

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
March 21, 2011

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, March 21, 2011, beginning at 5:00 p.m. with Warden Bruce Morrison in the Chair.

Present were:

District #1 – Paul MacNeil (Late Arrival)
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 was:

Heather MacLean, Recording Secretary

Absent were:

District #2 – Keith MacCuspic
Sandy Hudson, CAO

CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Warden Morrison called the meeting to order and presented the agenda for approval.

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

AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

Courtesy of Council was extended to Jacqueline Campbell, Community Development Coordinator, Department of Seniors.

Ms. Campbell introduced Brenda Hattie to Council. Ms. Hattie is a Researcher/Professor and Project Coordinator for the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging at Mount Saint Vincent University.

Ms. Campbell began by congratulating Council on the leadership shown by Victoria County in their initiative with regard to strategic planning for Age-Friendly Communities.

Ms. Campbell indicated that the first meeting of Victoria County's Age-Friendly Advisory Committee was held earlier this afternoon and focused mainly on goal setting and priority setting. The first step required is data collection and information gathering. Discussion was held on holding focus group meetings, surveys and targeted collection of data. The Nova Scotia Centre on Aging will support the work of the Municipality in regarding to data collection and analysis. The overall goal is to make communities accessible and all inclusive to allow seniors to stay meaningfully engaged in all aspects of the community.

Brenda Hattie advised that the Age-Friendly Communities initiative is a six year old project. The aging demographic provided the realization that if the needs and issues with regard to seniors were not addressed, there would be a problem. The beginning of the project to see what worked and what didn't began in HRM and the second project was carried out in the Municipality of the District of Guysborough. The benefits from these two projects have already been seen.

Councillor MacInnis questioned on the number of municipalities involved in the Age-Friendly Communities Program. Ms. Campbell advised that five municipalities are approaching work at the stage of assessment and priority setting – including Victoria County, Chester, Municipality of Cumberland, Municipality of Argyle and the Municipality of Yarmouth. Mahone Bay and Bridgewater are also involved but are working from a different perspective.

Councillor MacInnis indicated that the majority of the North Shore area are seniors and the health centre has a weekly hot meal where as many as 65 plus seniors gather. It is very well received and the social aspect is very important and is rejuvenating the community. He also lamented that the art of visiting is no longer and this is a huge loss to the social aspect of the community.

Councillor Buchanan questioned on how Guysborough carried out their program. Ms. Hattie advised that they realized the fact that seniors were socially isolated and initiated a local fun day that they took on the road and travelled to each community throughout the County. They had guest speakers, exercise programs, health sessions and used the local community halls as the gathering place. They encouraged seniors to bring other seniors with them and made community halls accessible and the program took off. Even after the funding expired, the program carried on. They also developed a community garden with raised beds which the seniors cared for.

Ms. Campbell indicated that across Canada there are communities involved in this initiative that are further along in the process and they recognize that communities need to be a safe and accessible place for people of all ages.

The Town of Pictou has also refurbished a local park to be accessible for children and seniors. They have integrated all generations and everyone is welcome.

Councillor Donovan advised that in the local fire department, they do not let seniors retire from the department when they reach retirement age. The oldest member is 89 years old and he still participates in functions put on by the Department. There are other seniors involved also. He indicated that it is seniors that keep communities going. People want to stay engaged and active.

Councillor Dauphinee indicated that he kept a close eye on the Ski Lodge when it was open this season and the one thing that was missing was the seniors and he felt the reason was accessibility as the lodge is not accessible. This highlighted to him that change is required. He indicated that he has seen an increase in calls from seniors with regard to lack of activities for them to participate in.

Deputy Warden Patterson updated Council on the Advisory Committee meeting held today. It was felt that the Committee needed further representation from the northern area of the County, as well as First Nations.

Ms. Campbell indicated that applications are now being accepted until May 16, 2011, for the Age-Friendly Communities Programs grants. Funding is available for two types of projects – strategic planning projects and age-friendly projects. There are also positive aging program grants available with the same deadline date. She encouraged the Municipality to apply for Phase 2 funding. By completing the two phases, all the milestones will be met and it will support the move and provide recognition as an age-friendly community. She indicated that the Municipality can make multiple applications.

Councillor MacNeil indicated that the seniors' complex in Iona reverted to more of a low income housing facility, but recently a number of seniors have entered the facility and the atmosphere has changed. They are now having card games, sing songs, etc. and this is positive. Ms. Campbell indicated that housing has been identified as a priority in the ICSP.

Councillor MacNeil advised that in the last five years a number of military personnel have retired to his area and have come to volunteer at the local legion and this has helped immensely.

Warden Morrison questioned on whether the Municipality is eligible to apply for Phase 2 funding at this point and Ms. Campbell indicated that this would be perfect

timing to submit an application. Once the strategic planning portion is completed, then the Municipality will be able to engage in the implementation phase right away. She explained the formal application process to Council.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that the Municipality make application for Phase 2 funding under the Age-Friendly Communities Grant Program. Motion carried.

Ms. Campbell advised that information on all programs can be viewed on the Department of Seniors website.

Ms. Campbell and Ms. Hattie were requested to meet with the Councillors from the North of Smokey area briefly to update on the Advisory Committee meeting this afternoon. In the near future, a Committee meeting will be scheduled in the North of Smokey area.

Warden Morrison extended a vote of thanks to the ladies for their attendance.

RECESS

Warden Morrison announced that Council would recess for 10 minutes.

ECBC

Warden Morrison extended the courtesy of Council to Marlene Usher, Executive Director General, Development and Advocacy; and Tom Plumridge, Director General, Community Economic Development; Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation (ECBC).

Ms. Usher and Mr. Plumridge then made a presentation on Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation to Council (copy attached).

ECBC is a federal Crown corporation established pursuant to Part II of the *Government Organization Act*, Atlantic Canada 1987 (also known as the *Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation Act*).

Ms. Usher indicated that ECBC has a broad legislative mandate. The objects of the Corporation are to promote and assist, with any person or levels of government or any agency of government, the financing and development of industry on Cape Breton Island to provide employment outside the coal producing industry and to broaden the base of the economy of the Island.

ECBC has the following powers:

- Lend money either with or without security or interest

- Make grants
- Purchase shares
- Guarantee repayment
- Purchase, lease or otherwise acquire or sell land
- Hold mortgages
- Do all other things the Corporation deems incidental or conducive to the attainment of its objects

The governance structure of ECBC was outlined to Council. ECBC's core business lines are:

- Commercial development
- Community development
- Environmental stewardship
- Property development

Mr. Plumridge explained these four core business lines to Council.

Ms. Usher outlined the objectives and focus of the advocacy and development section of ECBC.

On completion of the presentation, Warden Morrison requested Council to introduce themselves and identify the areas of the County they represented.

Deputy Warden Patterson brought up a major event that took place in Victoria County – the Silver Dart Centennial, and questioned on whether there was any way to measure the effect of this event. Ms. Usher indicated that a lot of money was spent on this event and it did not have the economic impact or achieve all the outcomes that were expected. She advised that she did not have figures with her, but she indicated that ECBC is now more conscience on looking at outcomes on a go forward basis.

The SCIF funding that used to be administered by ECBC was received by the Ross Ferry Marine Park organization about 6 years ago and Deputy Warden Patterson indicated that the Park has become a focal point for the community.

Councillor Dauphinee brought up the community centre program and indicated that he found there were two drawbacks to this program in that the funding had to be matched 50%/50% and that the funding limit at \$20,000.00 was too low.

Councillor Donovan indicated that he felt very little money under the rink program came to Victoria County. He advised that after many tries, he has now been successful at accessing funding, but it was a long and frustrating process. One of the problems seemed to be the lack of communication between ECBC and the Province.

Councillor Donovan also expressed concern with regard to the façade program that is currently being initiated around the Cabot Trail. The fact that it is only for businesses located on the trail is disappointing. There are very few businesses on the top of the Island that are located on the Trail. There are a number of businesses in Neil's Harbour and Dingwall, but because they are not located on the Trail, they are ineligible. He hoped there would be a Phase 2 to this program that would expand to cover these areas.

Mr. Plumridge indicated that there is usually a follow up phase when the project is completed and if merits are strong enough, then it could be given consideration.

Councillor Donovan brought up the matter of the Thunder in the Highlands Festival. With the increasing popularity in motorcycling, this is a good event, however; he would like to see it fan out more to allow for more participation in the northern area of the County. Ms. Usher indicated that if organizations wish to host events in conjunction with the festival, they would be advertised and participants would be interested.

Councillor Buchanan brought up his concern with regard to the North Victoria Community Centre and their efforts to obtain funding to complete the rink. Every time an application is submitted, additional information is requested and it becomes frustrating. The possibility of arranging a meeting on this project application was discussed.

Councillor MacInnis questioned whether consideration has ever been given to providing assistance to seafood producers to attend trade shows, such as the Seafood Trade Show in Boston. Ms. Usher indicated that this could be considered and Darlene Sponagle is the contact for trade and festivals.

Councillor MacNeil questioned on the Community Centre Program and whether the legion could qualify for this program. The requirements of this program are that the community centre must be community owned and accessible to the community.

Councillor MacNeil questioned on the dredging of small harbours and whether there was money through ECBC. Ms. Usher indicated that this was not on their radar, as their policy is centered around strategically positioned marinas.

Warden Morrison again brought up the Silver Dart Centennial celebrations, indicating that hosting such an event in February was a challenge. The comments earlier about not receiving the anticipated return from this event were discussed and Warden Morrison questioned whether this information was articulated back to the Committee. As a Committee member, he was not aware of this fact.

It was felt that the Committee should be advised and there should be a session where there can be a review and discussion of the overall event to see where there were shortcomings and learn for the future.

Warden Morrison also questioned on whether there was a way ECBC would partner with the County to look into alternative energy. Victoria County has the potential for wind turbines and tidal energy.

It was indicated that ECBC could play a role at the study stage at this point and the contact at ECBC would be Gerard Shaw. Warden Morrison advised the Municipality would be in contact in this regard in the future.

Warden Morrison expressed thanks for the Façade Program that was carried out in Baddeck. It was a remarkable success and has put pride back into the community.

Warden Morrison extended a vote of thanks to Ms. Usher and Mr. Plumridge for their report and they were excused at this time.

RECESS

Warden Morrison announced that Council would recess for 5 minutes

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MARCH 14, 2011

The minutes of the March 14, 2011, session of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that the March 14, 2011, minutes of Victoria County Municipal Council be approved as presented. Motion carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Little Narrows Water

Councillor MacNeil requested that the meeting held on the Little Narrows Water System be held on a weekend. Both Robert Dauphinee and Sandy Hudson are away on vacation at present and the meeting will be arranged after their return.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Committee Reports to be presented.

POLICY REVIEW

There were no new policies to review at this time.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #4

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that the communities of St. Ann's/North Shore be congratulated for being a recipient of the Governor General's Community Spirit Award. Motion carried.

Councillor MacInnis advised that the Governor General will be presenting the award on July 29-30, 2011.

Councillor MacInnis indicated that with all the talk on alternative energy, he would like to see someone come to Council to talk on solar collectors. This will be investigated.

With the recent disaster in Japan, Councillor MacInnis questioned if the Municipality ever made donation to the Red Cross.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that a donation of \$500 be made to the Canadian Red Cross to be used at their discretion. Motion carried.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that a letter of congratulations be sent from Victoria County to Prince William and his bride-to-be, Kate Middleton, on their upcoming marriage and invite them to come visit Victoria County (his ancestor's namesake) in the future. Motion carried.

Whether the financial request was received from North Shore Gaelic Cultural Centre was questioned and Council was advised it was received. The deadline for applications for community grants funding is April 1, 2011.

District #7

Councillor Donovan questioned whether a reply was received from Canada Post concerning the outside lighting at the Ingonish Post Office. This will be investigated.

Councillor Donovan brought up the matter of the \$400,000.00 funding issue that has been in the media with regard to HRM. He questioned on how to ensure something like this does not happen in Victoria County. Discussion took place. Warden Morrison

indicated that you trust your auditors to do their job and since the 2002 incident a number of changes have been instituted to ensure more accountability.

District #6

Councillor Dauphinee again thanked Council for their support of Ski Cape Smokey this season. It was a successful season and Councillor Dauphinee indicated that they came out of the season in the black. He received comments from children that it was their best March break ever.

There is no lease agreement in place for the Baddeck Branch of the Cape Breton Regional Library and they are requesting that one be put in place.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that the CAO investigate negotiating a lease agreement between the Baddeck Volunteer Fire Department and the Municipality for the Baddeck Public Library. Motion carried.

Councillor Dauphinee that Atlantic Path, a non-profit organization, is researching new ways to fight cancer in Atlantic Canada and are recruiting 30,000 men and women aged 35 to 69 to participate in the study. He indicated that he recently signed up to participate and encouraged Council to review the information and consider joining Atlantic Path.

District #5

Deputy Warden Patterson indicated that at the Age-Friendly Communities Advisory Committee earlier today, it was decided that a wider spectrum of participation is required on this Committee and he felt an invitation should be extended to Wagmatcook First Nation to participate.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that the Warden forward a letter to Chief Norman Bernard, Wagmatcook First Nation, inviting him to serve on the Age-Friendly Communities Advisory Committee for Victoria County. Motion carried.

District #3

Deputy Warden Patterson assumed the Chair.

Warden Morrison indicated that a motion is required to close the four existing individual water utility bank accounts and transfer the balances to the one Victoria County Utility Bank Account.

It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, to close the four water system bank accounts and transfer the balances to the established Victoria County Water Utility bank account. Motion carried.

District #4

Councillor MacInnis indicated that Ron Caplan did not receive payment for the 2010 advertisement in the Cape Breton Catalogue. This matter will be looked into.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, on motion of Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Bruce Morrison, Warden

Sandy Hudson, CAO