

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

April 8, 2019

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, April 8, 2019, beginning at 5:00 p.m. with Warden Bruce Morrison in the Chair.

Present were:

District #1 – Paul MacNeil
District #2 – Perla MacLeod
District #3 – Bruce Morrison, Warden
District #5 – Fraser Patterson
District #6 – Larry Dauphinee, Deputy Warden
District #7 – Wayne Budge
District #8 – Norman MacDonald

Also present were:

Leanne MacEachen, CAO
Heather MacLean, Recorder

Absent was:

District #4 – Merrill MacInnis (Out of Province)

CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

It was moved and seconded that the agenda be approved as presented. Motion carried.

NOVA SCOTIA POWER INC. PRESENTATION

Warden Morrison extended the courtesy of Council to Paul Casey, Vice-President of Transmission and Distribution, NSPI, who was in attendance to present on NSPI in Victoria County.

Mr. Casey introduced representatives in attendance with him, including:

- Amie Woodford, Manager, Field Support

- Darrell Emberley, Senior Manager, Customer Service
- Sean MacSween, Transmission and Distribution Supervisor, Baddeck
- Paul Breski, Operations Manager, Cape Breton
- Shoaib Qabil Badshah, P. Eng., Transmission Engineer

Mr. Casey presented a slide showing Victoria County's vegetation management overview and outlined the major and extreme event days that occurred in 2017 and 2018. The power outages in 2018 and the causes of the outages were outlined. The majority of the outages were related to adverse weather and tree contact issues. The annual hours with wind gusts between 70 to 80 km/h, 80 to 90 km/h and in excess of 90 km/h were outlined.

The annual investments on tree trimming, distribution and transmission in Victoria County for the years 2017 to 2019 were provided.

The NSPI resources in Victoria County were outlined and Mr. Casey addressed the loss of one of their team members, Clayton Organ, in 2018. Mr. Organ will be remembered and the NSP yard in Ingonish will be named in his honour. All power line technicians (PLT) positions are fully staffed in Victoria County.

Mr. Casey indicated that before and during storms, NSPI provides weather and storm planning information to the Municipality and EMO to prepare for storms and coordinate efforts. They are currently working collaboratively with EMO on a formal Comfort Centre program. He outlined the current areas that have Comfort Centres.

Sean MacSween outlined the New Campbellton/Seal Island project and provided a time line of when it began with the province wide storm on November 29, 2018, until the new line was energized from Big Harbour on March 14, 2019.

Paul Breski updated on Wreck cove Hydro. \$4.5 million was invested in 2018 and an additional \$6 million will be invested in 2019.

Shoaib Qabil Badshah provided Council with NSPI's proposed solution with moving transmission lines from the woods to the roadside in the National Park.

Councillor MacNeil brought up the recent power outage and road flooding in the South Cove area which saw residents without power for 30 hours. Discussion took place on the restoration process in this area. Mr. Casey indicated that smart meters are being installed across the province within the next year.

Councillor MacLeod brought up the increase in power outages in the Big Baddeck and Baddeck Inlet areas. She also commended Sean MacSween and his team for the work they do in extreme conditions.

The tree cutting and approval of landowners to access their property to cut trees was discussed. Councillor MacDonald indicated that at times the seasonal residents do not allow trees to be cut on their property and this directly affects the permanent residents. The seasonal residents do not live here when the weather is extreme.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee extended a thank you to Jeff Gillis, PLT, north of Smokey for his service.

Discussion took place on the project to move the transmission lines to the roadway in the Park. The reliability of lines due to the tree cutting that has taken place in recent years is evident and is a direct result of the tree trimming program.

After further discussion, Warden Morrison extended appreciation to Paul Casey and the delegation members for their attendance and the information provided.

RECESS

Warden Morrison advised that Council would recess for five minutes.

ST. ANN'S BAY TIME BANK – COMMUNITY GARDEN PRESENTATION

Courtesy of Council was extended to Dennis Lappan and Mel Sweetnam, St. Ann's Bay Time Bank, who were in attendance to present on their community garden project.

Mr. Lappan indicated that last fall the St. Ann's Bay Time Bank was looking at a new project and came up with a community garden project.

The new food pricing guidelines indicates a 6% increase this year, on top of an 11% increase in the past couple of years. Victoria County is an aging County and the increasing cost of food is affecting seniors and young people the most.

The project will reintroduce growing your own food and will bring people together to grow food together. The St. Ann's Health Centre has donated land at the North River end of the Meadow Road and 10 raised garden beds will be developed. They have 11 people committed to use these gardens.

Mr. Lappan indicated they will tend to the gardens, educate on new crops, soil dynamics and it will be an organic operation. Growing your own garden will provide food that is safe and reliable.

The Time Bank will sponsor and donate the labour and equipment and education sessions will be provided at the gardens. They will be 12' x 4' x 30" high. They will have a wood base and as the waste wood decays, they will retain moisture that will enhance the biology in the garden. The beds will need minimal work and just require additional compost annually.

Mr. Lappan indicated that he uses this method for gardening and he grows three crops per year in each of his garden beds.

Individuals involved in the garden can get Time Bank credits for helping and can spend Time Bank credits getting help.

Mel Sweetnam outlined the financing for the project. A funding proposal has been submitted to the County under the Healthy Eating in Recreation and Sport Settings (HERSS) funding and a \$1,000.00 contribution has been received from SABDA. Fundraising has and will continue to take place and materials have been donated by Baddeck Building Supplies.

The Victoria County Community Health Board has allowed them to be included in their insurance policy and this will cost approximately \$200.00 annually.

As the program progresses, it is hoped that the Meadow Road site will be expanded to include satellite sites in other areas.

A decision will be made on the application through HERSS funding within the next week.

Dennis Laffan indicated that he grows potatoes of various kinds and Asian vegetables in his own personal garden and indicated that he ships his produce to the Cape Breton Food Hub. The Food Hub is an amazing development that has assisted many vegetable growers throughout Cape Breton.

It is hoped that the Time Bank Community Garden project will be the start of something much bigger.

Warden Morrison extended a thank you to Mr. Laffan and Ms. Sweetnam for their presentation on a very worthwhile project venture.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MARCH 25, 2019

The minutes of the March 25, 2019, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

It was moved and seconded that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of March 25, 2019, be approved as presented. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Mining

Sean Kirby, Mining Association of Nova Scotia, has been contacted and he suggested that Council visit the Martin Marietta mining site to see a mining operation in action. The CAO will advise on a date and time for the visit.

Councillor MacNeil advised that Byron MacMillan, President of LNG, is willing to come to Council also.

Maskell's Harbour Tree Cutting

The Maskell's Harbour tree cutting is with our insurers at this point.

Speed Radar Signs

Whether any districts want speed radar signs was questioned. To purchase a poll model is \$3,700.00, while a trailer model is \$10,000.00. Whether TIR would allow these signs to be placed permanently instead of moving every couple of weeks is to be investigated. When this is known, consideration will be given to whether or not to locate speed radar signs.

Brett MacDougall, NSHA

Brett MacDougall, Eastern Zone Operations Executive Director, NSHA, has been requested to come to Council. He will likely attend a meeting in May, 2019.

Rural and Remote 2019

The CAO advised that the County put a booth in the Rural and Remote 2019, doctor recruitment forum, in Halifax on the past weekend. The Buchanan Memorial Hospital Foundation also had a booth at this event.

Graham MacKenzie and Dr. Jamie Tribo manned the County booth and only time will tell if contacts were made. A debrief meeting will be held with Mr. MacKenzie and Dr. Tribo next week.

Warden Morrison extended a thank you to Dr. Tribo who was in attendance at Council.

Public Works Supervisor

Interviews were conducted for a Public Works Supervisor position. There are a couple of prospects currently being investigated.

A Seasonal Water Operator position has been advertised and interviews will held later this week.

Tax Sale

The CAO advised that 8 of the 10 properties were sold at the March 26, 2019, Tax Sale.

TAXATION UPDATE

The CAO advised that total tax arrears are \$1.330 million, down from \$1.471 million for the same time last year. This is a decrease of \$141,000.00.

Concentration is now being placed on collecting the current tax arrears.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #8

Councillor MacDonald brought up concerns with regard to Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal issues.

- The Quarry Road in Dingwall that leads to the government wharf needs immediate repairs to the drains, culverts and the holes need to be repaired.
- The roadway to South Ridge road in Cape North is almost impassable, with mud and spring like conditions. A four wheel drive is required to access some areas and it is impeding access to emergency services
- Request on the status of the Gaelic signage for District #8

It was moved and seconded that a letter be forwarded to Stephen MacDonald, Area Manager, TIR, outlining the concerns with regard to District #8. Motion carried.

It was moved and seconded that a letter be forwarded to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans with regard to the wash out on the roadway to the Causeway in Dingwall. Motion carried.

It was moved and seconded that a letter be sent to Morley MacNeil, Department of Lands & Forestry, concerning locating signage for the protected area on the Dingwall Beach Road which is washed away and vehicles are now abusing the grassland area to gain access to the beach. Motion carried.

District #2

It was moved and seconded that a letter be sent to Stephen MacDonald, Area Manager, TIR, requesting that work be undertaken on the gravel roads in Big Baddeck and Middle River and that repairs be completed on the culvert on the Beverly's Hill Road and work be undertaken on the entire road. Motion carried.

Councillor MacLeod brought forward a residents' concern with regard to a long term care facility located in CBRM. Residents and workers in the Bayview wing of Seaview Manor are subjected to sporadic and also continuous screaming by a couple of residents in the facility.

This is detrimental to the well-being of all residents in this particular area of the home. Residents from our County can be located in this facility and it is an issue that should be addressed. Our seniors deserve better.

It was moved and seconded that a letter be sent to Continuing Care expressing concern on the living conditions of residents in the Bayview wing at Seaview Manor. Motion carried.

There is a new physician recruiter with the Nova Scotia Health Authority. Councillor MacLeod indicated that Council should meet with the new recruiter. Dr. Grayson Fullmore will be contacted to make arrangements to meet on recruitment.

District #1

Councillor MacNeil brought up the condition of the South Cove Road. The road is flooded in a number of areas. Contact has been made with Stephen MacDonald, TIR, with regard to this road.

Councillor MacNeil indicated he would send pictures to Council on the condition of the roadway.

District #3

It was moved and seconded that a letter be forwarded to Stephen MacDonald, TIR, requesting that the culvert on Upper Queen Street, Baddeck, be cleared. Motion carried.

VICTORIA COUNTY TRAILS FEDERATION

A letter was received from the Victoria County Trails Federation with regard to the multi-use trail system. The province is willing to add to the test areas for off-highway vehicles to travel on the shoulder of the road. There are currently five areas being tested and they are considering adding more. They wish to make a submission to see if the downtown core of Baddeck can be added to access to the test areas and requested that Council provide a letter of support.

It was moved and seconded that a letter of support be provided to the Victoria County Trails Federation for their submission to see if access to Baddeck could be added to the off-highway vehicles test areas. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councillor Patterson advised that Kristi Farrier, Seniors Safety Officer, developed a Project Charter and Terms of Reference for the Seniors Safety Program Advisory Committee. Applications for the Seniors Safety Advisory Committee will be advertised and it is hoped that the Advisory Committee will be in place and meet by the end of April. Council representation on the Advisory Committee was discussed.

It was moved and seconded that the Council members appointed to the Seniors Safety Advisory Committee include Warden Morrison, Deputy Warden Dauphinee, and Councillors MacLeod and Patterson and the Committee Terms of Reference be approved. Motion carried.

Councillor MacLeod indicated that Saturday's "Raising the Villages" session went well and she extended a thank you to BOLDC for hosting the event.

Councillor MacNeil updated on the CEPI Senior Council meeting and their application to Canada's Nature Fund species at risk program. The Municipality will be requested for support in the new funding for coastal protection.

VICTORIA COUNTY AWARDS NIGHT

The Volunteer Awards Night will be held at the Gaelic College, St. Ann's, on Tuesday, April 9, 2019, for south of Smokey and on Wednesday, April 10, 2019, at the North Highlands Community Centre, for north of Smokey. Both ceremonies will begin at 7:00 p.m.

ONE CAPE BRETON EVENT

Warden Morrison advised that all 5 municipalities and all 5 First Nations were represented at the recent One Cape Breton event.

A Committee will be established and one representative from each will sit on the Committee. It was felt that one representative and alternate should be appointed and this will be considered and the appointments will be made at the next Council session on April 23, 2019.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, it was moved to adjourn at 7:30 p.m.

Bruce Morrison, Warden

Leanne MacEachen, CAO