing the water rate for Interfor and Shaw as well as the rate for the residents of Chaleur Drive. CAO, Lee indicated that we would for sure be looking at these when we get to the utility budget.

Councillor, Bourque asked if we would be better off spending money maintaining two fire buildings, or would we be better off building one new building and combining the two. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle said that we would probably have to have a study done, she can't say off hand.

Councillor, Cormier said that there is a line in the budget that is a contractual agreement with local government and it is an expenditure of \$11,148.00. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle said that it was the dispatch expense.

Public Works Expenses

Councillor, Cormier said that she noticed that the line item for Building and Equipment went from \$58,000 to \$96,000. She is wondering if we purchased something, why large increase. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle replied that she felt that they had decided to increase the building maintenance line items because they had noticed the prior year that these lines were going up because they were older buildings just requiring more maintenance. Councillor, Cormier is not working off the same document that Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle is presenting, so Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle will look into what Councillor, Cormier is looking at to see if she can figure out what is causing the increase.

EMO

Councillor, Cormier doesn't feel that the budget for EMO will be sufficient if they are going to do any sort of EMO planning and preparation.

Winter Maintenance with DTI

Councillor, Cormier noticed that this line had increased. She inquired as to whether they increased their rates or if we had increased our streets. CAO, Lee indicated that they increased their rates.

Vehicles 16 & 19

CAO, Lee said that these are the garbage trucks. He's never been asked to look into what it would cost to contract out our solid waste pickup. We have two employees on the truck every day of the week except for Tuesday, and then we have the cost of fuel and maintenance on the vehicles, so that might be something worthwhile investigating. Councillor, Cormier said that we also have to take into consideration the replacement cost of the trucks.

CRSC Line Items

Councillor, Robinson would like for the CRSC to come in and explain what is included in all of their line items. She feels that they do a really good job of finding funding and going after grants, and she feels that it would be a good idea to have them come in and present what each of their departments is and what their costs are, and what their revenues are compared to what it's costing us. CAO, Lee said that this in the works with the service commission and they would like to have a conversation with Council about the tax revenue shortfall that Belledune will have in 2027 and things that they might be able to do to help.

Economic Development

CAO, Lee indicated that this line hasn't been used yet this year. Councillor, Cormier said that there is also an existing economic development by-law.

Campground Expenses

Councillor, Cormier asked about the extra person at the campground and arena, she wanted to know if that person's wages were being split and allocated to the arena and campground. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle indicated that they were.

Salaries

Councillor, Hickey asked if the amounts on the salary lines was just the salary. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle replied that there is a lot more that goes into those line items than just salaries, they include things like pension, benefits, and CPP contributions.

Rec and Wellness Programs

Councillor, Cormier said that there's about \$39,000 in that program but it's allocated out to other events. She feels that for the amount of money that we are putting into these programs that we should be able to reduce that and have better and more efficient programs. Councillor, Cormier also mentioned that we are the only community where everything is free. She said that it needs to be fair and equitable so the people can afford it, but not everything needs to be free.

Councillor, Robinson said that we need to start looking at how many people are attending these events because she has seen some music events where there are not many people, and they are not well attended.

Councillor, Cormier stated that every program has to be up for evaluation. Mayor, LaPointe agreed that throughout the budget there are opportunities for savings.

Debentures

Councillor, Cormier asked if there were any new borrowings in the last couple of years. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle replied that there was not.

Mayor, LaPointe would like a timeline on when those will sunset. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle believes that one of them is done in 2026 and will look into the others.

Capital Projects

CAO, Lee said that towards the end of the budget last year we changed the ratio to give a bump up in the revenue and the Clerk/Treasurer was directed to put that into the Capital Projects line item. He wanted Council to be aware that we currently don't have that amount allocated to anything specific. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle indicated that some of the spending for this year included the new roof on the

Public Works Building, there is a garage extension being built. Clerk/Treasurer, Buckle will look to see what else is being included in that line.

Councillor, Cormier feels that we need to plan better to list the projects that will be included in that line item.

- Next Meeting

The next Committee of Whole meeting is scheduled for August 12, 2026 at 1:00pm.

Council

Mayor, LaPointe

Councillor, Bourque

Councillor, Carrier

Councillor, Cormier

Councillor, Hickey

Deputy Mayor, Robinson

Administration

Chief Administrative Officer, Landon Lee

Clerk/Treasurer, Angela Buckle

Closed Session

Adjournment

M 2026/08/11-89

Ron Bourque moved that the meeting adjourned at 3:44pm, seconded by Cynthia Robinson.

MOTION CARRIED.

Mayor

Clerk Treasurer

