

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
February 4, 2008

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, February 4, 2008, beginning at 5:00 p.m. with Warden Wayne Budge in the Chair.

Present were:

District #1 – Paul MacNeil
District #2 – Keith MacCuspig
District #3 – Bruce Morrison
District #4 – John Graham MacInnes, Deputy Warden
District #5 – Fraser Patterson
District #6 – Lawrence Barron
District #7 – Wayne Budge, Warden
District #8 – Robert MacLellan

Also present were:

Sandy Hudson, CAO
Heather MacLean, Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

Warden Budge called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was presented for approval.

It was moved by Councillor MacCuspig, seconded by Deputy Warden MacInnes, that the agenda be approved as presented. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 21, 2008

The minutes of the January 21, 2008, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

It was moved by Councillor MacCuspig, seconded by Councillor MacLellan, that the January 21, 2008, minutes of Victoria County Municipal Council be approved as presented. Motion carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Provincial Court

Sandy Hudson advised that a letter was forwarded to the Honourable Cecil Clarke, Minister of Justice, concerning the changes in Provincial Court sittings in Baddeck. He also had a brief meeting with Judge Ross in this regard. A copy of the correspondence was also forwarded to Puma Young, Eskasoni Band Council, who are also affected by the changes in Court sittings.

Strategic Plan

The Community Development Committee received one proposal for updating the Victoria County Strategic Plan. The proposal was received from Dwayne MacEachern and the Committee will be meeting with him to review the proposal. Application will be made to the Office of Economic Development to assist with funding this plan review. This funding will not be available until the new fiscal year beginning April 1, 2008.

Dog Control By-Law

The Public Hearing on the Dog Control By-Law will be held on Monday, March 10, 2008, at 4:30 p.m.

HEALTH CARE PRESENTATION

Courtesy of Council was extended to John Malcom, CEO, Cape Breton District Health Authority and Norm Connors, Chairman of the District Health Authority's Board of Directors.

Mr. Malcom expressed his appreciation to Council for allowing them time on the agenda.

Mr. Malcom's report centered on the topic of the Cumulative Hospital Standardized Mortality Ratio Report for the Cape Breton Health Care Complex. Mr. Malcom indicated that the national media took the total figures and the report they presented was not favourable for Cape Breton. The report indicated that the number of deaths that occur in Cape Breton hospitals was above the national average. He indicated that the palliative care deaths were included in the statistics used by the national media. In other areas the palliative care numbers were not included.

The year to date mortality ratio report for the Health Care Complex for the period April 1 to October 31, 2007, was provided (copy attached). These figures indicate the hospital standardized mortality ratio to be 96, slightly below the national average which is 100.

The number of people in hospitals waiting to be placed in nursing homes was discussed. There are approximately 100 people in hospitals waiting for admission to homes. The result is an increase in the number of people in Cape Breton spending their last days in hospital. Along with the 100 presently waiting in hospitals for admission to homes, there are another 300 within the community waiting for admission.

Mr. Malcom indicated that there are a number of findings that came out as a result of this report that are being investigated to see how things can be improved. He provided comparisons with the Province of Saskatchewan and how they deal with end of life care. Prior to coming to Nova Scotia he was the CEO for the Saskatoon area and has first hand knowledge and experience with regard to their health care system.

Councillor Patterson brought up the matter of air fares from Sydney and explained his own experiences in this regard. Mr. Malcom had earlier published a letter to the editor in the *Cape Breton Post* concerning the cost and availability of air flights out of Sydney. The lack and cost of air flights affects the District Health Authority's ability to retain and recruit health care professionals.

Mr. Malcom indicated that he was advised that in comparing a flight of similar distance, the cost per mile of air travel from Grand Prairie to Edmonton was 42 cents, as opposed to \$1.42 from Sydney to Halifax.

Councillor Patterson also updated Mr. Malcom on the meetings held with health care providers in Victoria County over the last year and outlined the issues that came to light as a result of these meetings.

Mr. Malcom spoke to the issues addressed. He indicated that the Cape Breton University School of Nursing has been beneficial for the area. 70% of graduates have been recruited to fill vacant positions within the district and 38 or the 50 graduates this coming year have committed to working in the district. The problem of the prevalence of diabetes in Cape Breton was discussed. The report of a multi-year review will be released in June and will outline on how to go forward in this regard. The number 2 priority in the district is to establish an adult mental health position for Victoria County.

The correspondence received by Council concerning the Occupational Therapist position in Victoria County was discussed and Mr. Malcom indicated that the issue was concerning travel time and an offer has been made to the Union today which will hopefully resolve this issue.

The work of the St. Ann's Bay Health Centre was discussed. This is the only such centre within the district and has proven to be very beneficial to the area residents.

The recently released health care study (Sanchez) identified three challenges. First the was the fiscal challenge related to increasing costs for drugs, etc. . Demographics was also identified as a challenge in that 15% of the population are now over the age of 65 and within the next 13 years this figure will increase to 22%. The demand for health care increases as age increases. The third issue was the aging workforce. Within 7 years, 43% of the health care workforce will be eligible for retirement and the staffing replacement issue has to be addressed.

Mr. Malcom commended Victoria County on their past leadership in being the first municipality in the Province to go 100% smoke free. This led the way to a province-wide initiative. Within the first three years of the smoke free initiative, statistics of smokers decreased from 30% to 24% and this figure continues to decline.

There is growing evidence that Cape Bretoners are not participating in enough physical activity, as well as experiencing high rates of obesity. These factors are contributing to higher rates of chronic illness such as diabetes and heart disease, as well as premature mortality for many citizens.

The rates of physical activity decline in our youth is alarming and some health experts are suggesting that if these trends of lower physical activity and increased calorie intake continue, our youth will not outlive their parents.

Mr. Malcom presented a copy of the CD on Obesity, Physical Activity and Lifestyle. This CD was compiled from a presentation made at the District Health Authority's annual meeting by Dr. Deborah Zwicker, endocrinologist; Dr. Michael Gallivan, a family physician; and Dr. Rod Bird, pediatrician.

The Cape Breton District Health Authority is searching for partners to create a Coalition for an Active and Healthy Cape Breton and are asking Victoria County to again show leadership by being the first to commit to the creation of this coalition. The District Health Authority is committed to providing administrative support to this coalition and a steering committee will be established once all stakeholders have been identified and are committed to participate.

It was moved by Deputy Warden MacInnes, seconded by Councillor MacCuspik, that Victoria County Municipal Council support the creation of a Coalition for an Active and Healthy Cape Breton. Motion carried.

After further discussion, Mr. Malcom and Mr. Connors were extended a vote of thanks for their presentation.

RECESS

Warden Budge announced that Council would recess for 10 minutes for coffee.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #2

It was moved by Councillor MacCuspig, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that the Department of the Environment be requested to come to Council to explain the Crowdis Mountain Septage Lagoon closure. Motion carried.

District #3

Now that the Little Narrows Water Extension project is underway, a motion is required identifying the Baddeck Water Supply project as the #1 infrastructure priority.

It was moved by Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacCuspig, that the Baddeck Water Supply project be the #1 infrastructure priority project for Victoria County. Motion carried.

District #6

It was moved by Councillor Barron, seconded by Councillor Morrison, that a letter be forwarded to the Keltic Lodge on being named one of the top 500 resorts in the world and one of the top 15 in Canada (the only one east of Quebec City). Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Correspondence from Department of Transportation and Eastern District Planning Commission advising they have no objection to naming Private Road 5615(P), Reynolds Drive.

It was moved by Councillor Barron, seconded by Councillor Patterson, that Council approve the naming of Private Road 5615(P), Reynolds Drive. Motion carried.

2. Memorandum from Robert Dauphinee, Director of Public Works, providing statistics concerning a comparison of materials handled at the Baddeck and New Haven Enviro-Depot sites.
3. Letters were received from Roy MacDonald, Area Manager, Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, concerning the following:
 - Plowing the shoulders of the road along Shore Road, Baddeck

- Storm damage on Highway 205 below Crescent Grove, Baddeck Bay
 - Lighting at the east end of Beverly's Hill Road, Baddeck Inlet
4. Letter from Gerry Surette, Secretary to the Minister of Tourism, advising that the Premier has request Minister Dooks to respond to Council's letter.
 5. Letter from Ray Kavanaugh, Chair, Destination Cape Breton, concerning the Cape Breton Island Destination Marketing Strategy.
 6. Letter from the Honourable Cecil Clarke, Minister of Justice, announcing that upon approval of the 2008-09 budget, the Department will fulfill the commitment to provide every municipality across the province with at least one new RCMP officer to enhance public safety.
 7. Correspondence from the Honourable Peter MacKay, Minister of ACOA, acknowledging receipt of Council's resolution supporting the Smokey Recreational Society's outdoor rink initiative.
 8. Letter from John Bain, Eastern District Planning Commission, concerning inspection of a property at 1945 Highway 205, Baddeck Bay.

Sandy Hudson will bring this matter to Solicitor MacDowell for his recommendation.

Sandy Hudson read copies of letters he forwarded to the Honourable Jamie Muir, Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, regarding the mapping technician position, and the Honourable Cecil Clarke, Minister of Justice, concerning provincial court. Copies of these letters will be provided to Council.

Discussion took place on the cutbacks the government is making in Victoria County – the elimination of the mapping technician position, the cutback in provincial court sittings and in the Department of Community Services office in Baddeck. The letters forwarded regarding these issues have not resulted in any position response. Council felt that these matters should continue to be pursued.

It was moved by Councillor Morrison, seconded by Deputy Warden MacInnes, that Keith Bain, MLA, be requested to set up a meeting between Council and Premier Rodney MacDonald to discuss the cutbacks the provincial government is making to services in Victoria County. Motion carried.

It was felt that a meeting should be held with Keith Bain, MLA, to discuss these matters and he be requested to set up the meeting with the Premier at that time.

District #8

Councillor MacLellan brought up a concern with regard to the generators for fire departments. The Bay St. Lawrence Volunteer Fire Department has had trouble having the company come to service and repair the generator. He felt no further generators should be purchased from the company.

Barry Campbell will contact the company concerning this matter.

It was moved by Councillor MacLellan, seconded by Councillor Morrison, that a letter be forwarded from Council advising that generators will not be purchased in the future unless the company fixes the problems presently existing in Victoria County. Motion carried.

CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

It was moved by Councillor MacCuspic, seconded by Councillor Morrison, that the consolidated financial statements for the Municipality of the County of Victoria for the year ended March 31, 2007, be approved. Motion carried.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, on motion of Councillor Morrison, the meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Wayne Budge, Warden

Sandy Hudson, CAO