

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

April 17, 2000

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, April 17, 2000, beginning at 5:00 p.m.

Present were:

District #3 - Bruce Morrison
District #4 - John Graham MacInnes, Warden
District #5 - Gerald Sampson
District #6 - Lawrence Barron
District #7 - David Donovan
District #8 - Robert MacLellan

Also present were:

Brian Trask, CAO
Heather MacLean, Recording Secretary

Absent were:

District #1 - Gerald Yetman, Deputy Warden
District #2 - Shane Toms

CALL TO ORDER

Warden MacInnes called the meeting to order.

AGENDA

The agenda was presented for approval. The following additions were made to the agenda:

- Verbal Report - RITC
- Removal of Satellite Court, Ingonish

It was decided to proceed with presentations and then follow the agenda as outlined.

It was moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Morrison, that the agenda be approved with the noted amendments. Motion carried.

NORTH HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY MUSEUM

Courtesy of Council was extended to Heather Morrison and David Rasmussen, North Highlands Community Museum.

Ms. Morrison advised that the North Highlands Community Museum has been in operation under the guidance of an 8 member Board of Directors for the past 21 years. It is located on the Cabot Trail in Cape North. The purpose of the Museum is to help preserve the history of the area of Cape North and vicinity in the following ways:

- collect and compile historical data
- obtain and restore artifacts
- maintain and operate the museum buildings
- promote local and national interest in the history of our area

They are now in the process of undertaking an ambitious project - an extension to the building and washroom facilities and the hiring of a full-time coordinator. Ms. Morrison advised that they are requesting financial assistance from the Municipality in the amount of \$10,000 annually. Obtaining this funding from the Municipality will enable them to approach other levels of government, etc. for funding.

Ms. Morrison indicated that the additional space and full-time coordinator will allow them to provide a more consistent program and permit year around access to the public.

Mr. Rasmussen that this project would be inconceivable without financial support from the County. It is their overall goal to become self-sustaining and are seeking assistance from the County until they reach this point. The Board of Directors is confident that the timing is right to proceed with this project.

It was moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that the financial request from the North Highlands Community Museum be referred to budget talks. Motion carried.

Ms. Morrison and Mr. Rasmussen were extended a vote of thanks and left at this time.

PROPOSED MUSSEL FARM - ST. ANN'S BAY

Warden MacInnes advised that Russell and Scott Dockendorff, Harold Montgomery and Angelo Spinazzola, are on the agenda to make presentations regarding the proposed mussel farm for St. Ann's Bay and he extended to courtesy of Council to Russell and Scott Dockendorff, Bounty Bay Fisheries Inc.

Mr. Dockendorff indicated that his company, Bounty Bay Fisheries Inc., in association with 5M Aqua Farms Ltd., are seeking government approval to obtain water leases to develop mussel farm sites in St. Ann's Bay. The area in question is approximately 1,200 acres. If approved, Mr. Dockendorff indicated that the sites would produce 5 to 6 million pounds annually and there is a plan to locate a processing plant within 2 years as close to the farm site as possible.

The benefits that this mussel farm would offer would be employment of upwards to 75 full-time and seasonal workers, the purchase of materials from local suppliers and an ample supply of mussels.

Mr. Dockendorff advised the meeting on the impact such a farm would have. The sites would be submerged several feet under the water and the only visible signs would be the four (4) perimeter markers which would outline the area of the site. Navigation should not be impeded or prohibited. From studies done on other mussel farm sites, there is no evidence to indicate any negative ecological impact.

Mr. Dockendorff indicated that there are a number of rumors circulating about Bounty Bay and he indicated that they are not an Irving owned company; they receive no government financing other than the type that any business can receive; they will not be transporting the mussels from St. Ann's Bay to PEI for processing; and their plants in PEI are not working under capacity as rumored.

Mr. Dockendorff indicated that a promise has been made to locate a processing plant in Richmond County, however, St. Ann's Bay plans are separate from this.

Mr. Dockendorff answered various questions addressed to him from members of the public in the audience regarding the wages that would be paid to workers, harvesting methods, and environmental monitoring. Discussion took place on the proposed processing plant and whether a guarantee would be provided that it would be built in Victoria County. Mr. Dockendorff indicated that to this point they have not looked for land for a plant. Five (5) acres of land would be required. A 200 X 80 building would be erected. He indicated that as far as guaranteeing, he would put it in writing, as long as the land prices would be fair and reasonable. He also indicated that the company, along with 5M Aqua Farms Ltd., will set up a remedial fund that can be used in the event of any type of emergency situation.

Mr. Dockendorff was questioned on the optimum growing temperature for mussels and indicated that mussel growth would thrive in St. Ann's Bay.

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Some members of the public expressed their concerns on the size of the leases; the fact that the public were uninformed; and the impact such a business would have on the area and its environment.

A public hearing is to be held on the issue on Wednesday, April 19, 2000, at a number of the public suggested that this hearing should be deferred. As a result of what is perceived as a lack of public

information, Catherine Ann Fuller, Development Officer, has set up a public information session to be held at the Gaelic College, St. Ann's, on Tuesday, April 18, 2000.

RECESS

Warden MacInnes announced that Council would recess for 10 minutes.

HAROLD MONTGOMERY

Harold Montgomery, 5M Aqua Farms Ltd., advised that this company is comprised of five (5) local fishermen who first met the Dockendorff's last year when they applied to take over two existing mussel leases. Bounty Bay Fisheries Inc. set up their operation in St. Ann's Bay on the two existing leases and after seeing the operation, approach and professionalism of the company, the 5M company was formed.

5M will farm one-half of the leases being sought. Bounty Bay will purchase the mussels from 5M and provide them with the benefit of their years of mussel farming experience. Mr. Montgomery indicated that they have visited the Dockendorff's operations in PEI, have spoken to their competitors and regulatory people and all speak highly of them and their product. Mr. Montgomery indicated that 5M are pleased to be associated with Bounty Bay Fisheries Inc.

Mr. Montgomery was questioned on the feelings of the local fishermen. He indicated that their appeared to be a split of about ½ in favor of the mussel farm and ½ against. He indicated that the leases would not effect the lobster fishing grounds.

George Dauphney, a worker at Bounty Bay in St. Ann's, expressed the views of the workers and their support for Bounty Bay.

Additional questions were addressed.

ANGELO SPINAZZOLA

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Courtesy of Council was extended to Angelo Spinazzola, a resident of St. Ann's and operator of North River Kayak Tours.

Mr. Spinazzola indicated that he, along with many area residents, knew nothing of the proposed mussel farm operation until about 2 ½ weeks ago when he read it in the Victoria Standard. He expressed concern over the lack of information and the timing for the public hearing into this lease application. He indicated that he had a petition signed by approximately 150 residents of St. Ann's Bay requesting Council's assistance in urging the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, to defer the public hearing for

a period of four months to allow the public more information and time to review this proposal.

Mr. Spinazzola indicated that the public have a right to know the facts and he requested Council to pass a resolution to postpone the public hearing process.

Further discussion and questioning took place.

It was moved by Councillor Barron, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that this matter lie on the table until the next meeting. Motion carried.

All Councillors in attendance felt that they too would like to review all the information received before making any firm decisions, and thus by deferring same to the next meeting, this would give them the time required.

RECESS

Warden MacInnes advised that Council would recess for 5 minutes.

MEETING

It was felt that the remaining agenda business could not be dealt with at this meeting and another meeting would be required. Victoria County Municipal Council will meet on May 1, 2000, at 5:00 p.m.

It was decided to proceed with the Open Period/District Concerns portion of the meeting.

OPEN PERIOD/DISTRICT CONCERNS

Wagmatcook First Nations

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Brian Trask advised that a meeting of the Environmental/Solid Waste Committee and representatives from Wagmatcook First Nations will be held on Monday, May 1, 2000, at 10:30 a.m.

District #6

Councillor Barron presented a resolution regarding the elimination of the Satellite Court Sitings in Ingonish (copy attached).

Councillor Sampson suggested that a paragraph be added indicating the Council's fear that any cost incurred will find their way back (downloaded) to the Municipality.

It was moved by Councillor Barron, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that this resolution be adopted and forwarded as a "Press Release" to the Cape Breton Post, Victoria Standard and the Chronicle Herald. Motion carried.

District #7

Councillor Donovan presented a letter from Kelvin Hussey, President, North of Smokey Economic Development Association (NOSEDA). Due to lack of funding, they have been forced to close their office and lay-off staff. They wish to maintain communication by moving their phone line, fax machine and e-mail account to the North of Smokey Community Network office which will be monitored by a volunteer. They are requesting financial support in the amount of \$500 from the County to assist in transferring the communication equipment.

It was moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that \$500 be approved to assist NOSEDA in relocating their communication equipment as a show of our faith of community economic development in Victoria County. Motion carried.

District #5

Councillor Sampson indicated that the Regional Industrial Training Commission (RITC) has been renamed and it is now the Cape Breton Island Industry Skills Council.

The Council have recently funded an "Open Door to Hospitality Program" for the Baddeck area. Training for tourism counselors will take place from May

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10-12, 2000, and there as spots for students interested in working in the tourism field.

District #3

Councillor Morrison indicated that on the agenda of the UNSM Spring Workshop was the topic "RDA's Under Review". Discussion took place on whether to exercise our option to withdraw from the RDA at year end. It was decided to wait until the provincial budget results are clear.

Councillor Morrison questioned on the tree limbing program within the Village of Baddeck. This program will be advertised and the contact will be Arlene Morrison who will coordinate the work through the Village.

District #5

Councillor Sampson presented Councillors with a copy of an article by Peter O'Brien regarding the recent provincial budget.

Councillor Sampson questioned on the status of the next EMO exercise and the possibility of a mock disaster.

Outreach Worker's Position

Brian Trask read a letter received from Frank Capstick, Department of Community Services, regarding the Outreach Worker's position. Discussion took place on this matter.

District #4

Warden MacInnes presented a request from Hansel McEvoy to attend a Municipal Law Enforcement Officers Association Training Seminar at the Old Orchard Inn from May 9-11, 2000.

Council felt this training seminar was not necessary.

Warden MacInnes indicated that the RCMP Communications that was located in CBRM is to be relocated to Halifax. As there is already a communications centre in Halifax, Council questioned on the possibility of relocating a centre to Baddeck.

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It was moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Morrison, that a letter be forwarded the RCMP requesting that a communications centre and personnel be located in Baddeck. Motion carried.

Inverness, Richmond and Port Hawkesbury are to be contacted for support of this request.

Warden MacInnes expressed concern on the office closures in rural Nova Scotia.

It was moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that a letter be forwarded to Premier John Hamm expressing concern on the cutbacks to the Courts, Departments of Health, Agriculture and Education and the effects the loss of services, jobs, etc. will have in downgrading rural life in Nova Scotia. Motion carried.

District #5

It was moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that a letter be forwarded to the Department of Transportation questioning on the status of the turning lane coming down Kelly's Mountain to New Harris. Motion carried.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, on motion of Councillor Barron, seconded by Councillor MacLellan, the meeting adjourned.

John G. MacInnes, Warden

Brian E. Trask, CAO