

Valley Regional Services Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, February 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, February 18, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., based in the Municipality of the County of Kings Council Chamber with a virtual attendance option.

Board Members in Attendance:

Municipality / Town	Board Members	Others in Attendance
Municipality of Annapolis County	Dianne LeBlanc, Warden Virtual	Rob Frost, CAO Virtual
Town of Annapolis Royal	Amery Boyer, Mayor Virtual	Sandi Millett Campbell, CAO Virtual
Town of Berwick	Mike Trinacty, Mayor Virtual Justin Serino, Councillor Virtual	Jen Boyd, CAO Virtual
Town of Kentville	Andrew Zebian, Mayor Virtual	Chris McNeill, CAO In Person
Municipality of the County of Kings	Dave Corkum, Mayor In Person	Scott Conrod, CAO Regrets
Town of Middleton	Gail Smith, Mayor In Person	Ashley Crocker, CAO In Person
Town of Wolfville	Jodi MacKay, Mayor In Person	Glenn Horne, CAO Regrets
Municipality of Digby	Linda Gregory, Warden Virtual	Tyler Pulley, CAO Virtual
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.

Agenda Item No. 2 – Approval of Agenda

ON MOTION OF MAYOR MACKAY AND SECONDED BY MAYOR SMITH that the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors approves the February 18, 2026, agenda, with the addition of Agenda Item 5.3 Valley Waste - TBR Resolution for Preapproval for Debenture.

MOTION CARRIED.

Agenda Item No. 3 - Approval of the Minutes

Agenda Item No. 3.1 – Approval of the Regular Monthly Board Meeting Minutes held January 21, 2026

ON MOTION OF MAYOR SMITH AND SECONDED BY MAYOR MACKAY that the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors approve the January 21, 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. A presentation was included so that communication campaign could be shared. Key highlights included:

- The official *Tidal Transit Authority* name has been approved and administrative updates are in progress including a new logo under development.
- Bus 74 is being commissioned and is expected to be in service in April.
- Bus 59's engine has been ordered and is awaiting full engine replacement.
- Ridership is up modestly from December.
- Onboard ticket and pass sales end March 1, 2026. Public reminders are underway.
- Communication media campaign included new overhead displays on the buses.
- ICIP Phase 1 extension submitted & ICIP Phase 2 scope change approved. Hybrid electric bus RFP is expected in March.
- Staff received training for MS Office through the Chamber of Commerce continued learning.
- A Halifax film production company is renting a bus to be used in the film "The Institution".
- Driver appreciation day is March 18.
- Free period products launched on buses in partnership with Annapolis Valley Regional Library.
- GM and Fleet Manager visited Metrobus in St. John's to gather insight on hybrid buses, procurement, tech, training, and safety.

ON MOTION OF MAYOR MACKAY AND SECONDED BY MAYOR TRINACTY that the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors receive the February 18, 2026, Tidal Transit Authority General Manager's Report.

MOTION CARRIED.

Agenda Item No 4.2 – Presentation of 2026-2027 Operating and Capital Budget

As included in the meeting package, General Manager Meg Hodges presented the Operating & Capital budget for fiscal year 2026-2027. Highlights included:

- Overview of the operating allocations based on municipal partners' percentage shares.
- Proposed FY2027 operating budget of \$3.69M, compared to FY2026 at \$3.2M.
- Review of forecasted variances between current and future fiscal years.
- The presented budget is intended to build team capacity to better serve ridership.
- Budget to Budget variances are driven by factors such as aging buses, higher costs for parts, fuel costs, and increased administration costs such as insurance premiums.
- Capital projects include hybrid buses, service vehicles, signage and shelters, repair equipment, and the Cornwallis Park transfer station. Many of these projects, budgeted last year, were delayed pending funding approvals.
- The five-year capital plan includes seven hybrid buses in F2028; three efficient diesel buses in F2029; and two additional diesel buses in F2031.
- Summary of external funding sources, including their contributions and required municipal matching components.

In response to the questions:

- When buses break down and fail to arrive on time, ridership decreases due to lost confidence. A reliable system requires consistent service, sufficient frequency, and predictable schedules. The proposed budget

directly addresses these reliability issues. A summary will be provided to the Board to support questions received and discussion at Council meetings.

- A public communications campaign has been included in the budget, including enhanced public outreach on service improvement and public understanding of the investment.
- The rollout of new bus stops and related changes is based on recommendations from the WSP report and feedback received through the online survey. Plans for improved rider experience include new signage for bus stops with serial numbers to receive bus status updates, directional instructions on reaching their stop and how to ride the bus.
- It was confirmed that no additional facility space will be needed for the new buses.

ON MOTION OF WARDEN GREGORY and SECONDED BY MAYOR MACKAY that the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors, in accordance with the Intermunicipal Services Agreement, hereby approves the 2026-2027 Operating and Capital Budgets for the Tidal Transit Authority as presented.

Recorded Vote:

- Mayor Boyer (Town of Annapolis Royal) abstained.
- Mayor Smith (Town of Middleton) voted against the motion.

MOTION CARRIED.

In response to the question, locations of bus stops and shelters are available to municipal units for use with municipal infrastructure projects. Data was updated last year including recommended locations for new stops and shelters. The updated data will be shared with all municipal units.

ACTION: GM Hodges to provide a summary of the budget plan to the Board for use with Councils.

ACTION: GM Hodges to provide all municipal units with locations of bus stops and shelters for assistance with future infrastructure projects.

Agenda Item No 4.3 – Financial Statements as of December 2025

Dan presented the Tidal Transit Authority financial statements for the period ending December 2025 and highlighted the key variances:

- Ridership revenue decreased due to extended bus breakdown, which impacted service availability.
- From an expense perspective, fuel costs were higher than anticipated, and administration expenses increased due to HR requirements.

ON MOTION OF MAYOR MACKAY and SECONDED BY WARDEN GREGORY that the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors receives the February 18, 2026, Tidal Transit Authority Financial Statements as of December 2025.

MOTION CARRIED.

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:

- The RFP for Janitorial Services for Valley Waste facilities (five-year contract) closes February 19th with a recommendation expected for Board approval in March.

- Transition of banking services to BMO is progressing as planned.
- Funding request for the Eastern Management Centre expansion was not approved under the Canada Housing Infrastructure Fund. Staff will pursue alternative funding opportunities, with a focus on the planned Western Management Centre expansion.
- Roscoe Construction Ltd. has been selected to complete the Eastern Management Centre expansion.
- Construction & demolition yard expansion at the Eastern Centre is nearing completion.
- Canaan Jim & Sons will complete required repairs to the Eastern Centre's interior push wall.
- Hazardous waste facility steel structure in Lawrencetown is delayed but remains on track for completion by the end of March.
- Initial groundwater testing at both Management Centres was completed in December and results are pending.
- The new press for the Western Management Centre is scheduled for installation in late February or early March.
- Staff delivered Extended Producer Responsibility presentations to Housing Authority residents at many locations, along with additional community presentations.
- The "Careers in Waste" high-school education program was successfully launched.
- Staff supported Annapolis County cottage communities through their first winter without bins and advised on road access suitability for safe collection.
- Public communication continues regarding the transition to the two-truck curbside collection system.

In response to the questions:

- When roads or areas are missed on collection day, Valley Waste uses different communication approaches depending on circumstance. Residents are encouraged to contact Valley Waste directly to report a missed collection.
- Valley Waste will continue to promote the Recycle Coach reminder app. A suggestion was made to feature promotion of the app on curbside collection trucks. It was noted that curbside collectors must make discretionary safety decisions while on their route each day and expressed appreciation to Valley Waste for coordinating communication on alternate arrangements.
- Valley Waste will work with Public Works offices to ensure that any future road or infrastructure projects do not impede curbside collection.
- The second scale at the Western Management Centre has been inoperative for several years and would require a capital plan for replacement. Valley Waste will review the safety considerations associated with operating with only one functional scale.

ACTION: GM Garrett to work with Public Works on future infrastructure plans that might impede curbside collection

ACTION: GM Garrett to review Scalehouse safety at the Western Management Centre

ON MOTION OF MAYOR MACKAY AND SECONDED BY MAYOR SMITH that the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors receive the February 18, 2026, Valley Waste-Resource Management General Manager's Report.

MOTION CARRIED.

Agenda Item No. 5.2 – Valley Waste-Resource Management Authority – Financial Statements as of December 2025

Finance Director L'Abbe presented the financial statement update for the period ending December 2025. The statement of operations shows a positive variance, which aligns with the forecast. The primary driver of this variance is higher-than-expected provincial landfill diversion credits. Additional details regarding long-term capital projects, many of which have been underway for several years, will be discussed in Agenda Item 5.3.

ON MOTION OF MAYOR MACKAY and SECONDED BY MAYOR TRINACTY that the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors receives the February 18, 2026, Valley Waste-Resource Management Authority Financial Statements as of December 2025.

MOTION CARRIED.

Agenda Item No. 5.3 - TBR Resolution for the Approval for Debenture

Finance Director L'Abbe thanked the Board for approving the addition of this agenda item and explained that three capital projects from prior years were originally funded through debenture financing; however, the associated Temporary Borrowing Resolutions (TBRs) have now expired. After discussions with the Province, the recommendation is to submit new TBR requests.

The affected projects are:

- Hydrogeological well installation
- Eastern Management Centre Household Hazardous Waste steel structure
- Cardboard balers

Financing must be in place by April 23, 2026. With approval required from the Board, all seven councils, and the Province, this leaves a narrow timeline. As this matter arose on short notice, a formal RFD could not be prepared in advance.

In response to the question, these projects were missed due to oversight and misunderstanding of the full process. An RFD and all necessary documents will be circulated to councils right away.

ON MOTION OF MAYOR MACKAY and SECONDED BY MAYOR SMITH that the Valley Regional Services Board formally authorizes the Chair and General Manager, serving as Secretary to the Valley Region Solid Waste-Resource Management Authority, to execute the Resolution for Pre-Approval of Debenture Issuance Subject to Interest Rate in the amount of \$428,835 and further to submit the fully executed resolution to the Nova Scotia Department of Finance & Treasury Board for approval and release of funds.

MOTION CARRIED

Agenda Item No. 6 – Audit Committee Update

Mayor MacKay updated that the Audit Committee met last week and will soon be advertising for a public member to join the committee. Mayor MacKay explained that the auditors are seeking guidance on whether there should be audited financials after a three-month period as the Intermunicipal agreements don't address this and there was a change of ownership in June 2025.

A Board decision is required on the appropriate procedure for both organizations going forward. It was agreed that the CAOs are best positioned to determine an approach, would review the matter and return with a recommended resolution that works best for each municipality.

A timeline is needed, and the Board requested that the recommendation be provided by May including any cost implications or whether the agreement itself needs amendment.

ACTION: CAOs to bring forward a recommendation to the Board regarding the change of ownership on the audited statements for Fiscal 2025-2026 and if any contract language around the current ownership model is required.

ON MOTION OF MAYOR TRINACTY and SECONDED BY MAYOR ZEBIAN that the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors receives the February 18, 2026, update by the Auding Committee.

MOTION CARRIED.

Agenda Item No. 7 – Correspondence

There was no correspondence at this time.

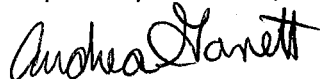
Agenda Item No. 8 – Next Meeting

The next Regular Monthly Meeting of the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors will be held on **Wednesday, March 18, 2026, beginning at 10:00 a.m.** in keeping with the normal meeting schedule.

Agenda Item No. 9 – Adjournment

With no further business at the February regular monthly meeting of the Valley Regional Services Board of Directors, Chair Corkum called for adjournment at 11:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Andrea Garrett

Recording Secretary

Administration Manager, Valley Waste-Resource Management