

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
February 11, 2013

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, February 11, 2013, beginning at 5:00 p.m. with Warden Bruce Morrison in the Chair.

Present were:

District #1 – Paul MacNeil
District #2 – Athol Grant
District #3 – Bruce Morrison, Warden
District #4 – Merrill MacInnis
District #5 – Fraser Patterson, Deputy Warden
District #6 – Larry Dauphinee
District #7 – Wayne Budge
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 the Jim Folds, Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Reserve Association, would not be in attendance this evening.

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

STAFF SGT. CRAIG YORKE, RCMP

Courtesy of Council was extended to Staff Sgt. Craig Yorke, RCMP, Victoria County District.

Prior to his presentation, Sandy Hudson requested Council's indulgence and asked that Staff Sgt, Yorke, on behalf of the Governor General David Johnston, present the Queen Elizabeth the Second Diamond Jubilee Medal to Warden Bruce J. Morrison.

Staff Sgt. Yorke presented and pinned the medal on Warden Morrison and Council offered their congratulations to Warden Morrison for this recognition.

Staff Sgt. Yorke presented Council with the Victoria County RCMP 2012 Year End Report. (copy attached).

Crime statistics for the period January to December, 2012, were provided, along with the annual performance plan priorities. Information pertaining to staff complements in the detachments within Victoria County was outlined.

Staff Sgt. Yorke outlined the community policing initiatives to date and the benefits of having a community policing officer. He also provided a listing of noteworthy investigations in Victoria County.

Deputy Warden Patterson brought up the drug bust in the Boularderie area that resulted in the seizure of an AK47 and two adults charged. This actually was in CBRM, but Staff Sgt. Yorke advised that it was under the jurisdiction of the Baddeck Detachment.

Councillor Dauphinee expressed his appreciation on the greater visibility of the RCMP in his district. They are seen more often and this is a positive. Councillor Budge indicated that same. On the stormy day on Saturday past, he saw the RCMP twice in his community. Councillor Buchanan also expressed his gratitude for the increased presence in his district.

Councillor Buchanan questioned on the RCMP presence in schools and Staff Sgt Yorke indicated that members have been attending the 3 schools in the northern area. There are open files and the attendance is being documented.

Councillor MacInnis questioned on why road checks were not used as they have been in the past. Staff Sgt. Yorke indicated that there are only certain areas where they can be conducted and 1 member cannot do it on their own. Two officers are required and sometimes they do not have the extra body available.

Councillor MacInnis questioned, that with all the cutbacks in other agencies, is there any possibility of cuts to the RCMP. Staff Sgt. Yorke indicated he could not see the current numbers changing.

Councillor Grant questioned if Staff Sgt. Yorke would be attending the community meeting in Middle River tomorrow evening and he indicated he would be in attendance.

Councillor Grant questioned on false alarm statistic. It was indicated that there were 52 calls for service. These calls are a result of personal security systems and members attend to check everything is ok.

Councillor Grant questioned whether any charges have been laid for the break and enters in the Middle River area and he was advised not as yet.

Councillor MacNeil indicated that he has not seen an increase in police presence in his district and questioned whether this will change. Iona and Boularderie areas appear to be the areas lacking visibility.

Staff Sgt. Yorke indicated that the best scenario would be a Community Policing Officer position that could travel the County. He outlined the benefits of such an officer.

Staff Sgt. Yorke indicated that the best policing is working with the youth and he has dedicated officers who are committed to this also.

Warden Morrison expressed a thank you to Staff Sgt. Yorke for presenting him with this Diamond Jubilee Medal. He questioned on the drug issue in the Village. Staff Sgt. Yorke indicated that there is not a whole lot of drug information but it appears that it is mostly marijuana.

Warden Morrison brought up the impaired driving charges statistic. In 2012, 17 were charged in the Baddeck area, as compared to 3 in Ingonish and 2 in Wagmatcook. He questioned on why these stats are so much higher for Baddeck. Staff Sgt. Yorke indicated that his members know where to look and who to watch for in this area and it has resulted in a number of charges.

Deputy Warden Patterson brought up the matter of the AK47 weapon found in a recent drug bust in the Boularderie area. Staff Sgt. Yorke indicated that this is a result of organized crime.

Councillor Dauphinee advised that there has been a string of garbage box fires in the last month, Staff Sgt. Yorke indicated that more and more people are coming forward to report suspicions and provide information and this is a positive.

Councillor MacInnis indicated that he has a concern with regard to littering in his district. He felt the location of a webcam could assist in tracking down the offenders and he questioned in information such as this could be used in Court and Staff Sgt. Yorke indicated that such information could hold up in court.

Councillor Grant questioned on the illuminated traffic speed sign located going into the Village of Whycomagh and he questioned if it was possible to find out further information on this matter.

The recent rash of break and enters in the Baddeck/Baddeck Bay area was discussed. Staff Sgt. Yorke indicated that there are 4 or 5 groups targeting the Baddeck area as it is an easy target. Residents tend to leave their cars unlocked making them an easy target for thieves. Arrests have been made for some of the break and enters, with the individuals being for the northside area and one from the Iona area.

Elmourne MacKinnon indicated that he was interested in knowing the financial pay for RCMP servicing the northern end of Inverness County at Meat Cove. Staff Sgt. Yorke indicated that Victoria County does not pay over and above their \$1.2 million for policing. The Sheriffs are responsible for picking up criminals and transferring them to Court when necessary.

Sandy Hudson questioned whether the Municipality could put something in place like a by-law that could assist the RCMP with the false alarm calls for service. He also mentioned the cost and time for the RCMP to provide traffic control when shutting down the Seal Island Bridge to take houses across. 67 calls were received to attend to the Seal Island Bridge. The RCMP attends if the DOTIR are too busy to go. Staff Sgt. Yorke indicated that you must be a Peace Officer to close down a road.

Warden Morrison extended a vote of thanks to Staff Sgt. Yorke for his attendance.

Staff Sgt. Yorke brought up the matter of a Community Policing Officer position for the Victoria District. This would be over and above the present staff complement.

Warden Morrison suggested that Staff Sgt. Yorke provide a written request outlining the costs involved and the benefits of such a position and it can be forwarded to budget talks for consideration.

Staff Sgt. Yorke left at this time.

RECESS

Warden Morrison advised that Council would recess for 5 minutes

PUBLIC HEARING

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that the recommendations to Council from the Public Hearing regarding the unsightly premises matters be accepted. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 21, 2013

The minutes of the January 21, 2013, 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 January 21, 2013, be approved as presented. Motion carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

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Councillor Buchanan was questioned as to whether any reply was received from the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board with regard to the girl's volleyball trip to Cuba. He advised he has received no response.

A letter was received from Chip Bird, Parks Canada, regarding the golf fees proposed for Highland Links.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #1

Councillor MacNeil felt that a flashing light is required at the entrance to the Ferry Road in Little Narrows. This is located in Inverness County.

It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that a letter be forwarded to Inverness County expressing concern with regard to the entrance of the road to the Little Narrows Ferry and suggesting that a flashing light be installed at this location. Motion carried.

District #2

Councillor Grant indicated that he would like to make a presentation of Council at the March 11, 2013, meeting with regard to a Retire Cape Breton website, as well as community websites. Donna MacDonald, VCCAPS, will be assisting him and the presentation will take about 15 minutes.

This will be included as an agenda item on the March 11, 2013, council meeting.

Councillor Grant indicated that he will be hosting a community meeting tomorrow night in Middle River. Warden Morrison will be in attendance with Councillor Grant.

Councillor Grant indicated that the day care issue is still being pursued. A meeting has been scheduled with the School Advisory Committee on February 19, 2013, in this regard. He indicated that they are trying to build support for this initiative from the ground up.

Councillor Grant indicated that on speaking to John Bain, EDPC, on the wind turbine issue, he advised that a planning group is required for the whole County to discuss this issue and come back with recommendations.

A meeting of the Alternate Energy Committee has been scheduled for February 15, 2013, and this issue will discuss at that time.

Councillor Grant advised that alternate energy will also be a topic of discussion at his community meeting tomorrow.

Councillor MacNeil indicated he has received a few emails regarding the draft Wind Turbine By-Law and has advised he will update on anything done in this regard.

Councillor MacInnis questioned if a representative from the Lingan Plant and/or Port Hawkesbury should be a part of the Alternate Energy Committee. He was advised that their expertise might be sought further down the road.

District #4

Councillor MacInnis questioned if an investigation was done into County owned land at Rear Little River. Sandy Hudson advised that the County owns 100 acres of land at Rear Little River. Councillor MacInnis was advised that a map of the area could be obtained at the Sydney Land Registry Office.

Councillor MacInnis advised that he attended a meeting at the Gaelic College concerning the divestment of 247 acres College owned land to the Province. The College sold this property to clear their debt.

Councillor MacInnis advised that there are concerns with what will happen to this property. Discussion took place.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that a letter be forwarded to the Department of Natural Resources questioning on the intended use for the property recently obtained from the Gaelic College. Motion carried.

Councillor MacInnis brought up the condition of the roads and whether a reply was ever received from DOTIR concerning same. Sandy Hudson advised that he was advised that the section of Cabot Trail paving is not on the list for this year. Discussion also took place on the lack of salt used, especially in the North Shore area.

Stephen MacDonald, Area Manager, DOTIR is to appear before Council on March 25, 2013.

The condition of the new pavement in the North Shore area was discussed.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that a letter be forwarded to DOTIR questioning if the department is meeting the same construction standards for paving since 1978 or has there been a change. Motion carried.

District #8

Councillor Buchanan requested an update on the Bay St. Lawrence Water. Sandy Hudson advised that they have received permission to go on the Burton property to check on a possible water supply and if it proves satisfactory, Ms. Burton has agreed to sell the Municipality 5 acres of land.

Two sights have also been identified as possible water sources in Neil's Harbour and they will be investigated at the same time as Bay St. Lawrence.

Council was advised that the Green Gym company is no longer in business, but there is a company in the US that has been in contact that has similar equipment.

Sandy Hudson advised that an Expression of Interest will be published for organizations in Districts #2, 3, 5, and 8, interested in obtaining outdoor gym equipment.

Once the interest is determined, a source for this gym equipment will be pursued.

Councillor Buchanan presented a letter from the Dingwall Recreation Society seeking permission to lease the former Dingwall School property, owned by the Municipality, to start a recreation facility on the property. The Dingwall Recreation Society is a registered society.

It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor Budge, that this matter be referred to the Solicitor to draft the appropriate lease. Motion carried.

It was felt that Nelson Dixon and Gerard Jessome come to Council with Stephen Macdonald and Darrell Blunden on March 25, 2013.

The possibility of having a webcam installed in the North Shore area was questioned. Residents in the northern area of the County would like to be able to view the condition of the road before traveling.

It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that a letter be forwarded to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal requesting that a highway webcam be located in the North Shore area. Motion carried,

District #7

Councillor Budge brought up the two outstanding issues he has been bringing to Council since November, 2012 – the status of the bobcat for the Neil's Harbour/New Haven Enviro-Depot and the installation of water and a washroom at this site.

Sandy Hudson advised that the existing machine at the site has been removed and will not be repaired. Robert Dauphinee is to make a decision on the appropriate machine to be located there.

Bruce Latimer, Strait Engineering, is looking at the site for a holding tank and checking the existing disposal fields at the fire department. Strait Engineering will be preparing the documentation for tender.

Councillor Budge felt these decisions are taking entirely too long. He also questioned by blue bags from Ingonish are being brought to Baddeck rather than Neil's Harbour. Blue bags collected north, should remain in the northern area.

It was felt that the Environment/Solid Waste Committee should meet to discuss and clarify these issues.

Councillor Buchanan felt that if water and sewer were installed at the Neil's Harbour site, then the Cape North site will be looking for same.

District #6

Councillor Dauphinee questioned whether a reply had been received concerning the lack of ambulance coverage in Ingonish Beach. Sandy Hudson advised a reply has not been received to date.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that a letter be forwarded to the Minister of Health and Emergency Medical Care concerning the lack of ambulance coverage in the Ingonish Beach area. Motion carried.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Budge, that the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 105 request for funding be referred to budget talks. Motion carried.

The status of the septic lagoon at Cape North was questioned. Nothing further has been heard from the Department of Environment. Whether Richmond County had purchased a pumper truck was questioned and a follow up will be done in this regard.

Councillor Dauphinee requested a brief overview of the meeting held in the Baddeck area pertaining to the establishment of a day care. Councillor Grant updated on the meeting held and the options available. A further meeting is to be held with the Baddeck School Advisory Committee and Councillor Dauphinee will be notified of this meeting so he can attend. Bea Buckland, Department of Community Services, is the contact with regard to regulations for day cares and a meeting will be held with her in future also.

Councillor Grant also made mention of the RBC after school program that is available. This matter will be discussed with the School Advisory Committee. The deadline for applying for the after school program is March 15, 2013.

District #5

Deputy Warden Patterson indicated that if another portion of the Cabot Trail was included in the 5 year capital plan for DOTIR for 2012-2013, then it should not have been removed from the plan. This is to be investigated.

Deputy Warden Patterson advised that 8 RFP were received from the Transit Feasibility Study. The Committee met and have narrowed down the submissions to 3 and they are currently being reviewed. A final decision has not been made as yet.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that the Committee reviewing the RFP's be given the authority to select a successful applicant. Motion carried.

District #3

Deputy Warden Patterson took the Chair.

Warden Morrison brought up the issue of Canada Post regarding rural mailboxes. The relocation of mailboxes was supposed to be a safety issue, but the mail drivers hours have been reduced due to the installation of community mailboxes.

It was indicated that a reply has not been received to Council's letter to Canada Post concerning the Saturday closure of rural post offices in Nova Scotia.

It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that contact be made with Canada Post to have a representative come to council to provide full information on their plans with regard to community mailboxes and the closure of rural Post Offices on Saturday. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison indicated that he, along with all Council members received correspondence from a staff member earlier this week. This correspondence is to be acknowledged indicating Council is not to be contacted in this regard when it is an administrative matter.

Warden Morrison advised that three commercial properties on the Baddeck Waterfront saw their assessment increase by 115%, 113% and 78% in one year. The Property Valuation Services Corporation has indicated that these properties were overlooked and undervalued and this was a catch up year.

Warden Morrison indicated he provided this information to Russell Walker, UNSM, stating our displeasure and that such an increase is unacceptable in one year.

It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that a letter be forwarded to PVSC indicating that the increase in commercial assessments on the Baddeck Waterfront was brought to Council's attention, and Council express opposition to these exorbitant assessment increases in 1 year and the increases should be made over a five year term. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison indicated that he knew he would be receiving the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, having been previously advised by the FCM who nominated a number of individuals.

Warden Morrison returned to the Chair.

PROCLAMATION – TAKE THE ROOF OF WINTER

It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor Grant, that “Take the Roof of Winter 2013” be proclaimed by Council. Motion carried.

TEMPORARY BORROWING RESOLUTION

It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that a temporary borrowing resolution in the amount of \$1,900,000.00 for the Baddeck Village Water System be approved and forwarded on to the province for their approval. Motion carried.

PROCUREMENT POLICY

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that the Procurement Policy for the Municipality of the County of Victoria be approved effective April 1, 2013. Motion carried.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, on motion of Councillor Budge, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, the meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Bruce Morrison, Warden

Sandy Hudson, CAO