

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
June 11, 2012

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, June 11, 2012, 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 (Personal Reasons)

CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Deputy Warden Patterson requested three additions to the agenda – Age-Friendly Communities; Lieutenant Governor Awards; and IB Program at Sydney Academy.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that the agenda be approved with the noted additions. Motion carried.

COMMUNITY LINKS

Courtesy of Council was extended to Cheryl MacQuarrie, Regional Coordinator of Community Links, who was in attendance with a presentation on Ageing Well Together (copy attached).

Warden Morrison requested Council members to introduce themselves to Ms. MacQuarrie.

Community Links is a provincial not-for-profit organization that promotes age-friendly communities and quality of life for Nova Scotia seniors through community development and volunteer action. Their vision is that seniors in Nova Scotia are informed, active, and engaged in their communities, have a voice in public policy and are able to age in place with quality of life.

The Ageing Well Together Coalition supports awareness, action and change with a focus on fall prevention, physical activity and other factors that promote healthy lifestyles and age-friendly communities.

Ms. MacQuarrie outlined the population health approach and the key elements in this approach. She also summarized the social determinants of health. It was noted that 700 Nova Scotians turn 65 each month.

Ms. MacQuarrie advised that ageing well means preventing falls and injuries; eating well; staying physically active; adopting positive health practices; staying socially connected; and maintaining ones independence.

Falls are the main cause of injuries to seniors. In Canada, falls cause 65% of all injuries to seniors; 85% of injury-related hospital admissions among seniors; 58% of injury-related deaths among seniors; and 90% of all hip fractures to seniors. Falls are expensive and in Nova Scotia cost the health care system \$72 million each year.

Falls are much too common and each year one of every three seniors will fall and more than half of these will fall more than once. Two-thirds of falls requiring hospitalization occur at home and women are three times more likely than men to be hospitalized for a fall-related injury. The older you are, the more likely you are to fall and be seriously injured.

Ms. MacQuarrie advised that by working together, we can reduce the risk factors that cause falls. Making our homes and communities safer for seniors will make them safer for everyone. Falls are the most preventable risk to seniors' health, well-being, and independence.

Councillor MacCuspig indicated that in his district there is no shortage of seniors living at home by themselves and he questioned whether Ms. MacQuarrie would come to the Middle River Seniors Group to provide a presentation on fall prevention and other topics with regard to seniors' health. Ms. MacQuarrie indicated she would be happy to do so and would leave business cards with her contact information for Council at the conclusion of her presentation.

Councillor MacInnis questioned on whether there was any experience with regard to a coordinated group to assist seniors with outdoor work, snow removal, etc. Ms. MacQuarrie indicated that the Seniors Council in CBRM have researched this matter and HRM has a designated snow removal budget for seniors.

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Councillor Buchanan questioned whether it was difficult to get seniors out to activities and Ms. MacQuarrie advised that it varies. You have to connect with the right people in the communities to ensure it is possible for seniors to attend activities.

Councillor Dauphinee expressed an interest in having mobility/fall prevention workshops for seniors in his area and Mr. MacQuarrie indicated that this could be possible.

Deputy Warden Patterson mentioned Ted Hobson and the work undertaken in Mahone Bay and how it has evolved.

It was indicated that from November to April of each year in District #4 seniors dinners are held on a weekly basis and there are upwards of 60 in attendance each week. In a community of 200 residents, 60 is very significant. Guest speakers are brought in for these dinners and the seniors themselves have amazing memories and stories to tell.

Warden Morrison questioned whether there was an opportunity for Victoria County to have a representative on the Community Links Board and Ms. MacQuarrie indicated that she saw potential for this and this matter could be considered.

After further discussion, Warden Morrison extended a vote of thanks to Cheryl MacQuarrie for her presentation.

RECESS

Warden Morrison announced that Council would recess for 5 minutes.

TIANS PRESENTATION

Courtesy of Council was extended to Darlene Grant Fiander, President, and Lisa Dahr, Manager, Professional Development and Industry Relations, TIANS (Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia).

Council provided introductions indicating the districts they served.

Ms. Grant Fiander then presented Council with a presentation – *Tourism Outlook – An Industry Perspective* (copy attached).

TIANS has been the voice for the tourism industry since its formation in 1977. Ms. Grant Fiander discussed the Nova Scotia product and the fact that Cape Breton Island has been named the number three island in the world and the number one island destination in North America.

Ms. Grant Fiander provided a tourism industry scan and an outline of tourism trends. The constraints faced by tourism at present include quality and infrastructure; transportation and access; policy and environment; and marketing and innovation.

The new direction for tourism was outlined and Ms. Grant Fiander outlined what municipalities can do to assist, including:

- Including tourism filter in business dialogue
- Being strong advocates at the provincial level
- Becoming local champions
- Influencing policy

Ms. Grant Fiander reviewed TIANS' optimism statement with Council.

Deputy Warden Patterson brought up the seasonal property tax issue and the detrimental effect that this has had on Victoria County with a loss of \$150,000 in revenue due to seasonal business closures. The Municipality has met with two different Ministers on this issue but nothing has changed. Businesses should be encouraged to stay open in the off season instead of being given an incentive to close.

Deputy Warden Patterson also made mention of the Department of Tourism advertising which mentions Nova Scotia having the #1 island destination in North America, but it fails to mention the name of the island. Does TIANS have any influence on the Department of Tourism advertising and marketing?

The responsibility for training of staff was questioned and it was indicated that there are ongoing workshops such as SuperHost, ServeRight and others that are available. Training is a major issue for the tourism industry.

Councillor Dauphinee mentioned the adventure tourism insurance offered and questioned whether this would be available to ski hills and mountain bike racing initiatives and he was advised it would.

Councillor Dauphinee brought up the matter to the signature resorts such as Keltic Lodge and that the push should be made to get the government more involved. He also made mention of a survey that was done in the 1980's which indicated that the Cabot Trail was the #1 attraction in Nova Scotia. Ms. Grant Fiander indicated she would investigate to see if she could find this survey.

It was indicated that many of our local Cape Breton residents are doing destination vacations in the winter time, thereby decreasing their domestic travels.

Councillor Donovan indicated that as a gift shop operators, he has talked to a lot of the customers and has found that they have a budget to spend and they have no money available for extras such as the items offered in the gift shops.

Councillor Buchanan indicated it was interesting to hear that the 50 plus age group spends the most money and is the richest tourist category.

Councillor MacInnis questioned if TIANS actually exhibits tourism information to countries such as Russia and China. Ms. Grant Fiander indicated that a new federal government tourism strategy was released in an effort to address policy issues impeding the free flow of tourism in Canada. Nova Scotia must strive to recapture international market share and position itself as a top destination of choice.

The question was raised as to whether TIANS had a marketing division and Ms. Grant Fiander indicated that the provincial Department of Tourism has a festival program. TIANS is more in helping with training and the business side of tourism.

Councillor MacCuspic brought up the matter of the marketing levy and felt there should be a more coordinated approach provincially with regard to the marketing levy. It is in effect in some areas and not others. He also made mention of the tourism information centre at the Halifax Stanfield Airport and the fact that Cape Breton has very little advertising space. One trail on the mainland has the same amount of space as all of Cape Breton. Mr. Grant Fiander indicated she would stop at look at the information centre.

Warden Morrison indicated that in his fifteen years on Council he does not recall TIANS ever presenting to Council. Cape Breton is fighting for every tourism dollar with Halifax and the message has to be put out there that the best tourism product is in rural Nova Scotia.

Ms. Grant Fiander thanked Council for the good discussion and indicated that TIANS appreciates the opportunity to work with the tourism operators and stated that tourism cannot be taken for granted.

Warden Morrison extended a vote of thanks to the ladies for their attendance and they were excused at this time.

RECESS

Warden Morrison announced that Council would recess for 5 minutes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MAY 28, 2012

The minutes of the May 28, 2012, meeting 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 28, 2012, be approved as presented. Motion carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Meeting – Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal

Since the last meeting there have been changes in the provincial cabinet and there is now a new Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal – Honourable Maurice Smith.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor MacCuspic, that a letter be forwarded to the Honourable Maurice Smith, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, congratulating him on his appointment and requesting that he meet with Victoria County Municipal Council. Motion carried.

It was indicated that the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal paving plant is on its way to the northern area of the County this week.

Nova Scotia Power

Nova Scotia Power is holding meetings throughout the Province to see how to better serve their customers. The two meetings scheduled in Cape Breton are at the YMCA, Sydney on June 12, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. or at the Port Hawkesbury Civic Centre on June 13, 2012, at 6:30 p.m.

Baddeck Community Garden

Discussion took place on the Baddeck Community Garden project. Warden Morrison indicated that he is receiving favourable comments on the project. There are three beds that have not yet been assigned.

Councillor MacInnis advised that he has received some negative comments.

Council felt it was a good idea and would see how it goes this summer, with a view to expanding to other communities in the future.

Scotian Windfields

The letter of support requested by Scotian Windfields was discussed. It was decided to wait until Councillor MacNeil is in attendance to deal with this matter.

Stacey Pineau Report

The Warden, CAO and President of the Union all signed off on the letter to be sent to all staff regarding Stacey Pineau's report. The letter and a copy of Ms. Pineau's report were forwarded to all staff members.

Warden Morrison indicated that there were a number of issues in this report that Council were to work on and he requested a volunteer from Council to work with him in this regard. Councillor Dauphinee indicated his interest.

Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal

Sandy Hudson advised that a letter was forwarded to the Minister regarding the change in the district boundaries that has affected the Iona Peninsula area. A reply has not been received as yet.

Council was advised that an announcement was made on Friday past that the Red Bridge in Big Baddeck will be replaced this construction season.

Wind Turbine By-Law

The draft Wind Turbine By-Law has been circulated to Council for review and a copy has been forwarded to Genivar for their review also.

Genivar will be in attendance at Council on July 16, 2012, and this matter will be added as an agenda item.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #2

Councillor MacCuspic presented a request for funding received from Gordon MacIver for \$7,400 to complete construction of a helipad at the DNR Depot on the TCH 105, Baddeck.

It was moved by Councillor MacCuspic, seconded by Deputy Warden Patterson, that a letter be forwarded to Gordon MacIver questioning on the source of the fundraising to date; the organization requesting the funding; and whether written approval has been received from DNR for the location of the helipad. Motion carried.

District #4

Councillor MacInnis brought up that matter of the controlled access designation on the TCH in the South Haven area. He had a request from a resident who is looking at buying a property to set up a business and this designation prevents that. This is a deterrent to development.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor MacCuspic, that a letter be forwarded to Stephen MacDonald, Area Manager, DOTIR, requesting that the controlled access designation at South Haven be reversed. Motion carried.

Councillor MacInnis brought up the matter of economic development and questioned on the status of the work being done on same by Nona MacDermid. Sandy Hudson has a meeting scheduled with Nona on June 18, 2012.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that Josephine Barron be appointed to the Highland Manor Board. Motion carried.

District #8

Councillor Buchanan brought up a concern over the discontinuance for the summer months of the RMV service in the northern area of the County to allow residents to write their beginners driving test. He felt that this may be the first step in discontinuing the service entirely.

It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that a letter be forwarded to the Registry of Motor Vehicles expressing concern on the loss of the beginners testing service in the northern area of the County for the summer months. Motion carried.

The paving plant will be located in the pit at South Harbour owned by Gloria MacDonald.

Councillor Buchanan requested that a street light be ordered for installation on pole at 69 Fraser Road.

District #7

Councillor Donovan indicated that the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal have deemed the section of the New Haven Road from White Point to New Haven as not repairable.

It was moved by Councillor Donovan, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that a letter be forwarded to the Honourable Maurice Smith, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, requesting that as his department has deemed the section of the White Point Road from White Point to New Haven not repairable, this section of road be placed on the list for capital projects. Motion carried.

Councillor Donovan requested a certificate for the Ingonish Volunteer Fire Department on their 50th Anniversary on June 24, 2012.

District #6

Councillor Dauphinee brought up a concern with regard to the condition of the parking area and sidewalk at the Ingonish Beach Post Office. A letter was previously forwarded to Canada Post on this matter.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that contact be made with Canada Post to request immediate action be undertaken to repair the parking area and sidewalk at the Ingonish Beach Post Office. Motion carried.

District #5

Deputy Warden Patterson advised that five Victoria County students received the Lieutenant Governor Medals at a ceremony last Thursday. The recipients were Laken Cameron, Baddeck Academy; Kendell Fitzgerald and Samuel Fraser, Cabot High; and Mary Emma MacNeil and Dryden MacNeil, Rankin School of the Narrows.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor MacCuspic, that letters of congratulations be forwarded to the Lieutenant Governor Medal recipients from Victoria County. Motion carried.

Deputy Warden Patterson brought up the matter of the possible elimination of the IB Program at Sydney Academy. Over the years, a number of Victoria County residents have graduated from this program.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that a letter be forwarded to the CBVRSB expressing Council's concern on the future of the IB Program at Sydney Academy. Motion carried.

Deputy Warden Patterson indicated that the Age-Friendly Communities Committee met last week and the issue of a communications plan was addressed.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that the Municipality issue an RFP for a communications plan for the Age-Friendly Communities Committee. Motion carried.

District #3

Deputy Warden Patterson assumed the Chair.

Warden Morrison advised that Councillor MacNeil requested he bring forward a number of issues on his behalf in his absence.

The gypsum hole located on Highway 223 at Jamesville is in need of immediate attention.

It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that a letter be forwarded to Darren Blundon, DOTIR, requesting that immediate attention be given to repairing the gypsum hole on Highway 223 at Jamesville. Motion carried.

The MacKinnon Harbour request is to be held in abeyance until further information is received.

The “Play It Forward” soccer event that was held this past weekend in Wagmatcook was an extremely successful event. The event was put on by the Burlington Soccer Club.

It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that a letter of appreciation be forwarded to the Burlington Soccer Club for the “Play It Forward” event held in Wagmatcook. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison advised that the Department of Natural Resources will be holding sessions tomorrow afternoon and evening at the Baddeck Community Centre on the future of the provincial parks in Nova Scotia.

Warden Morrison indicated that Council has received an invitation to attend a retirement supper for John Malcom who recently retired as CEO of the Cape Breton District Health Authority. Tickets for the event are \$40 per person.

It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor Donovan, that any Council member interested in attending John Malcom’s retirement celebration be permitted to do so. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Pitu’paq Committee

Councillor MacCuspie indicated that the Pitu’paq Committee will be hosting a session on fracking on July 5, 2012 and are requesting \$500 for each municipality and First Nations to assist in bringing a speaker in to address this issue. He indicated that the Pitu’paq Committee will be meeting on Friday and he will provide further information on this matter at the next Council session on June 25, 2012.

NEW BUSINESS

Unightly Premises

A report was received on an inspection conducted as a result of a complaint on the Herbert Gregory property on the Cabot Trail at Ingonish Centre. A camper trailer located on the property falls under the “dangerous and unsightly” conditions as defined in the *Municipal Government Act*. It is recommended that the camper trailer be demolished and that an “Order to Remedy Condition” be issued and that the Order be a Demolition Order issued from Council to the owners giving them 30 days to demolish and remove all debris from the property. Failure to do so will result in the Municipality undertaking the cleanup and recovering the costs through property taxes.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Donovan, to proceed with the issuance of a 30 day “Order to Remedy Condition” for the Herbert Gregory property at Ingonish Centre. Motion carried.

The status of an unsightly premise on Upper Twining Street, Baddeck, is to be investigated.

Right Some Good Event

Council had previously agreed to fund one event under the Right Some Good Food Adventure at a cost of \$3,000.00. There will be two events held in Victoria County this year – one at the Keltic Lodge and one at the Bell Museum. Sandy Hudson advised that by increasing the funding to \$5,000.00, the Municipality can sponsor both events in the County.

Discussion took place on this matter and Councillors provided their opinions with regard to these events.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that the Municipality provide \$5,000.00 to be a sponsor at both Right Some Good events in Victoria County.

Those voting in favour of the motion were Councillors MacCuspik, MacInnis, Dauphinee, Buchanan and Warden Morrison.

Those voting against the motion were Deputy Warden Patterson and Councillor Donovan.

Motion carried.

Funding Request Updates

Sandy Hudson updated on the Bay St. Lawrence Community Centre request for funding.

A letter is to be written to the Bay St. Lawrence Community Centre indicating that consideration is being given to their funding request and asking for clarification and verification on the funding partners for the project.

The BABTA request for funding to assist with the operation of the Baddeck VIC was discussed. Sandy Hudson spoke to Mary Tulle, DCBA, on this matter and she has indicated that DCBA will provide \$11,000 towards this operation and it was indicated that BABTA itself will contribute \$8,500. They are requesting \$20,000 from the Municipality.

The difference in the funding received by the Baddeck VIC in comparison to the Sydney VIC was discussed and questioned. It was felt further clarification was required on this funding request.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor MacCuspic, that BABTA be advised that the Municipality will consider contributing up to \$20,000 for the Baddeck VIC pending a presentation to Council. Motion carried.

A letter is to be forwarded to Mary Tulle, DCBA, questioning on the funding discrepancy between the Sydney VIC and the Baddeck VIC.

BABTA is to be requested to come to Council on June 25, 2012, to provide an update and further information on this request.

Court House Repairs

Sandy Hudson advised that an inspection of the Court House showed evidence of lead paint and there is a leak in the roof area. Work is required to repair the Heritage Office and Village Office area and at the same time make one barrier-free washroom in the area where there is presently two public washrooms.

Sandy Hudson advised that it is hoped that this work will be carried out between June 23 and July 23, 2012, as there is no Court in session during these dates. An outline of the work required was provided. Prices will be received for the work to be completed and the work will be done as outlined.

IN CAMERA

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

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

ADJOURN

There being no further business, on motion of Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Bruce Morrison, Warden

Sandy Hudson, CAO