

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
June 13, 2011

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the St. Andrew's Hall, Neil's Harbour, on Monday, June 13, 2011, beginning at 5:30 p.m. with Warden Bruce Morrison in the Chair.

Present were:

District #1 – Paul MacNeil
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
Zina MacNeil, Recording Secretary

Absent was:

District#2 – Keith MacCuspic

CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Warden Morrison called the meeting to order and thanked Councillor Donovan for the invitation to come to Neil's Harbour for this session of council, the ladies group for the beautiful supper they provided, and the community members who came out for the meeting. The agenda was presented for approval.

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

NORTH VICTORIA SIX PORTS HARBOUR AUTHORITY

Kim Stockley was welcomed by Warden Morrison to do a presentation on behalf of North Victoria Six Ports Harbour Authority. Kim thanked council for giving her the opportunity to once again present to council. Ms. Stockley went through her presentation that she handed out to council on what the Harbour Authority does and has done, and continues to do.

The cost of operations and the work completed during the 2010/2011 fiscal year is approximately: \$1,615,000.00, 98% went to Cape Breton Businesses/Individuals and 10% of that went to North of Smokey businesses/groups/individuals.

The projects for 2011/2012 include:

- Install electrical on the new wharf at Neil's Harbour,
- Secure funding to place concrete on the service area at the new wharf in Neil's Harbour,
- Carry out maintenance on all gear sheds,
- Secure funding to install a vessel haul-out trailer at Ingonish Ferry,
- Complete all storm related damage that occurred at our harbour sites in December 2010,
- Undertake a complete harbour development plan for Neil's Harbour with a focus on integrating our fishery, community and tourism potential at this site
- Continue to host visiting cruise ships to our harbours,
- Continue to maintain our harbours to the highest possible standards.

The final touches hope to be finished by Wednesday, June 15, 2011 on the new wharf. That is basic summary of what is going on and the floor was opened up for any questions or comments from council on her presentation.

Chairman Morrison took this opportunity to introduce council to the attending community members.

Councillor Donovan thought it was important to see the value of all the work that was done and that it stayed in Cape Breton.

Councillor Buchanan thanked Ms. Stockley for coming but didn't have any questions at this time.

Deputy Warden Patterson congratulated the group on a work done. It was nice to see that the contractors were staying in the area and generating monies back to the community through accommodations and grocery purchases.

Councillor MacInnis wondered if the December 2010 storm made them pro active in what's ahead in the future. The main focus could be put on breakwater enhancement. The whole coastline should be protected not just the coop fisheries. There could've been a lot more damage without what you have in place. Assessment is still undergoing on the other three wharfs. A study on climate changing could impact on the coastline. Ms. Stockley also commented that they are in contact with Port Hawkesbury on cruise ships that come in. They call well in advance to make accommodations for access. They got one or two in last year but would like to expand in that area.

Councillor MacNeil thanked Ms. Stockley as well and he wondered as well about the cruise ship access. Ms. Stockley commented that they have nothing scheduled yet but have had as many as 4 or 5 previously come in to dock.

Councillor Dauphinee thanked Ms. Stockley for her great presentation and investment. He has been questioning on the Ingonish Beach Barrier and Natural Resources and Fisheries are not in agreement on who is responsible for it. It is a natural barrier in a leased harbour. The beach area is provincially owned and the rest is private ownership. No one wants the responsibility.

Warden Morrison commented on the investment made last year as a municipality and the work they did was great for the area.

VICTORIA COOP FISHERIES LTD/OSBORNE BURKE

Mr. Burke was welcomed to council for his presentation on behalf of the Victoria Coop Fisheries. They employ in excess of 125 employees. They want to make the cooperative as self sufficient as possible in all aspects of the local economy.

They have eight buying stations located at various commercial fishing wharves from Little River to Bay St. Lawrence, a processing plant located in New Haven, a fully operational lobster holding facility capable of holding 200,000 pounds, a leased restaurant, in Neil's Harbour, a main office building and own transport company. They have the only lobster processing facility currently operating on Cape Breton Island. Because of a successful fall harvest last year they are expanding fall production this year.

The future plans for the Coop is have a lobster pound holding facility, cold storage facility, possibility of mussel processing, additional buying stations, and a generator system for the current lobster pound. It costs approximately \$150,000 to operate a lobster pound. The challenges they face are the current water system in Neil's Harbour, the sporadic power interruptions that are still continuing, and access to funding.

They are running on the edge of the water system and sometimes have to cut back on production and work closely with water utility so as not to run out. Improvements in the water system would be a great improvement for the operation they need.

Warden Morrison commented that council was well aware of the issues with the operation and water problems.

Councillor MacInnis asked about the possibility of shipping crab as well. Mr. Burke commented on bringing in a shipment of lobster in the spring and the length of time it took to ship by Air Canada. From now on in Canada they will ship via Fed Ex or Purolator takes 2-3 days. They are looking at doing more buying, holding and shipping outside of Canada down the road. Instead of using the middle man they will do themselves but he holding facility is a problem right now.

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Councillor MacNeil questioned on the holding facility sites. They have been checking into two possible sites. The cost would be approximately \$400,000 to double the capacity to hold the lobsters.

Councillor Dauphinee commented on it being the only Lobster Processing plant in Cape Breton. He didn't know that and that was good to know. He thanked the Coop for all the employees they hire. The impact on the economy for that area is huge.

Deputy Warden Patterson, Councillor Buchanan, and Councillor Donovan had no questions or comments at this time and all thanked Mr. Burke for his presentation.

RCMP UPDATE/SERGEANT RICK BEATON

Chairman Morrison commented that there was a last minute piece of correspondence received from a citizen from Dingwall area in relation to RCMP updates and it will be entered into correspondence for the next meeting.

Sergeant Beaton was welcomed to the Neil's Harbour session of council. Sergeant Beaton mentioned that he was acting in his position as Sergeant but as of July 1 he would be permanent in that position. His report will be geared to Ingonish area for this meeting. Corporal Ellis couldn't make the meeting, Constable Redden was transferred, and Constable Davidson is off due to a new baby. Constable Redden was a replacement but he then got transferred. The process is slow and they don't always get someone right away to replace the members who are off, transferred, etc. They have a Constable Fraser who is expected to come soon.

He went over a report on the list of traffic offences. There were 77 altogether. They had done 20 check stops. They have 35 different files open from 911 offences, accidents, off road, sudden death, mental health, etc. 1 firearms related, 9 disturbances, 18 criminal offences, 3 weapons related (unsafe storage), 0 child pornography (one in media was not theirs), 1 drug trafficking, 1 sexual related, 12 harassment offence by phone/internet, 6 assault, theft, 15 damage to property, break and enters reported 13 and 6 arsons.

Criminal record checks are increasing with business's asking for them from employees. Each one takes approximately fifteen minutes to deal with and if you get a hit with a similar birthdate to someone else who has a record you have to send file away and have them clarified and cleared. Most come back cleared but time consuming. There have been 37 false alarms in the last six months and 85 common activities. The total for Ingonish are 341 files and in Baddeck 560. Since April 1st there are 193 calls or reports. There was some discrepancy in the numbers on one of the reports.

Councillor Donovan thanked Sergeant Beaton at this time for his presentation and asked about the discrepancy on the reports and he figured the stats were reversed for the different areas. He will provide a corrected report to Sandy.

Councillor Buchanan thanked Sergeant Beaton and he had the same questions as Councillor Donovan. The number of officers covering the area for the next month was down to the three. The percentage of solved cases was arsons, none were solved, various collision and assault you always know who was involved.

Deputy Warden Patterson questioned on the number of false alarms. They were mostly from the alarm companies. The fire departments respond to them. They are not 911 dispatched they are dispatched from Sydney for residential. The liability is on the fire department if they don't go. It is annoying.

Councillor Dauphinee commented that there were two alarms at the Ski Lodge. There is a problem in Ingonish in the summer with youth drinking, the seniors get nervous, have a problem and calling all the time. They are just calming down now a bit. RCMP presence is needed in the area, with the graffiti on road signs as well. Can the RCMP take action and yes they can if they are caught in the act graffiti is considered causing mischief and you never seem to catch them in the act.

Councillor MacNeil congratulated Sergeant Beaton on his new appointment. He questioned on charges for various offences if any charges are laid. They did pick up one drug offence with the possession of purpose of trafficking. They don't lay charges in most cases because paperwork is done by them and it takes hours to do and very labour intensive. Then when they go to court they get off with a small fine. They have to determine whether the charges are minor or not as to whether to follow through with it. The break and enters have started back up again in District 1 and we would like to see more RCMP presence in that area.

Councillor MacInnis questioned why a flag wouldn't come up if Ingonish normally has 5 officers would it just be a mandatory thing that they would be filled right away. The money is there and it is the busiest time of the year shouldn't the criteria be in place for it. Sergeant Beaton said that they do have four stationed there at the time but one is off. If someone is off it isn't like another job that is filled right away. They don't replace them right away. Councillor MacInnis commented that wouldn't it be more unusual if something happened and not enough officers for the situation. The population doubles this time of year, couldn't pressure be put somewhere to take resources from outside. We are paying for 5 and only have 3 are you providing the same service with fewer officers.

Warden Morrison commented that he heard there was some weekend damage to a couple of businesses in the Baddeck area on the weekend was Sergeant Beaton aware of this. Sergeant Beaton was unaware that there was anything happened in Baddeck.

Rob MacDonald from Sugarloaf commented that it was reassuring to have his report. But if something like arson took place would the lack of having enough people there at the time constraint the investigation. Having meetings so we know what is going on is good so we know where problems are. We do have a problem with fires and arsons. Some cases are still open and they have specialized people helping them with those.

Darrell LaFosse congratulated Sergeant Beaton and in his observations it is not so much the actual crime that is the problem facing the community it is the fear of the crime. What is the solved rate of the crimes and how many cases are closed. The website for the RCMP hasn't been updated in a number of years. Maybe Corporal Ellis or you could make sure it is updated. Why can't you use the extra dollars of the 5th person that isn't here to fund an extra body. We need to have more meeting with the community so they know what is happening and keep informed.

In observation there are 8 RCMP members in the County 4 constables in Ingonish and 3 in Baddeck that is the lower percent of the population but it has the highest crime rate.

The county is now in the process of developing a Police Advisory Committee because it is now required by the province that you have one. But you could have a small informal group separate for the Police Advisory.

Councillor Donovan spoke that Councillor Buchanan, Councillor Dauphinee and himself are in the process after a discussion with Sergeant Beaton in Baddeck, of having Crystal bring people in for an informal sit down within the month on issues.

Kim Stockley mentioned they have 6 ports over 7 million in assets and would like to see more patrols in and around those sites. They have visiting vessels that they don't know who they are and it would be nice to know the presence is there of the RCMP to help protect there assets.

Osbourne Burke congratulated Sergeant Beaton on his position and spoke on the necessity of manpower in the area. The manpower is stretched to the limits most times and the bodies are needed out there and in touch with the community. Recognition of the members to the community is important that we know who's here.

Sergeant Beaton commented that the new reporting system is time consuming. They are now all data clerks and have to enter in a lot of information. Everyone does there own work in entering general reports and stuff. They are in the office now more doing paperwork. They have to decide on the importance of the report and rate it. As of June 1st they don't have to score the files anymore but they did. It is just one little thing that takes time away from availability.

Sandy Hudson commented that six to seven years ago that the park provided extra RCMP Service for the summer months because they were the ones bringing in the extra visitors to the area. They were told it was a provincial matter. If the RCMP were to bring in more members it is the municipality that has to pay the cost.

Kevin Chaisson commented that officers are scarce, how can the community help. Should they be going after politicians for support? The community help via pressure on the local politicians would help get manpower in place.

RECESS

Warden Morrison announced that Council would recess for 5 minutes.

Chairman Morrison made a couple of announcements one that it was Sandy Hudson's birthday today and secondly to introduce the new Physical Activity Coordinator, Vince Forrestall, just hired by the county. He welcomed Mr. Forrestall to Victoria County and asked him to give a synopsis of his background to council.

Vince Forrestall thanked council for having him attend the meeting on his lucky 13th day of June as he started his new job. He went on to say he was a proven advocate and passionate leader with a vast array of knowledge and experience in recreation, Community Development, Partnerships, projects and events, servicing, consultation, strategic planning, AT, and needs assessment.

- I have worked closely with Province, Community Recreation Directors
- Yarmouth, PEI, Annapolis Valley, King's County P.A. Strategy
- Enjoy watching people reap the benefits of participating
- Referee hockey and soccer, volunteered in soccer, hockey, and baseball
- Family enjoys camping, hiking, biking, beach and NS events
- Wife is from PEI, has two daughters

Strategy

- DMA planning, and management services with Jim Morgenstern
- To council I've worked with Jim before on strategy and steering committee
- Work with county members
- P.A. Champions Recreation
- Bike week, AT, walking, trails, geo cache
- Mandate/Vision P.A. a serious epidemic less than 50% of Nova Scotian's are not active enough
- Brand name
- Educate and motivate to increase P.A. By 10%
- Strategies
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- Partners: Victoria County, Health and Wellness, Health Authority, School Board
- Build on Strengths, beat barriers
- IPSOS Reid
- Consultation process focus groups with Victoria County leaders to celebrate success, assets to achieve, and strategies for result areas
- Demographics Victoria County Strategic Plan and ICSP into it
- Public awareness, Physical enhancement, Social Policy/planning, evaluation monitoring

Thank you for giving me this opportunity and I look forward to developing and implementing a strategy.

Warden Morrison commented that his biggest challenge would be Municipal staff and leaders to get us motivated. We look forward to working with you and good luck in your new job.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MAY 24, 2011

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

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

Business Arising

Councillor Donovan questioned whether in the letter to Canada Post included the installation of a light. Sandy commented that he just a copy of the old letter with the new one and no he didn't add on about the installation of a light.

NEW BUSINESS

Public Hearing Date

A public hearing date was discussed for the Planning Advisory with a change of date agreed to be on July 4th in Baddeck at 4:30. This will be advertised for that time.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that the change in date to July 4th be approved for the Planning Advisory hearing. Motion carried.

An application came in from Athol Grant to change a road name on Shore Road.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, to approve the application for road name change from Athol Grant. Motion carried.

Sandy mentioned the Muise property sale came up whether we want to put the tax deed in the County name on Mountain View Road in Dingwall. The basement is full of water. If we sign the deed to take possession we own it.

It was moved by Councillor Donovan, seconded by Councillor Buchanan that the Municipality sign the deed for the Muise property on Mountain View Road in Dingwall. Motion carried.

The Hydro Power Company proposal was questioned and how much the municipality was willing to spend on the proposal. The Fire Department study was between \$25,000 - \$30,000. There are a lot of questions on its affect on tourism with windmills in our backyards. We are more dependant on tourism in Victoria County for economic growth. We have to criteria to look at. It can be put out to 5-6 consultants. We need to put a range on the proposal for the consultants. It would be considerably more work than the fire department study.

We can get a list of consultants from NSPI Wind Energy list and add ACOM to it. It would go out on public tender, NS Procurement, with \$50,000 as the low end and \$75,000 as the high end.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that the range for the RFP's on the Wind Energy Proposals for the consultants be set between \$50,000 and \$75,000. Motion carried.

The Rock Quarry at White Point was discussed. How much do we want to spend to research Effie's Brook? It would be a significant cost just on the environmental study on it. Are we really considering getting into the business of operating a quarry? If we have the property we could lease it to any construction company. The consensus was to put out an RFP on the interest in leasing a quarry.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, to put out intent to RFP to see if any interested parties in developing or leasing, or selling the quarry with a public hearing and open house as part of the RFP. Motion carried.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District#4

Councillor MacInnis questioned Lewis Mountain Property Rd. It is a listed road but is not passable as bridge not good shape. He has had no luck with Steve MacDonald on this issue and there are landowners on the road.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that a letter be sent to the Department of Transportation on the condition of the Lewis Mountain Rd. Motion carried.

District#1

Councillor MacNeil mentioned the start up of the break and enters in his district again. Sergeant Beaton answered his question on that earlier in the meeting. He requested that more presence of the RCMP in the area would help.

He also mentioned he emailed Steve MacDonald on his district roads especially the Cains Mountain Road that it needed gravel. He said he would send Robert Morrison over to check it out.

District #6

Councillor Dauphinee had questions on Lorne Green and unsightly premises. Those would be brought up later in meeting.

District #5

Deputy Warden Patterson commented on the Population Forum he attended on April 30th. A report was handed out on this meeting.

District #8

Councillor Buchanan had two motions to put through council one on a sub station in Meat Cove and the second on Bell Aliant service.

It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor Donovan, to send a letter to the CAO of Inverness County on putting a Sub Station in the Meat Cove are of Bay St. Lawrence. Motion carried.

It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that a letter be sent to Bell Aliant on the lack of cell service in Bay St. Lawrence area. Motion carried.

District #7

Councillor Donovan requested the final payment of the \$55,000 request be released to the fire hall.

It was moved by Councillor Donovan, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that the final installment of the \$55,000 request for funding be released. Motion carried.

District #3

Warden Morrison received a letter that Reverend Karen Lynch will be retiring and a party will be held on the 26th for her. Warden Morrison wondered if someone would go to present a certificate to her as he will be away at that time.

It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that a certificate be presented to Reverend Karen Lynch on the 26th of June. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison met with John Bain last week and he told him to do up a list of unsightly premises. He would confirm by email that he received it. He did receive an email to confirm that he got it.

It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that John Bain, District Planning Commission be asked for an update on this list of unsightly premises on an ongoing basis by CAO, Sandy Hudson. Motion carried.

There are six or seven on the list now so it will be a good test to see how the list goes.

Warden Morrison sent a letter through email to Steve MacDonald, DOT, regarding the sidewalk on Campbell St. and the shoulder on the 107 Old Margaree to Baddeck at Needs the shoulder is gone.

Lorne Greene

Warden Morrison spoke to Lorne Green today at 3:00. The day before the scheduled meeting the minister cancelled it. This is the 4th time it has been cancelled on the Baddeck Academy issue. He has a school board meeting tomorrow. It would be good to have council support on their sense of frustration or a press release from them. Draft something up to council with a quick turnaround on the context in the news release for tomorrow morning. This would be ready to go out with the school board release.

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Councillor Dauphinee commented that he had spoke to Lorne Greene on a number of issues in his area and he never heard anything back from him. He has been hearing lots on Baddeck issues but not on other issues in the other areas.

Councillor Donovan commented on the issue in North Highlands of the Reading Recovery program. A letter was sent home through the school that they couldn't justify a fulltime resource teacher but changing to early literacy. Baddeck, Cape Smokey, and North Highlands will not have resources. They will not be one on one like before this will be a group of 3 or so for 45 minutes instead of the 45 minutes per child.

A letter should be sent to the Minister, Lorne Greene that enough is enough we cannot lose any more we need the program. We should have the same program and access as other places.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that a letter be sent to Lorne Green, the Superintendent, the Minister of Education, the Chair, and all school board members for clarification on what is going on, that we cannot afford to lose any more programs and should have the same access as other schools. Motion carried.

There is a meeting in Port Hawkesbury on June 20, 2011 at 1:00 pm with Minister MacDonald with Service NS. That is our timeframe and everyone should wear their county blazers.

Councillor MacInnis questioned whether we were receiving the fire department invoices.

The letter received earlier in the meeting was entered into correspondence from Jim Wilkie. It was tabled at tonight's meeting. It was sent to Ingonish RCMP on June 2nd and to date have not received any acknowledgement on it. Sandy will make sure that Rick Beaton has a copy of it.

NEXT COUNCIL SESSION

The next council session will be held on June 20th. We will look at the catalogues for merchandise to order with the county logo on it.

ADJOURN

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that the meeting adjourn. Motion carried.