

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
May 29, 2006

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, May 29, 2006, beginning at 5:00 p.m. with Warden Wayne Budge in the Chair.

Present were:

District #1 – Dan E. MacNeil, Deputy Warden
District #2 – Keith MacCuspic
District #3 – Bruce Morrison
District #4 – John Graham MacInnes
District #5 – Fraser Patterson
District #6 – Lawrence Barron
District #7 – Wayne Budge, Warden

Also present were:

Sandy Hudson, CAO
Heather MacLean, Recording Secretary

Absent was:

District #8 – Robert MacLellan

CALL TO ORDER

Warden Budge called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – APRIL 24, 2006

The minutes of the April 24, 2006, Council Session were presented for approval.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnes, seconded by Deputy Warden MacNeil, that the April 24, 2006, Victoria County Municipal Council minutes be approved as presented. Motion carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

- **District Policing**

The District Policing concept for Victoria County is moving forward and the additional staffing for the northern area is being investigated.

- **Heavy Solid Waste Collection**

Sandy Hudson advised that he is still investigating the most appropriate way to carry out this collection.

- **Public Budget Presentations**

The public budget presentations were held throughout the County last week and Mr. Hudson indicated they were sparsely attended.

- **Deed Transfer Tax By-Law**

This topic will be dealt with later in the agenda.

UPDATE ON THE BLACKHEADED BUDWORM

Courtesy of Council was extended to Tim Dunne, Communications Advisor, and Walter Fanning, Manager, Forest Resources, Department of Natural Resources.

Mr. Dunne indicated that approximately 1 year ago, they attended Council to report on the blackheaded budworm and were back to provide an update. He introduced Walter Fanning who would be making the presentation.

Mr. Fanning thanked Council for the opportunity to appear and provide an update on the blackheaded budworm (copy attached).

Mr. Fanning indicated that the spray and natural predators and diseases have resulted in their being no concern with regard to the blackheaded budworm for this year.

The prevalence of the tussock moth and hemlock looper in the Highlands is now a concern and is being monitored.

A 135 hectare research block will be sprayed this summer. This will be an aerial spray and the exact blocks are unknown as yet.

Various questions were asked and answered by the gentlemen.

Warden Budge extended a vote of thanks to Mr. Dunne and Mr. Fanning for their presentation.

RECESS

Warden Budge announced that Council would recess for 5 minutes.

BUDGET 2006-2007

The proposed 2006-2007 budget was presented to Council. The total municipal budget is \$8,081,095.00. Mr. Hudson reviewed the budget with Council. The tax rates proposed are unchanged from last year.

The public budget presentations were held throughout the Municipality last week. The public were surprised to learn that the budget categories of solid waste, education and policing, account for over half of the total municipal budget.

Discussion took place on the revenue loss from the elimination of the business occupancy tax and the 25% refund to seasonal tourist businesses. There will be no change in the street light allocation.

It was moved by Councillor Patterson, seconded by Councillor Barron, that the 2006-2007 budget be approved as presented and the tax rates for 2006-2007 be \$1.22 residential, \$2.10 commercial and a rate of 75% of the commercial rate of \$2.10 for the seasonal tourist businesses. Motion carried.

Mr. Hudson indicated that on comparing other rural municipalities, Victoria County still has the highest commercial tax rate and one of the highest residential rates.

DEED TRANSFER TAX BY-LAW

The proposed Deed Transfer Tax By-Law was presented to Council.

It was moved by Councillor Patterson, seconded by Councillor MacInnes, to approve the first reading of the Deed Transfer Tax By-Law. Motion carried.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #5

Councillor Patterson questioned on whether there were any changes to the road naming procedure and was advised that there were none that the Municipality was aware of.

District #1

A letter was received from the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board concerning Rankin Memorial School, Iona.

It was moved by Deputy Warden MacNeil, seconded by Councillor MacInnes, that a letter be forwarded to the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board advising that the Municipality will accept ownership of Rankin Memorial School from the School Board upon the closing of the school. Motion carried.

District #3

Councillor Morrison advised that during the construction of the Baddeck Sewage Treatment Plant the nature walking trail around the soccer field was disturbed and was to be returned to its original state.

It was moved by Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor Barron, that pending the cost, materials be provided to restore the nature trail adjacent to the Baddeck School to its original state. Motion carried.

District #4

Councillor MacInnes presented a letter he received from the Gaelic College concerning their proposed septic facility. They were seeking a representative on their Steering Committee and financial assistance.

It was moved by Councillor Morrison, seconded by Deputy Warden MacNeil, that Councillor John MacInnes be appointed to serve on the Gaelic College Sewage System Steering Committee. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit Committee and Budget Committee

The Audit Committee and Budget Committee meeting minutes of May 15, 2006, were presented.

It was moved by Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacCuspic, that the May 15, 2006, Audit and Budget Committee minutes be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Public Works Committee

The Public Works Committee minutes of May 15, 2006, were presented for approval.

The topic of the lease for the North Shore School property was discussed.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnes, seconded by Councillor Barron, that the lease for the North Shore School be extended to a 20 year term.

Discussion took place on the letter forwarded from Solicitor MacDowell and the concerns contained in the letter. It was felt that it was important to proceed in the proper manner with this lease, as there is now a similar project being considered for the former Ingonish School property.

It was felt that the proponents and the Solicitor should meet to address the concerns.

Councillor Barron withdrew his seconding of the motion regarding the lease extension and this was seconded by Councillor Patterson. Motion carried.

The motion pertaining to the lease extension was withdrawn.

It was moved by Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacInnes, that a meeting between the proponents, Solicitor, CAO, Warden and Councillor MacInnes be set up as soon as possible to discuss concerns with regard to the lease for the North Shore School property. Motion carried.

NEXT MEETINGS

A Committee of the Whole meeting will be held on Monday, June 12, 2006, at 5:00 p.m.

The next Council Session will be held on Monday, June 19, 2006, at 5:00 p.m. A public hearing on the proposed Deed Transfer Tax By-Law will take place prior to Council at 4:30 p.m.

A meeting of the EMO Committee will be held on Wednesday, June 7, 2006, at 5:00 p.m.

The Recreation and Tourism Committees will meet on Thursday, June 1, 2006, beginning with Recreation at 4:30 p.m., followed immediately by the Tourism Committee.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, on motion of Councillor Patterson, seconded by Councillor Morrison, the meeting adjourned.