

**VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL**  
*August 11, 2014*

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, August 11, 2014, beginning at 5:00 p.m. with Warden Bruce Morrison in the Chair.

Present were:

District #1 – Paul MacNeil  
District #2 – Athol Grant  
District #3 – Bruce Morrison, Warden  
District #4 – Merrill MacInnis  
District #5 – Fraser Patterson, Deputy Warden  
District #6 – Larry Dauphinee  
District #7 – Wayne Budge  
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.

The following items were added to the agenda:

- Ivany Report on Economic Development
- Protected Areas Presentation
- Highland Manor
- Electoral Boundary Review

**It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Grant, that the agenda be approved with the noted additions. Motion carried.**

**HELIPAD REQUEST**

Courtesy of Council was extended to Gordon MacIver who was in attendance concerning the helipad at the Department of Natural Resources Depot.

Mr. MacIver thanked Council for the opportunity to appear and indicated that the paving of the Baddeck helipad was not completed last year as planned due to a couple of issues and he explained these issues to Council.

When the DNR pad was laid, it was laid at ground level rather than it being below ground level by 3 ½ inches. This resulted in additional gravel being required to bring it to ground level to allow the asphalt to be level with the top of the pad. The harsh winter also contributed to the problem. These two issues and the cost of inflation have resulted in the additional cost of \$3,825.00. This amount is required to complete the helipad.

The Victoria County Memorial Hospital Trust Fund has committed an additional \$1,500.00 for the project and the amount of \$2,325.00 is being requested from Council to complete the project.

Mr. MacIver indicated that this information was only recently received and was unknown at the time of the Municipality's deadline for funding requests.

Discussion took place. Mr. MacIver requested that a County representative be available to meet with the air flight representatives and paving company to ensure this project is completed as required.

**It was moved by Councillor Budge, seconded by Deputy Warden Patterson, that the Municipality provide \$2,325.00 as requested for the completion of the Baddeck helipad. Motion carried.**

### **NEIL'S HARBOUR WATER**

Sandy Hudson provided an overview of the Neil's Harbour Water Utility. The water supply is a surface water supply coming from Trout Brook. There are limitations to the amount of water that can be withdrawn from the brook, as well as limitations on the amount of water that can be treated. There were capacity issues in July that were monitored and controlled.

Mr. Hudson indicated that the Department of Environment want to move away from surface water sources to groundwater sources and this is an issue for consideration.

A double treatment regime can be completed on the existing system that will have dual filtration. This would be 98% more efficient than what we have now, but would still be a surface water system.

Work has been done to identify a groundwater source however the wells drilled to date proved to have insufficient capacity or the one that did have the capacity contained high uranium levels.

Earth Water Concepts have plotted some other potential places in the area where there might be water sources. They are proposing to drill 6 wells at a cost of up to \$200,000 if all wells are necessary. If sufficient water is found in the first few wells, additional wells will not be required, decreasing this cost.

The water usage at the Victoria Co-op Fisheries Plant was discussed. They are the largest user on the system. A new meter will be installed at the top of the hill to ensure that all water used by the plant is captured and paid for.

The cost of a second tower was questioned. This would be in the vicinity of \$100,000 and \$150,000, but this would not solve the problem, as there would have to be a regular turnover of water in the tower and this would only be during the summer months. The remainder of the year the water capacity would not be required.

The possibility of desalination of the sea water was questioned. This would provide an unlimited water supply.

Both Highland Manor and Buchanan Memorial Hospital are on the system and are a priority.

Councillor Budge indicated that area on the lower side of the road past his residence is always wet and he felt this area should be investigated for a possible water source.

**It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that the possibility of identifying and drilling for a new groundwater source for the Neil's Harbour Water Utility be further investigated. Motion carried.**

**It was moved by Councillor Budge, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that Victoria Co-op Fisheries be contacted for funding to assist with the groundwater source. Motion carried.**

Sandy Hudson advised that funding for this initiative will be investigated through PCAP, other government sources and with Victoria Co-op Fisheries. Desalination of sea water will also be investigated.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JULY 21, 2014**

The minutes of the July 21, 2014, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

**It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of July 21, 2014, be approved as presented. Motion carried.**

#### **BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

##### **Victoria County Water Utility**

Robert Dauphinee, Director of Public Works, and Leanne MacLellan, Director of Finance, are to be included on the agenda of the next meeting of Council to discuss the Victoria County Water Utility.

**Open Fire Burning**

The open fire burning issue brought up at the last Council meeting was discussed.

Two copies of Open Fire Burning By-Laws in other municipalities were received and will be reviewed.

**It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Deputy Warden Patterson, that a representative from the Department of Natural Resources be requested to come to Council to discuss the open fire burning issue. Motion carried.**

**Meeting – Minister of TIR**

Warden Morrison indicated that the meeting held with the Minister of TIR went very well and he suggested that a letter of thanks be forwarded to the Minister and his staff for attending the meeting with Council.

The idea to get together on a grander scale with regard to the upgrading of the Cabot Trail over a five year period was discussed. Council was impressed that the Minister brought up this issue. Now that it is on the radar, it was felt that work should continue to get this initiative rolling.

It was felt that Council should host a meeting in October/November to work on this initiative. All Council will be involved, as well as government departments, Inverness County, etc.

**WILDERNESS PROTECTED AREAS**

Councillor Grant provided a presentation on Wilderness Protected Areas and the effect they have on local economies and the impact on Wilderness Area use by Nova Scotians (copy attached).

Forty percent of the land mass of Victoria County is within the existing and proposed Parks and Protected areas. This effects economic development.

Mr. Grant outlined problems with previous designated areas within Northern Cape Breton, with public input on the proposed new protected areas and with the language of the *Wilderness Areas Protection Act*.

Discussion took place on this matter.

Councillor Grant felt a resolution should be forwarded to the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities for consideration.

**It was moved by Councillor Grant, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that representatives from the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities and the Nova Scotia Government undertake discussions on the *Wilderness Areas Protection Act*, regarding ways to minimize economic impacts on rural communities and resolve issues arising from the 1998 designations and the language of the *Act* and that this resolution be forwarded to the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities for consideration. Motion carried.**

### **DISTRICT CONCERNS**

#### **District #2**

Councillor Grant indicated that Stephen MacDonald, Area Manager, TIR, has advised that the traffic study for the area at Tim Horton's is now in and he will review and advise.

#### **District #1**

Councillor MacNeil requested a copy of the PowerPoint presentation that was provided at the meeting with the Minister of TIR.

The CAO advised it would be provided when received from TIR.

Councillor MacNeil brought up the application to designate the Gillis Point Lighthouse as a heritage site. He questioned whether Council could do anything to expedite this situation.

Joan MacInnis may be able to provide contacts as she has assisted with St. Paul's Lighthouse and Neil's Harbour Lighthouse designations in the past.

Councillor MacNeil requested that a letter of congratulations be sent to Vince MacLean on the recent launch of his book – *These Were My People: An Anecdotal History of Washabuck*.

#### **District #4**

Councillor MacInnis requested an update on the two unsightly premises in his district – Plaster Park and a property on Highway 312 at River Bennett.

The CAO will contact the Eastern District Planning Commission for an update.

Councillor MacInnis felt that in terms of economic development, he felt it would be beneficial if each of the Councillors bring one business leader from their district to attend a meeting and obtain their input on how to proceed.

Councillor MacInnis also mentioned that last year Council agreed to have a presence at Celtic Colour events and Councillors should sign up to join the volunteer group.

Councillor MacInnis advised that last year a welcoming party was held in Indian Brook for all newcomers to District #4 and it proved to be very successful. He encouraged all Councillors to keep this on the radar for their districts this year.

**District #8**

Councillor Buchanan questioned if a follow up is being done with regard to the recent cell phone coverage announcement.

The CAO advised that he is working on this matter and outlined the contacts he has made to date.

Councillor Buchanan indicated that the two RCMP houses in the northern area appear to be vacant.

Staff Sgt. Craig Yorke recently visited the CAO's office and advised that the Victoria County District is at full strength and a new member to assist with the Safer Communities initiative has been funded by the Province to assist with community policing.

Councillor Buchanan brought forward a request from the North Highlands Community Centre requesting funding for housing their artifact collection. The initial letter of December, 2013, was not referred to budget and the recent follow up letter is to be deferred until next year's budget.

**District #6**

Councillor Dauphinee requested that the snow removal tender for the Ingonish Beach Sidewalks be advertised this month.

**District #5**

**It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that \$1,071.76 be approved from the District #5 budget to the Ross Ferry Volunteer Fire Department for grant top-up and \$5,000.00 be approved from the District #5 budget for the Ross Ferry Stewardship Society to assist with wharf repairs. Motion carried.**

**RECESS**

Warden Morrison advised that Council would recess for 10 minutes.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Former Rankin School Property**

The CAO provided an update on the former Rankin School property at Iona. Lawrence MacKinnon has a well and septic on the property but no registered easement. The Municipality wishes to convey their property to the CBVRSB to allow them to sell the whole property and reclaim some of the money they spent demolishing the school building. The Municipality would like to stipulate that the CBVRSB provide written access to Mr. MacKinnon to protect his water and sewer system.

Councillor MacNeil questioned if the Municipality could provide this access prior to conveying the property to the CBVRSB.

The most appropriate course of action was discussed and Councillor MacNeil indicated that he wished to talk to Lawrence MacKinnon on this matter and he will bring this matter up again at the next session of Council on August 25, 2014, for a resolution of this matter.

**Electric Car Charging Stations**

The two electric car charging stations to be located in Victoria County were discussed.

**It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that the charging stations be located at Baddeck and Cape North. Motion carried.**

**Easement - Paul and Randall MacDonald, St. Margaret's Village.**

Sometime ago the Municipality approve an easement over municipal property for residents of MacDonald Road in St. Margaret's Village, but at the time Paul and Randall MacDonald were not included in the easement.

**It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor Budge, that pending the Solicitors recommendation, Paul and Randall MacDonald be added as parties to the easement over municipal property at MacDonald Road, St. Margaret's Village. Motion carried.**

**Victoria County Home Support Society**

Warden Morrison declared conflict and left the meeting.

A letter was received from Ruth Morrison, Agency Director, Victoria County Home Support Agency, advising that the Department of Health and Wellness has set the median rate for direct service hours for home care at \$51.18. At present, Victoria County Home Support direct service hour rate is \$59.33 per hour. This will result in a shortfall in the home support budget of \$238,116.

The Victoria County Home Support Agency is working to see if this funding can be reinstated and were providing this information to Council for information only.

**It was moved by Councillor Budge, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that a letter be forwarded to Ruth Morrison advising that her letter was tabled at Council and Council is prepared to provide a letter of support if requested. Motion carried.**

Warden Morrison returned to the meeting.

### **IVANY REPORT**

Deputy Warden Patterson brought up the Ivany Report and the recent closure of two businesses in Victoria County. Between the two businesses, 30 jobs were lost and the impact this has on a rural area is like the loss of 1300 jobs to HRM.

He felt Council should come forward with a stronger voice. We cannot sit back. A meeting on the Ivany Report was to have been held in June and it did not happen. All of our economy is in jeopardy and Council has a responsibility to do something about it and work on doing something should commence soon.

If this was an Economic Development Committee issue or all of Council issue was questioned and it was felt that it was too important not to be a Council issue. Council does not have a lot of power, but it does have influence and it should use this influence to see what can be done.

Whether it would be appropriate to wait until an Economic Development Officer (EDO) was hired was questioned. It was felt Council should come up with things for an EDO to work on when hired.

It was felt that our local MLA and MP should step up on this matter and Council should push them to get involved.

Warden Morrison presented an update on the status of the REN. A meeting will be held on August 26, 2014 to hopefully have the contract finalized and the REN established. The working relationship with the Cape Breton Partnership and the Cape Breton Small Business Centre will also be determined at that time. Once this is in place, an advertisement will be posted for an EDO for Victoria County.

Councillor MacNeil, Chair of the Economic Development Committee, advised that a meeting of the Committee will be held on August 21, 2014, and this can be a starting point. All Councillors are invited to the meeting.

### **HIGHLAND MANOR**

Elmoune MacKinnon brought up the matter of Highland Manor as to how it is governed, what role the Municipality plays, what role the Province plays, the authority of the Board of Directors and whether Council as a whole are aware of the operation of Highland Manor.

Highland Manor is a Municipal Housing Corporation with their own Instrument of Incorporation and their own by-laws. They have a Board of Directors that consists of four Council members and three lay members. The Municipality does not provide any funding to the operation of the Manor.

Mr. MacKinnon questioned on who hires the Administrator for Highland Manor and he was advised that the Board of Directors, Department of Health, and the Solicitor are involved in the hiring process. He questioned on whether minutes of Board meetings were kept and if Council received minutes of the Board meetings. He was advised that minutes used to be provided at one time but are not at present. He questioned why an annual report was not provided to Council. The financial statements of Highland Manor are received by the Municipality annually.

He questioned on the recent advertisement for the Administrator position and why it was not published in the *Victoria Standard*. He asked who the applications were to be directed to and was advised it was to Highland Manor's solicitor, Conrad LeBlanc.

Mr. LeBlanc will be contacted to advertise the Administrator position in the *Victoria Standard* and Warden Morrison advised that they appreciated Mr. MacKinnon's comments on this matter.

### **ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES REVIEW**

Sandy Hudson advised that as Council has now had time to review his report on the Electoral Boundaries and Number of Councillors, he questioned on how they wished to proceed.

Five options were provided for consideration. Whether further public comments should be requested was discussed. The final report is to be provided to the Utility and Review Board by the end of December, 2014. It was felt that one meeting should be held in the northern area and one meeting in the southern area of the County.

**It was moved by Councillor Budge, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that a public consultation meeting on the Electoral Boundary Review be held in the northern area and the southern area of the County. Motion carried.**

Council will decide on the most appropriate option based on the public consultation.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **CHARTING THE COURSE – AGE FRIENDLY CONNECTION CONFERENCE**

The Age-Friendly Communities Advisory Committee is hosting a provincial conference on September 12, 2014, entitled – Charting the Course: Age Friendly Connections. The conference is the first provincial age friendly conference and will be held at the Inverary Resort, Baddeck.

Each Council member is to provide the name of a senior in their district that will be invited to attend this conference. The names are to be provided by August 25, 2014.

Funding for the conference has been received from the Department of Seniors and it should prove to be an excellent conference.

Warden Morrison congratulated Deputy Warden Patterson and the Planning Committee on the work done in planning this event.

### **PHYSICIAN RECRUITMENT**

Warden Morrison advised that the Physician Recruitment Committee has been actively meeting and he and a local group had the opportunity to take a possible candidate to dinner on Saturday night past.

The incentives that Council could provide were discussed and what is being offered in other areas was questioned.

The candidate they took to dinner has to make a decision by October on where to locate and work should be done to see what incentives can be offered.

Jim Merkley, CBDHA, will be attending the next Council meeting and a discussion on what incentives are possible will be held at the time.

The CAO advised that the *Municipal Government Act* comes into play in this matter also.

### **ADJOURN**

**There being no further business, on motion of Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor Budge, the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.**

**Bruce Morrison, Warden**

**Sandy Hudson, CAO**

