

**VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL**  
**June 15, 2009**

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at St. Andrew's Parish Hall, Neil's Harbour, on Monday, June 15, 2009, beginning at 5:00 p.m. with Warden Bruce Morrison in the Chair.

Present were:

District #1 – Paul MacNeil  
District #2 – Keith MacCuspic  
District #3 – Bruce Morrison, Warden  
District #4 – Merrill MacInnis  
District #5 – Fraser Patterson, Deputy Warden  
District #6 – Larry Dauphinee  
District #7 – David Donovan  
District #8 – Robert MacLellan

Also present were:

Sandy Hudson, CAO  
Heather MacLean, Recording Secretary

**CALL TO ORDER**

Warden Morrison called the meeting to order and extended appreciation to Councillor Donovan for providing the delicious meal for Council prior to the meeting.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The agenda was presented for approval.

**It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that the agenda be approved as presented. Motion carried.**

**Gaelic College – Proposal for Expansion**

Courtesy of Council was extended to Sam MacPhee, Executive Director of the Gaelic College, who presented a proposal for expansion of the Gaelic College (copy attached).

Mr. MacPhee indicated that the Gaelic College is a unique institution covering the entire spectrum of the Gaelic culture since 1937. The Gaelic College is a substantial employer in Victoria County, employing 23 full-time and seasonal staff and 35 faculty and part-time staff during the peak season.

Mr. MacPhee outlined the proposed expansion which includes a campus expansion and the completion of the St. Ann's Centre. He indicated that the learning and interpretive centre has been completed and the expansion will include the Rev. Norman MacLeod Story, textile centre and the great hall building. The great hall building is 8,800 sq. ft., with concert/assembly seating capacity of 375 and banquet seating for 300. It will have a portable inside stage, as well as an outdoor stage and includes 2 classrooms, kitchen and servery/bar facilities.

The expansion will provide a dedicated space for meetings, conferences, concerts, weddings and reunions. It will allow for year round operations and increase revenues to offset lower tourism visitation numbers. It will replace the 40 year old outdoor performance venue and allow for the St Ann's Centre to be a dedicated exhibit space and provide much needed classroom space.

The total cost of the expansion project is \$2,745,500.00 and Mr. MacPhee indicated that they are looking for partners to move the project forward. He requested that the Municipality consider a commitment of \$50,000.00 over the next two years. This funding will be used to lever other funding.

Mr. MacPhee was extended a vote of thanks for his presentation and was advised that his request would be given consideration. He left at this time.

Discussion took place on the funding request.

**It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that the Municipality commit \$50,000.00 over the next two years to the Gaelic College Expansion Project and a letter be provided indicating the Municipality's commitment contingent on other funding being confirmed. Motion carried.**

### **INTEGRATED COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY PLAN**

Warden Morrison extended the courtesy of Council to Anne Warburton and Kristen Morse of Stantec who are developing the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) for the Municipality.

Stantec have been hired to develop an ICSP for the Municipality of the County of Victoria and Ms. Warburton indicated that she and Kristen Morse are two members of the three member team who will be developing the plan.

Ms. Warburton indicated that each municipality that receives federal gas tax transfers under the Canada-Nova Scotia Gas Tax Agreement is required to prepare and provide an ICSP by 2009-2010.

An ICSP is a long-term strategic plan for municipalities. Developed in consultation with members of the community, it identifies goals for sustainability and provides direction for communities as they move into the future. It is different than the Municipality's strategic plan in that an ICSP is a 20+ year plan, whereas the strategic plan is a 5 year plan.

The ICSP recognizes the interconnected dimensions of environmental, social, cultural and economic development and focuses on integrating these considerations to achieve a 20 to 30 year vision for the County.

ICSP's are meant to complement and build upon existing community planning efforts. Stantec will use the recently completed strategic plan as a base and carry the conversation further to fill in any holes, etc. and provide a draft document to the Municipality in September, 2009. Included in the plan is a vision statement. The final ICSP document must be completed by March 31, 2010.

The Province is also requiring that climate change be addressed and this will be included in the completed plan.

An important step in the development of the plan involves identifying stakeholders from the County. A strong public involvement component adds legitimacy to the process and helps to secure public support for the ICSP plan. The main purpose of public engagement as it relates to the ICSP is to gain a broader understanding of values that have weight in the communities and identify issues affecting the community in both the immediate and long term.

Ms. Warburton indicated that the recommendations contained in the strategic plan are governance oriented and economic driven. The ICSP will take this further and identify key sustainability issues.

She questioned whether the four themes identified in the strategic plan are the themes the ICSP should be built around. Council members provided their opinions on same including:

- That there may be underlying issues within each of these theme areas which should also be looked at
- Employment is a key issue to retain people in the County
- 300+ people provided input to the strategic plan, so this is what emerged and is a good basis on which to proceed

The fact that the strategic plan and the ICSP Plan are being done so closely together was discussed and it was indicated that this can be both a good thing and bad thing. The fact that the focus group sessions held in conjunction with the ICSP plan will be publicly discussing the contents of the strategic plan was discussed and it was

indicated that it is anticipated that Council will approve the strategic plan document in principle this evening.

Ms. Warburton indicated that they have a booth at the Silver Dart Centennial Welcome Centre at the Baddeck Community Centre entitled “Navigate Victoria County’s Future”, where they are encouraging the public to provide their thoughts. Discussion took place on the focus group sessions and in particular the one to be held in Neil’s Harbour on June 16. It was decided that more advertisement should be done and focus group sessions be deferred until July. This will allow more time for contact with community leaders and the public to participate in the process.

Whether Councillors should attend the public meetings was discussed and Ms. Warburton indicated that Council members are encouraged to attend the focus group sessions.

Ms. Warburton indicated that they would develop a small package to accompany the strategic plan that would include the template for ICSP development, the Schedule “A” of the provincial/federal gas tax agreement and other pertinent information. This package will be helpful in explaining the ICSP process and will assist in achieving public participation in the process.

After further discussion, Ms. Warburton and Ms. Morse were extended a vote of thanks for their presentation.

**RECESS**

Warden Morrison advised that Council would recess for 10 minutes.

**VICTORIA COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN – SHAPING OUR FUTURE**

**It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor MacCuspick, that that the Victoria County Strategic Plan – “Shaping Our Future” be approved in principle and referred to the Victoria County Municipal Community Development Committee for further review. Motion carried.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MAY 25, 2009**

The minutes of the May 25, 2009, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

**It was moved by Councillor MacLellan, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that the May 25, 2009, minutes of Victoria County Municipal Council be approved as presented. Motion carried.**

**BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

**Cats**

Councillor MacInnis indicated that at the last meeting a discussion took place on dealing with cats and he questioned whether any information was received from other municipalities with regard to cats.

Sandy Hudson advised that he and the County Animal Controllers visited the SPCA last week and he was advised that the SPCA and CBRM do nothing with cats. The Baddeck Veterinary Clinic was to assist in developing an article to be included in the *Victoria Standard* with regard to dealing with animals.

**Victoria County Website**

Les Coleman, AMA Website Venture, is working with Tom Wilson on the county website and will have a draft site to view by the end of June.

**Cabot Trail Relay Association**

As the Cabot Trail Relay Association receives annual funding from the Municipality, it was felt that a financial report should be provided to the Municipality.

**It was moved by Councillor Donovan, seconded by Councillor MacLellan, that the Cabot Trail Relay Association be requested to provide the Municipality with a copy of their financial statement. Motion carried.**

**Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board**

Whether a reply was received from the School Board with regard to Council's concern over the reduction in teaching positions North of Smokey was questioned. The letter was forwarded to Ed Davis, Superintendent, who replied that it should be forwarded to Lorne Green, Chair of the School Board. This was done, but a reply has not been received.

**DISTRICT CONCERNS**

**District #1**

Councillor MacNeil questioned whether the Municipality has a deed for the former Rankin School property at Iona. Sandy Hudson advised that there is an unrecorded deed and Lorne MacDowell, Municipal Solicitor, is investigating options available to the Municipality.

Councillor MacNeil indicated that the grounds around the school building require mowing and maintenance.

**It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that a letter be forwarded to the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board requesting that the grounds surrounding the former Rankin School property be maintained. Motion carried.**

Councillor MacNeil indicated that a resource teacher position is being lost at Rankin School of the Narrows and there is also consideration being given to triple grades in this school.

**It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Deputy Warden Patterson, that a letter be forwarded to the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board expressing Council's concern with regard to the loss of a resource position and possible triple grades at the Rankin School of the Narrows. Motion carried.**

Councillor MacNeil requested that a streetlight be located on a pole at the residence of Hector MacNeil to be paid for through his district budget funds. He will provide the civic address, so the order can be placed.

**District #2**

Councillor MacCuspic indicated that the MacLennan's Cross Bridge in Middle River is now undergoing repairs and the road is closed. Apparently the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal did not notify emergency services of the road closure.

**It was moved by Councillor MacCuspic, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal be requested to notify emergency services of road closures. Motion carried.**

**District #4**

Councillor MacInnis indicated that he heard of plans to develop a bike/hiking trail in Inverness County from Cheticamp to Pleasant Bay and he questioned whether something similar could be done in Victoria County. It was indicated that the area in Inverness County is on the Old Cabot Trail.

**It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor MacCuspic, that the Cabot Trail Working Association be contacted to investigate a bike/hiking trail on the Victoria County portion of the Cabot Trail. Motion carried.**

**It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that a letter be forwarded to the new Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal expressing concern on the condition of the roads in the Victoria County portion of the Cabot Trail. Motion carried.**

**It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that a letter be forwarded to the Honourable Gail Shea, Minister of Fisheries, expressing concern on the fisheries aid package as it relates to Victoria County and stressing the importance of the fishery to Victoria County and the effect on the economy as a result of the downturn in the fisheries (lower catches, lower prices). Motion carried.**

**District #7**

**It was moved by Councillor Donovan, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that a letter be forwarded to Roy MacDonald, Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, requesting that the passing lane from Freshmart to the Victoria North Library Branch be changed to a double line, no passing lane. Motion carried.**

Councillor Donovan questioned on the funding available to service station operators for installation of electrical panels to run generators. He was of the understanding the Municipality would pay for the installation of the electrical panel, provided the service station operator paid for the generator and agreed to open during power outages and emergency situations.

**It was moved by Councillor Donovan, seconded by Councillor MacLellan, that the Municipality fund the purchase and installation of generator electrical panels up to a maximum of \$1,000.00. Motion carried.**

**District #6**

**It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that a letter be forwarded to the Cape Breton Regional Housing Authority requesting that a sign be erected indicating the location of Keltic View Manor, Ingonish. Motion carried.**

**It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that a letter be forwarded to the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal requesting that a sign be erected for Williams Road. Motion carried.**

**It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that a sign be purchased for MacDougall Road to be paid for out of the District #6 budget. Motion carried.**

A question was raised as to who has the authority to require civic addresses to be posted. It was felt that this was under provincial jurisdiction, but it will be investigated further.

**District #3**

Deputy Warden Patterson assumed the Chair.

**It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that a letter be forwarded to the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal requesting that attention be given to improving the appearance of the Exit 10 entrance at Baddeck Bay. Motion carried.**

**It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that the Recreation Director be requested to investigate the community's interest for the location of a walking trail in the Baddeck area.**

Warden Morrison assumed the Chair.

**District #4**

**It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor MacCuspic, that the streetlight located at the former North Shore School property be relocated to the pole at Calvin Hillier's residence. Motion carried.**

**CORRESPONDENCE**

1. Letter from Erin Phillips, Cape Breton Regional Library, requesting the Municipality's assistance to have the exterior signage replaced or repainted at the Victoria North Regional Branch Library, Ingonish.

**It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that the Municipality cover the cost of new exterior signage for the Victoria North Regional Library Branch. Motion carried.**

2. Request from Leanne Boutilier, Island Community Justice Society, requesting that Victoria County recommend a volunteer from Victoria County to serve on the Board of Directors of the Island Community Justice Society.



**It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that Councillor David Donovan be recommended as Victoria County's representative to serve on the Board of Directors of the Island Community Justice Society. Motion carried.**

3. Information was presented on organizational workshop services put on by Gordon MacIntosh

Sandy Hudson indicated that he has attended workshops facilitated by Mr. MacIntosh and found them beneficial. Mr. MacIntosh will be in Nova Scotia on October 15 and 16, 2009, and will come to the Municipality to conduct a customized workshop.

**It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that the CAO check with other municipal units on Cape Breton to see if they would be interested in having Gordon MacIntosh facilitate a workshop in the area in October. Motion carried.**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Laptops**

Council received laptop computers this evening. It is expected that Council will become paperless and the laptops will be used by Council to receive all pertinent information for the meetings. Carl Thistle will provide direction on their use once Councillors become familiar with the basic operation of the computers.

#### **ecoNova Scotia**

Council was advised that Warden Morrison signed the contribution agreement between the Province of Nova Scotia and the Municipality of the County of Victoria for a green house gas/air pollutant inventory and basic energy audit for the Municipality.

#### **Public Works Committee**

A meeting of the Public Works Committee will be held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Tuesday, June 23, 2009, beginning at 5:00 p.m.

#### **Congratulations**

Deputy Warden Patterson received congratulations from Council on his fine showing as the NDP candidate in the June 9, 2009, Provincial Election.

### **ADJOURN**

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

**Bruce Morrison, Warden**

**Sandy Hudson, CAO**