

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
December 15, 2014

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, December 15, 2014, 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 #6 – Larry Dauphinee
District #7 – Wayne Budge
District #8 – Johnny Buchanan

Also present were:

Sandy Hudson, CAO
Heather MacLean, Recording Secretary

Absent was:

District #5 – Fraser Patterson (Death in Family)

CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

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

SUMMARY OFFENCE TICKET PRESENTATION

Courtesy of Council was extended to John Bain, Director, Eastern District Planning Commission, who was in attendance to make a presentation on Summary Offence Ticketing as a means of getting compliance with the *National Building Code* and the *Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations*.

Sean Donovan has qualified as a special constable and can issue summary offence tickets if authorized by the municipal unit in which the specific legislation is being violated. The schedule of fees was outlined. Individuals constructing or demolishing a building without a permit can be fined \$693.95 and corporations doing the same can be fined \$1268.95. Mr. Bain

indicated that the intent is not so much to issue tickets, but rather use the possibility of fines as an incentive for compliance.

Mr. Bain requested Council to consider appointing Sean Donovan as a Special Constable able to issue Summary Offence Tickets for violations of the *Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations* in the Municipality of the County of Victoria.

To date Inverness County and the Town of Port Hawkesbury have appointed Sean Donovan as a Special Constable.

The possibility of having more than one person qualified as a Special Constable was questioned. This could be a possibility and will be considered in the future, but at present Mr. Donovan is the only one qualified.

It was moved by Councillor Grant, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that Sean Donovan be appointed as a Special Constable able to issue Summary Offence Tickets for violations of the *Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations* in the Municipality of the County of Victoria. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison extended a thank you to Mr. Bain and he was excused at this time.

PHYSICAL ACTIVE LIVING UPDATE

Courtesy of Council was extended to Vince Forrestall, Physical Activity Strategy Coordinator, who made a presentation highlighting the celebration tour with Heather Moyse, two-time Olympic Gold Medalist, on October 20-21, 2014.

Mr. Forrestall also outlined the accomplishments and partnerships from 2011 to 2014 (copy attached).

Mr. Forrestall thanked Council, the CAO and Larry Maxwell, Department of Health and Wellness, for their support and indicated that it is now time to step back for the next few months to determine if we are going in the right direction. This will allow time to evaluate the strategy and continue with future planning.

Council expressed their appreciation to Mr. Forrestall for a job well done.

The increased access to schools was discussed. Mr. Forrestall indicated that the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board have a draft document on community use of schools that they will be consulting the community on prior to final approval.

Warden Morrison thanked Mr. Forrestall for his report and indicated that Council looks forward to the future of physical active living in Victoria County.

Warden Morrison recognized Dr. Monika Dutt, Medical Officer of Health, CBDHA, who was in the audience. Dr. Dutt indicated she was in attendance as an interested citizen.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Warden Morrison extended the courtesy of Council to Leanne MacEachen, Director of Finance, who was in attendance to provide a financial update.

Ms. MacEachen indicated she received today, the consolidated financial statements for the Municipality of the County of Victoria for the year ended March 31, 2014. The non-consolidated statements were presented in July, 2014.

Council were forwarded the statements for review by email, as well as the Victoria County Water Utility statements for the year ended March 31, 2014.

Ms. MacEachen highlighted some of the points contained in the consolidated statements. The report was an unqualified audit report which indicates that everything is in order and it represented fairly the financial position of the County as of March 31, 2014.

The financial positions of the two nursing homes come into play in the consolidated statements and as a result, the statements show a deficit. The non-consolidated statements are more of a true picture of the Municipality's position at year end.

Ms. MacEachen indicated that staffing issues with Grant Thornton accounted for the lateness in receiving the consolidated statements. They are to be submitted to the Province by September 30 of each year. Assurance that they will be received in a timelier manner next year should be received.

Ms. MacEachen indicated that she would appreciate receipt of Council's wish list for the upcoming year, prior to budget planning. Sometime in January a meeting will be held to layout going forward in the next 12 months.

Grant Thornton's lateness in providing the consolidated statements was discussed.

It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that a letter be forwarded to Grant Thornton indicating that the Municipality is to be in receipt of the consolidated financial statements no later than the first week of September each year. Motion carried.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that the Victoria County Water Utility and Consolidated Financial Statements for the Municipality of the County of Victoria for the year ended March 31, 2014, be accepted as presented. Motion carried.

Ms. MacEachen also brought up the proposed changes to the *Municipal Travel Expense Policy*. This policy applies to both Council and staff.

Councillor Dauphinee expressed concern with regard to the meal provided at Council and felt there should be a choice of whether a meal could be charged if you do not eat what is provided. This can be looked at.

Also the increase in mileage to \$0.48 per kilometer was questioned. Council have traditionally followed the provincial mileage rate. Ms. MacEachen she indicated she researched mileage rates and felt the provincial rate was low and made the call to increase the rate to recommended amount.

The policy is a working document and will be reviewed annually.

It was moved by Councillor Grant, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that the changes to the Municipal Travel Expense Policy be accepted with the policy becoming effective January 1, 2015. Motion carried.

RECESS

Warden Morrison advised that Council would recess for 10 minutes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NOVEMBER 24, 2014

The minutes of the November 24, 2014, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of November 24, 2014, be approved as presented. Motion carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Barra Glen Road

Sandy Hudson contacted Merrill Bustin, DNR, with regard to the beaver problem on the Barra Glen Road.

Provincial Municipal Fiscal Review

Warden Morrison brought up the motion contained in the last meeting with regard to the position of the Village with regard to the recommendations on Villages in the Provincial Municipal Fiscal Review.

Warden Morrison indicated he would obtain further information and revisit this matter at Council in January, 2015.

Roper's Bridge

The condition of Roper's Bridge remains unsatisfactory. Sandy Hudson indicated he has contacted Stephen MacDonald, Area Manager, TIR, on this matter and will be forwarding a letter to the Minister of TIR concerning same.

NEW BUSINESS

EMO

Council will meet with Lyle Donovan, EMC, in the New Year to review the EMO plan and responsibilities.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #2

Councillor Grant distributed a map showing municipal property at Little River which he proposes is offered for exchange with DNR for equal acreage at Wreck Cove Flowage. The Little River property is 100 acres and 100 acres of Crown land is requested in exchange.

Councillor Grant indicated he attended a meeting in Port Hawkesbury recently where he had the opportunity to sit beside a NSPI employee who deals with Guysborough County and the Sable Winds project. He also spoke with Mark Sidebottom, NSPI, and they both suggested the wind energy possibilities will be significant in the future.

The topic of power storage was also discussed at this meeting and Wreck Cove is a spot being considered.

Sandy Hudson indicated that the 100 acres being requested from DNR would have to be identified prior to a request for exchange being made.

It was moved by Councillor Grant, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that a letter be forwarded to DNR requesting consideration of the possibility of exchanging 100 acres of County owned land at Little River for 100 acres of Crown land at Wreck Cove Flowage as outlined in the attached map. Motion carried.

Councillor Grant indicated that he was approached by representatives from the Baddeck Academy School Advisory Committee regarding Council's support for the completion of the remaining school renovations.

It was moved by Councillor Grant, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that the CAO contact the CBVRSB inquiring on the status of the remaining renovations to the Baddeck Academy elementary school section and whether budget consideration is being given to completing these renovations in the near future. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison indicated that he too has been contacted in this regard.

District #4

Councillor MacInnis questioned on whether a cheque for \$10,000.00 was received by the Municipality for the St. Ann's Bay Health Centre. He will contact the Director of Finance on this matter.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that a letter of congratulations be forwarded to Gail Montgomery on being awarded the TIANS "Golden Hospitality Award". Motion carried.

Councillor MacInnis questioned on the status of the River Bennett unsightly premises. Sean Donovan is currently working on this matter.

District #6

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that \$3,500.00 be approved for Ski Cape Smokey from the District #6 budget for maintenance and repairs. Motion carried.

District #7

Councillor Budge questioned on the status of the water for the Neil's Harbour Enviro-Depot. Sandy Hudson advised is currently being investigated.

District #8

Councillor Buchanan questioned on the approved funding for the North of Smokey Safer Communities. Once a written request is received from the North of Smokey Safer Communities, the funding will be released.

Councillor Buchanan and MacInnis updated Council on a meeting they attended with regard to the use of shell waste. Alicia Lake also attended and updated on enhancing the compost side of things with some added processes and a few pieces of equipment that would make a compost product that would be saleable. Another meeting is scheduled for January 6, 2015, on this matter and additional information and options will be presented after that time.

District #3

Councillor Budge assumed the Chair.

Warden Morrison indicated he has received a number of concerns with regard to the quality of Bell Aliant's high speed internet. It is rumored that the quality of the equipment in the Victoria County is substandard.

It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that a letter be forwarded to Bell Aliant concerning the upgrading of the high speed internet service in Victoria County and requesting that a representative come to Council to outline their plans for upgrading service in Victoria County. Motion carried.

All Councillors agreed to provide funding from their district budgets for Feed Nova Scotia.

Warden Morrison indicated that he and Councillor Grant met with a representative from Canada Revenue Agency on the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program. This program has volunteers helping Canadians who have low income and a simple tax situation prepare their income tax returns. Information on this program should be posted in all districts.

Warden Morrison updated Council on the FCM's Hometown Proud initiative. He has uploaded pictures for his district he and challenged all Councillors to do the same. They have five weeks to include their districts. Photos are available of all districts and video footage of some that can be used. Jocelyn Bethune can assist with this initiative.

Dan White & Associates have agreed to facilitate the review of the three economic development documents and he will be meeting with the Economic Development Committee on Monday, December 22, 2014, at 10:00 a.m. to begin the process.

Warden Morrison returned to the Chair.

CORRESPONDENCE

Sandy Hudson read a letter received from Joel Rochon, owner of the Markland Inn, concerning his tax bill and the fact that he had not received a bill from 2011 to the fall of this year.

Sandy Hudson advised that property taxation bills were sent as required to the address of the registered owner. The bills were returned to the Municipality. Upon investigation by Brian Chandler, the bill was then forwarded locally to Mr. Rochon.

Mr. Rochon's correspondence is to be acknowledged and he be advised that the CAO will discuss payment arrangements with him.

IN CAMERA

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

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor Budge, to return to the regular session of Council. Motion carried.

CUPE LOCAL 2694

It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, to accept the recommendation of the County's Negotiating Committee with regard to CUPE Local 2694 negotiations. Motion carried.

REN 6 UPDATE

Warden Morrison provided Council with an updated on the REN 6. The Board of Directors and Oversight Committee have been named and approved and advertisement for an Economic Development Officer for the County should be completed soon. It is anticipated that REN 6 will be up and operating by April 1, 2015.

NEXT COUNCIL

The next meeting of Council is scheduled for January 12, 2015, subject to change should the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism be available on a different date.

CENTRAL CAPE BRETON DELEGATION

It was moved by Councillor Budge, seconded by Councillor MacInnis, that Councillor MacNeil be authorized to attend a meeting with a delegation from Central Cape Breton with the Liberal Caucus in Halifax on December 17, 2014, as a representative from Victoria County. Motion carried.

OTTAWA TRIP

The Ottawa trip for Cape Breton municipalities will be held from January 27-29, 2015. Councillors Grant and Budge indicated they would not be attending.

Once additional information is received, appropriate arrangements will be made.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, on motion of Councillor Budge, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, the meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Sandy Hudson, CAO

Bruce Morrison, Warden