

**SOURCE WATER PROTECTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TOWN OF LUNENBURG**

May 11, 2026 | 2:00 pm
Lunenburg Town Hall - Council Chamber



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- Present (Voting Members) Councillor Gale Fullerton, Councillor Alison Strachan (Chair), Kathryn Ritchie Josenhans (Dares Lake Resident)
- Absent Deputy Mayor Chasidy Veinotte (MODL)
- Also present Paul Nopper, CAO
Kayla Byrne, Municipal Clerk
Marc Kiely, Director of Community Development
Tyson Joyce, Director of Public Works
Ella Gindi, Planner (MODL)
- Call to Order The meeting was called to order at 2:08 p.m.
- Land Acknowledgment There was a land acknowledgement recognizing Lunenburg's location on the unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people.
- Approval of Agenda Moved and seconded that the Committee approve the agenda for the May 11, 2026 meeting with the following amendment:
- Transitioning from an Advisory Committee to a Working Group
Motion carried unanimously
- Approval of Minutes Moved and seconded that the Committee approve the minutes from the November 27, 2025 meeting as presented.
Motion carried unanimously
- Transitioning from an Advisory Committee to a Working Group Staff introduced the idea of transitioning the Committee from a formal advisory committee structure to a more informal working group format while the Source Water Protection Plan review is underway. Staff noted that the intent would not be to reduce transparency, but rather to provide a more flexible and collaborative working environment as the group reviews and develops recommendations related to the plan.
- It was explained that, unlike a formal advisory committee, a working group would not require formal agendas, minutes, voting procedures, or roles such as Chair and Vice-Chair, and meetings would not necessarily be open to the public. Staff noted that this format could allow members to work through the plan in greater detail, ask questions freely, and hold more discussion-based working sessions.

Committee members discussed the importance of transparency and public participation, particularly given the public interest in watershed protection matters. Some members expressed support for using a more informal structure during the early stages of the review process, while noting that broader public engagement opportunities should still occur before recommendations are finalized or brought forward to Council.

Staff suggested it may be beneficial to transition to a working group format if the Committee anticipates needing an extended period to review and work through the plan in detail. It was noted that this approach could be revisited at a future meeting following further discussion by the Committee.

Source Water
Management Plan
Review – Group
Discussion

The Committee discussed the current Source Water Protection Plan and generally expressed support for the existing framework and protections in place. Members noted the importance of protecting the Town's water supply while also discussing whether some recreational restrictions around the watershed may be overly restrictive for adjacent property owners. Discussion included activities such as canoeing, fishing, picnicking, and shoreline use, as well as the rationale for the strict protections currently in place under provincial legislation.

Staff and Committee members discussed how watershed protection requirements are established by the Province and vary depending on the size, characteristics, and vulnerability of individual water sources. It was noted that Dares Lake has a relatively small and sensitive watershed, resulting in stricter protections than some other municipalities. Concerns regarding precedent-setting, enforcement capacity, and balancing public access with long-term water quality protection were also discussed.

Members also discussed broader environmental and operational considerations, including drought conditions, climate change impacts, watershed size, water conservation, and the importance of maintaining a reliable long-term drinking water supply for the Town. Staff noted that the recent spillway upgrades have improved water level management capabilities and confirmed that current water levels remain strong following winter snow and recent rainfall events.

The Committee discussed the distinction between the prescribed watershed area under the current legislation and the larger natural watershed boundary. Staff noted that expanding the prescribed watershed to better align with the natural watershed had previously been discussed and could help mitigate future land use risks outside the currently protected area.

Committee members generally agreed that the existing Source Water Protection Plan remains strong and comprehensive, with most suggested updates relating to administrative matters such as contact information, references, and legislative terminology. Some members noted that additional review of climate change considerations and future water supply pressures may still be beneficial.

As a follow-up, staff agreed to review and update outdated contact information and determine whether certain operational contact lists should remain within the Plan or instead be maintained as separate internal documents. The Committee also discussed potentially revisiting specific sections of the Plan in greater detail at future meetings if required.

ACTION: Staff will review and update outdated contact information and references contained within the Source Water Protection Plan.

ACTION: Staff will review whether operational contact lists and emergency contact information should remain within the Plan or be maintained separately as internal operational documents.

ACTION: Committee members will continue reviewing the Source Water Protection Plan and identify any sections requiring further discussion or potential updates at future meetings.

The Committee also discussed arranging a site visit to the Dares Lake spillway and watershed area in June to allow members an opportunity to view the recent spillway upgrades and discuss watershed operations and water level management on-site. Staff noted that smaller group visits may be required due to site access limitations.

ACTION: Tyson will send out an email suggesting site visit dates.

MODL Land-Use
Planning Strategy
(Verbal Update)

Ella Gindi, Planner II with the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MODL), provided a presentation for information regarding MODL's ongoing municipal-wide land use planning project and watershed protection framework as it relates to the Dares Lake watershed area, which is located within MODL. The presentation outlined the distinction between municipal land use authority under the Municipal Government Act and watershed activity regulation under the Environment Act, as well as current watershed protection zoning, land use restrictions, and regulatory requirements within both the prescribed watershed area and the broader natural watershed.

Following the presentation, the Committee discussed concerns related to potential mining activity and other land use impacts near watershed

areas. Committee members discussed the possibility of regional councils considering advocacy to the Province regarding opposition to mining activities near drinking water sources. Staff confirmed the matter would be raised during an upcoming meeting with MODL staff and may also be discussed further at a future Regional Mayors and Wardens meeting.

Next Meeting The Committee agreed to aim for its next meeting in September.

ACTION: Tyson will circulate possible September meeting dates to Committee members.

Adjournment There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:42 p.m.

Minutes were read and approved.

DRAFT