

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
July 18, 2011

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, July 18, 2011, beginning at 5:00 p.m. with Warden Bruce Morrison in the Chair.

Present were:

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

Absent was:

District #1 – Paul MacNeil (Due to Illness)

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 MacCuspic, that the agenda be approved with the addition of an In Camera meeting at the end of the agenda. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - JULY 4, 2011

The minutes of the July 4, 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 July 4, 2011, be approved as presented. Motion carried.

JOHN MALCOM, CAPE BRETON DISTRICT HEALTH AUTHORITY

Warden Morrison extended the courtesy of Council to John Malcom, CEO, Cape Breton District Health Authority (CBDHA).

Mr. Malcom expressed his pleasure on being back before Council and was in attendance in response of Council's letter of May 9, 2011. He informed Council that the CBDHA has been successful in recruiting a husband and wife team of doctors who will be looking at a joint practice in Baddeck this fall. The two doctors will account for one full time equivalent position. He advised that there has been no luck on filling the Wagmatcook position and in the Neil's Harbour area, they have been successful in placing extended locums for the summer period and also have hired a Nurse/Practitioner on a term position.

Mr. Malcom indicated that the reality is that doctor recruitment is an ongoing continuous process and with the aging of the doctors servicing Victoria County at present, it is one they will continue.

Mr. Malcom indicated that the number two priority, behind the C difficile matter, is the expansion of the Victoria County Memorial Hospital to accommodate a Community Health Centre, along with a similar project in New Waterford. It is important in recruiting doctors that there is office space available in the hospital and the doctors recruited to the Baddeck area wanted this and are interested and committed to a Community Health Center and a Collaborative Practice with a Nurse Practitioner. This is necessary for future recruitment.

Nurse recruitment was also discussed and Mr. Malcom indicated that of the 60 new nurses hired by the CBDHA this year, 90% came from the CBU nursing program. The district also participates in the training of family medicine practitioners, and Mr. Malcom indicated that Dr. Jim MacKillop is the Program Director. Approximately 1/3 of those trained in Cape Breton are retained in Cape Breton.

Councillor Dauphinee questioned on the Rehabilitation Centre at Harbourview in Sydney Mines and why it shuts down for a three week period in the summer. Dr. Doug Watt, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Specialist, is the only doctor in his field in the area and he requires vacation and the operation cannot function without his presence.

Mr. Malcom indicated that there are four tertiary programs in Cape Breton – one being the rehabilitation centre and the others being the Cancer Centre, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and the Dialysis Unit.

Discussion took place on the availability of physiotherapy in other hospitals within the District.

Mr. Malcom advised that 750 of the CBDHA's 3500 member staff are eligible to retire within the next five (5) years and there is a huge challenge ahead to recruit and replace what is a very experienced workforce.

Councillor Donovan brought up the doctor shortage in the Neil's Harbour area. Dr. Murray is considering retirement and Dr. Buffett has indicated that if the situation does not change by next year, he will relocate. He does not want to be the only doctor in the area. It is reaching a crisis situation and a long term solution is required.

Mr. Malcom indicated that on the plus side, when the enrollment in medical school went up, it increased the number of doctors graduating and we are now just seeing the results of this enrollment increase, as doctors are now just graduating. There is a 60% increase in the number of graduates.

The seats at Dalhousie University being sold to Saudi Arabia was discussed and Mr. Malcom indicated that Saint John, New Brunswick, have established a medical school. This has decreased the number of students from New Brunswick training at Dalhousie in Halifax. The cost to train a medical student is \$100,000.00 per year and the Province of Nova Scotia could not afford to purchase all the seats, so some were sold to Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Malcom indicated that the CBDHA has bought some residency seats in return for service at a cost of \$65,000 per year.

Mr. Malcom advised that they will find the right person for Neil's Harbour and it is a priority. The return for service graduates might be a possibility.

Councillor Donovan brought up the nursing situation at Buchanan Memorial. Night shift only has one RN and one LPN and this is a deterrent when trying to attract nurses due to the responsibility involved. Mr. Malcom indicated that he did not see this changing. On a cost per patient per day, Buchanan Memorial Hospital is the most expensive within the district. This is due to low patient volume as some days there are no patients in the hospital. Mr. Malcom indicated that Buchanan Memorial is needed in the area and as long as he is CEO he will fight to maintain Buchanan Memorial as a full service hospital.

Councillor MacInnis said the recruitment of physicians to the Baddeck area is great news and he questioned on whether there was a long term commitment by way of contract. Mr. Malcom advised that the commitment to the Community Health Centre, with a team collaborative approach is very important to these physicians, and if this is achieved, it will go a long way to retaining doctors.

The extension to Victoria County Memorial Hospital for a Community Health Centre will require a 25% committee from the local area and Mr. Malcom indicated that if the province approves this project, he will be back next year looking for a funding commitment from the County.

Councillor MacCuspig questioned on the time frame for the building of the Health Centre extension and Mr. Malcom indicated that if approved, the planning stage will be completed this year, with a call for tender next year and occupancy in the year following.

Mr. Malcom indicated that there are 400 Canadian medical students training in Ireland, Australian and the Caribbean. Some of these may be interested in doing residency and relocating to this area.

Warden Morrison indicated that the Community Health Centre is not only a health issue, but it is also an economic development issue for the County, as medical care is important in attracting new residents and businesses to the County.

Deputy Warden Patterson requested an update on the long term care facilities coming under the District Health Authorities. Mr. Malcom indicated it would happen this fall. The placement staff will become employees of the CBDHA. It will not change ownership or management of services. Creative and innovative ways will be considered to meet the needs and hopefully the admittance process will become a more friendly process. There are presently 450 people waiting for placement. The District will also consider alternatives to keep the elderly in their own home and community. Mr. Malcom indicated that the CBDHA are looking forward to the challenge.

Warden Morrison indicated that the Municipality has recently become an Age-Friendly Community and round tables were recently undertaken and one of the things mentioned was the access to cancer treatment in local hospitals. Is this a possibility? Mr. Malcom indicated that in all areas of treatment, consideration is given to sufficient volume to maintain competency and this is why such treatments are done at larger facilities.

Mr. Malcom indicated that a number of positive changes have occurred in recent years; one being that the mortality rate for heart attack victims is ½ of what it used to be now that advanced care paramedics can administer the appropriate drug to victims onsite.

Councillor MacCuspig questioned on what the province is doing with regard to Multiple Sclerosis and liberation treatment. The province has agreed to be a part of the National Program for MS Research. Mr. Malcom indicated that this is the appropriate action as this treatment needs to be researched to determine whether it is the right thing to do.

After further discussion, Warden Morrison extended a vote of thanks to Mr. Malcom for his attendance.

RECESS

Warden Morrison announced that Council would recess for 10 minutes.

NEW BUSINESS

Victoria County Scholarships

Sandy Hudson questioned on who the recipients of the Victoria County scholarships were. The recipients for Baddeck and Cabot were provided, with the Rankin recipient to be investigated.

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations

Honourable John MacDonnell, Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, has requested a meeting with Council in Baddeck on Monday, August 15, 2011, at 3:00 p.m. Council agreed to meet with the Minister.

There are a number of issues to be addressed and it was felt that Council should meet one hour prior to the meeting to discuss items that will be addressed with the Minister.

Low Income Exemption

Sandy Hudson advised that the Low Income Tax Exemption should be revisited and he will investigate the existing by-law and bring it back to Council for consideration.

Golf Tournaments

A request was received from the Gaelic College to participate in their Kilted Golf Tournament to be held at Bell Bay Golf Club on August 12, 2011.

Warden Morrison advised that the Gaelic College can provide kilt rentals at a cost of \$60 per person.

It was moved by Councillor MacCuspik, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that the Municipality enter a team in the Gaelic College's Kilted Golf Tournament on August 12, 2011. Motion carried.

Sandy Hudson advised that the UNSM has requested that the Municipality host the 2011 UNSM Golf Tournament at Bell Bay Golf Course on September 19, 2011.

It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that Victoria County host and sponsor the Annual UNSM Golf Tournament at Bell Bay on September 19, 2011. Motion carried.

Police Advisory Board

Sandy Hudson advised that an advertisement was placed in *The Victoria Standard* for citizen members for a Police Advisory Board. Five responses were received. Sandy Hudson will look at the required composition of the Committee and a decision will be made at a future meeting.

Civic Addressing

Sandy Hudson advised that in the past, civic address signs were available through the local fire departments, however, now some of the departments do not provide this service. He questioned whether the Municipality should assume this responsibility.

Whether the Municipality had a civic addressing by-law was questioned and it was indicated that the Eastern District Planning Commission are responsible for assigning civic numbers in Victoria County.

Sandy Hudson is to contact John Bain with regard to the policy on signage and where civic address signs are available.

Extension of Alexander Drive, Baddeck

Leo Fownes, Mile Brook Estates, is considering extending Alexander Drive to connect with Jones Street. He is requesting that a letter from the Municipality be sent to the Eastern District Planning Commission indicating that when the road extension is brought up to the Department of Transportation standards, the Municipality assume ownership of same. The Municipality presently owns the existing Alexander Drive.

It was felt that more information was required on this matter.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor MacCuspic, that the request be tabled until the next meeting. Motion carried.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #2

Councillor MacCuspic questioned on how the recently signed MOU with CBCEDA affected the process for immigration to Victoria County. Sandy Hudson advised that there would be no change in the present process. The Navigator position contained in the MOU will sit on the Committee and the Navigator will be responsible to help newcomers with contacts, information, etc.

The application for the Community Identified Stream under the Nominee Program can be obtained on the Office of Immigration website.

Councillor MacCuspic questioned on whether reclaimed asphalt could be obtained for the Baddeck Municipal Solid Waste Facility roadway.

It was moved by Councillor MacCuspic, seconded by Deputy Warden Patterson, that a letter be forwarded to the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal requesting a price and whether it is possible to obtain reclaimed asphalt for use on the Baddeck Municipal Solid Waste Facility roadway. Motion carried.

District #4

Councillor MacInnis advised that there is a six kilometer stretch of the Cabot Trail, just past the Gaelic College to Goose Cove, where the Aliant phone lines are laying on the side of the road. The lines were dug up during road construction and the line was left lying on the roadside since that time. This has resulted in a number of phone interruptions for area residents.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that a letter be forwarded to Kevin Hashem, Bell Aliant, expressing concern with regard to the temporary telephone line and requesting that this situation be resolved. Motion carried.

Councillor MacInnis brought up the matter of the 13 hour power outage that occurred that resulted in 6000 pounds of lobster product being taken to the Cape North Transfer Station from Victoria Co-op Fisheries. This outage was also a detriment to the tourism facilities in the area.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that a letter be forwarded to Nova Scotia Power Inc. expressing concern on the 13 hour power outage and the communication received that resulted in the loss of 6000 pounds of lobster and tourism revenue in the north of Smokey area. Motion carried.

District #7

Councillor Donovan brought up the matter of the South Harbour Channel and whether there was a plan in place in the event of the channel blocking.

The question was raised as to why the Municipality should have a plan in place when the area is protected and governed by other levels of government.

Councillor Donovan indicated he would tell the concerned residents to approach their MLA and MP in this regard.

Councillor Donovan brought up a concern with regard to the lack of Department of Transportation maintenance in his district.

It was moved by Councillor Donovan, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that a letter be forwarded to Steve MacDonald, Area Manager, Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, requesting an update on the summer maintenance and repair schedule for the District #7 area. Motion carried.

District #6

The Canadian and Nova Scotia flags at the Englishtown Ferry are in disrepair.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacCuspic, that a letter be forwarded to the Department of Transportation requesting that the two flags at the Englishtown Ferry be replaced. Motion carried.

District #5

Deputy Warden Patterson indicated that the poles for the two new Victoria County signs have been erected at the boundary lines on the TCH 105 and the signs should be erected shortly.

Deputy Warden Patterson advised that the 26th Annual Ross Ferry Pork Chop Barbecue will be held on August 13, 2011.

District #4

Councillor MacInnis indicated that he would like to have the County owned North Shore School property mowed and bush hogged as was done last year. He was given permission to do so.

District #3

Warden Morrison advised that thank you letters were received from Rev. Karen Lynch and Lyn Duchesney for the County's acknowledgement of their achievements.

Warden Morrison provided an update on Councillor MacNeil. He went to the OR this afternoon at 2 pm to have a defibulator placed. Council wished him a speedy recovery.

IN CAMERA

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacCuspic, to move In Camera. Motion carried.

It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, to return to regular session. Motion carried.

CAPE NORTH TRANSFER STATION

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor MacCuspic, that the property matter at the Cape North Transfer Station be referred to the Solicitor. Motion carried.

It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that a letter be forwarded to Island Vacuum & Portables advising that the County is not prepared to entertain an expansion to the existing sewage lagoon site at the Cape North Transfer Station. Motion carried.

WATER STREET PROJECT

It was moved by Councillor MacCuspic, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that the Water Street Project matter be referred to the Solicitor. Motion carried.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, on motion of Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor MacCuspic, the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Bruce Morrison, Warden

Sandy Hudson, CAO