

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
March 25, 2013

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, March 25, 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#5 – Fraser Patterson, Deputy Warden
District#6 – Larry Dauphinee
District#7 – Wayne Budge
District#8 – Johnny Buchanan

Also present were:

Heather MacLean, Acting CAO
Zina MacNeil, Recording Secretary

Absent was:

District#4 – Merrill MacInnis (Out of Town)

CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL AGENDA

Warden Morrison called the meeting to order and presented the agenda for approval with the addition of voting on a decision to join the REN.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Budge, to accept the agenda with the addition of voting on a decision for Victoria County to join the REN, and also that the presentation by CBDHA be the first one on the agenda. Motion carried.

CBDHA/BABY FRIENDLY INITIATIVE

Warden Morrison extended courtesy of Council to Erin Forsey and two other former co-workers with the District Health Authority.

Ms. Forsey and her team explained that the Breast Feeding Initiative is a recommendation to help promote the increase of breastfeeding. It is part of world Health and Health Canada recommendations for exclusive breastfeeding and it is a natural way of providing the most healthy growth and development in young infants. The data shows that CDHA has the lowest rates in the province. The higher rates are found

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in communities where there are supports by community, workplace policies and where breastfeeding is a normal part of the social environment.

Some of the important reasons to promote breastfeeding are to help alleviate obesity, cardiovascular disease, cancer, inflammatory bowel disease(Crohn's & Colitis), diabetes, respiratory disease, improve cognitive development, mental health, environmentally friendly, reduce health care costs, and employer costs.

A part of the Human Rights Act it is law now that women have the right to breastfeed a child in public areas, including restaurants, stores, and shopping centers, theatres and so forth. Women shall not be prevented from nursing a child in a public area, nor asked to move to another area that is more discreet.

Also as part of the Human Rights Act employers have a duty to accommodate employees who are breastfeeding. The duty is limited only if the accommodation would create undue hardship. The onus is on the employer to show an undue hardship if a request for accommodation related to breastfeeding is refused.

So CBDHA/BFI is asking the Municipality of Victoria County to create a breastfeeding policy, create a breastfeeding culture, and display the promotional decals in the Municipal Buildings and Facilities. This can also be done by providing baby friendly areas in facilities if possible for those who prefer to breastfeed in private, and provide employee awareness and facts in the accommodations of breastfeeding in the Municipality.

Deputy Warden Patterson asked if other municipalities would be approached as well as local businesses as part of the campaign and would the BFI be available to help the Municipality with the policy development. The 61% was based on the initiation of breastfeeding that number drops off after that and more so after 6 months. The BFI is trying to create a normalcy for it.

Councillor Dauphinee commented that it is an uncommon thing in his area but didn't know it was a law now and that not many people realize that. The decals would certainly help posting them in community facilities and businesses.

Councillor Budge and Councillor Buchanan thanked BFI for their presentation they had no questions as the presentation gave the information and answered the questions.

Councillor Grant had no questions just wondered what the next step was. He commented that the Municipality would call them to help with the development and education of creating a policy.

Councillor MacNeil asked if the other Municipal Units were involved and we were the first one they approached and presented to. They would be approaching the other units.

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Warden Morrison stated that the Municipality would be interested in adopting a breastfeeding policy if the BFI would send a copy of one to Heather MacLean we would be in favor of creating one. The Municipality would post decals especially the Court House building where family court is held. Let us know when the decals are ready. This is a central building.

Warden Morrison thanked CBDHA/BFI for the information they provided and wished them good luck with their initiative.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that the Municipality of Victoria County adopt a Breastfeeding Policy. Motion carried.

WEBSITE PRESENTATION/ATHOL GRANT

Councillor Grant's indicated that Cape Breton and Victoria County need to sell themselves better. By creating a Retire Cape Breton Website and update or create local community websites we would have more online marketing to promote us. In his experience as a business owner he had an office but with the internet and online marketing he didn't need it anymore he could do it from home or anywhere. People like the area and remote location, friendly people, and land prices are reasonable.

He had a subdivision which attracted people locally as well as from away from as far as BC and Ontario. Some families originated in Cape Breton and others moved here because of the lifestyle which is also attracting other family members. Two of the three outside families got here by chance we can improve on that by promoting what we have to offer in a better way. The tax basis received from those few people amounts to roughly \$13,000 as well as providing local contractors with work building the new homes. This provides an economic benefit that is huge.

Community websites are very important in providing information such as what is happening in the local communities and be kept updated on a regular daily basis by volunteers and partnerships. The Retire Cape Breton Website may have such things as active living, culture, service, shopping, etc, with links on the side for maps, weather, golf, and other interests. The middle of page may have a reasoning why you should retire to CB. On the other side you may have a list of comments. Lots of pictures and a phrase like "come for a visit, stay for life". We promote what we have to offer in the communities like local suppers, bingos, gardening, golfing, dances, ceilidhs, active living, and cards. Other information would be land for sale, businesses for sale, farming, classifieds, etc.

There could be an entrance or joining fee for the website paid annually to be part of it. It could be funded with the help of partnerships with ECBC, REN, and Victoria County. Councillor Grant indicated a figure between \$10,000 and \$20,000 is what he is estimating it cost to set this up. It would show the overall reasons why you would want to retire in CB. We could use websites like www.retirecapobreton.co, www.ourbaddeck, www.ouringonish, etc. These are just ideas that could be used. We would use highway signs, print ads, local realtors, web sites, community sites, and social media as part of our advertising.

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Councillor Grant in conclusion is requesting support of Municipal Council to seek funding for the Retire Cape Breton website venture and financial consideration when it is up and running, and for the local websites a commitment for 2 years of \$5000 a year. He expressed thanks to Donna MacDonald from VCCAPS who couldn't be here for the presentation for all her help putting the presentation website together.

Councillor MacNeil commented how important the local websites are to so many people that when Central Cape Breton Website was down because of server issues that there was a lot of people calling and wondering what was going on and they relied on it for so much information.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, to defer the request to budget deliberations, for financial support to maintain Retire Cape Breton Website and Community Websites. Motions carried.

Councillor Grant asked for permission to proceed to seek other funding. Warden Morrison thanked him for his presentation and wished him luck with the website venture.

DOTIR/STEVE MACDONALD/DARREN BLUNDEN

Courtesy of Council was given by Warden Morrison to Steve MacDonald and Darren Blunden from Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. Mr. MacDonald thanked council for the list of items/issues received prior to the invitation to come to council.

The Red Bridge was contracted to Van Zutphens, and they started hauling in materials, the bridge will be passable to traffic by the end of May for the Relay Race. It is scheduled for completion by the end of June.

Humes River Bridge had some asphalt repairs to potholes and they are standing up pretty good. The tenders will be out soon and will be replace this summer. A temporary detour will be set up.

The Lower Middle River Bridge at Nyanza needs some concrete work and work on rails and expansion joints that work is scheduled for this summer.

They are trying to get the Kempt Head-Steel Cross Rd on the list. They know the condition of the roads but may be able to get RIM for additional patching.

On the issue of Jones/MacLeod intersection request for a four way stop they think the 2 way stop is adequate for now. They are recommending removal of some of the tree growth around that area. They will be approaching land owners about removing some of trees.

On the Cabot Trail the paving in the 5 year plan has been pushed out to next year. The tenders will be out later this year for a 6 kilometer section for next year.

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Ice buildup on Queen St. is an issue they are looking hard at it to find a way to capture the water and redirect it.

The Dump Rd at South Ridge Rd there is no record that it is a public road and not a private road. They can get service for non- provincial roads but there is a fee the same as other roads in the county. It is a minimal cost per year.

Under the RIM Program the funding has not changed this year. Slight change to Darren's towards the Little Narrows area. The total budget each supervisor receives is \$600,000 and \$100,000 is strictly for bridge repairs.

There will be patching on the Old Margaree Rd, MacMillan Mountain Rd, New Harris Rd also ditching and gravel, brush cutting in Big Harbour, North Shore, Rear Little River Rd, patching on Kempt Head Rd, Murray Rd and Oregon Rd in North River also gravel, MacQuarrie Rd, and Yankee Line. South Ridge Rd get gravel, Loop Rd-Hwy Garage, Ingonish get hand patching, Middle River and Steel Cross Rd.

They try to keep the same allotment in each area \$350,000 OAS area's contingency money held back also to deal with issues that arises. There is no asphalt scheduled for this year just chip and seal. There are three bridge replacements which cost 8-10 million bridge costs. There are four roads for chip and seal for roads from 5-7 years old to make them last or prolong the life. The crews will be staying in Victoria County. Next year there is a section of the Trans Canada at the end of Kelly's Mountain to Cabot Trail that is scheduled for asphalt.

They have made multiple requests for more sections of Cabot Trail to be added to the list to the directors. Traffic counts will be done for priorities.

Darren commented that in summary of the winter operations they went rather well in his opinion. There was an issue this weekend with mechanical breakdown and trucks were taken in from Truro to help. He has tried to get RIM money for District#1, he has \$55,000 for ditching in Cain's Mountain Rd, Ditching in Red Point and St. Columba and Rear Estmere. There will be gravel patching done. There will be single chip for the 11 km on Route 223 that was done in the last 3-4 years for surface protection and add to life of that 11 km. Other normal maintenance will be done as problems come up. The big issue of St. Columba-Gillis Point Road to Washabuck is not going to get paved. It is a candidate for double chip seal if the community wants to go that route.

There is also a change in supervisor for that area this year. One supervisor was moved to another area and a temporary person is in place a posting will be put out for a new person.

Steve mentioned that this past weekend was a challenge but most roads were done within the 24 hour period. Had to get equipment from other areas as well and working with EMO and NSP with clearing roads for flooding conditions and clearing roads to those groups could get through. Graders and

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loaders were used on paved roads and gravel roads were last to be done. The staff worked hard on weekend.

Deputy Warden Patterson commented that most people would understand the delay on the weekend and thanked them for the good work. He wanted them to keep trying to get Steel Cross Rd and Kempt Head on the list. He questioned why the section of the Cabot Trail that was schedule for this year was pushed to 2014 why didn't it stay there on list and why was it subject to revision.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that a letter be sent to the Minister to find out why that section of the Cabot Trail was moved to 2014, and the importance of it. Motion carried.

Deputy Warden Patterson also commented on the white wash off the roads in the past two weeks the paint didn't stand up and very noticeable at night in a lot of places harder to see at night.

Councillor Dauphinee had same issues as Deputy Warden Patterson regarding the section of the Cabot Trail that was scheduled for asphalt and why it was changed to next year. He appreciates the work DOT workers are doing. The guard rail on the Ingonish side of Smokey on the S-turn and a second on the on the top of the hill towards Ingonish at Knotty Pine there has been concerns arisen recently to him by people driving that could see over the rails that there is going to be a problem and they should be checked out.

The North Shore area of road doesn't seem to be getting enough attention seems like a day or two behind on that section with plowing and salt application to make it safe. That is the problem with the salt silos being taken from the Wreck Cove area. Steve commented that this is area has the highest use of salt on that route. They use 7 ton of salt on one single application on the Smokey-North Shore area.

Councillor Budge commented that the White Point Rd in Neil's Harbour was not mentioned as well as another road between Neil's Harbour and New Haven which has been washed out and the road need armor stone. The last time it was done it was paid out of his district budget. There is 9 km total and the roadside development study showed 800 cars a day but the funding didn't get allocated. There has been a lot of correspondence from the MLA, Council, and the District level of DOT. It needs full reconstruction and incorporated into the repairing of that section. They will continue to ask questions on it.

The road is bad plows can't get through it and that is part of the flooding problems. They will check into it and get back to Councillor Budge as well on the armor stone which is very expensive. The DOT will come to have a look at it.

Councillor Buchanan thanked Steve and Darren the roads have been pretty good on the section that has been recently paved. We will be expecting flooding when the snow starts to go fast as the snow has doubled this year compared to other years. The Loop Rd on top of bridge you come to about 1 km that

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will get gravel patch and ditching not full reconstruction. If funding available may try to divvy up a little extra funding allocate to this area.

Councillor Grant had concern with the West Side Middle River Rd it has been brought up many times and will keep bringing it up. It is a challenge for local paved roads the traffic tests were done and the traffic volumes were low the same as the Gillis Point Rd. They are aware of the problems but can't commit to anything at this time.

The road by Finewood Flooring was another issue and who is responsible to maintain it. It is not part of the list of provincial identified roads so it is not maintained by DOT. It was a financial decision back in the 1960's on list of roads and can access the history and it can be reversed. If it was brought to a certain standard of width and the lowest class of road, with a mutually agreed agreement or venture they can take it over if you bring it to this standard. There is a standing policy on it. He will get a copy of the policy to Councillor Grant.

Councillor MacNeil thanked both Steve and Darren for their work. He has been able to get in touch with Darren by email or by telephone and always gets back to him. His number one issue of course is that section of the Gillis Point Road to Washabuck. He wanted to know if anyway to get back on list that the road conditions are unacceptable. They are that much worse again this year. Steve and Darren commented that it has been brought forward but to no avail. They questioned whether the residents would be open to double chip seal on that section of road. Councillor MacNeil stated that in order to do that there would have to be construction done to the road first. We lost a bus because of the condition of the road and trucks can't get over it.

The gravel roads as well have been deteriorating again. Barra Glen done again last year and is slop again. The material used didn't stand up more than a few months. The John Neil George Rd is good. They commented that there is graveling in the budget this year two parts will be done in house by DOT and the other two will be by contract. The contracted one prior year didn't stand up but met the specs for the job but what is going on is not standing up. They can't go back and tell contractor once contract is assigned. The Highland Hill Rd is deteriorating real badly. The crew was called there today and the bridge abutment broke. They will put reclaimed material on that part.

The RIM program has to be done by the end of July this year usually into the fall to keep staff going. Robert will still oversea the new temporary supervisor until they figure out where they are going with his replacement.

Councillor MacInnis area issues were mentioned by Warden Morrison that was with the plowing of the area. The grader was going into North River now using the loader more because of the snow this year. The roads are being done faster with the use of the loader. The quality of pavement isn't as good as years ago the material is not lasting as long and has to be chip sealed after 5-6 years.

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Warden Morrison issue was with the flooding/draining issues on that busy street section. The private property owners should not have put the drain where it is as it is a safety issue. DOT will look hard at it a catch basin would cost thousands of dollars. They will approach the land owners and give them a chance to correct the problem.

Nelson who supervises the north area was off today so he didn't make it to the meeting it would be costly to bring him in on his day off. They will schedule a meeting with the North Councillors within the next few weeks to discuss their issues.

DOT is trying to reduce its winter budget of salt/plowing. It is the highest budget and they are over budget. They want to improve service and fiscal responsibility. So they have to convince the decision makers that the need is there. They have been tracking all the snow falls and storms compared to other areas of the province and how much salt and snow removal was used for each event to justify the spending on our budget. We can't lose equipment and they want to reduce equipment. There is more equipment scheduled to go in the Inverness area this year as well.

They will check on the warranty issue on the 3 year job at MacKinnon's Harbour/Ottawa Brook area. They will let council know. Warden Morrison thanked them again for coming to meet with council and if there was any way council could help them justify the spending of their budget to let us know.

BREAK

Warden Morrison asked about voting on a decision at this time on whether we should join REN. Discussion arose on the topic debating if a good idea or not with some questions from the public in attendance and council. It is a \$65,000 commitment from the Municipality. It was indicated that this would give Victoria County a full-time Development Officer with salary and benefits. The original commitment was for \$48, 150 but with benefits it took this figure to \$65,000.

One concern from the audience was if the person hired was not from the county how would we benefit from this? Well we would be getting an experienced Development Officer and it would be up to us to give or bring forth to them. We have been there before with 3 or 4 people from the county and didn't get what we wanted. They have the experience we need and the mix in the use of different people instead of just one. We have more input and can learn from our mistakes before. The position is to be negotiated to our best benefit. We have missed out before on monies from programs because we didn't qualify as being not part of an RDA. We will transition as we go forward. We have to make a commitment to see what those benefits are. We can re-evaluate after a year or so to see how it is working.

The REN offices adjoin ECBC offices which gives and they work closely to if project monies become available they would have insight. Are there opposing views? We have been looking at the issue over four years and it is not taken lightly. There is a little unknown territory but we will vote on it on an individual basis in an open vote. If we are that dissatisfied after a year we will deal with it then.

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Councillor MacNeil stated his hesitancy because CBRM has admitted they will be in trouble in a few years but there is money we will miss out on if we don't commit. We have sufficient information to make a decision now and we have excellent cooperation with CBRM council. I think we can work with them says Councillor Patterson who borders CBRM. A few of the North Councillors disagree they don't feel they will benefit from it. Councillor Grant sees the potential. The A Governance Board is made up of all members. Councillor Dauphinee didn't want us to be left out of it. It has to come from us to make sure we take advantage of it and make it work for us. If joining isn't an option what are we doing? If we don't join we are missing out on opportunities. Councillor Grant admitted he has changed his mind numerous times but thinks it is a good idea. Yes it would be nice to have a fulltime person but if we can't we use multiple people there to make it better. Mr. MacKinnon was pleased to hear the debating of council on the issue.

The question was asked at this time. Who is for joining and committing to the REN and who is against? The vote was a 5 for joining and 2 against. Motion approved that Victoria County has now committed to join the REN.

The minutes from the March 11, 2013, session of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

It was moved by Councillor Grant, seconded by Councillor Budge, that the minutes from the March 11, 2013 council meeting be approved as presented, Motion carried.

BUSINESS ARISING

There is no business arising.

NEW BUSINESS

Draft lease for the Dingwall Recreation Building was received. It was given to Councillor Buchanan to have a look at.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District#1

Councillor MacNeil indicated that the Barra Food Bank Building is deteriorating and they will be looking for funding to erect a new building. They are looking at approximately \$15,000 for a new building. Councillor MacNeil was making council aware he will be taking it to budget discussions. There are 39 people who use the Barra Food Bank on a regular basis.

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It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Buchanan that the request for funding to erect a new building for the Barra Food Bank be referred to budget discussions. Motion carried.

DISTRICT#2

Councillor Grant updated council on the Day Care situation. They have looked at a few possible places in Baddeck but need a lot of renovations to meet the requirements for a Day Care Facility. They got a little scared off. The more optional choice would be to have Family Day Cares. These work out of people's homes and can take in up to 6 children. They have been very successful. There is assistance to upgrade the home which is less severe than the cost of operating one. Funding for low income out there and could pay for some of the costs. They would need an Agency to sponsor it and maybe the Municipality could do that. The Family ones are smaller and easier to manage. The Community Day Care Coordinators Bea Buckland and Nancy Delaney are coming up to meet with us and the public to explain how this cooperative works and the good option it is.

As well Department of Natural Resources has or is losing some jobs we have to push them to keep them or get them back. If we let them go we will never get them back. Whycomomagh is losing positions as well. We need to go see the Minister of Natural Resources about this issue. We should get MLA Keith Bain to set up an appointment with the Minister and meet him face to face on this matter of taking 6-7 jobs away from us. Council agreed this was a good idea to set it up.

DISTRICT#8

Councillor Buchanan and Warden Morrison met with a group in Bay St. Lawrence on a washroom review on the Cabot Trail and the access of washrooms. Sandy has a copy of it and they want to see it and review it. Sandy is to be asked for a copy for the next council meeting.

Hector Hines has requested to do a presentation to council as soon as possible before lobster fishing starts. The presentation is on non-motorized moose hunting in Victoria County. He will be put on the agenda for the April 29th meeting of council if there are not already two presentations on it.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that a letter be sent to Bob Petrie and Julie Towers, of Department of Natural Resources and two from the Department of Environment inviting them to come to council. Motion carried.

DISTRICT#7

Councillor Budge raised the question why there was two different fishing season start dates between north and south. Shouldn't the fishing season be the same for all of Victoria County?

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It was moved by Councillor Budge, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that a letter be sent to the Minister of Natural Resources asking them to make the fishing season the same for all of Victoria County. Motion carried.

DISTRICT#6

Councillor Dauphinee indicated that the Northeast Highlands Chamber of Commerce's AGM social will be coming up and he would like council to sponsor \$500 and he would take \$500 from his District Budget as well.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Budge, that the Municipality of Victoria County sponsor the annual AGM social in the amount of \$500 and \$500 from District#6 Budget. Motion carried.

DISTRICT#5

Deputy Warden Patterson commented that he received an email from Chris Prentiss, IBM on the Transportation Feasibility Study and there are a number of things he would like to discuss. He will forward the email to Councillor Dauphinee and Warden Morrison who are also on this committee.

There are public consultations to be held beginning in April not sure where, when and how many but the first one is scheduled for April 1 and will go from there. It was stated in the proposal if it was concluded that it was not feasible to proceed then they would advise on other options.

Baddeck and Area Tourism Association are requesting to present a proposal to council in May on Sustainable Tourism.

The Wind Turbine By-Law we have done some work on it. We will be meeting with John Bain on Tuesday on it. Planning is involved in it and public participation will be as well.

CORRESPONDENCE

A letter was received from Chip Byrd on the fees for Highland Links Golf Course. The fees for a single person increased 32%, and for a couple they increased 23%. The increase in the proposed fees was tabled to council.

It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, and seconded by Councillor Grant, that the Eastern District Planning Commission Financial Budget be approved. Motion carried.

A letter was received from Charlie Parker of Natural Resources on the land exchange proposal for the Solid Waste Facility he will be in contact in a few weeks.

Correspondence from the Department of Community Service was provided to council.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

The next session of council will be held on April 15, 2013.

ADJOURN

It was moved by Councillor Budge that the meeting adjourn.