

**VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL**  
**February 1, 2010**

A meeting of the Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, February 1, 2010, 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 #8 – Robert MacLellan

Also present were:

Sandy Hudson, CAO  
Heather MacLean, Recording Secretary

Absent was:

District #7 – David Donovan (Out of Town)

**CALL TO ORDER**

Warden Morrison called the meeting to order and acknowledged Victoria-The Lakes MLA, Keith Bain, who was in the audience.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The agenda was presented for approval.

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

**NSPI LOW-INCOME HOMEOWNERS ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAM**

Courtesy of Council was extended to Katherine Reed who was in attendance to explain NSPI's Energy Efficiency Program for Low-Income Homeowners with Electric Heat.

Mr. Reed indicated that she has been contracted by Nova Scotia Power to do outreach for them on the Low-Income Energy Efficiency Program.

The Low-Income Energy Efficiency Program is offered to homeowners living on lower incomes and who heat primarily with electricity. All types of residences are eligible to apply (mobile homes, semi-detached, single family homes, etc.). The program is available to homeowners across Nova Scotia and offers energy audits and upgrades such as insulation in attics, walls, crawlspaces, caulking to seal of drafts and efficient lighting.

Ms. Reed advised that most people living on low incomes are not able to pay for energy efficient upgrades. They would benefit from having their energy consumption reduced. She presented information on the program and the Statistics Canada 2008 before tax low income cut off lines. The audit and upgrades are done free of charge if the eligibility requirements are met. All the individuals must do is make application. Ms. Reed indicated that there is some flexibility in the program.

The program started in July, 2009. Helping Nova Scotians use less electricity at home and work is a fundamental part of NSPI's long term plan for reducing environmental emissions and keeping current and future electricity demands manageable.

Ms. Reed indicated that further information on the program could be obtained by visiting the NSPI website – [www.nspower.ca/LIH](http://www.nspower.ca/LIH).

Ms. Reed also advised of the EnerGuide Program through Conserve Nova Scotia and RRAP Grants that are available through the Province. She answered various questions of Council.

Warden Morrison extended a vote of thanks to Ms. Reed for the information provided and she left at this time.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 18, 2010**

The minutes of the January 18, 2010, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

**It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of January 18, 2010, be approved as presented. Motion carried.**

#### **BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

**John Malcom. Cape Breton District Health Authority**

Sandy Hudson advised that John Malcom, CEO, Cape Breton District Health Authority, is available to meet with Council on any Monday in March, 2010.

Mr. Malcom is to be invited to attend Council on Monday, March 1, 2010.

**DISTRICT CONCERNS**

**District #5**

Deputy Warden Patterson expressed concern with the increase in break and enters in District #5 and indicated he would address this matter with Staff Sgt. Thompson when he is in attendance later in the meeting.

**District #6**

Councillor Dauphinee indicated that he felt Victoria County might be missing information on programs and funding for trails in Nova Scotia and felt it would be beneficial to have someone from Trails Nova Scotia come to Council to explain the programs available.

Councillor Dauphinee indicated that the Smokey Recreational Society is still hopeful that the project to upgrade the outdoor rink at Ingonish Beach will proceed in the future and as a result are requesting Council to extend the committed funding to the next budget year.

**It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacLellan, that the \$118,000.00 allocated for the Smokey Recreational Society rink upgrade be deferred until the 2010/2011 budget dependent on funding being received from the other funding partners. Motion carried.**

**District #8**

Councillor MacLellan indicated that he is receiving complaints with regard to the snow clearing in District #8.

**District #4**

Councillor MacInnis questioned on whether there was a program for welcoming new residents to Victoria County. He felt it was in the best interests of the County and a courtesy to the new residents to have an information package available.

**It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that the development of an information package for new residents be investigated. Motion carried.**

**District #2**

Councillor MacCuspig again brought up the signage issue at MacLeod's Brook, Middle River.

**It was moved by Councillor MacCuspig, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that a letter be forwarded to the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal requesting they revisit the present signage warning of the turn at MacLeod's Brook, Middle River, and expressing concern on the lack of visibility in both directions at MacIntyre Road, Middle River. Motion carried.**

Councillor MacCuspig indicated that he will be requesting, at the request of the Middle River Volunteer Fire Department, to move the street light at MacLeod's Brook to the opposite side of the road. He will provide the necessary information for placing the order to NSPI.

Concern was also expressed on the new asphalt paving recently completed on the Big Baddeck Road. The asphalt is not wintering well and is breaking up.

**It was moved by Councillor MacCuspig, seconded by Councillor MacLellan, that a letter be forwarded to the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal expressing concern on the quality of the new asphalt paving on the Big Baddeck Road. Motion carried.**

**District #1**

**It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor MacCuspig, that a letter be forwarded to the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal requesting that the clearing of brush along the roadsides in Victoria County be completed early in the season in this year. Motion carried.**

Councillor MacNeil also indicated he would be addressing the break and enter situation in District #1 with Staff Sgt. Thompson when he appears before Council.

**District #3**

Warden Morrison indicated that there is funding available to municipalities to assist in the preparation of a wind energy development plan. Up to \$50,000.00 is available.

**It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that the CAO contact the Department of the Environment concerning funding for a wind energy development plan for Victoria County. Motion carried.**

**KEITH BAIN, MLA**

Keith Bain advised the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal will be looking at the condition of the new pavement on the Big Baddeck Road within the next couple of days.

Councillor MacNeil indicated that the section of guardrail at Estmere was fixed, but there are other sections of guardrail that also should be repaired. Keith Bain indicated that there are a number of sections of guardrail and a dip in the road in this area that will be investigated by the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

**THEATRE ON THE HILL**

A request for funding in the amount of \$95,000.00 over a three year period was received from the Theatre on the Hill.

**It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Deputy Warden Patterson, that the Theatre on the Hill funding request be referred to budget. Motion carried.**

**CAPE BRETON REGIONAL HOSPITAL FOUNDATION**

The Cape Breton Regional Hospital Foundation will be holding a reception on February 11, 2010, to thank their donors for the contributions to the Cape Breton Cares Campaign. The information will be forwarded to all Councillors when received to ensure representation from Victoria County.

**DEVELOPMENT OFFICER POSITION**

Sandy Hudson advised that the 23 applications received for the Economic Development Officer position were reviewed and 8 have been identified. The qualifications of these 8 individuals are being investigated.

**STAFF SGT. ARCHIE THOMPSON, RCMP**

Courtesy of Council was extended to Staff Sgt. Archie Thompson, RCMP, to provide Council with an update.

Staff Sgt. Thompson indicated that as Council is aware, the RCMP lost the contract to provide police services to Wagmatcook First Nation effective April 1, 2010. As a result, the 3 members who serve Wagmatcook will be transferred out.

Staff Sgt. Thompson indicated that the impact this change will have on the rest of the Victoria County will not be a factor. He indicated that in reality, the regular members in Victoria County were often required to provide assistance to the 3 members stationed at Wagmatcook.

Staff Sgt. Thompson indicated that he has met with a representative from the Cape Breton Regional Police and a Memorandum of Understanding has been developed to address in detail the use of the RCMP holding cells and other issues and this is now in the hands of the legal department for review.

Staff Sgt. Thompson indicated that they were successful in having the School Resource position reassigned to a Street Crime position. Constable Scott MacKenzie is the member assigned to this position and he will now focus on break and enters and drug dealers.

Deputy Warden Patterson advised of the meeting he attended in his district and the misconceptions that are out there as a result of the loss of policing in Wagmatcook. He felt it was important to counteract this message. Staff Sgt. Thompson indicated that he is confident that there will be no decrease in service to Victoria County.

The Cape Breton Regional Police have indicated that the RCMP's assistance will not be required in Wagmatcook. The Cape Breton Regional Police will be providing backup from their jurisdiction to Wagmatcook when required. Staff Sgt. Thompson indicated he will monitor the situation and keep Council informed on this matter.

Staff Sgt. Thompson also indicated that he spoke with the Chief and Council of Wagmatcook and indicated that they want to continue to be good neighbours. He indicated that during their service provision to Wagmatcook, they have done a lot of outreach and instituted a number of programs with the youth in the area.

Councillor Dauphinee expressed concern with regard to the youth hanging out and drug activity in the Ingonish Beach area and he requested that extra patrols be done in the area to increase the RCMP's visibility. Staff Sgt. Thompson indicated that now that there is a Street Crime member, he can do more work in that regard and has access to his counterparts in Street Crime in Port Hawkesbury, as well as the Drug Unit in Sydney.

Councillor Dauphinee also indicated that he is hearing from his constituents that there is a lack of respect for the RCMP members in the area and he questioned whether something could be done with the youth in the area to promote good relations.

Staff Sgt. Thompson indicated that he encourages Member involvement in schools and indicated that as part of his annual performance plan he will focus on youth and drug related activity in Victoria County.

Councillor MacLellan expressed concern on the arsons that have taken place in his area and was more concerned as he felt there were residents that knew more about these crimes and were not sharing this information with the RCMP. He indicated that he was pleased with the service provided by the RCMP in his area.

Staff Sgt. Thompson indicated that arsons are hard to prove and prosecute, but the RCMP leave no stone unturned in trying to solve these crimes.

Councillor MacInnis questioned on the reason for not releasing the report on the John Simon matter. Staff Sgt. Thompson indicated that the reason it was not released was to do with the federal Privacy Act. He indicated that he did not have any involvement with this decision. The Commanding Officer of the "H" Division would be responsible for this decision.

Councillor MacNeil brought up the concern with regard to break and enters in his area, one of which occurred as recent as last night across the road from his residence. He requested that the RCMP increase their presence in the area. Staff Sgt. Thompson indicated he would include this request in their annual performance plan and increase patrols, not only in the daylight hours, but also in the nighttime and early morning hours when such crimes are likely to occur.

Councillor MacNeil questioned on a Neighbourhood Watch Program and Staff Sgt. Thompson indicated they could attend a community meeting in this regard if requested.

Staff Sgt. Thompson advised that in relation the break and enters in Boularderie, an individual was charged with an unrelated incident and since that time the break and enters in the area have stopped. He indicated that the RCMP would like to be kept informed on discussions and hearsay in the areas, as this can be of great assistance to them.

Deputy Warden Patterson questioned whether there were any plans for a media release to counteract the unauthorized media release of last week. He felt it would be a good idea to get the correct message out to the public.

Staff Sgt Thompson indicated that there will remain an eleven member complement in Victoria – 6 in the Baddeck Detachment and 5 in the Ingonish Beach Detachment. There are 3 members who live locally in Victoria County, but work in other detachments that could be called upon if required. Also a member in a recruitment

position works out the Baddeck Detachment and can be utilized if required. He is confident that Victoria County will not see a decrease in service.

Warden Morrison thanked Staff Sgt. Thompson for keeping Council informed and indicated that he would be invited to return to Council in May or June after the Cape Breton Regional Police have been in Wagmatcook for a time to see if or how the RCMP have been affected.

Staff Sgt. Thompson indicated he would take the following from the meeting – that Council would like to see an increase in the RCMP's involvement with the youth; increased work on drug related activity; more patrols in rural areas late at night to deter break and enters; and a possible media release regarding the RCMP and Wagmatcook.

Warden Morrison extended a vote of thanks to Staff Sgt. Thompson and he was excused at this time.

### **RECESS**

Warden Morrison advised that Council would recess for 10 minutes.

### **VICTORIA COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN**

The Victoria County Strategic Plan is a standing agenda item for each session. Deputy Warden Patterson indicated that the hiring of an Economic Development Officer is in progress and a meeting of the Victoria County Municipal Community Development Committee will meet on February 10, 2010.

### **MAPPER POSITION**

Keith Bain, MLA, questioned on the present status of the Mapper position for Victoria County. At present a Mapper comes to Baddeck every second week for a four hour period.

A letter was forwarded to Minister Jennex, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, in regard to this position and a meeting has been requested with her when she does her province wide tour to discuss this issue.

Mr. Bain will write a letter in support of the position to the Minister also, and send a copy of the letter to the CAO for Council's information.

### **IN CAMERA**

**It was moved by Councillor MacLellan, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, to move In Camera to discuss a personnel issue. Motion carried.**

**RECONVENE**

**It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, to come out of In Camera and return to the regular session. Motion carried.**

**ADJOURN**

**There being no further business, on motion of Councillor MacLellan, the meeting adjourned.**

**Bruce Morrison, Warden**

**A. W. (Sandy) Hudson, CAO**