

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
May 28, 2007

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, May 28, 2007, beginning at 5:00 p.m.

Present were:

District #2 – Keith MacCuspic
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
Denise MacKinnon, Director of Finance
Heather MacLean, Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

Warden Budge called the meeting to order.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Warden Budge requested Council Members and those in attendance to stand and observe a moment of silence in memory of the late Councillor Dan E. MacNeil, District #1.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was presented for approval.

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

CAPE BRETON NEWCOMER'S NETWORK

Courtesy of Council was extended to Cindy Tobin, Cape Breton County Economic Development Authority, and Ken MacDonald, Cape Breton Newcomer's Network Project.

Page 2, VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, May 28, 2007

Ms. Tobin and Mr. MacDonald made a presentation on the Cape Breton Newcomer's Network Project (copy attached).

Discussion took place and various questions concerning the Newcomer's Network Project were answered.

Warden Budge extended a vote of thanks to Ms. Tobin and Mr. MacDonald for their report.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – APRIL 30, 2007

The minutes of the April 30, 2007, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

It was moved by Councillor Barron, seconded by Councillor Patterson, that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of April 30, 2007, be approved as presented. Motion carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Economic Development

Sandy Hudson advised that a letter was forwarded to Neal Conrad, Office of Economic Development, thanking him for his attendance and presentation at the April 30, 2007, Council Session.

Informal talks will commence soon with the two RDA's – Cape Breton County Regional Development Authority (CBCEDA) and Strait-Highlands Regional Development Agency, to determine if and in which direction Victoria County would best fit.

Whether there is any funding available for updating our strategic plan was discussed and will be investigated.

A meeting of the Victoria County Municipal Community Development Committee will be scheduled to discuss this and other issues.

Aliant

Aliant have been contacted to attend a future Council session to answer questions concerning cell phone coverage in Victoria County. They have indicated that their plan with regard to cell phone coverage will not be available until November.

Nova Scotia Power

Nova Scotia Power will also be requested to attend a future session of Council.

Proposed Cape Breton Marketing Levy

Sandy Hudson advised that a meeting of Mayors, Wardens and CAO's will be hosted by Victoria County on June 12, 2007, to discuss the proposed Cape Breton Island Marketing Levy.

Donation – Memory of Dan E. MacNeil

A donation will be made to the Victoria County Memorial Hospital Foundation in memory of Dan E. MacNeil.

Region 1 Solid Waste

Region 1 Solid Waste is now divided into Region 1A which covers Richmond, Inverness, Port Hawkesbury and Victoria and Region 1B which is CBRM. Sandy Hudson explained what the changes entail to Victoria County.

2007/2008 BUDGET AND TAX RATES

The 2007/2008 budget was presented to Council for approval. The total budget is \$8,592,815.00 and the proposed tax rates for 2007/2008 are \$1.22 residential - same as last year and \$2.15 commercial – a 5 cent increase over last year's rate.

Discussion took place on the budget. Mr. Hudson advised that the final figures for 2006/2007 are as yet unknown.

It was moved by Councillor Morrison, seconded by Deputy Warden MacInnes, that the District Grants be maintained at the 2006/2007 level of \$9,000.00 per district. Motion carried.

It was moved by Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor Barron, that the total budget for 2007/2008 of \$8,592,815.00 be approved and the tax rates for 2007/2008 be \$1.22 residential and \$2.15 commercial. Motion carried.

Letters will be forwarded to organizations that have requested funding.

Deputy Warden MacInnes indicated that the MacAskill Heirs Association request was originally referred to the Recreation Committee and he felt it should be referred back to this committee.

It was moved by Deputy Warden MacInnes, seconded by Councillor Patterson, that the MacAskill Heirs Association request be referred to the Recreation Committee for consideration. Motion carried.

A draft press release regarding the 2007/2008 budget was reviewed. Suggestions were made regarding including the positive impact to the residents. The press release will be revamped and issued.

NEW BUSINESS

DECLARATION OF VACANCY – DISTRICT #1

It was moved by Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacCuspic, that the District #1 seat on Victoria County Municipal Council be declared vacant. Motion carried.

A by-election must be held within 11 weeks after declaring the seat vacant.

It was moved by Deputy Warden MacInnes, seconded by Councillor Patterson, that August 18, 2007, be set as the date for the District #1 by-election. Motion carried.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #6

It was moved by Councillor Barron, seconded by Deputy Warden MacInnes, that a letter be forwarded to Canada Post Corporation opposing the increase in post office box rentals for residents who live on rural routes in Victoria County. Motion carried.

District #5

Councillor Patterson questioned on the heavy garbage pickup. Sandy Hudson will contact both contractors concerning this matter.

District #3

Discussion took place on unsightly premises and the problems encountered with having such properties cleaned up. Sandy Hudson was requested to investigate other municipal units' by-laws in this regard.

Congratulatory letters are to be forwarded to Jessica Wong on being awarded the Nova Scotia Female Team Player of the Year Award and to Franklin MacDonald who was the winner of the “Making The Cut” reality television program.

The 20th Annual Cabot Trail Relay was held over the past weekend and went very well. Councillor Morrison indicated that 65 teams are registered each year by the October 10 deadline and that it is estimated that the relay generates \$300,000.00 to \$500,000.00 around the trail annually – a total of approximately \$10,000,000.00 over the 20 year period.

It was moved by Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacCuspic, that a letter be forwarded to Dave Parkinson and Arlene Morrison, Co-Chairs of the Cabot Trail Relay, congratulating on the 20th year of the relay and its success. Motion carried.

District #4

Deputy Warden MacInnes indicated that included in the Councillors binders was an overview of the municipal responsibilities with regard to emergency measures. An inspection of our EMO preparedness will be done in the future and he indicated that there is work to be completed.

Craig MacLaughlin, EMO Nova Scotia, has indicated that he would like to come and speak to Council.

It was moved by Deputy Warden MacInnes, seconded by Councillor MacLellan, that Craig MacLaughlin, EMO Nova Scotia, be invited to attend Council. Motion carried.

The Council Members who took the Basic Emergency Management course recently indicated that it was an excellent course and thanked Barry Campbell for his work on securing this course and the recent EMO Conference in Baddeck.

District #7

It was moved by Deputy Warden MacInnes, seconded by Councillor Morrison, that \$1,500.00 be approved from the District #7 budget to the Neil’s Harbour/New Haven Development Association to assist with the cost of a sign. Motion carried.

RCMP

It was moved by Councillor MacLellan, seconded by Councillor Barron, that a letter be forwarded to the Honourable Stockwell Day and the Honourable Murray Scott, with a copy to the Honourable Peter MacKay, expressing our concern that the Municipality pay for policing services within the Cape Breton Highlands National Park. Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS VEHICLE

The lease will expire on our present public works vehicle in June and Robert Dauphinee is looking at a larger, 4-wheel drive vehicle that will allow them to haul trailers and transport material between our sites.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Letter from Charles MacDonald, P. Eng., Department of Transportation and Public Works, in reply to Council's letter advising the following:
 - The Operations Supervisor has been asked to install a "narrow bridge" sign for the bridge between Neil's Harbour and New Haven
 - The District Traffic Supervisor has reviewed the Harvey Drive/Alexander Drive intersection control and the control will remain as is, a "stop" sign on Alexander Drive.
 - The Traffic Supervisor has reviewed the parking concerns on Queen Street and it is felt that parking restrictions are not warranted.

2. Approval has been received from both the Eastern District Planning Commission and the Department of Transportation for the following road name changes:
 - Shamrock Lane
 - Sandrock Lane

It was moved by Councillor Patterson, seconded by Councillor Barron, that Victoria County Municipal Council approve the road names changes for Shamrock Lane and Sandrock Lane. Motion carried.

3. Letter from Alex Steeves, Executive Director, Department of Justice, advising that Victoria County's policing costs for 2007/2008 are \$1,129,999.00.

4. Letter from the Honourable Murray Scott, Minister of Justice, regarding vacancies in Victoria County RCMP Services advising that a copy of Council's letter has been forwarded to the RCMP for their comments.

NEXT MEETING

The tentative date for the next meeting is June 18, 2007, however; as both Warden Budge and Councillor Morrison will be unavailable, an alternate date will be considered, based on the availability of George Lahey, Safer Communities Initiative, Department of Justice.

COURT HOUSE DRIVEWAY

The remaining construction and paving of the Court House driveway should be completed within the next few weeks.

FIRE SERVICES

Councillor MacLellan indicated that an increase in fire department funding should be considered a priority budget item.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, on motion of Councillor Barron, seconded by Councillor MacCuspik, the meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Wayne Budge, Warden

Sandy Hudson, CAO