# HOW TO BE A MUNICIPAL COUNCILLOR 101

www.electionspictoucounty.ca

# Election 2024

## Election Day – Oct. 19, 2024

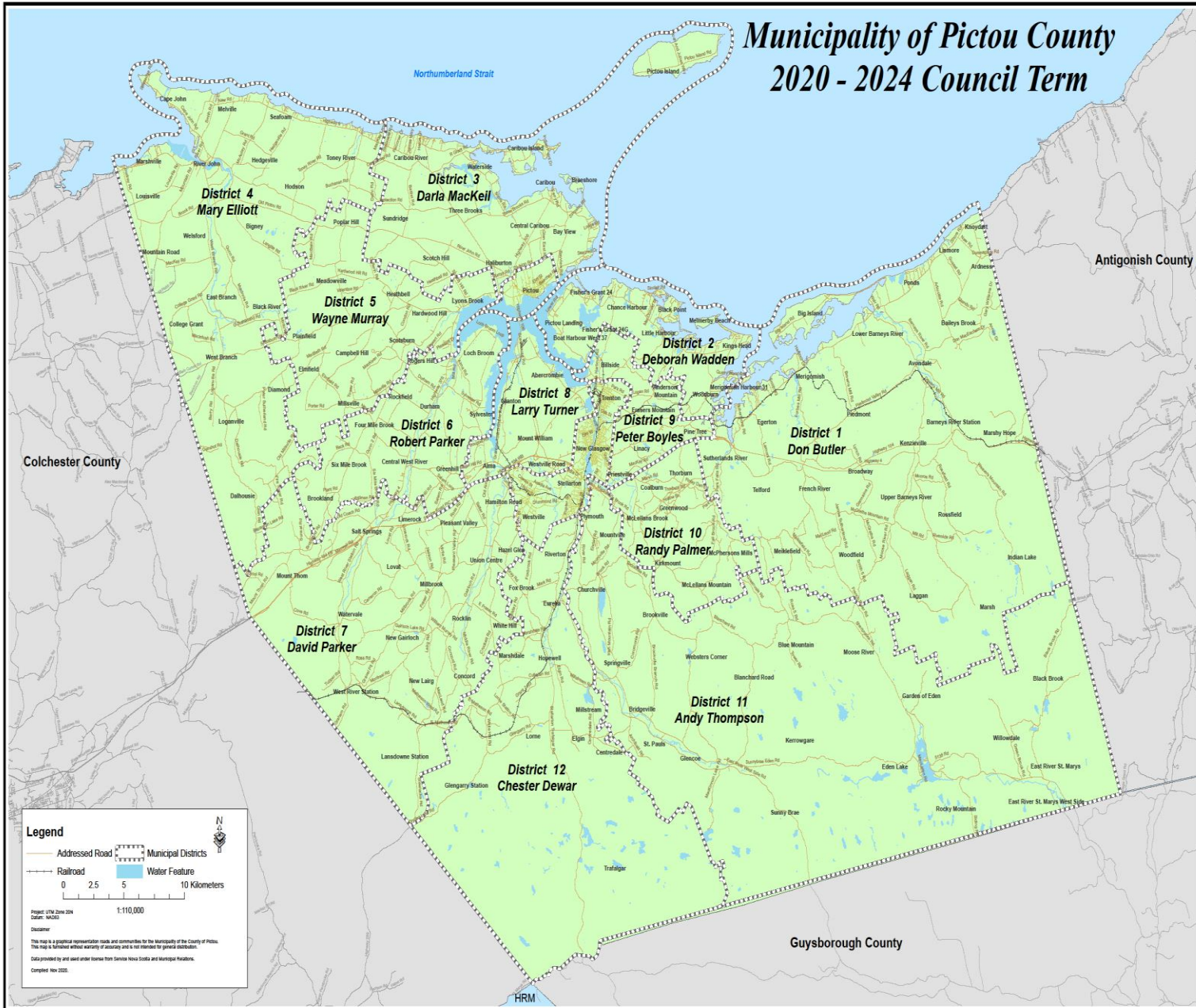## Nomination Day – Sept. 10, 2024

## Phone or Online Voting Only

## Voting Starts – Oct. 6, 2024

# Eligibility

- Be a Canadian Citizen
- Be 18 years old on Nomination Day (Sept. 10, 2024)
- Be a resident of the municipality for a period of six months proceeding Nomination Day (by March 9th, 2024)
- Not disqualified under Section 18 of the Municipal Elections Act.
- Candidates must have municipal charges such as taxes and liens, fully paid.

**MOPC – 12 Districts** – One councillor per district.   Warden and Deputy Warden are elected by Councillors.

**Town of New Glasgow** – Three Wards – two councillors per ward.  Mayor elected in own race.

**Town of Stellarton** – Two wards – two councillors per ward.  Mayor elected in own race.

**Town of Trenton** – 4 Councillors elected at Large.  Mayor elected in own race.

**Town of Pictou-** 4 Councillors elected at large. Mayor elected in own race.

**Town of Westville** – 4 Councillors elected at large. Mayor elected in own race.

# You Won! Now What?

- Monthly Council Meetings

- Executive Committee Meetings

- Meetings can last up to three hours.

- Extra budget meetings in early spring.

- Committee work

- Paid an honorarium

# Municipal Government

- Municipalities exist and operate within the authorities and responsibilities set out in provincial legislation.

- The Municipal Government Act (MGA) is the most significant piece of legislation that governs Municipalities.

- Municipalities must abide by the Labour Standards Code, Occupational Health Safety Act, Pensions Benefits Act, and Workers Compensation Act as employers.

- The MGA gives municipalities authority to set policy and bylaws.

- In many areas, the MGA is permissive but does not require the Municipality to do certain things, i.e. Municipalities may have a noise bylaw, but it is not mandated.

# Municipal Government Services

- Building Permits and Inspection Services

- Emergency Management Services

- Fire Inspection

- Land Planning and Development

- Civic Addressing and GIS mapping

- Water and Wastewater Services

- Public Works Services (J Class roads, sidewalks, streetlights)

- Fire Service Funding for Volunteer Departments

- Recreation Programming

- Police Service Economic Development

- Various Grant Programs

- Bylaw Services – Dog Control/Dangerous and Unsightly

## Shared Responsibilities include:

- Pictou County Shared Services which oversees Solid Waste Collection and the East River Environmental Control Centre

- New Scotland Inc – The Town of New Glasgow and MOPC East River Road Business Park.

- Pictou County Wellness Centre – New Glasgow, Pictou, Stellarton, Trenton and MOPC form board of directors.

- Pictou County Partnership – A six municipal units and Pictou Landing First Nations.

- Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library

# NOT Municipal Government Services

❖ **Provincial Roads**
(Maintenance, Crosswalks, Stormwater management, interchanges)

❖ **Education Issues**
(Bussing, School Issues)

❖ **Health Care**
(Mental health care direct support, doctor recruitment)

❖ **Housing**

❖ **Financing Business**

# Municipal Funding
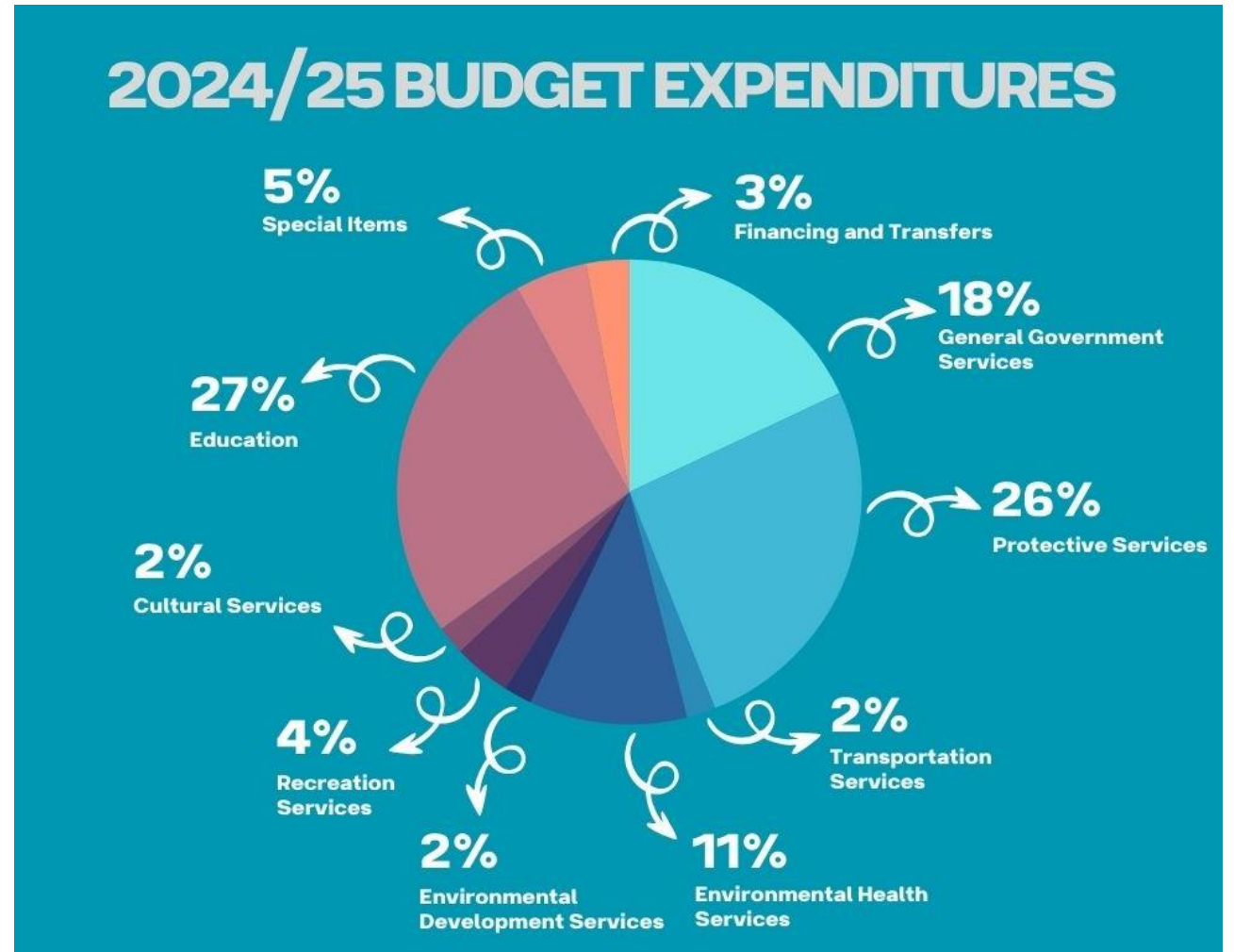
❖ The budget is set every year with an accompanying capital plan.

❖ The MGA gives Council wide authority to decide the levels of taxation of its property owners/residents.

❖ Taxation reflects decisions made by Council around the level of service.

❖ Taxes may be allocated based on property value, per dwelling unit, per tax account and other basis determined by appropriate by Council.

❖ User fees are all determined by Council or delegated by policy to the CAO.

❖ Capital contribution from senior levels of government.

# General Tax Rate

The tax rate for the 2024/25 fiscal year in the Municipality of Pictou County is $0.815/$100 assessed value for residential and resource properties and $1.825/$100 assessed value for commercial properties.

The Municipality of Pictou County has an operating budget of $23,357,052 for the current fiscal year.



## 2024/25 BUDGET EXPENDITURES

- 5% Special Items
- 3% Financing and Transfers
- 18% General Government Services
- 26% Protective Services
- 2% Transportation Services
- 11% Environmental Health Services
- 2% Environmental Development Services
- 4% Recreation Services
- 2% Cultural Services
- 27% Education

# Water Utility Funding

Water rates are approved by the Utility and Review Board.

Water rates vary widely among municipal units depending on many factors, but the source of water and treatment methods are a factor.

The provincial government sets regulations around treatment and facility operations.
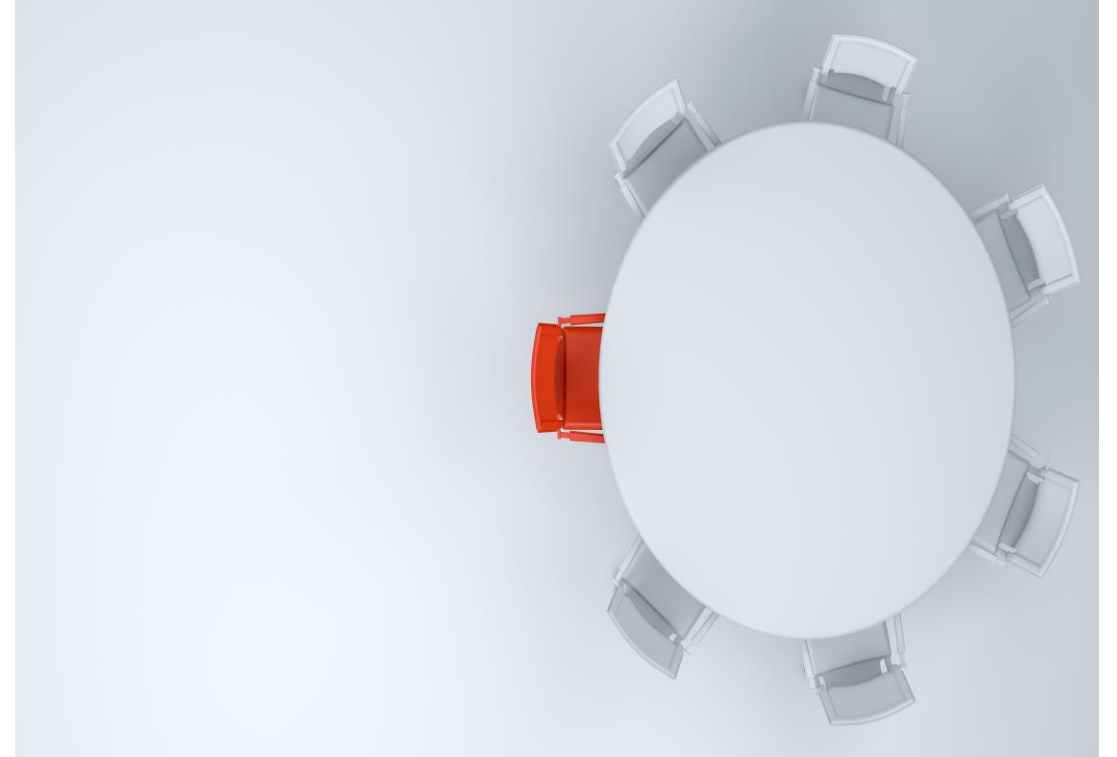
# Council

- ❖ Determines level of service
- ❖ Approves annual budget and capital plan
- ❖ Approves council policies and bylaws
- ❖ Adheres to a code of conduct
- ❖ Has only one employee – the CAO

# CAO

- ❖ CAO has broad authority and responsibility to run the organization.
- ❖ Advises Council and carries out Council's wishes.
- ❖ Sets Administrative Policy to complement Council Policy.
- ❖ All staff in the Municipality are the responsibility of the CAO.
- ❖ The CAO is the only staff member whom Council directs.

# Municipal Information

- **Council and Committee meetings are live-streamed and open to the public.**

- **Exceptions to this include discussions about personnel, legal issues, and other in-camera discussions.**

- **The MGA outlines when Council can go into a private in-camera session.**

- **Once Council votes, Councillors speak with one voice.**

# Committees of Council

**The MOPC operates an Executive Committee structure which includes all members of Council that meet monthly for:**
- Council Meetings
- Property and Finance Committee Meetings

**When needed:**
- Committee of the Whole
- Executive Council Meeting

**Other committees of the Council meet and report to the Council on their schedules or as needed. Some of these include:**
- Climate
- Police
- Accessibility
- Planning

**Council also has appointed representatives to outside agencies and organizations such as:**
- Hector Arena Commission
- Riverview Home Corporation
- Pictou- Antigonish Regional Library
- 144 CEF Engineering Construction

# Emergency Management

CAO is responsible for:

❖ EMO Planning

❖ Emergency Management Centre Operations

❖ EMO Communication (with Warden)

# Policing

- ❖ **The MOPC is policed by RCMP.**
  **- 23 officers**
  **- $4.4 million a year**

- ❖ **Managed by Staff Sgt.  Curtis MacKinnon**

- ❖ **Detachment offices in Pictou and Stellarton**

- ❖ **Police Advisory Committee**

# Fire Service

- ❖ 18 independent volunteer fire departments

- ❖ Levies collected on behalf the fire service

- ❖ Fire Department Funding Policy

- ❖ Receive $2.8 million in operating grants

# Are you prepared to…

- Read technical reports written by staff?  For example, budgets, tenders, etc.

- Prepare for meetings in advance.

- Speak for your region and the whole of the Municipality.

- Establish a vision for the Municipality or Town and set the priorities to get there.

# Election Information 2024

❖ All five towns and the MOPC appointed Josephine MacDonald as their returning officer for the 2024 Municipal Elections.

❖ Each municipal unit will host its own election, but to reduce costs, they share a website and other services, such as tech and communications.

❖ Josephine's office is in the MOPC building at 46 Municipal Drive, Pictou. It is open Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

❖ The elections website is www.electionspictoucounty.ca

# IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

You can speak to election staff anytime during office hours; however, you can not become an official candidate until nominations open. This can be done by appointment on the following dates:

**Municipality of Pictou County- August 29th**
**Town of Westville – August 30**
**Town of Stellarton – September 3**
**Town of Trenton – September 4**
**Town of Pictou – September 5**
**Town of New Glasgow – September 6**
**Municipality of Pictou County- September 7**

- September 10th is the final day to become a candidate.

- **NOMINATIONS WILL BE NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER THIS DATE.**

- If a seat is not contested, the candidate will be acclaimed.

# Things to Remember

- $200.00 Deposit
- Form 3 – Certificate in Respect to Charges that are Liens/Taxes
- Official Agent
- Nomination Form

**BE HEARD**
**Be a Candidate.  Be a Voter. Be Heard**

# QUESTIONS?