

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
February 14, 2011

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, February 14, 2011, 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 – Johnny Buchanan

Also present were:

Sandy Hudson, CAO
Heather MacLean, Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Warden Morrison called the meeting to order and presented the agenda for approval. It was noted that Marlene Usher, ECBC, will not be in attendance tonight and as a result, Nona MacDermid has been requested to appear earlier than she was scheduled.

It was moved by Councillor MacCuspic, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that the agenda be approved as amended. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 24, 2011

The minutes of the January 24, 2011, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of January 24, 2011, be approved as presented. Motion carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Fire Departments

The draft fire study report presented by Marathon Human Resources was accepted in draft form and they are now accepting feedback for inclusion in the final report. The final report should be available for presentation in late February/early March.

Councillor MacInnis advised that the Chief Officers Committee met and representatives from 9 of the 11 departments were in attendance. The communications funding was discussed at this meeting and the required invoices will be forwarded to the Municipality for reimbursement.

County Flag

The schools will be contacted with regard to the contest to develop a Victoria County flag.

Federation of Canadian Municipalities

The Annual Conference of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities will be held in Halifax from June 3-6, 2011. Any Council member wishing to attend may do so. Warden Morrison, Deputy Warden Patterson and Councillor Dauphinee indicated they would be attending and Councillors MacCuspic and MacNeil indicated an interest, but would advise at a later date. Councillors MacInnis, Donovan and Buchanan will not be attending.

It was moved by Councillor Donovan, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that accommodations and registration for the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Conference be completed for 5 participants. Motion carried.

Keltic Lodge

A meeting is scheduled with Jim Frise, Manager of the Keltic Lodge, as a follow up to the meeting with Minister Paris. It will be held at the Keltic on February 15, 2011, at 10:00 a.m. Councillor Dauphinee indicated he was unavailable; however, Warden Morrison and Councillors Donovan and Buchanan will attend.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Deputy Warden Patterson updated on the Age-Friendly Communities initiative. Representatives at Mount Saint Vincent University researched the Municipality's ICSP, Strategic Plan and Economic Development Strategy and have identified their preliminary findings and it was felt that it was now time to formalize the County's Age Friendly Communities Committee.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that Council endorse the formation of the Age Friendly Communities Committee and members of the Committee include:

- Warden Bruce Morrison
- Deputy Warden Fraser Patterson
- Councillor Larry Dauphinee
- Arlene Morrison, Facility Manager, Alderwood Rest Home
- Dr. Jeanne Ferguson, Geriatric Psychiatrist, CBDHA
- Eileen Woodford, Coordinator of Rural Health, CBDHA
- Thelma Grant
- Joan Fownes
- Marge Doucette

Motion carried.

Discussion took place on the formation of a Committee, when Council recently did away with Committees. It was indicated that this Committee has been formed to deal with a specific task and is not considered a long term Committee.

Warden Morrison indicated that he was invited to a meeting concerning the Cape Breton Partnership in Halifax last week where the partnership and its role were discussed. Dan White & Associates have been retained to provide a report on same and Warden Morrison indicated he would circulate this report to Council when received. Keith MacDonald, Cape Breton Partnership, will be invited to come to Council to discuss this report at a future meeting.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #1

Councillor MacNeil indicated that he received a call from a resident of his district regarding Council's decision to purchase Victoria County highway signs. This resident expressed concern over the increase in their water rates and felt that the cost and purchase of these signs was unnecessary.

It was indicated that the Municipality does not set the water rates. The water rates are set by the Utility and Review Board.

Councillor Buchanan indicated he had a similar comment on the signs and this resident was concerned because they needed and had no water system.

Council generally felt that it was important to brand the Municipality and that most every town and County in Nova Scotia now have highway signs and it is considered more of an investment than an expense.

Councillor MacNeil questioned on whether the Municipality could give a rebate on the water rates. The CAO questioned on why the Municipality would want to take this action.

Warden Morrison indicated that no matter what decisions are made, there is always someone who will disagree. Council respects the residents' opinions but indicated that they would move forward with the signage.

Councillor MacNeil indicated that during the last couple storms, the dirt roads in his district were not plowed for a lengthy period of time. The government's policy on the plowing of secondary roads was discussed. It is the policy that secondary roads will be plowed within 24 hours after the end of a storm. Operators do not go out until they are dispatched.

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 government change their policies on plowing of all roads. Motion carried.

Councillor MacNeil indicated that he wished to notify Council that there are a couple of projects in his area that may be looking for funding during budget talks.

District #2

Councillor MacCuspig indicated that he had a discussion with Dr. Bill Sutherland, who works at Waycobah and does part-time work in Baddeck, concerning what new doctors are looking for when deciding to set up practice in an area. He would be willing to come to Council to discuss this matter.

Council will be meeting with senior doctors in Victoria County in the future and felt it would also be beneficial to meet with Dr. Sutherland.

District #4

Councillor MacInnis expressed concern on the number of tractor trailers that have been travelling through his district with gravel to the Ingonish Ferry Wharf Project. There is no source of gravel in the northern area and he questioned whether the County may have a property available in the northern area of the County that can be utilized as a gravel pit.

Discussion took place. The first step would be to do an inventory of properties owned by the Municipality.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councilor Dauphinee, that an inventory of municipal properties between the top of Smokey and Bay St. Lawrence be identified. Motion carried.

Councillor MacInnis indicated that there was an announcement recently made regarding seal products being shipped to China. The seal harvest is a multi-million dollar industry and could create employment in our County.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that Robert Courtney be contacted for information on the Seal Harvest. Motion carried.

Councillor MacInnis presented an invoice from Ron Caplan, Breton Books, for advertising in the 2010-2011 Cape Breton Catalogue. The amount of the invoice is \$1725.00.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Deputy Warden Patterson, that this request be referred to budget talks and Mr. Caplan be advised of its referral. Motion carried.

District #8

Councillor Buchanan questioned on the ownership and plowing of the Dump Road. Two residences before the gate were snowbound from Friday, until the road was plowed by the Transfer Station workers on Tuesday. Sandy Hudson will investigate this matter.

Councillor Buchanan also mentioned that the roof of the office trailer at the Dingwall Transfer Station is leaking and the staff finds the building cold. This matter should be addressed through Robert Dauphinee, Director of Public Works.

District #7

Councillor Donovan presented a letter of thanks on behalf of the residents of Capstick Manor for the Municipality's donation towards redecorating the lounge area.

Councillor Donovan requested clarification on the South Harbour Channel issue. He questioned on who is responsible in the event of the channel blocking, as he would like to be prepared when he is approached in the future when the channel blocks. This matter will be investigated.

The Kings Point Wharf was divested a few years ago and it was brought up at a Harbour Authority meeting. Councillor Donovan questioned whether other areas had

assumed ownership of a wharf. Councillor MacNeil indicated he would contact the Central Cape Breton Community Venture group in Iona who took over ownership of the Iona Government Wharf sometime ago for information.

Councillor Donovan questioned whether the Municipality would consider applying for a summer student employment grant for a student for the Enviro-Depot at Neil's Harbour. It was felt that the same should be applied for the Baddeck Enviro-Depot.

It was moved by Councillor Donovan, seconded by Deputy Warden Patterson, that the Municipality apply for two positions through the Service Canada Student Employment Program. Motion carried.

District #8

Councillor Donovan advised that the Cabot High School Basketball Team will be hosting the provincials in March and are looking to borrow a Victoria County flag for the opening ceremonies. Sandy Hudson advised that he would check to see if an old County flag is available.

District #6

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that \$1,500.00 be approved from the District #6 budget for Ski Cape Smokey for their continuing maintenance costs. Motion carried.

Councillor Donovan agreed to provide \$500 from the District #7 budget for Ski Cape Smokey for continuing maintenance costs also.

Councillor Dauphinee indicated the ski hill operations are going well and he received a number of comments thanking Council for their contribution towards the operation of Ski Cape Smokey.

Warden Morrison recognized Councillor Dauphinee for his leadership, contribution and efforts in re-opening a portion of Ski Cape Smokey this season. He offered congratulations on behalf of Council.

District #5

Deputy Warden Patterson indicated that he received complaints with regard to Seaside's high-speed and on talking to Tom Wilson he was advised that Seaside will be working to increase speed in all areas. The Municipality should continue to compel both

Aliant and Seaside to keep current, by installing new equipment and upgrading their high speed framework in Victoria County.

Deputy Warden Patterson again brought up the email server for the County email. He was again unable to access his email this weekend and has sent all the times he has been unable to do so to Sandy Hudson for his information. Sandy Hudson advised that he has had one meeting and will be having one with Aliant regarding our options concerning our email.

District #3

Deputy Warden Patterson assumed the Chair.

Warden Morrison advised that the old Alderwood has been sold to the MacLeod Group and their plans for its future should unfold within the next few months. He, on behalf of the Alderwood Board and Council, extended a vote of thanks to Deputy Warden Patterson for all the work he has done on behalf of the Alderwood Board in the past months.

It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacCuspic, that a letter of sympathy be sent to Mary Jess MacDonald, wife of recently deceased Inverness County Councillor, Ed MacDonald, from Victoria County Council. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison reassumed the Chair.

NONA MACDERMID

Council was advised by Councillor Dauphinee that he just received an email from Nona MacDermid advising that due to the weather, she will not be attending tonight's meeting.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY COORDINATOR

The job description for the Physical Activity Strategy Coordinator was circulated and Warden Morrison indicated that a few minor changes are required to the job description. The position is to report to the CAO instead of the Director of Recreation and Tourism.

It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that the job description for the Physical Activity Strategy Coordinator position be approved and the position be re-advertised. Motion carried.

PROVINCIAL VOLUNTEER NOMINEE

Council was provided with six nominees for the County representative to attend the Provincial Volunteer Ceremony in Halifax. It was agreed that the nominees would be ranked with 6 being the highest and 1 being the lowest and the results tabulated and the winner selected based on the most votes received.

GAELIC COLLEGE

Council had previously agreed to provide \$50,000, over a two year period, to the Gaelic College Expansion Project. The first \$25,000 installment was paid last year and they are now looking for the second \$25,000 installment. This payment will be forwarded to the Gaelic College.

WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT BURSARY

The Women in Local Government Bursary is a joint project of the UNSM/AMA. They are looking for assistance from municipalities towards this program.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that the Municipality contribute \$500 towards the Women in Local Government Bursary Program. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The 2009/2010 consolidated financial statements for the Municipality were forwarded to Council electronically.

RECESS

Warden Morrison announced that Council would recess for five minutes.

DATES FOR MARCH COUNCIL SESSIONS

Victoria County Municipal Council will be held on March 14, March 21 and March 28, 2011.

Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation and Age Friendly Communities are to be the two presentations on the March 21, 2011 agenda.

Councillor MacNeil, Councillor Donovan and Sandy Hudson will not be in attendance at the February 28, 2011, Council meeting.

BUSINESS DISCOVERY CHALLENGE SURVEY

Council provided their comments, and the opinions received from constituents, regarding the Business Discovery Challenge Survey. The deadline for submitting the survey was February 11, 2011, and it will be interesting to find out the level of participation in the survey. More information will be available from Nona MacDermid at a later date and the draws for the gift certificates will be done at a future time.

CAPE BRETON HIGHLANDS NATIONAL PARK PROJECT

Councillor Dauphinee indicated that an invitation was received to attend the announcement of the completion of the project at the Cape Breton Highlands National Park. This event will be held at the Big Fiddle in Sydney on February 16, 2011, at 11:00 a.m. Councillor Dauphinee indicated he would be attending and any other Council member interested in attending can do so.

NOMINEE FOR THE PROVINCIAL VOLUNTEER AWARDS CEREMONY

The scores for the municipal nominee to attend the Provincial Volunteer Awards ceremony in Halifax were tabulated and the successful nominee is Rob MacDonald who was nominated by the North Highlands Community Organization.

It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that Rob MacDonald be the County's representative at the Provincial Volunteer Awards Ceremony in Halifax. Motion carried.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, on motion of Councillor MacNeil, the meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Bruce Morrison, Warden

Sandy Hudson, CAO

