

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

*October 15, 2001*

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Boularderie Elementary School, Boularderie, on Monday, October 15, 2001, beginning at 6:00 p.m. with Warden Sampson in the Chair.

Present were:

District #1 – Dan E. MacNeil

District #2 – Shane Toms

District #3 – Bruce Morrison, Deputy Warden

District #4 – John Graham MacInnes

District #5 – Gerald Sampson, Warden

District #6 – Lawrence Barron

District #8 – Robert MacLellan

Also present were:

Brian Trask, CAO

Heather MacLean, Recording Secretary

Interested Citizens

Absent was:

District #7 – Wayne Budge (Absent due to illness)

## **CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME**

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Warden Sampson called the meeting to order and welcomed the public in attendance.

## **AGENDA/TIME TO ADJOURN**

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The agenda was presented for approval. The following items are to be added to the agenda:

- Introduction of Ross MacDonald, Director of Development
- Report on Conferences attended by Warden Sampson
- District Concerns

**It was moved by Councillor MacInnes, seconded by Councillor Barron, that the agenda be approved as amended. Motion carried.**

**It was moved by Deputy Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacInnes, that the meeting adjourn no later than 8:30 p.m. Motion carried.**

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**MINUTES/BUSINESS ARISING**

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The minutes of the September 24 and October 1, 2001, Council Sessions were presented for approval.

Brian Trask advised that Charles (Skip) MacKenzie, Regional Director of Assessment, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, will be attending the November 5, 2001, Council Session, pertaining to assessments.

Ross MacDonald, Director of Development, has coordinated the advertisement in the Cape Breton Catalog with Ronald Caplan.

**It was moved by Councillor Barron, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that the September 24 and October 1, 2001, Council minutes be approved. Motion carried.**

**WATER UTILITY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

Courtesy of Council was extended to John Anderson, C. A., Roach Perry Anderson, who was in

attendance to present the financial statements for the three water utilities.

Mr. Anderson presented the financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2001, for the Dingwall Water Utility. The Utility incurred a deficit of \$9,927 on total revenues of \$72,973 and total expenditures of \$82,900. This brings the accumulated deficit of the Utility to \$74,330.

Mr. Anderson also presented a management letter outlining their comments and recommendations for 2001/2002.

**It was moved by Deputy Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacLellan, that the Water Committee initiate a public meeting in Dingwall regarding the water system to determine the public's intentions of supporting the upgrading of the Dingwall Water supply. Motion carried.**

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It was felt that information should be compiled before this meeting to ensure that the public is well informed, with accurate facts.

Mr. Anderson then presented the financial statements for the Little Narrows Water System for the year ended March 31, 2001. This Utility incurred a deficit of \$1,777 on total revenues of \$41,677 and total expenditures of \$43,454. This is an improvement over the previous year; however, the accumulated deficit of the Utility totalled \$34,278 at March 31, 2001.

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A management letter outlining comments and recommendations for 2001/2002 for the Little Narrows Water System was also presented.

The financial statements for the Neil's Harbour/New Haven Water Utility for the year ended March 31, 2001, were then presented for approval.

Mr. Anderson indicated that the Neil's Harbour/New Haven Water Utility incurred a deficit of \$24,417, on total revenues of \$88,207 and total expenditures of \$112,624. The year ended March 31, 2001, represents the initial year of operations for the Utility with only three quarterly billings done, as full operations did not commence until July 1, 2000.

Mr. Anderson indicated that increased revenues reflecting a full year of operations and controlled expenditures should allow this Utility to operate on a more balanced basis in the current year. He also presented the management letter outlining comments and recommendations for the 2001/2002 fiscal year.

Mr. Anderson presented the consolidated financial position of the Municipality as of March 31, 2001. Although the Municipality had a surplus of \$99,163, when including the deficits of the three water utilities, this results in a deficit of \$33,862. Mr. Anderson also included the deficits of the two municipally owned homes for information purposes.

**It was moved by Councillor MacInnes, seconded by Deputy Warden Morrison, that the financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2001, for the Dingwall, Little Narrows and Neil's Harbour/New Haven Water Utilities and the associated management/recommendation letters be accepted. Motion carried.**

Mr. Anderson was excused at this time.

**DINGWALL WATER UPGRADING**

Courtesy of Council was extended to Ed Carey, P. Eng., Carey Geoenvironmental Engineering.

Mr. Carey advised that he is awaiting the results of recent water sampling on the Dingwall Water Supply, to determine if the chlorine dioxide treatment method is appropriate. Once the results are obtained, if they confirm that chlorite won't be a problem, the chlorine dioxide treatment unit will be ordered and should be delivered within one month.

Mr. Carey indicated that he would provide a cost estimate on a new source of water for the Dingwall Water System for the next Council meeting.

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Deputy Warden Morrison indicated that although this chlorine dioxide treatment system will eliminate the THM (trihalomethane) problem, it will not improve the esthetics of the water. The water will remain discoloured and the users will not notice a difference in water quality. Mr. Carey concurred with these comments.

After further discussion, Mr. Carey was excused.

#### ASSESSMENT EXEMPTIONS

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Courtesy of Council was extended to Arthur Pickup, Q. C., Municipal Solicitor.

Mr. Pickup indicated that after a delegation of citizens appeared before Council concerning increases in their tax assessments, he was requested by Council to review two sections of the *Municipal Government Act* that allow for tax exemption and tax deferral for low income taxpayers.

Mr. Pickup advised that traditionally the Province assesses properties and the Council sets a tax rate per \$100 of assessment. He felt that concerns regarding assessment would be best addressed with Skip MacKenzie when he appears at Council in November.

Mr. Pickup reviewed these two sections with Council and advised that these provisions deal with low-income residents and if implemented would not only apply to the residents of one specific area, but to all residents of the County.

Mr. Pickup indicated that Council must look at the financial implications of passing such a policy or by-law.

Council requested Solicitor Pickup to be in attendance when Skip MacKenzie comes to Council in November.

Mr. Pickup was excused at this time.

**RECESS**

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Warden Sampson announced that Council would recess for 10 minutes.

**JOHN BAIN, RURAL CAPE BRETON DISTRICT PLANNING COMMISSION**

Courtesy of Council was extended to John Bain, Director of the Rural Cape Breton District Planning Commission, who was in attendance to make a presentation on planning and zoning.

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Mr. Bain presented a brief overview of the planning process. The only area in the County at present to have planning and zoning in effect is the Village of Baddeck.

Mr. Bain explained the benefits of planning in rural areas. He indicated that planning is a public process with the residents being fully involved.

He indicated that the Planning Commission would work with any community interested in instituting planning to put a good quality document in place that conforms to the wishes of the community. The planning documents are not engraved in stone and can be amended through an amendment process.

Deputy Warden Morrison indicated that in the case of the Baddeck Sewer Treatment Plant upgrading, the planning and zoning in effect in Baddeck was very beneficial.

Mr. Bain indicated that he was willing to discuss this topic in further detail with anyone interested and left copies of his business card. Mr. Bain was excused at this time.

**DISTRICT CONCERNS**

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**District #1**

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It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor MacInnes, that \$300 be approved for the Washabuck Community Centre and \$500 for Branch 124 Legion from the District #1 budget. Motion carried.

**District #2**

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It was moved by Councillor Toms, seconded by Deputy Warden Morrison, that \$300 be approved for the Cape Breton West Midget AAA Inverary Islanders; \$150 for Baddeck Valley 4-H; and \$1,000 for the Victoria Highland Civic Centre from the District #2 budget. Motion carried.

**District #3**

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It was moved by Deputy Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor Toms, that \$1,000 be approved for the Victoria Highland Civic Centre from the District #3 budget. Motion carried.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor Barron, that Carey Geoenvironmental Engineering be paid for drawing up technical specifications and tender documents for the first diversion for the Baddeck Sewage Treatment Plant at a cost of \$5,300. Motion carried.

Deputy Warden Morrison extended appreciation to Council for their support in the replacement and upgrading of the Baddeck Sewage Treatment Plant.

Deputy Warden Morrison indicated that there is a prototype of the sewage treatment plant in Halifax and he requested that he and Councillor Toms be permitted to view this plant prior to construction in Baddeck. Council agreed that Deputy Warden Morrison and Councillor Toms be authorized to travel to Halifax to view this treatment plant.

**District #4**

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**It was moved by Councillor MacInnes, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that \$200 be approved for the North River Community Hall from the District #4 budget. Motion carried.**

**District #5**

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**It was moved by Warden Sampson, seconded by Councillor MacInnes, that a letter be forwarded to ECBC opposing the sale of the “sound stage” and have Arts Cape Breton promote it. Motion carried.**

Gary Collins, EMC, will be absent from the area for a 6-week period and Gary Stockley, Alternate EMC, will be fulfilling the EMC duties. Mr. Collins has requested the purchase of a trunk scanner. This is to be held in abeyance until further investigation.

**It was moved by Warden Sampson, seconded by Councillor MacInnes, that a letter be forwarded to the Honourable Peter Christie, Minister of Community Services, objecting to the increase in age from 18 to 19 for individuals with Downs Syndrome to obtain monthly assistance, and request that the qualification age revert back to 18. Motion carried.**

**District #6**

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**It was moved by Councillor Barron, seconded by Councillor MacInnes, that Paul Burt investigate to determine if there is any way to install a fire exit in the McKrous Subdivision and if so, the CAO look into avenues for paying for such an exit. Motion carried.**

**District #8**

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Councillor MacLellan brought up the matter of the Small Options Homes regarding tax exemption. The Solicitor has previously provided his opinion in this regard and the CAO is to write a letter outlining this opinion to Highland Visions Society.

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**ROSS MACDONALD, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT**

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Warden Sampson then introduced Ross MacDonald, Director of Development, to the public in attendance.

Mr. MacDonald outlined his position to those in attendance. One of themes he has been working

on is wind generation and alternative energy strategies and he indicated his desire to hold a public forum on this subject.

Mr. MacDonald indicated that he also would like to hold a public forum on the Farm/Agriculture Loan Board.

He requested that the Municipality, through the CED Committee, sponsor these events.

**It was moved by Deputy Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacInnes, that a maximum of \$1,000 be approved for Ross MacDonald to host public forums on alternative energy strategies and the Farm/Agriculture Loan Board. Motion carried.**

**MABEL MACEACHERN**

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Warden Sampson recognized former Municipal Clerk, Mabel MacEachern, who was in attendance.

**NEW DAWN ENTERPRISES**

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Warden Sampson advised that New Dawn Enterprises will be hosting a seminar, “Building Communities In The 21<sup>st</sup> Century” on October 25-26, 2001.

**OPEN PERIOD FOR THE PUBLIC**

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A resident brought up a concern about the lack of police presence in the Boularderie area. Sgt. MacKenzie is to be invited to the November 5, 2001, Council meeting and the public are invited to come to this meeting to voice their concerns.

A resident brought up a concern about the lack of adequate brush cutting and community signs in Victoria County.

**It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor MacLellan, that a letter be forwarded to the Department of Transportation requesting that the brush along Highway 105 in Victoria County be cut back the full length of the**

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**highway as is done in the municipalities east and west of Victoria County and further requesting that local community signs be erected in Victoria County. Motion carried.**

A resident brought up a concern about a potential fire hazard in the New Campbellton/Cape Dauphin area. Timber has been cut along the road and the brush has been left behind. Warden Sampson indicated that he would contact Charlie MacDonald, Department of Transportation, in this regard.

**ADJOURN**

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**There being no further business, on motion of Councillor Barron, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.**



