



**Greater Miramichi
Service Commission**

**Commission de services
du Grand Miramichi**

GMSC – MEETING MINUTES

2025-7

July 23, 2025

5:00 PM

GMSC Boardroom

The Chairperson, Art O'Donnell, called the meeting to order at 5:04pm.

Item 2025-5-01 Record of Attendance

Members present:

Mayor Art O'Donnell (remove commas)

Mayor Kevin Russell

Mayor Adam Lordon

Mayor Ernest Robichard

Lynn Gregan, Rural District Rep

Also present:

Roberta McIntyre, Chief Executive Officer

Justin Forbes, Director of Operations/Planning Director

Edna Trevors, Recording Secretary

Melanie Albert, Recording Secretary

Ron Gaudet, Rural District Manager

Krista Chase, Economic & Labour Force Development Director

Shawn Cripps, Chief Financial Officer

Larry Allain, Rural District Representative

Virtual:

Leigh Bursey, Housing Initiatives Manager

Nancy Gorman – Acting City Manager

Guests from the Miramichi Trails for their presentation only

Kevin Gallant

Paula Foley McFarlane

Item 2025-7-02: Approval of Agenda

Moved: Kevin Russell

Seconded: Ernest Robichard

RESOLVED, “to accept the agenda as amended.”

Carried

Item 2025-7-03: Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None declared.

Item 2025-7-04: Approval of Minutes of June 25, 2025 Board Meeting

Moved: Kevin Russell
Seconded: Lynn Gregan

RESOLVED, “that the minutes of June 23rd, 2025, be approved as presented.”

Carried

Item 2025-7-05 Quarterly Report – Housing Navigator and Housing Specialist (April 1-June 30, 2025)

Presented by Leigh Bursey, Housing Initiative Manager.

Leigh gave a brief explanation of actions in the housing sector. There is an addendum in the package from the community hub satellite office in the downtown area for transparency. He requested the board indicate if they required more in-depth reporting in the future.

Q&A

Adam commented that the work they are doing is great despite the struggles of funding. The City has only agreed to fund for this fiscal year, and he hopes there was an eye out for funding opportunities so that housing staffing could be funded in more ongoing ways.

Leigh acknowledged that this is an interim solution and that the new Grant Writer would be helping to find funding options.

Motion: to approve the Housing Navigator Quarterly report.

Moved: Lynn Gregan

Seconded: Adam Lordon

RESOLVED, “that the Quarterly Report be approved as presented.”

Carried

Item 2025-7-06(prev 7) Quarterly Financial Report

Presented by Shawn Cripps, Chief Financial Officer.

To line up with booked time block granted to the presenters of Item 6, agenda's item 7 was moved up and became item 6.

Shawn gave the budget report including up to June 30, 2025. He briefly explained the current surplus and outlined each department's individual surplus/deficit.

- Corporate services shows slight deficit
- Co-operative Planning shows a very minimal deficit
- Development (one of our core services) has a slight deficit
- EcoDiversification (which traditionally is more costly in the summer) has a slight deficit
- Regional Tourism shows a modest deficit

- Economic Development has a slight surplus
- Regional Housing Authority has a large surplus. Housing authority usually has expenses all at once nearer the end of the year so we should keep that in mind when looking at the current surplus (such as for housing forums).
- Community Development has a slight surplus,
- Regional Transportation shows a modest deficit (but the reason is a delay in receiving a particular grant of additional funds from ESIC that was expected).
- Public Safety has a surplus
- Regional Sport, Rec and Cultural has a surplus
- By-Law enforcement shows a deficit though some will be offset by the payback from the ended contract, to cover the part of the quarter they will not be servicing.
- Miramichi Housing Solutions has a slight surplus
- Rural Plans Project also has a slight surplus.

Q&A

K.Russel: A question was raised of our situation with our bylaw enforcement sub-contractors.

J.Forbes: our contract should carry until the end of September, but a particular situation arose: the current employee servicing that contract is leaving at the end of July and so instead of hiring a new employee simply to finish September, they will continue until the current employee leaves then pay us back the balance of that quarter that will not be serviced.

Motion to approve the Quarterly Financial Report

Moved: Ernest Robichaud

Seconded: Kevin Russell

RESOLVED, “*that* the Quarterly Financial Report be approved as presented.”

Carried

Item 2025-7-07(prev 8) Workforce Action Plan for Adoption

Presented by Krista Chase (see Annexed Minutes)

To line up with booked time block granted to the presenters of Item 6, agenda's item 8 was moved up and became item 7.

Krista explained the intent of the report, how the data was gathered, who contributed, and how it will help attract new workers, improve business succession planning and identifying priority occupations. The Board is asked to consider adopting the plan, as well as allowing the GMRSC to lead its implementation.

Motion: Be it resolved that the GMRSC adopts the Greater Miramichi Workforce Action Plan 2025-2027 as amended today and authorizes staff to coordinate and implement the initiatives outlined within the plan in collaboration with regional and provincial partners.

Moved: Adam Lordon

Seconded: Ernest Robichaud

Resolved, “that they adopt as amended today and allow staff to coordinate.”

For the record: Mayor Lordon strongly in favor of the motion: he endorses the report fully. David Campbell is a very trusted and competent expert source. Excited to see it made into action. He requests that this document be placed up on our website so that it can be referenced by anyone when needed. He specified that his amendment to the document was small and outlined it again: that the industry-specific items include one for Industrial Manufacturing and the Trades especially as the Industrial Manufacturing sector is one of the largest private industry employers in the region.

Carried

Item 2025-7-08(prev 9) Request for Partnership and Financial Contribution (Miramichi Airport Commission)

Presented by Justin Forbes

To line up with booked time block granted to the presenters of Item 6, agenda's item 9 was moved up and became item 8.

Justin outlined a presentation given at the May board meeting by the Miramichi Airport Commission. After a brief review of the presentation, mention was given of a letter requesting the appointment of a representative either from the GMRSC board or staff to sit on the Airport Commission board. They also requested consideration of a \$20,000 financial contribution from GMRSC to support airport operations and capital renewal efforts. Furthermore, they offered for staff and board members to tour the facilities.

Justin proceeded to acknowledge that it is an important piece in the region, but that it is not currently aligned with any of our mandated goals. A formalized partnership might be subject to the board's decision. Specifically, it was requested that this be reviewed with the board re: RSSF funding.

Based on review, the staff currently recommends that the Board defer or deny the \$20,000 funding request from the Miramichi Airport Commission, noting the absence of alignment with an approved regional strategy and the RSSF eligibility.

Q&A

A.Lordon: frustrating that RSSF has so many strings attached from provincial decision-makers. City has supported the airport commission for years and they grant 70 thousand annually as an acknowledgement of their importance. Would have liked to see the region contributing to such an important part of the local economy. Acknowledging we might not be able to afford a contribution at the moment but perhaps request an economic assessment including trickle-downs so we can see the actual impact on the region with data, so we might be able to approach it at budget time with more information.

Discussion among the board followed regarding what the current motion language should be and how we would proceed. Consideration of who to volunteer for their commission board, as a show of support and belief in their work, and to show that we are supporting them. Lynn Gegan was tentatively selected for the Airport Commission.

A.Lordon noted that he would be of the opinion to vote against not awarding the financial contribution but would be willing to make a motion that we appoint a member to the airport commission.

Motion: that the GMRSC appoint a staff member to participate on the Miramichi Airport Commission board, and that we pursue an economic impact assessment of the airport's impact on the region.

Moved: Adam Lordon

Seconded: Kevin Russell

Resolved, "that they adopt the motion as given."

Carried

Chair requests a motion on whether to provide funding.

Motion: that we defer funding for now and will look at it again at budget time.

Moved: Ernest Robichaud

Seconded: Kevin Russell

Question from Kevin Russell before voting on motion: will this money come in from the higher government in the next budget review? Will we be splitting it fifty-fifty with the province or something of the sort?

A.Lordon: informs that this was already looked into and that the funding in question wouldn't qualify for provincial or federal support (RSSF).

J.Forbes: outlined the RSSF criteria that need to be met. The airport does not meet eligibility.

A.Lordon: might be helpful to gather data from Chaleur and Restigouche RSCs to see how they deal with their airports, as their RSCs contribute. Also, reason for refusing funding currently has to do with failure to align with goals and mandates, but that doesn't mean upkeeping existing infrastructures should be abandoned as all goals and mandates are only forward moving. We should explore ways to support existing value in the region.

Chair suggest tabling for now to search for more information we might be lacking.

A.Lordon: agrees and states that he believed the current request was for this to be considered at budget time. Gathering more information before then might be the best way to proceed.

R.McIntyre: We understand we are to look at the models for Chaleur and Restigouche RSCs and examine the criteria for the RSSF.

Current Motion withdrawn by Ernest Robichaud, seconded by Kevin Russell.

Motion: to table this item until more information can be gathered.

Moved: Adam Lordon

Second: Kevin Russell

Resolved, "that the item be tabled."

Carried

Item 2025-7-09 (prev item 6) Miramichi Trails (5:30-6:00)

To line up with scheduled block of time allotted, agenda item 6 was moved down and became item 9.

Presented by Kevin Gallant and Paula Foley McFarlane

Kevin gave a presentation on Miramichi Connector Trails and explained the intent and scope of their project:

- connect all trails in the region so that they can all be accessed without the use of a vehicle to go from one to the other.
- offer trails longer than 2km.
- make trails useable year-round.
- encourage tourism and boost economic attractions in the region.

Presentation also outlined ways already thought possible to achieve this goal, such as:

- creating parallel bridges and trails on current ATV trails
- using the haul routes for bypass construction as trail foundations
- businesses already donating wood for trail boardwalk construction

Steps needed from the GMRSC are to staff a Trail Coordinator to oversee all the planning and construction needed for the project, as volunteers doing it on off-time is not a viable option.

Q&A

A.Lordon states admiration for their drive and passion and encourage them to keep presenting in the future. We are at the point of laying groundwork for that kind of thing but are not at the point yet where we can consider something this far ahead, but that it's definitely of interest for upcoming years' budgets perhaps. Suggestion given to have them put in contact with Paula Durelle, Grant Writer.

P.Foley McFarlane requests that in future budgets we include consideration for a Trail Coordinator position as in other RSCs in the province (ie. Kent).

Presenters left the meeting after presentation completion.

Item 2025-7-10 CEO Update

HR update: no changes.

Partner Meetings and Key Collaboration:

- July 2nd: annual general meeting of the Greater Miramichi Chamber of Commerce at Golf and Country club.
- Economic and Social Inclusion Commission (ESIC): accepted role as regional service rep for the province, on the Provincial Advisory Committee established by New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion. First meeting is scheduled later this summer.
- Public Safety Committee update: asked all members of the region including first nations to collaborate on a regional wildfire emergency plan for the Greater Miramichi area. Requested options for production of a single coordinated application on behalf of the whole region.

- Research study by the University of Moncton on the role of the RSCs, led by Christine Paulin and Magella Simard. Board and Staff might be invited for focus groups roughly an hour long in the future. Could take up to twelve months after interviews conclude to get the results of the study.
- GMRSC New Website is now live. Lindsey Palmer is available to give presentation if desired in the future.

Motion: to accept the CEO report as read.

Moved: Ernest Robichaud

Seconded: Kevin Russell

Resolved, "to accept the CEO's report as read."

Carried

Item 2025-7-11 "In-Camera" session

Motion: to go in-camera

Moved: Kevin Russell

Seconded: Ernest Robichaud

Resolved, "to go in-camera."

Carried

Non-essential Staff left the meeting, recordings turned off and minutes suspended during in-camera session.

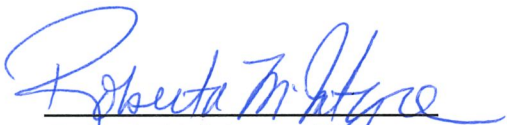
ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Kevin Russell to adjourn the meeting.

There being no further business, the Chairperson declared the meeting adjourned at 6:38 pm.

Next Board Meeting: August 27th, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,


Roberta McIntyre, CEO


Melanie Albert, Recording Secretary