

PICA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Per PICA bylaws, no new business is to be discussed at the AGM. Standing business conducted at the AGM is as follows:

- 1) *Presentation of annual Committee Reports*
- 2) *Presentation of annual Financial Report*
- 3) *Selection of Board of Directors for 2025-2026*

Meeting Date: August 23rd, 2025

Meeting Minutes

Prepared by: Amy Harding, Secretary; with assistance from Anna LeBlanc, President

Please submit proposed corrections or omissions to amy@hardingworks.org no later than 14 days after Minutes publication date.

In Attendance

Executive Committee

Anna LeBlanc, President
Bonnie Rankin, Vice-President
Ed George, Treasurer

Board of Directors

Anne Chaldecott
Jenn Langille
Nancy MacDonald

General Membership

Rob Boudreau	MaryAnne MacDonald
Sheila Brandt	Gretchen Maguire
Ley Cheverie	Lorne McMillan
Hannah Coleman	Richard Proteau
Susan Forsyth	Darrell Rankin
Gloria Fraser	Petra Rankin
Cathy Gibson	Sheila Rankin
Joyce Halasz	Troy Rankin
Lisa Hickey	Allison Sloan Proteau
Paula Law	Kathy Smith
Andrew LeBlanc	Steve Smith
Myrna LeBlanc	Brenda Spence-MacLeod
Aaron (Butch) MacDonald	Sarah White
Cameron MacDonald	

Call to Order, Approvals

President Anna LeBlanc calls meeting to order, and thanks all members of the community for all that they do for the island.

PICA COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORTS

Church/Cemetery Committee

Submitted by: Nancy MacDonald

Committee Members: Anna LeBlanc, Bill MacMillan, Bonnie Rankin, Brenda MacLeod, Brent Bennett, Cathy Gibbons, Kirby Veevers, Myrna Leblanc, Scott MacEwan, Sheila Rankin Sheila Tobin and myself, Nancy MacDonald (Chair/Contact person).

This has been an unbelievable year for our committee. The biggest project was the renovation of the outside of the church. This included the shingles being completely stripped, rotten wood replaced, covered in Tyvek, and then finished with siding. A new metal roof, and a new window in the bell tower. A new step/ramp was also installed, up to code. Heartfelt thanks from the committee to Rob Boudreau of Boudreau Construction and his crew, Sam Bennett, Steve Rawlings and Geoff White.

The metal sign for the Pioneer Cemetery was also installed by Boudreau Construction along with the help from island volunteers. The headstones in the Pioneer Cemetery are also being given new life. They are being cleaned under the direction and supervision of Brenda Macleod. So far there is about 1/3 of them restored.

There are interpretive panels being designed and made for both the church and pioneer cemetery. These are being designed with input and approval from the committee but are fully funded by the Pictou Island Heritage Society.

We had 2 major events this year. The first was a concert put on by Rachael and Darren, a Celtic duo from Cape Breton. This was not as well attended as concerts in the past. It was a shame because they were really good and this was our only fund raiser of the year. The second was a church service to celebrate the 115 year anniversary of the building and to give thanks for what seemed like an insurmountable task a couple of years ago, which was completing the total renovation of the outside of the building.

We have had some minor events this year as well. The last couple of years, there has been a gathering at the church, a week before Christmas to celebrate the last boat out off the water, which starts our winter season. And Colin Knock has lead two services in the spring to celebrate life and to give thanks.

Going forward, we would like to see the church used more and are up for ideas/suggestions.

The only physical thing we are planning is continuing to work on the church cemetery. There was a great deal done at the island work party, under Scott MacEwan's leadership, which improved it a lot. We are working on making a permanent grid, where plots would be easy to identify and getting some fill to level the ground.

There is \$10,000. in our bank account.

Communications Team

Submitted by: Linda Schweitzer & Amy Harding

PI Email List

- We have sent over 50 emails to the community since the season began (this does not include those from the summer student) - this is remarkable, given how few ferry cancellations/reschedules we have had this year.
 - The main challenges are:
 - folks reply to Pictou Island instead of to the contact included in the message (for example, sending Kirby (inquiries@pictouislandcharters.ca) their full orders). This is only an issue for time-critical messages - as their messages may be delayed because we have to forward them to the correct person.
 - recipient email servers blocking our messages: we send a lot of emails to a large distribution list - sometimes the recipient's server thinks this is junk and they never get the email. The only remedy for this is for folks to add the Pictou Island email (pictouisland@gmail.com) to their 'safe senders' list.

Communications Survey

- We sent out a Communications Preferences survey and have received 60 responses so far.

- Responses received by the August 10th deadline were shared with C@P student to have requested corrections/inclusions/exclusions added to the Phone List.
- Updates per survey responses received are being made to the PI email list and will be completed next week.
- 90% of respondents indicated they wanted to receive time-sensitive information (e.g. fuel runs, junk runs) by email, as is currently done. Only about 50% of respondents were interested in the possibility of text alerts: with this in mind, we *may* pursue a limited 1-month trial of a text alert service – further discussion is required.

Website

- We cleaned up and updated the website at the end of last year.
- At the August PICA meeting, a motion was unanimously passed to purchase web hosting services (at a cost of about \$300 annually) so that we can build our own website that allows us more flexibility than the templates provided for the current page.
- Amy is working on building this new site, and expects it to be ready for soft launch and testing at the end of this month. [EDITOR'S NOTE 8/30: upon further evaluation, the tools required to provide the level of site customization we need are more complex than anticipated. This means more learning/study by Amy than originally anticipated: she's into it, but the learning curve means at least another month of development time.]
- The new site will include separate sections for residents; visitor information; and helpful information for new residents. It will also include external links to relevant sites like pictouislandcharters.ca; and a more prominent events calendar than that on the current website.
- Because more than half of our communications survey respondents indicated that they would like to be able to use a webpage as their primary source of island info, particular focus is being placed on building a site that is easily updatable and 'editor-friendly' so that specialized expertise (e.g. HTML editing) is not required for volunteers to keep site current once launched.

Events Committee

Submitted by: Gretchen Maguire

The events committee is largely responsible for organizing with the BBQ being the largest event held. As a committee of one, a huge thank you to everyone who pitches in to help with set up and clean up.

Garbage Committee

Submitted by: Aaron (Butch) MacDonald

There has been more garbage this summer with the fire ban in place, as a result Kirby and Krista are keeping a closer eye on the bin in Caribou so it doesn't overflow. Another recycling run will be held shortly and we had another full junk run today. Thank you to Ed, Maryanne and Krista for their assistance.

Summer Students Committee

Submitted by: Anna LeBlanc

This year we were again fortunate to have two summer students grants. This year we welcomed Raymon Rondelet-Swan as our groundskeeper and Jackson Law as our C@P student.

Having an off-Island summer student comes with unique challenges but Raymon took it all in stride. It was also a challenging summer with the lack of rain, often leaving the lawn too crispy to mow. Despite this, Raymon left our properties clean and tidy every week. I'd like to thank him for his communication, effectiveness and can-do attitude. He is unfortunately leaving us two weeks early to move out west but we are working behind the scenes to get a replacement for the next two weeks for fulfill the grant before moving to end of season mowing.

As our C@P student, Jackson prepared and sent community reminder emails and introduced a weekly bulletin outlining weekend events and weather that was well received by the community. He offered print services, tech support and welcomed visitors to the community centre. He was a great help with our annual craft auction, facilitating pick ups and collecting money as well as helping with our revamp of the Please Don't Die in Pictou Island brochure. He also updated the phone list, please see him after the meeting if you'd like a hard copy of the phone list. A pdf will be sent out tomorrow. I'd like to thank Jackson for a wonderful summer and I've heard a rumour he'd like to come back next year!

I'd also like to thank everyone behind the scenes that helps these programs run smoothly. Melanie Paul with the library for securing our C@P program and Amy for applying for our groundskeeper position. As well as Maryanne for her effort in revitalizing and perfecting our Please Don't Die on Pictou Island brochure. Also Isaac, Andrew, Jenn, Rob and anyone else who answered my frantic texts when needed.

Park Committee

Submitted by: Anne Chaldecott & Susan Witcomb

The number of people enjoying the John D. MacCallum Memorial Park this summer—including 80 or so attendees at the annual picnic—proves that this East End landmark remains as popular as ever. That said, it's 31-years old and due for a bit of a makeover.

Anne has asked Brent Bennett to organize the rebuilding of the cairn and Gretchen (who has thankfully joined the committee) is plotting a reconfiguration of the adjacent flower patch. The latter will now be made up of perennials, so donations will be gratefully accepted from any of our gardeners who happen to be dividing bulbs in the spring

Dispensing with the current planter of annuals will reduce the need for watering

and, in turn, allow us to remove the problematic rain barrel that is too often used as a garbage can.

Speaking of garbage (which, unfortunately, seems to be more prevalent every year) a sign will be added reminding park goers that everything they bring to the beach must be taken away again.

One last addition we think worth considering is a tourniquet and perhaps some related medical supplies for the park shed.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the committee.

REPORTS FROM OTHER COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Pictou Island Heritage Society

Submitted by: Brenda Spence-McLeod, President

As always our opening event was the annual Lobsterfest , hosted by Lorne and Wendy. Thank you to Logan's North Nova Seafood and all the fishermen whose cooperation and donations make this such a success every year. We raised a record breaking \$2460.00!

We followed this by hanging a new sign on the Heritage Centre and remounting the interpretive panels even before we did our annual site assessment and work party. Our annual work party was well attended, and thanks to everyone who helped us get everything in tiptop shape for the season.

Members of the Society assisted with transportation and highlighted Island heritage during an impromptu Island tour for visitors from the NSCC. A good time was had by all!

We have some new benches at the lighthouse sites (thank you Gary and Dana). We are in the final stages of a collaborative project, with PICA's Church/Cemetery Committee. Expect to see Interpretive panels appear soon at both the Church and the Pioneer Cemetery!

We have begun cleaning the stones at the Pioneer Cemetery and anyone wishing to participate should contact me (Brenda Spence MacLeod), for a brief tutorial and the proper equipment, so that no stones are damaged unintentionally.

We have also begun a project where we are trying to compile biographies and, where available, pictures of people buried in the Pioneer Cemetery. If you have a family member there please feel free to approach me and tell me a story or give me a picture! We held one general meeting in July followed by a brief presentation on the Pioneer Cemetery. Our next GM is August 30 at 4:30, where we will drawing for the lucky winner of Sheila's beautiful painting of the wharf in 1956. There are a few tickets still available so don't be shy! The meeting will be followed by a card party (45's Pictou Island rules). We'll be sending out more details, so watch your email. Hope to see you there, and also at our AGM Sept. 13.

Finally a huge thank you to everyone who faithfully brings their refundables down to Lorne's and Wendy's in support of the PIHS! A reminder to try not to include garbage or nonrefundables, and to please keep glass separate from cans and plastic. Those bags get thrown onto the boat and we don't want anybody getting cut!

Pictou Island Fire Department

Submitted by: Aaron (Stretch) MacDonald, Fire Chief

The fire department completed the purchase of the land behind the current dept this summer. We have begun identifying the location and our needs for a new department. The goal is to work on fundraising over the winter. This will likely be a \$200,000 + project so any community support is appreciated, either by way of donations and/or helping with fundraising efforts. Donations to the fire dept will receive a charitable donation receipt. Support of the 50/50 draw is very much appreciated.

Fire dept members have been working on a 15 hour study course. We are also receiving updates to our training from Deborah. We purchased a decommissioned ambulance to facilitate transfer of patients. Work is underway to obtain a stretcher. We have also purchased sophisticated dummies for CPR training, which have already been used.

Harbour Authority

Submitted by: Jenn Langille

Installation of the new boom is underway and it should be operational within a matter of weeks. It will lift 2000 pounds (which is the same as Caribou), can reach approximately 12 feet out, and cargo can be unloaded onto either the wharf or the loading dock.

This project has been cost shared for harbour infrastructure as part of the Zero Plastic Waste Project (\$12,500). Small Craft Harbours has paid for the engineering drawings and the foundation work (approximately \$40,000 plus tax). Then, of course, the donations to last year's BBQ, the pancake breakfast, additional donations from community members, the 2024 craft sale auction proceeds, and the cookbook sales. Thank you to everyone who contributed recipes, crafts, and financially. Special mention to Maryanne MacDonald and Sarah White. Please note there are still cookbooks available and they make a great Christmas present.

Thanks to everyone who pays parking without being chased. We can confirm parking fees will remain at \$60 next year. If you haven't paid yet, please do. These are our fees for ongoing expenses, such as our wharfinger, accounting and bank fees, etc. Reminder to use your common sense and courtesy when parking. Park tight and use parking spots/don't block people. In association with the ferry committees, lines have been added to the wharf for no parking and loading zones during ferry times and for the steps on the dock.

Lights and power have successfully been installed. This is important for the safety and response, especially during nighttime emergencies. One more light was purchased to be installed once the boom is up. Wifi is available and we have purchased a weather station for installation. We have been provided with several waste separating containers for on board our island boats.

Small Craft Harbours is also proceeding with the installation of new ice shields on the east wharf. Pictou Island is on the list for dredging, although that is more medium term (i.e. not next year), and the 10 year recommendation list for wharf replacement. There are no guarantees here, but obviously getting on the list is the first step. The east wharf is in poor condition and too low, while the west wharf planking was only ever meant to be temporary. Going forward, the Harbour Authority will continue to lobby for these projects.

Pictou Island Food Producers

Submitted by: Geoff White

A new group has formed under leadership of President, Steve Rawlings, that will be sharing resources and information with Island gardeners. They will be meeting the first Saturday of every month (next meeting September 6th) to discuss planting strategies and supply ordering. They hope to eventually be open to discussing land leasing opportunities in return for growing and other agricultural opportunities.

PICA ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Submitted by: Ed George, Treasurer

**PICTOU ISLAND COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
INCOME STATEMENT
AUGUST 2025**

Revenue

Food auction	\$10,400
Pot Luck	\$280
Total Revenue	\$10,680

Expenses

Supplies	\$130.49
Insurance	\$1,106
Banking	\$250
Light, Blocks, Flags	\$426.87

Total Expenses	\$1913.36
Total Income	\$8766.46
GIC	\$24,210.79 + \$1,390.90 int = \$25,601.69

Bank Balance: June 2nd	\$20,377.04
Income	\$8,766.46
Bank Balance Aug 1st	\$29,143.68

Total \$25,601.69 + \$29,143.68 = \$54,745.37

PICA ANNUAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPOINTMENT

Anna explains 2024-2025 Director terms conclude with this meeting and a new Board must be appointed. Anna calls for volunteers.

Selection of Board of Directors for 2025-2026

- 2024-2025 Directors who volunteer to serve an additional term:
 - Anne Chaldecott
 - Ed George
 - Amy Harding
 - Jenn Langille
 - Anna LeBlanc
 - Nancy MacDonald
 - Bonnie Rankin
 - Linda Schweitzer
- 2024-2025 Director resigning:
 - Ashlynn Baird
 - Geoff White
- Individuals who volunteer to join Board of Directors for 2025-2026 term:
 - Andrew LeBlanc
 - Cameron MacDonald
- Motion to nominate all individuals who have offered to serve on 2025-2026 Board of Directors for appointment.
 Motion: MaryAnne MacDonald **Seconded:** Gloria Fraser
 Vote: all in favour, motion carried

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Susan Forsyth **Seconded:** Ed George
Vote: all in favour, motion carried

PICA BOD Convene to Elect Executive Committee

- Immediately following the AGM, the 2025-2026 Board of Directors met to select from their ranks the Executive Committee for the coming year.
 - All new board members were present, with the exceptions of Linda Schweitzer and Amy Harding, who had both expressed their willingness to serve for another year to Anna in advance of the meeting.
 - Amy had additionally offered to continue in her role as Secretary, if the Board chose to make that nomination.
- By unanimous vote, the 2025-2026 Executive Committee is as follows:
 - President: Anna LeBlanc
 - Vice-President: Bonnie Rankin
 - Treasurer: Ed George
 - Secretary: Amy Harding