



ATTENDING

- Councillor Howard Williams (Chair),
- Mayor, Jody Mackay (virtual)
- Councillor Ian Palmeter
- Greg Cumings, Source Water Protection Planner NS (virtual)
- Jeremy Strong, Citizen
- Councillor Peter Allen, Municipality of the County of Kings

ALSO ATTENDING

- Colin Walker, CBCL Hydrogeologist (virtual)
- Devin Lake, Director of Planning and Public Works

ABSENT

- Meghan Swanburg
- Marcel Falkenham, Acadia University, Representative

CALL TO ORDER

Chair, Councillor Howard Williams, called the meeting to order at 2:30 pm

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda as presented, agenda approved.

CARRIED

APPROVAL OF THE SOURCE WATER PROTECTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 10, 2025.

Motion to approve previous meeting minutes as distributed.

CARRIED

DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:

No conflicts of interest declared.

PRESENTATIONS:

None

PUBLIC INPUT:

No public attendees or online participants.



UPDATE, DROUGHT AND WATER LEVELS – COLIN WALKER, CBCL HYDROGEOLOGIST

- Colin Walker presents an analysis of drought conditions and water supply risk based on climate and groundwater data. Using rainfall, snowfall, snowpack, and groundwater monitoring data (including new well sensors installed in late summer), he finds that 2024 experienced a significant precipitation deficit—about 350 mm below average, one-third less than normal. The deficit began early in the year and worsened sharply from June through mid-October, when rainfall was minimal, before partial recovery with heavy rain in November.
- Low snowpack last winter likely reduced groundwater recharge, as snow melted early and likely ran off rather than soaking into frozen ground. National drought mapping from Agriculture Canada classified the Wolfville area as D4 “exceptional drought,” a rare and serious designation for the province, and many regional water supply issues occurred, especially for shallow and dug wells.
- Despite these warning signs, current well and aquifer data do not show an immediate water supply crisis, so there is no need for panic. However, Colin emphasizes the importance of water conservation, preparedness, and long-term planning.
- Production and monitoring wells showed only minor seasonal declines (~10 cm), indicating aquifer resilience. This small drop is expected and not concerning, reinforcing that the aquifer remains stable.
- Colin agreed that voluntary water-use restrictions did not measurably reduce water consumption, based on pumping and usage data, which show no clear decline after restrictions were introduced.
- Colin then presents a cross-section of the well field, showing how static water levels across production and monitoring wells align, indicating good hydraulic connection within the aquifer. He proposes preliminary “trigger levels” for water levels—starting near sea level as a clear caution point and followed by additional levels in 2.5 m steps—to guide future monitoring, drought response. It was suggested that trigger levels could reasonably be set higher than sea level, such as a 2-metre drop from historical norms, to apply a more precautionary approach.
- While supporting the bylaw, concern about timing, as the legislative process can be slow and another severe summer drought could occur before a bylaw is formally adopted. Regardless, the water utility already has authority to issue conservation directives immediately if conditions worsen.

QUESTIONS FROM APPENDIX D, LUB AMENDMENTS:

- Appendix D, Table 13.10.2 (LUB Amendments) indicates that bulk chemical storage is not permitted in Overlay A and Overlay B, but is permitted in Overlay C. The table does not specify a maximum allowable quantity for bulk chemical storage within Overlay C. Laura Mosher with the County of Kings will be contacted to confirm whether there is a defined allowable amount or if additional regulations apply.



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- 13.1 of the LUB Amendments is Wolfville simply catching up or simply being added to the Summary of Wellfield Protection Overlay Names. Wolfville is being added.

ACTION ITEMS:

- The meeting date for the adoption of the LUB Amendments to be sent to Committee members.
 - Begin drafting a water conservation bylaw with staged restrictions tied to aquifer trigger levels.
 - Develop plain-language educational materials explaining Wolfville's water source and conservation measures. Education is important for building public confidence and demonstrating that water management decisions are evidence-based.
 - Continue monitoring aquifer recovery through winter recharge.
 - Seek clarification from Kings County on groundwater overlay regulations and chemical storage thresholds.
 - Revive discussion on residential fuel oil tank removal incentives as a future agenda item.
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- **NEXT MEETING:** March 11, 2026, 2:30-4:30
 - **ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 3:11 pm.

As recorded by Microsoft Teams, summarized by ChatGPT (checked by K Outerleys).