

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

July 16, 2019

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, July 16, 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 #4 – Merrill MacInnis
District #5 – Fraser Patterson
District #6 – Larry Dauphinee, Deputy Warden
District #7 – Wayne Budge
District #8 – Norman MacDonald

Also present were:

Leanne MacEachen, CAO
Alix Redden, CFO
Heather MacLean, Recorder

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.

CAPE BRETON REGIONAL ENTERPRISE NETWORK (CBREN) UPDATE

The Warden extended the courtesy of Council to Patrick Austin, Economic Development Officer, CBREN, who was in attendance to provide an update on CBREN activities.

Mr. Austin presented an update on Broadband and assured Council that Victoria County will not be forgotten. At the completion of the program, there should be 95% coverage across the entire province.

The Province halted the Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program. 18 businesses have received one-on-one counselling through the REN. They are also proactive with succession planning.

New business start-ups are at a record high. Currently there have been 8 business plans completed and 9 in the process of being done.

Funding applications are more complicated and Mr. Austin has been working with 5 clients to get their applications submitted.

Mr. Austin indicated that Cape Breton is exceeding other areas in the province with regard to the Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program. Last year 138 immigrants and their families moved to Cape Breton.

There is not as much uptake in the billeting program this season. The program is hindered by Air BNB's.

The PB Shuttle which takes workers from CBRM to their employment in Victoria County was late getting started, but it is a service that is needed and more will be known on its feasibility as the season progresses.

Mr. Austin is working with the Victoria County Trails Federation on their funding applications and committee. More business involvement is needed as the businesses will be the ones benefitting from the trail system. Dan Coffin, Tourism and Development Officer, will also be involved in this Committee.

The CBP has partnered with TIANS to work on extending the tourist season. Federal/provincial funding covering 6 aspects of the seasonality issue including training, HR tool kits, skills training workshops, National Certification Program, E Cornell Scholarship Program of \$2,000.00 and the wage subsidy program. The most uptake to date has been the wage subsidy program which is 50 cent dollars.

Sean Freeborne is a summer student with the CBREN and is available to the County. He has excellent research skills.

Mr. Austin indicated that there are two major investment programs that he has been diligently working on and one is to be announced within the next two weeks or so. Due to a

confidentiality agreement, he cannot say anything further, but has kept the CAO updated on what is happening.

The Strait Area Chamber of Commerce and the Cape Breton Partnership will be hosting a summer social at Big Spruce Brewing tomorrow, July 17, 2019. This is a free event and everyone is invited to enjoy a tour of Big Spruce Brewery in Nyanza, followed by snacks and live music.

Councillor Patterson indicated that the broadband infrastructure in his area is now 15+ years old and he questioned whether the Provincial Broadband Program would address the areas where there is internet, but not up to grade.

Mr. Austin indicated that the plan is to get everyone up to 25 mg/second (wireless) and 40 mg/second (wired).

The Internet Service Providers (ISP) that are expected to bid on the NS Broadband infrastructure program was discussed.

Additional discussion took place and Patrick Austin was commended for all the work he has done in the past year to promote Victoria County. He is working very hard with very positive results.

Warden Morrison indicated that it is important to get the information on the services available through the CBREN advertised. Patrick Austin, Shannon MacNeil from the CBP and the summer student are all available to assist and it is important to promote this. The Communications Officer will ensure this information is promoted.

Warden Morrison extended a thank you to Patrick Austin for the updates and he was excused at this time.

BRAS D'OR LAKES DAY CAMP (BOLDC)

Courtesy of Council was extended to Penny Chapman, Organizer/Facilitator and Judy King, Board Member of the Bras d'Or Lakes Day Camp (BOLDC). She indicated that Madison Greening was unavailable this evening and she would be making the presentation.

BOLDC is in its third year. Every year has gotten better and more has been learned. The fee for the Camp is \$125.00 weekly or \$40.00 daily. There is a 1-10 worker/child ratio.

Campers come from everywhere and they are now seeing more campers who have come to visit grandparents. The community has been wonderfully generous and supportive of the camp, but they are currently operating on a small budget.

The Friday weekly field trips take a lot of the budget because of the bussing cost of \$500 per trip. Some of the Friday activities were outlined.

The after school program was offered and will be again this coming school year. The cost of the after school program is \$13.50 daily for three hours.

An application was submitted to the Municipality for funding and the ask is \$5,000.00. This will assist in helping to subsidize fees and assist with the programming.

Council indicated that the BOLDC is a great asset to the community and County.

Tentative approval was given to this request pending on their presentation to Council.

It was moved and seconded that the Municipality approve a \$5,000.00 community grant for 2019-2020 for BOLDC as requested. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison extended a thank you to Penny Chapman and Judy King and they were excused at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JUNE 25, 2019

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

Councillor MacLeod indicated that in District #2 concerns the request for the CAO to reach out to the Village to explore installing water stations and charging stations could be on Water Street or Chebucto Street.

Councillor MacDonald indicated that the letter to the Department of TIR should be included in its own section after District Concerns.

It was moved and seconded that the June 25, 2019, minutes of Victoria County Municipal Council be approved with the noted changes. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Councillor Patterson indicated that a Seniors Lunch and Learn was held in his district with 21 people in attendance. It was well received and very worthwhile.

NEW BUSINESS

CAO REPORT

Waste collection rejections during the past week were 25 and the CAO provided the statistics for each collection route.

All of Cape Breton is under a Regulatory Affairs Pilot project to see if red tape can be eliminated and projects move quicker.

The week of September 23, 2019, is “Right to Know” week throughout the Province.

It was moved and seconded that Victoria County Council proclaim the week of September 23, 2019, as “Right to Know” week in Victoria County. Motion carried.

Leanne MacEachen outlined the meetings she attended since the last Council.

Dan Coffin, Tourism and Development Officer, put together a fabulous swag package for a recent doctor recruitment event. All the products in the package were Victoria County products.

Discussion took place on where the rejected waste bags go when they are left curbside. Jocelyn Bethune is to follow up on the rejections and there has to be flexibility.

The CAO was questioned as to whether there was an update on the Maskell’s Harbour site and she indicated that this matter is still being worked on.

An advertisement for the Recreation and Active Living Coordinator has been finalized and advertised.

The CAO advised that a group of 8 municipalities is exploring shared IT services and will be initiating a study on IT needs and risk analysis. Victoria County's cost for this study is \$5,000.00, and the other municipalities and province will also provide funding.

It was moved and seconded that a MOU be signed by the Municipality to join the other municipalities to undertake an IT risk analysis for the group of eight municipalities and the cost to the County be \$5,000.00. Motion carried.

RECESS

Warden Morrison advised that Council would recess for 10 minutes.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #1

It was moved and seconded that a street light be ordered for installation at Civic # 625 Red Point Road. Motion carried.

It was moved and seconded that \$1,000.00 be approved from the District #1 budget to assist with the Washabuck Community Centre's festival. Motion carried.

Councillor MacNeil moved that a letter be forwarded to the Department of TIR regarding brush cutting and mowing the roads in the Iona area and requesting that the bridge on the South Cove Road, Little Narrows, be built up to prevent future flooding of the area.

This motion will remain open for additional TIR concerns.

District #2

Councillor MacLeod requested that included in the letter to Department of TIR, a no passing lane be installed between Civic #8390 and #8492 Trans-Canada Highway, west of Baddeck.

Councillor MacLeod questioned on the “No Parking” signs at the Irving/Tim Hortons. This was included in a letter to TIR from the last meeting, but a reply has not been received to the request.

Councillor MacLeod advised that there is a new resident doctor at the Victoria County Memorial Hospital. Her name is Jennifer MacDonald and Councillor MacLeod requested that a welcome bag with local materials be provided for her.

Councillor MacLeod presented a newspaper article on building with plastic bottles and she provided the information to the CAO for further investigation.

District #4

Councillor MacInnis brought up the Point Pleasant Lodge, Halifax, where currently a neighbour of his is staying while his wife is a patient in hospital. It is a great facility and he questioned if it is a charitable organization and if other municipalities contribute to the facility. This will be investigated for the next meeting.

The Baddeck & Area Cat Rescue wish to present at the next Council meeting.

Councillor MacInnis advised that he was contacted by a resident of his district who feels the Council minutes should be on the website the night of the meeting.

Minutes are currently uploaded on the website when they are approved by Council.

The CAO advised that the Communications Officer will be tweeting during Council meetings and would have a Council Corner on the County website with highlights from the Council meetings.

District #5

Councillor Patterson requested that brush cutting and mowing for District #5 be included in the letter to the Department of TIR.

Councillor Patterson indicated that he attended a play at Theatre Baddeck recently. It was an excellent, professional show.

Councillor Patterson indicated that he attended an Island Food Network presentation recently and was impressed with the number of young farmers in attendance.

District #6

It was moved and seconded that a thank you be forwarded to Gordie Sampson on a successful song camp and thanking him for choosing Ingonish as the location. Motion carried.

Repairs to the Beach Crossing Road, line striping through Ingonish, and a speed study for the area of the new pavement in Ingonish are to be included in the TIR letter.

District #7

Councillor Budge advised that the doctor's residence leased by the County in Neil's Harbour needs a barbecue. One will be purchased.

It was moved and seconded that \$200.00 be approved from the District #7 budget for the Cabot Trail Lions Club. Motion carried.

District #8

Councillor MacDonald brought up the issue of portable washrooms and the need for additional in his district.

It was moved and seconded that an additional portable washroom be located in the South Harbour area for a one month period. Motion carried.

Councillor MacDonald indicated that the approach to the South Aspy Bridge needs attention and "No Dumping" and "No Camping" signs be located in his district. Garbage is being dumped in local areas and campers are squatting in various locations.

These items will be included in the letter to TIR.

The Cabot Day ceremonies were held on Saturday, July 6, 2019. Approximately 200 people attended and everything went well.

The 20th Annual Bay St. Lawrence Crab Fest will be held at the Bay St. Lawrence Fire Hall on Sunday, July 21, 2019, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

The 20th Anniversary of Buchanan Memorial Hospital will take place on August 4, 2019.

District #5

Gina Reid has been a Victoria County representative on the Cape Breton Regional Library Board for some time and she wishes to retire from the position.

A letter of thanks for her service is to be forwarded to Gina Reid and the vacant position advertised.

District #3

The new washrooms at the Victoria County VIC in Baddeck are in use. All that remains to be done is signage for the doors.

Warden Morrison presented certificates from the Municipality of the County of Victoria on the retirement of four Cape Breton Regional Library Board employees.

TIR LETTER

The status of the Gaelic signage for District #8 is to be requested also.

The motion for the letter to TIR was seconded. Motion carried.

All items in the minutes will be included in the letter.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councillor MacNeil provided an update on the recent CEPI meeting.

BY-LAW/POLICY REVIEW

Tax and Water Collection Policy

It was moved and seconded that the Tax and Water Collection Policy be approved. Motion carried.

TAXATION REPORT

The CAO advised that tax arrears are currently under \$1 million.

Arrears are down to \$444,000.00 and the current is down to \$543,000.00 – for a total of \$987,000.00 down from \$1.096 million the same time last year.

The annual interest rate is not included on the tax bill. This is to be investigated and corrected before next year's billing.

CORRESPONDENCE

Approval was received from the EDPC and Department of TIR for a private road name in Skir Dhu – French River Road.

It was moved and seconded that the private road name French River Road, Skir Dhu, be approved. Motion carried.

NEXT MEETING

The next Council meeting will be held on Monday, July 29, 2019, at 5:00 p.m. at the Court House, Baddeck.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned 7:00 p.m.

Leanne MacEachen, CAO

Bruce Morrison, Warden