

Meeting Date: August 15, 2026

Meeting Minutes

Prepared by: Amy Harding, Secretary

Please submit proposed corrections or omissions to amy@hardingworks.org within two weeks of minutes publication date.

In Attendance

Executive Committee

Anna LeBlanc, President (*online*)

Amy Harding, Secretary

Board of Directors

Jenn Langille

Andrew LeBlanc

Cameron MacDonald

General Membership

Cathy Gibson

Joyce Halsaz

Paul Law

Myrna LeBlanc

Susan McCallum-Whitcomb

Cathy Smith

Brenda Spence-McLeod

TJ Stevenson

Colin Whitcomb

Call to Order, Approvals

President Anna LeBlanc calls meeting to order

Calls for motion to approve May 2026 Minutes

- **Motion:** Susan McCallum-Whitcomb **Seconded:** Cathy Gibson
 Vote: all in favour, motion carried

PICA Thank Yous!

In addition to discussing 'island business,' PICA meetings are an opportunity to recognize and thank volunteers who have made particularly noteworthy contributions to the community in the preceding month.



August 2026: PICA Would Like to Thank...

- **Chris & Alaska**, for their work as hosts of the Annual Food Auction!
- **Corinne & Alaska** for helping with the painting of the new East End outhouse!
- Anna & Casey once again extend their most heartfelt thanks for the many people behind the scenes who helped make their wedding such a special day!
- The Heritage Society extends thanks for donated pictures of the schoolhouse and a drawing by **L.B. Jensen**.
- A gigantic thank you to **Jenn Langille** for her tireless and extensive efforts in getting a new and now operational Boom at the wharf!!!

OVERVIEW

The August meeting covered a broad range of community operational matters, including wharf parking management, garbage handling reminders, fire department training updates, harbor authority boom status, and cell service degradation concerns. The food auction was confirmed as the highest-grossing in PICA history at \$10,290. The upcoming Annual General Meeting (AGM) and community barbecue were confirmed for the following weekend, with logistics largely in place. A significant new initiative was announced: the PICA 40th Anniversary Planning Committee, marking the organization's incorporation in 1987. The meeting also surfaced several action items for follow-up, including locking the harbor boom mechanism, investigating the ratepayers meeting broadcast option, and relocating a Mi'kmaq territory map to the Heritage Society.

Announcements & Celebrations

- **Food auction grand total: \$10,290** — confirmed to exceed all previous auction records; special thanks extended to **Chris and Alaska** for hosting and entertainment.
- **Craft auction** is still ongoing and closes the following Saturday at noon; winning bids and an Excel sheet of winners will be posted by Anna after closing; payment and pickup to be coordinated through Ed. Non-Facebook users can have a friend post bids on their behalf, with the bidder's name in brackets.
- **PICA financials confirmed back in good standing** following the ramp build and food auction; the organization is described as "back above water."
- **New accessibility ramp** has been completed and is in place in front of the school.

Agenda Item: AGM & BBQ

- **AGM scheduled for the following weekend**, along with the community barbecue and an evening kitchen party at the dance hall featuring **Albert Dunwall**.
- **AGM format reminder:** No new business is presented and no votes are taken at the AGM; it is the end of the annual cycle.
- **Board transition process:** At the end of the AGM, all current board members step down; those wishing to re-offer may do so, and new volunteers are invited to raise their hands; the executive is then set from the reconstituted board.
- **Committee heads** are asked to submit reports in advance (to Amy or Anna) if unable to attend in person; those present will be asked to deliver their report verbally.
- **Barbecue logistics:** Corn, sausages, and buns have been ordered by Gretchen, who will bring them over Thursday; condiment coverage (ketchup, relish, salt) to be confirmed with Gretchen.
- Barbecue is **by donation**; barbecues and corn boilers are needed.
- **Picnic tables:** Currently three confirmed; a fourth was volunteered on the spot by a community member with a truck.

- Proposal raised to **broadcast the AGM via Zoom** (view-only, "more of a television program than a participant") using the new Starlink connection — no objections raised.

Agenda Item: Ratepayers Meeting Planning

- Anna is working with **Darla** to schedule the annual ratepayers meeting; this meeting is **not** the vote on the fire levy — it is solely the annual ratepayers meeting.
- Preferred date: **Labor Day weekend**, chosen to maximize island population attendance.
- Fallback options if Darla is unavailable for Labor Day: **Saturday, August 29**, or a Thursday/Friday in that week.
- Question raised about whether the ratepayers meeting can be **broadcast remotely** (similar to the current meeting setup); Anna confirmed this is feasible if Darla approves it.

Agenda Item: Wharf Parking

- General consensus: **parking at the wharf has not been a significant issue this summer**, attributed largely to residents limiting themselves to **one vehicle per household** and being conscientious about spacing.
- A couple of outstanding parking fee payments remain — some due to lack of awareness, some due to unwillingness to pay.
- **Decision: Table formal parking policy changes** until the June meeting of next year, when there will be a clearer picture of whether the issue has returned.
- **Immediate follow-up:** Amy and Anna to check in with Anne (the fee collection contact) to get a clearer picture of payment compliance.
- Discussion of **long-term parking** by people who visit infrequently (e.g., summer-only boat visitors leaving vehicles at the wharf): Anne noted there is no practical way to police this.
- Suggestion raised to designate a **long-term parking zone** further from the port, similar to what some East End fishermen already do informally.
- Practical note shared: parking on grass or lawn over winter is significantly better for vehicle longevity than leaving vehicles at the saltwater wharf.
- **Parking Reminders:** the limit is one vehicle per household; when parking, please do so with others in mind and maximize available space

Garbage Reminders

- **Broken glass / sharp items in ferry garbage:** Reminder to double-wrap anything sharp before sending garbage off-island, as many people handle it between the house and the mainland dumpster.

- **Beach garbage:** The specific area of issue noted is Roger's Point. While the transgressors appear to be visitors/'boat tourists,' residents are asked to consider that visible garbage signals to others that littering is acceptable.
- General reminder: **pack it in, pack it out**; take only pictures, leave only footprints.
- **Garbage Runs:** If refuse placed in the dumpsters during garbage runs contains prohibited or incorrectly sorted items, Kirby himself incurs additional costs. This occurred after the season's first junk run. It is suggested that if this recurs, discussion of how to address/prevent may need to be a formal agenda discussion point at a future meeting.

Fire Department Report

- Fire department is still working through their **five-year plan** as requested by MOPC (Municipal/Provincial authority).
- PICA would like to understand **when the fire levy vote will take place** so they can assist with advertising it; Anna to follow up with **Stretch**.
- **Wildland firefighter training** is being lined up pending availability of the wildland fire trainer; timing is before end of the season.
- **15 wildland firefighter suits** have been obtained, along with bags, boots, and other gear; fittings are being done.
- Training is **open to volunteers** who want hands-on participation, not limited only to those receiving equipment.
- Priority context: The community's fire risk priority is **forest/grass fire prevention and response**, not structural firefighting; training direction reflects this.
- **Missing water extinguishers:** Paula is missing four wide water extinguishers that were refilled by Stretch and left for pickup by the fire department. They were likely mixed in during one of our two fire responses this season, and are not individually marked. [If you have inadvertently ended up with any of these extinguishers, please either contact Paula directly or return to Fire Hall.](#)

Harbour Authority Report

- Boom is effectively **paid off and operational**: the final payment to Steel Pro for the boom has been sent!
- **Access/training concern raised:** Who is the designated expert on operating the boom, and who will train others to prevent misuse or damage?
 - Current direction: Anyone needing to use the boom should **contact the Harbor Authority** (e.g., Colin) to ensure proper use.

- **Locking question:** The boom mechanism itself may not be locked, though the generator is stored in a locked shed.
 - Precedent noted: The previous boom mechanism was locked, and that was considered important — it only became locked after it was broken through improper use.
 - **Action:** Take the question of locking the boom mechanism to the Harbor Authority.

Heritage Society Report

- Heritage Society is on the verge of launching a **new interactive website**, built by Dana Moran, described as a "virtual museum."
- Key feature: Users can view historical photos and **submit identifications** of unknown individuals — entering their name, email, who they think the person is, and confidence level; verified IDs will be posted.
- Website will also include **folklore, oral tradition stories**, and expanded content on locations (church, cemetery, lighthouses) beyond what the physical panels can hold.
- Expected to **generate additional community outreach** — people with historical connections to the island have already been reaching out with information.
- **Mi'kmaq territory map** was reported missing from the Heritage Building; it was located during the meeting (found in a downstairs storage area, noted as heavy and requiring assistance to move).
- Proposal raised by Joyce: Move the **Mi'kmaq territory map to the Heritage Society building** — Amy agreed it is a good idea and will put it to a vote at the next regular meeting.
 - Context: The map likely arrived through the school board as part of a curriculum unit on the island's first peoples.
 - **Mi'kmaq history display** is a long-standing curatorial goal: the Mi'kmaq did not settle permanently on the island but were present during fishing and hunting seasons; plans to create a display with artifacts, pictures, and information.
 - Resources available in the Heritage library: a book of Mi'kmaq writings, a book on Mi'kmaq medicine and local plants, and two copies of the written oral history of the first person to overwinter on the island.

Agenda Item: PICA 40th Anniversary Planning

- **PICA was incorporated in 1987** and will turn 40 years old next summer.
- Anna is launching the **PICA 40th Anniversary Planning Committee** and is happy to start as a committee of one, with meetings over the winter to plan events.

- Volunteers who joined the committee during the meeting: **Amy, Paula**, and the **Heritage Society** (represented by Joyce, who noted they would be happy to collaborate).
- Reference made to a past **200th Anniversary island celebration** as a model for the kind of event to aim for.
- Heritage Society's involvement seen as a "lovely collab" — they can research historical content and contribute programming.

Discussion: Cell Service & Connectivity

- **Bell/Virgin/PC Mobile (TELUS) service has degraded significantly** this summer, particularly for Mid-Island and East End users; service dropped to 3G and stayed there.
- Bell is in the process of **shutting down 3G service nationally** (the US completed this a few years earlier); anyone on Bell-network providers (Virgin, PC Mobile, TELUS) is advised to consider switching.
- **Rogers** identified as the primary alternative; multiple anecdotes shared of Rogers users having better service — including at a remote property during the wedding, where the only person with cell service had Rogers.
- At least one community member recently switched to Rogers and reported improved service.
- Technical note: Higher G numbers (4G, 5G) are faster but have **shorter range**, which is a disadvantage for an island that hasn't gotten closer to the shore.
- **Starlink** has also been experiencing difficulties recently — possibly atmospheric; even Starlink users have had service interruptions.
- **Rogers satellite phone option** mentioned: Rogers launched a satellite handset option (~1 year ago); Amy participated in the trial and noted modest improvement; flagged as a potential future option as satellite internet rolls out.
- Agreed priorities: Continued engagement with **MOPC** in pursuit of **reliable Wi-Fi**.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Susan McCallum-Whitcomb **Seconded:** Cameron MacDonald

Vote: all in favour, motion carried