

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
February 13, 2012

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, February 13, 2012, beginning at 5:00 p.m. with Warden Bruce Morrison in the Chair.

Present were:

District #1 – Paul MacNeil
District #2 – Keith MacCuspic
District #3 – Bruce Morrison, Warden
District #4 – Merrill MacInnis
District #5 – Fraser Patterson, Deputy Warden
District #6 – Larry Dauphinee
District #7 – David Donovan
District #8 – Johnny Buchanan

Also present were:

Sandy Hudson, CAO
Heather MacLean, Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Warden Morrison called the meeting to order and presented the agenda for approval.

An In Camera meeting is to be added to the agenda.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that the agenda be approved with the noted addition. Motion carried.

BADDECK ACADEMY PRESENTATION

Courtesy of Council was extended to Barb MacDonald, Vice-Principal; Orlynn Somerville, Teacher; Baddeck Academy, and Jonathan Saul, Victoria Highlanders Soccer Coach; who were in attendance concerning the Baddeck Academy Sports Field.

Mrs. MacDonald thanked Council for the opportunity to appear. Council had previously approved funding for the sports field but due to unfortunate circumstances, the funding had to be deferred. She indicated that they are now in the position to offer assurances that the work to the sports field will take place. Last Wednesday at a meeting with the Department of Education official notification was received that this work will take place beginning in the spring of 2012.

As a result, they are requesting Council for funding. If the Municipality wishes to provide funding for something tangible, Mrs. MacDonald indicated that the cost of the fencing for the field included in the breakdown of the tender is \$20,000.00 to \$25,000.00.

Mrs. MacDonald extended a thank you to the Committee who fought hard to have the sports field included in the renovation project. She indicated that in March, 2012, the demolition of the senior high wing of the school will commence with anticipated completion by August, 2012, although this may be optimistic. The sports field project will be a two year project beginning in the spring of 2012. The elementary section of the school will receive a new façade.

Mrs. MacDonald indicated that the Victoria Highlanders Soccer Association also played a huge role in the sports field project and Jonathan Saul outlined his perspective of the project. He advised that he has been searching for this field for over a decade and he indicated that this should fit in nicely with the County's Physical Activity Strategy. The sports field will be a significant asset for economic development also. He advised that he looks forward to seeing the sports field become a reality and can't wait to use it.

Ms. Somerville also expressed total agreement and looked forward to seeing the completed project.

Councillor MacNeil indicated that he is happy to see this project proceed, as he knows first hand how important a sports field is to a community. The field in Iona is an integral part of the community.

Councillor MacCuspic questioned whether there has been any discussion since the provincial cutbacks were announced and Mrs. MacDonald advised that the Department is committed to finishing the project and once a project such as this is begun, it is brought to completion.

Councillor MacInnis also expressed his pleasure on the sports field project and mentioned the commitment of a resident of his district, Stephen MacDermid, who has volunteered significantly in numerous sports over the years.

Councillor Buchanan indicated that as a parent and coach, he will be happy to see the sports field in Baddeck completed so the Baddeck home games will no longer take place in Iona.

Councillor Donovan questioned on the amount of funding being requested and the funding being asked for is the amount that was previously approved and deferred - \$20,000.00.

Councillor Dauphinee indicated that the walking track associated with this project would fit in nicely with the Age-Friendly Communities Program. Deputy Warden Patterson indicated that in consultation with the seniors, a safe place to walk was one of the items suggested.

Whether the walking track area would be lit was questioned. Nova Scotia Power Inc. should be approached in this regard.

Warden Morrison indicated that he looked forward to the field becoming a reality as in the past Baddeck has had to host soccer provincials on the turf field in New Waterford.

It was moved by Councillor MacCuspic, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that \$20,000.00 be approved for the Baddeck Academy Sports Field when required once the final funding commitments are in place from all sources. Motion carried.

A thank you was extended to Council and the representatives were excused at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 30, 2012

The minutes of the January 30, 2012, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of January 30, 2012, be approved as presented. Motion carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Baddeck Library Lease

Councillor Dauphinee questioned on the status of the Baddeck Library Lease Agreement. Sandy Hudson advised the lease has been signed and returned. A meeting will be held in the near future with regard to maintenance concerns at the Baddeck Library.

Iona School

Councillor MacNeil questioned whether the Eastern District Planning Commission had been contacted with regard to the Rankin Memorial School property. They have been contacted, but a report has not been received as yet.

C Difficile Matter

The C Difficile matter has been resolved and the invoice for the costs incurred in the clean up at the Baddeck Municipal Solid Waste Facility site will be forwarded to the Cape Breton Island Housing Authority for payment.

Bicycle Policy Workshop

Deputy Warden Patterson reported on the Bicycle Policy Workshop he attended in Halifax recently.

Environment Act Review

An Environment Act Review session will be held in Sydney on Wednesday, February 15, 2012, at 6:00 p.m. should any Council Member wish to attend.

Alternative Energy Strategy Study

Genivar will be conducting public consultations throughout the County on the Draft Alternative Energy Strategy Study. The locations for the consultations were discussed and it was agreed that 5 sessions in total be held at the following locations: Ingonish, Dingwall, Middle River, Iona and Boularderie.

Electronic Voting

The meeting concerning electronic voting has not been held as yet.

Electoral Boundaries Review Commission

Warden Morrison advised that he attended a rural caucus meeting on Friday past and a discussion was held on the electoral boundaries review. It is a distinct possibility that rural seats will be lost.

A presentation is to be made to the Electoral Boundaries Review Commission and when drafting the presentation consideration is to be given to Section 2(B) of the Act and the presentation be drafted on that basis.

POLICE ADVISORY BOARD PRESENTATION

Courtesy of Council was extended to Kevin Chiasson and Andy Watt, appointed members of the Victoria County Police Advisory Board.

Sandy Hudson advised that last September, Andy Watt and Kevin Chiasson, were appointed to serve on the Police Advisory Board, along with Councillors MacCuspik and Dauphinee. An additional member is to be appointed by the Province, for a total five member Board.

Under the *Police Act*, the Municipality is mandated to establish a Police Advisory Board. The Board members went to a training session in Port Hawkesbury and the feelings with regard to the training were discussed.

The Municipality has yet to call a meeting of the Police Advisory Board. Sandy Hudson advised that there is an exemption under the Act whereby the Municipality can be exempt from having a Police Advisory Board if they can show they have a better established process in place. The Municipality has a good relationship with the RCMP at present and they update Council on a quarterly basis. Whether this would be the case with the establishment of a Police Advisory Board was discussed.

Kevin Chiasson indicated that he is concerned with the happenings in his community and he is willing to do what he can to turn things around and if the Police Advisory Board can assist with this, it is a positive step. He indicated it was encouraging to see the Minister of Justice take a positive role and the RCMP are now more active in the area and positive results are being noticed.

Andy Watt indicated that he felt that the Police Advisory Board can be a positive measure for the Municipality. He advised that the training session attended by the Police Advisory Board members was 70% RCMP, which was disconcerting. He indicated that he did not foresee the RCMP being a member of the Board. The Board can be a way of getting information flowing between the Council, RCMP and community.

Mr. Watt discussed the exemption under the *Police Act* and if a better process is in place an exemption can be requested. He felt it could work either way, with or without the Board. The Police Advisory Board is the go between Council and the RCMP, but it does not prevent Council from direct contact with the RCMP.

Mr. Chiasson felt the Council, RCMP and Police Advisory Board could work together.

Discussion took place as to requests for additional resources from the RCMP and how this would be handled with a Police Advisory Board in place.

The main function of the Police Advisory Board is to provide advice to Council. Mr. Watt read a section of the *Police Act* outlining the requirements.

Whether there were Boards in place in other municipal units was questioned and it was felt it would be beneficial to contact other municipal units to determine if Police Advisory Boards are in place and if so, how they work.

A meeting of the Board should be held to determine how to proceed. Until the provincial appointee is in place, the Board cannot meet, so it is imperative that this appointment be made as soon as possible. A further request will be made to the Minister to make the appointment as soon as possible, to enable the Board process to begin.

Warden Morrison thanked the gentlemen for their attendance and indicated that immediate action to get the Police Advisory Board in place will be commenced and they will be advised when the initial Board meeting is scheduled.

RECESS

Warden Morrison advised that Council would recess for 10 minutes.

TOURISM CAPITAL PROJECTS

Courtesy of Council was extended to Tom Wilson, Director of Tourism and Recreation, who was in attendance to present two Tourism Capital Grant applications for 2011/2012.

The first application was from BABTA for the placement of a Community Identity Sign on the TCH 105 when travelling westerly to Baddeck. In 2011 a sign was placed on the TCH 105 easterly. The project merit was reviewed and the project costs and budget were presented. The funding requested is \$7,137.50.

The second application was from North Highlands Nordic Ski Club for the replacement of a storage shed, fuel tank for the groomer and additional signage on the trails. The budget was presented and the funding being requested is \$2,348.40.

Tom Wilson advised that there is a total of \$15,000.00 in the Tourism Capital Budget and these are the only two applications that have been received.

Discussion took place on Baddeck being the beginning and end of the Cabot Trail and this designation was found in Council minutes in 1938. Sandy Hudson advised that Joan MacInnes could provide a copy of these minutes.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that the Tourism Capital Project applications for BABTA and North Highlands Nordic Ski Club be approved. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST – I-FIT GYMS

Sandy Hudson advised that to date he has received three written Expressions of Interest for the I-Fit Gyms, with phone calls received from another four. It is anticipated that there will be a number of applications by the February 15, 2012, deadline.

TAX SALE

Sandy Hudson advised that there will be a Tax Sale held on March 13, 2012.

APPOINTMENT OF ELECTION OFFICIALS

Sandy Hudson advised that Council must appoint their election officials by March 12, 2012, for the upcoming Municipal and School Board Elections.

During the past two elections, Sandy Hudson has served as Returning Officer and Joan MacInnes, Deputy Returning Officer.

A question was raised as to whether we should advertise these positions or go with the experienced officials.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor MacCuspic, to retain Sandy Hudson as Returning Officer and Joan MacInnes as Deputy Returning Officer for the 2012 Municipal and School Board Elections. Motion carried.

Sandy Hudson advised that he would like to see an enumeration done in May/June for the election.

It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that a County wide enumeration be undertaken for the 2012 Municipal and School Board Election. Motion carried.

VICTORIA COUNTY SCHOLARSHIPS

Sandy Hudson questioned whether Council wished to continue with the scholarships for graduates from Victoria County Schools.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacCuspic, to continue to provide \$500 scholarships for a graduate of each of the three high schools in Victoria County. Motion carried.

I-FIT GYMS

Discussion took place on the I-Fit Gyms and the fact that 4 will be approved in this year and another 4 in next year's budget, so that each district in the County will receive one.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #1

Councillor MacNeil indicated that he has received documentation from VCCAPS regarding online meetings which he will bring to Council at the next meeting.

District #2

Councillor MacCuspig advised that Municipal Staff have initiated a food drive and he felt it would be appropriate that Council contribute also. Boxes have been set up in the Court House to receive non-perishable goods which will be provided monthly, on a rotating basis, to one of the 4 food banks in the County. The other worksites in the Municipality will also participate in this venture.

Council is to be reminded to take in a non-perishable item when they are sent their Council meeting notice.

Councillor MacCuspig indicated that the Middle River School was on the review list, but was given a reprieve by the School Board. He indicated that the concerned parents and citizens put a great deal of time and effort into drafting their report for presentation during the course of the review and he felt that due process should be followed. This is the second time this has happened.

It was moved by Councillor MacCuspig, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that a letter be forwarded to the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board and the Minister of Education expressing concern with the present manner in which the school review takes place and requesting that a proper process be put in place in future that is carried through to completion. Motion carried.

District #4

Councillor MacInnis brought up the matter of public transit for the Municipality and whether it was time to establish a committee to look into this matter.

This is one of the items that was brought forward during the Age-Friendly Committee process and it was felt this is something the Age-Friendly Committee can explore further.

Councillor MacInnis brought up the Right Some Good Food Adventure that will again be taking place this year. Funding is being requested from the Municipality for the Victoria County venues in conjunction with this event. Sandy Hudson advised that he is waiting for further information on this matter as to the number of venues in Victoria County.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that \$1,000.00 be approved for each of the Victoria County venues, pending identification of the sites in Victoria County. Motion carried.

District #8

Councillor Buchanan brought up the matter of the reflectors on South Mountain and areas within the Cape Breton Highlands National Park roadways. The fluorescent strips used look similar to animal eyes and concern has been expressed by travelers in this regard.

It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that a letter be forwarded to the Cape Breton Highlands National Park expressing concern on the reflective markers on their roads. Motion carried.

Councillor Buchanan advised that Corbett Road is located in Dingwall.

District #7

Councillor Donovan questioned whether the Municipality will be applying for student grants under the Canada Summer Jobs 2012 program. Applications will be submitted prior to the deadline.

Councillor Donovan questioned on a Derelict Vehicle Program for the County and whether application was submitted to the RRFB for this program. Robert Dauphinee is to be requested to investigate this matter.

Councillor Donovan questioned on the Municipality's agreement with the SPCA as a result of the recent problems with the Cape Breton SPCA. Sandy Hudson advised that the monthly funding was withheld, but now that the problems seem to be resolved, the monies owing will be forwarded.

Councillor Donovan advised that the halibut fishermen of 4VN are looking for equal sharing of the quota and will be meeting with the Minister of Fisheries in Ottawa in this regard. There are approximately 200 license holders in Victoria County and they are looking for assistance of up to \$500.00 to draft a report for submission.

It was moved by Councillor Donovan, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that up to \$500.00 be approved for the Victoria County halibut fishermen in 4VN to assist with drafting their report. Motion carried.

District #6

Councillor Dauphinee indicated that he was approached by the Northeast Highlands Chamber of Commerce with regard to planning and zoning in the Municipality. At present the only are with zoning is the Baddeck Municipal Planning Area.

Whether there would be interest and how this process could be started was discussed. If it should be the County as a whole or a more populated area such as Ingonish was questioned.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacCuspig, that the Eastern District Planning Commission be approached to explore the possibility of introducing planning in the County. Motion carried.

District #3

It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that a letter be forwarded to the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal requesting that they investigate the installation of a four-way stop for the intersection of Jones/MacLeod Street, Baddeck. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison again brought up Emera and the profits made by the company this past year. They have laid off 40 staff and have raised power rates by 10%. There have been no decreases to the bonuses received by their senior staff. This is unacceptable.

It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacCuspig, that a letter be forwarded to the Utility and Review Board questioning how the 10% rate increase can be justified when Emera has record profits, is laying off staff and is not decreasing the bonuses received by management. Motion carried.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETINGS

The next meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council will be held on February 27, 2012. This session will be devoted to economic development with presentations by the Office of Economic and Rural Development; NEDAC; ECBC; and Nona MacDermid.

The March meetings will be held on March 12, 2012 and March 26, 2012. Ambrose White, Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board, will be in attendance at that meeting. Parks Canada has also been invited to attend this meeting. The Gaelic Council of Nova Scotia and CBCEDA and possibly LFA27 will be in attendance at the March 26, 2012, session.

IN CAMERA

It was moved by Councillor Donovan, seconded by Deputy Warden Patterson, to move In Camera. Motion carried.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, to return to the regular session. Motion carried.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, on motion of Councillor Donovan, the meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Bruce Morrison, Warden

Sandy Hudson, CAO

