

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
November 3, 2014

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, November 3, 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.

It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Grant, that the agenda be approved as presented. Motion carried.

PORT HAWKESBURY PAPER

Warden Morrison extended the courtesy of Council to Port Hawkesbury Paper representatives, Andrew Fedora, Marc Dube and Foncie Farrell.

Andrew Fedora presented a PowerPoint presentation on woodlands activities and operations (copy attached).

Port Hawkesbury Paper manages 522,000 hectares (\$1.29 million acres) in eastern Nova Scotia and Cape Breton. 110,496 hectares (272,925 acres) are located within Victoria County. Of the 110,496, there are 44,979 hectares located in the protected area and the percentage of protected lands is 40.7%. He provided maps outlining the protected and special management areas in Victoria County.

A map showing the Crown Harvest Areas for 2015 in Victoria County was presented. 3100 hectares is planned to be harvested and it is anticipated that 60% will be harvested. Harvest methods include group and single tree selection, partial cut, commercial thinning and clearcut.

Mr. Fedora outlined the planned Crown silviculture for the 2015 season in Victoria County. Planting of 500,000 trees (white, red and black spruce) is planned. Manual weeding of 200 hectares is anticipated. There has been no herbicide since 1997. 300 hectares of Site Prep will be completed and 150 hectares will have release spacing done.

Mr. Fedora outlined the Forest Advisory Committee and its makeup. The Committee has been in existence for 10 years and they themselves decide on who sits on the Committee. If anyone is interested in serving on this committee they can make application to the Committee.

There is a leasing program offered across Port Hawkesbury Paper Forest Management Area. Troy Jessome is the contact. Comprehensive woodland management services and competitive stumpage rates are provided.

He outlined the LIDAR Pilot Project that was conducted on 50 km² (5000 hectares) area in the Highlands (Bell Lakes). Leading edge geomatics were used and the area was flown on July 26, 2014. There were 7 calibration plots cruised July 30, 2014. Deliverable 1 – Surface Images was provided on September 22, 2014 and Deliverable 2 – Inventory Data was provided on September 30, 2014.

Mr. Fedora presented maps indicating the LIDAR Study Area, the hillshade, unmapped streams, and contours. LIDAR data inventory attributes included:

- Merchantable Tree Height (m)
- Average Tree Height (m)
- Basal area (m²/ha)
- Quadratic Mean DBH 9 (cm)
- Merchantable QMDBH (cm)
- Merchantable Stems/ha
- Gross Total Volume (m³/ha)
- Gross Merchantable Volume (m³/ha)
- Base to Live Crown (m)
- Diameter Distributions

Mr. Fedora concluded by saying that Port Hawkesbury Paper is the largest industrial employer in Cape Breton and produces super calendared paper and manages over 500,000 hectares of Crown land. The value of the output exceeds \$170 million. There is an estimated 1,100 full-time equivalent jobs and the GDP is over \$112 million. The income is double the average industrial wage in Nova Scotia and tax revenue is \$23 million annually.

Marc Dube provided an overview of the 2nd year of operations. The company is profitable and many things have been accomplished. They have a no loss safety record, with very few incidents. Their absentee rate is 2.3% and they are producing quality paper and new grades used for magazines such as People, Outdoor Life, etc.

Port Hawkesbury Paper has partnered with 90 scientists to work on improvements in energy and environment. They have also partnered with the Mi'kmaq through an Impact Benefit Agreement and it is working well.

On the forestry side \$14 million is generated by forest contractors. There are 4500 working in the forest. The biomass fuel for the Nova Scotia Power Boiler was outlined.

A question was raised on the pollution comparison between the Pictou Plant and Port Hawkesbury Paper. Port Hawkesbury Paper is first class in this line. They are equal or better than any other Mill in North America.

Whether wood collected at our Waste Facility would be good for selling to the biomass plant was discussed. Pressure treated wood and painted wood would not be acceptable, but all other wood could be used.

What Victoria County could do for Port Hawkesbury Paper was questioned. Mr. Dube indicated that as they move forward, they are coming out to obtain support. They want things to happen and the company to expand and create new jobs.

Foncie Farrell indicated that there is more private wood in Victoria County. Their scale house is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The spruce budworm is coming back and should reappear in Nova Scotia in the next 3 to 5 years.

It was questioned if there was a limit to the private wood that Port Hawkesbury Paper takes. There is no limit, if not enough is obtained; it has to be purchased elsewhere.

The clay used in the paper making process is shipped from Brazil

Port Hawkesbury Paper is doing a lifecycle analysis of every aspect of the mill operation. This information will be put in a big model and this is the environmental footprint of the mill. They will measure their own results annually and by mid-December, they should be ready to share information with the public.

Further discussion took place and Warden Morrison extended a vote of thanks to Mr. Fedora, Mr. Dube, and Mr. Farrell for their presentation.

RECESS

Warden Morrison announced that Council would recess for five minutes.

BADDECK EMPLOYMENT AND RESOURCE CENTRE

Courtesy of Council was extended to Melanie Garland, Baddeck Employment and Resource Centre.

Mrs. Garland indicated that the Centre is in its 12th year of providing client-centred employment assisted services to the residents of Victoria County. She has been employed at the Centre for the past 8 years.

The Baddeck Employment Resource Centre is a Career Resource Centre administered by the Department of Labour and Advanced Education's Employment Nova Scotia Division. It is directed and managed by the Northside Economic Development Assistance Corporation (NEDAC).

Mrs. Garland outlined the mandated services of the Centre and additional services that the Centre provides. She indicated that in 2013, 2,367 signed in to use services, and 14 Skills Development Applications, 18 Start Applications, and 1 Job Creation Partnership (JCP) application were submitted.

Mrs. Garland indicated that a pilot project is underway to certify 50 Career Development Practitioners in Nova Scotia through the Nova Scotia Career Development Association (NSCAD). She is enrolled in this program and advised what it entails.

The Baddeck Employment and Resource Centre have a new location – 503 Chebucto Street, Chebucto Place, Baddeck. She advised that the new space is a great location. It is centrally located, with ample parking. The building is more accessible and spacious and offers privacy for the clients.

She outlined that there is surplus space (430 sq. ft.) with a separate entrance, which includes a partitioned office area that is partially furnished. This area increases the rent by \$300 per month, a cost that is not budgeted for in the current contract which expires in June 2015. She suggested entering a partnership with the Municipality. She is requesting the Municipality consider a \$300.00 monthly contribution until the current contract expires. This area could be utilized for municipal workshops, meetings, projects, etc. and she felt this would be a win-win for both the Centre and the Municipality.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that \$300.00 be approved for the Baddeck Employment and Resource Centre for the period from October, 2014, to June, 2015, for County use of the surplus space at the Centre. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison extended a thank you to Melanie Garland for her presentation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – OCTOBER 20, 2014

The minutes of the October 20, 2014, 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 October 20, 2014, be approved as presented. Motion carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Scotian Windfields Inc.

The date of the public information session hosted by Scotian Windfields Inc. has been changed to November 18, 2014.

Barra Glen Road

Councillor MacNeil indicated the TIR removed the beaver dam on the Barra Glen Road, but the beavers remain, and two days later the dam was back blocking half of the road.

It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Budge, that a letter be forwarded to DNR requesting something be done with regard to the beavers on the Barra Glen Road. Motion carried.

Victoria County Property Tax Arrears

At the last meeting, Councillor Grant brought up a number of questions with regard to tax collections and arrears.

The CAO provided the answers to the questions (copy attached), realizing that it was a great deal of information to absorb. Council were asked to review the document and a further discussion will be held at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Build Canada Fund

Sandy Hudson advised that the deadline for applications for the New Building Canada Fund – Small Communities Fund is midnight on December 19, 2014. Priority projects must fall

within the eligible project categories and can be initiated within the next 3 fiscal years (15/16, 16/17, or 17/18).

The infrastructure priorities were discussed. Bay St. Lawrence Water and the extension of the Dingwall Water System to Cape North are the top two priorities. Other projects are on the list not prioritized.

The list of proposed infrastructure projects is to be re-circulated for review at a future meeting.

Federal Gas Tax Program

Sandy Hudson presented the Municipal Funding Agreement (MFA) as prescribed under the new Canada/Nova Scotia Administrative Agreement on the Federal Gas Tax Fund 2014-2024. In order for the Municipality to participate in this program, the agreement must be executed by the Municipality and forwarded to Municipal Affairs.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that the Municipal Funding Agreement for the Federal Gas Tax Program 2014-2024 be approved and executed on behalf of the Municipality. Motion carried.

Three Year Cost Share Agreement for Subdivision Streets

The current three year agreement for the paving of subdivision streets expires March 31, 2015. A new three year agreement must be entered into with the Minister of TIR in order to continue this program.

Even though the Municipality does not have any subdivision streets, it was recommended that the document should be executed. There is no cost to the Municipality if they do not use this agreement.

It was moved by Councillor Grant, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that the Three Year Cost Share Agreement for Subdivision Road be executed on behalf of the Municipality. Motion carried.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #1

Councillor MacNeil brought forward a concern with regard to a bent water shut off at 22 Route 223, Ottawa Brook.

It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that this matter be referred to the Department of Public Works. Motion carried.

District #2

Councillor Grant presented a re-drafted resolution concerning Wilderness Protected Areas.

A resolution was previously forwarded to the UNSM Resolutions Committee but was not supported. Councillor Grant indicated he would like to continue to try to get this resolution passed and was advised that the Municipality can present a motion from the floor.

It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that Councillor Grant be authorized to present the motion supported by Council concerning Wilderness Protected Areas at the UNSM. Motion carried.

Councillor Grant congratulated Alicia Lake, who was in attendance, on being hired as the PAN Cape Breton Food Network Coordinator. This is a two year term position and will be located out of Baddeck.

District #4

Councillor MacInnis questioned on the contractor's use of former North Shore School property. Sandy Hudson advised that he has been in contact with Stephen MacDonald, TIR, and the contractor will clean up the property.

Councillor MacInnis showed Council a Garden Boost product made in Souris, PEI, from lobster shells. He felt something similar is possible in Victoria County and felt a Committee should be set up to look into this matter.

Council suggested that Councillor MacInnis, Osbourne Burke, Alice Lake, Councillor Buchanan, Marc Dube and a representative from the Ecology Action Centre, investigate this issue.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Grant, that Councillors MacInnis and Buchanan be appointed to the Committee to investigate the development of a product using lobster shells. Motion carried.

Councillor MacInnis congratulated Councillor Grant on a successful Newcomers Welcoming party he hosted in Middle River on November 1, 2014. Approximately 150 people attended and it was well received.

Councillor MacInnis indicated he has held a newcomers welcoming function the past two years in his district with great success and he encouraged other Council members to do so also.

District #8

Councillor Buchanan questioned on whether anything was received from ACOA with regard to cell coverage. Sandy Hudson indicated that a reply is not expected until December.

Councillor Buchanan brought forward a concern with regard to bussing in the northern area of the County.

It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor Budge, that Colleen MacMullin and Paul Oldford, CBVRSB, be requested to attend a meeting concerning the bussing situation to Cabot High as soon as possible. Motion carried.

District #7

Councillor Budge again brought up the matter of a water supply for the Neil's Harbour/New Haven Enviro-Depot.

The status of the cleanup at the sewage lagoon in Cape North was questioned. Good progress has been made and an extension has been requested by Island Vacuum. Sandy Hudson advised that our Solicitor has written a letter questioning on the status of the cleanup project.

District #3

Deputy Warden Patterson assumed the Chair.

Warden Morrison advised that the Baddeck Christmas Parade will be held on November 29, 2014, and requested Councillors to attend if possible. It was felt that the theme should be in keeping with the clear bag collection initiative. Jocelyn Bethune is to be asked to assist in organizing the County's participation in the parade.

It was felt that promotional material should be obtained for events, such as pull up cylinder banners, 12 foot banners, and written promotional materials.

It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that we move forward with advertising and marketing initiatives through our Communications Officer. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison again brought up the dangerous conditions that exist at the Irving/Tim Horton's on the TCH outside of Baddeck.

It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that Irving Oil, Department of TIR, RCMP and Tim Horton's be requested to come to Council to address the serious traffic concerns at the Irving/Tim Horton's on TCH 105 west of Baddeck. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison returned to the Chair.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Alternate Energy Committee

Councillor Grant indicated that nothing much has been done since the meeting with the Minister in Halifax in July and he felt that it was worthwhile continuing to pursue obtaining land from DNR. The possibility of purchasing or trading for Crown land was discussed. There is an area in Little River that the County owns that DNR are interested in obtaining.

Councillor Grant indicated that some of the Committee members visited an old turbine site in the Highlands that is no longer in operation. The turbine tower is in good shape and the possibility of locating a small turbine on the existing tower was discussed. He requested permission to approach NSPI to see if this tower could be used for a small turbine, and if they have no objection, to proceed to have an engineer look at this tower.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that the Alternate Energy Committee and/or Chair negotiate with NSPI on the possibility of locating a small turbine on an existing tower in the Highlands. Motion carried.

Council was advised that the location of a test turbine at the Barra Strait is getting closer to becoming a reality.

Age-Friendly Committee

Deputy Warden Patterson advised that an Age-Friendly Committee meeting was held with Chris Prentice. Mr. Prentice obtained more information, met with additional residents and will be presenting the finalized Transit Business Plan in the near future.

Committee Changes

Council was advised that the Central Cape Breton Community Ventures are pursuing a facility for the wharf at Iona.

Councillor MacNeil advised that Jill Franklin, Jill's Chocolates, has been invited to attend the American Music Awards gifting suite with her product. She will be operating her business out of the former Highland Heights Inn, Iona.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor Grant, that Councillor Paul MacNeil be appointed to serve on the Victoria County Home Support Society Board. Motion carried.

It was moved by Councillor Grant, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that Warden Bruce Morrison be appointed to serve on the Cape Breton Regional Library Board. Motion carried.

Councillor MacNeil indicated that discussions have been held with Eileen Oldford, Cape Breton Small Business Development Centre, with regard to obtaining a facilitator to review and update the three municipal development documents – Victoria County Strategic Plan, Integrated Community Sustainability Plan and Economic Development Strategy.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that Councillor Athol Grant be nominated to serve on the Port Hawkesbury Paper Forest Advisory Committee and Norman Matheson's interest on serving on this Committee be forwarded along to Port Hawkesbury Paper. Motion carried.

POLICY REVIEW

Employee Recognition Policy

Sandy Hudson advised that the review completed by Stacey Pineau in 2012, indicated that an Employee Recognition Policy should be initiated. He advised that he has reviewed a number of policies in other municipalities and is recommending a similar policy to that of Colchester County. The awards are as follows:

- 5 years – Certificate
- 10 years – Certificate and \$50 gift
- 15 years – Certificate and a \$100 gift
- 20 years – Certificate and a \$200 gift
- 25 years – Certificate and a \$250 gift
- 30 years – Certificate and a \$500 gift
- 35 years – Certificate and a \$1,000 gift
- 40 years – Certificate and a \$1,500 gift

The list of eligible staff members will be compiled and the awards be presented at the Christmas Party.

It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that an Employee Service Recognition Policy as outlined be approved. Motion carried.

CAPE BRETON SUMMIT

The Cape Breton Summit, hosted by CBRM, will be held at the Gaelic College, St. Ann's, on November 19-20, 2014. Councillors interested in attending are to advise the Municipal Office as soon as possible.

Councillor MacInnis indicated that his nephew caught a blue fin tuna last Friday and travelled to Tokyo with the tuna to a fish market and sushi restaurant where a documentary is being done.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, on motion of Councillor Budge, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Bruce Morrison, Warden

Sandy Hudson, CAO