

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
February 9, 2015

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, February 9, 2015, 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

Also present were:

Sandy Hudson, CAO
Heather MacLean, Recording Secretary

Absent was:

District #8 – Johnny Buchanan (Out of Town)

CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Margaret MacPhee, who is celebrating her 100th Birthday today, is in attendance and a presentation and discussion with her will be added to the agenda.

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

MARGARET MACPHEE

Warden Morrison invited Margaret MacPhee to come forward for a special presentation on behalf of the Municipality for her 100th Birthday today.

Warden Morrison indicated Council's pleasure in having Mrs. MacPhee with them today. He then presented her with a Certificate of Recognition on her 100th Birthday and two birthday cakes and invited her to have cake and tea with Council. He also introduced Margaret's daughter, Catherine, who was in attendance.

He then opened the floor to Council to introduce themselves and offer their congratulations to Margaret.

Mrs. MacPhee answered various questions and provided Council with some stories over the past 100 years.

Warden Morrison expressed Council's pleasure in having Margaret with them this evening and indicated that she is a remarkable lady and wished her many more years of continued health.

Mrs. MacPhee thanked Council for their kindness and was excused at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 26, 2015

The minutes of the January 26, 2015, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of January 26, 2015, be approved as presented. Motion carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Ferry Service

Councillor MacNeil advised that the policy regarding the ferry service not operating in the event of a power outage has been rescinded.

Cell Service

The status of the cell phone coverage project was discussed. Sandy Hudson advised that they are still waiting a decision on the North Shore request; however, the other two sites at Middle River and Bay St. Lawrence are proceeding.

Meat Cove

The invoice was forwarded to Inverness County for services provided to the Meat Cove area by Victoria County. The matter is before Inverness County Council now.

Cell Coverage – Top of Smokey

Councillor Dauphinee indicated that the ability to make a cell phone call at the top of Smokey is no longer available and he questioned why. Contact will be made with Bell Mobility in this regard.

NOTICE OF MOTIONS

Councillor Grant presented notice of motions for three motions he will be presenting at the February 23, 2015, Council meeting.

The first motion is that the 2015 tax bills include notification of the rebates offered for property taxes both provincially and municipally.

The second motion is that the rebate for low income property owners in Victoria County be increased from \$100.00 to a maximum of \$200.00.

Lastly he indicated that he will be presenting a motion that the Victoria County credit card payment option be administered by a third party for the 2015 taxation year and if a by-law is required to effect this change in policy, then efforts be made to begin this process.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #1

Councillor MacNeil expressed concern on the plowing of the gravel roads in his district. One road was not plowed for 3.5 days after a storm. He has talked with Darren Blunden, Area Manager, on this matter.

District #2

Councillor Grant indicated that he was present recently when an AED (automated external defibrillator) was used on a heart attack victim and he felt these machines should be readily available in public buildings.

It was moved by Councillor Grant, seconded by Councillor Budget, that the appropriate number of AED's be purchased for our municipal sites and signage be placed indicating their location and availability. Motion carried.

District #4

Councillor MacInnis brought up the matter of snow removal around Bell Aliant switch boxes in his district. Sandy Hudson will contact Kevin Hashem regarding this matter.

Councillor MacInnis questioned if the Municipality was contacted with regard to the land trade between Cabot Links and the Department of Natural Resources. DNR traded beach area to Cabot Links in Inverness County in exchange for property in Barrachois, Victoria County.

It was moved by Councillor MacInnis, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that the CAO investigate the land transaction between Cabot Links and the Crown and report back to Council. Motion carried.

Councillor MacInnis questioned on funding for KitchenFest. The CAO advised that an application was received and will be referred to budget.

Councillor MacInnis requested that a street light located at 44622 Cabot Trail, Little River, be relocated to 50591 Cabot Trail, Goose Cove.

District #7

Councillor Budge also brought up concern with regard to the plowing of the side roads in his district.

It was moved by Councillor Budge, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that Stephen MacDonald and Darren Blunden, Area Managers, DTIR, be invited to the next session of Council. Motion carried.

The status of the navigation buoys in Neil's Harbour and North Shore was questioned. It was indicated that they were removed on Saturday past.

District #6

Councillor Dauphinee brought up the concern with regard to the breakdown of snow removal equipment in the northern area of the County. This can be addressed with DTIR representatives at the next Council meeting.

Councillor Dauphinee expressed concern on ACOA's funding moratorium. Applications have been submitted for assistance with a ski groomer and the golf course and both applications were denied as a moratorium was placed on funding.

A letter is to be forwarded to the Minister of ACOA, bringing Council's concern on the funding moratoriums on the two applications submitted and request that each application should be investigated based on merit and benefit.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Budge, that congratulations be forwarded to Bobby Fitzgerald, EHS Paramedic, on his retirement after 31 years of service. Motion carried.

District #1

Councillor MacNeil expressed concern on the lack of salt on the roads.

District #3

Deputy Warden Patterson assumed the Chair.

Warden Morrison expressed concern on the staffing and hours of operation of the Department of Community Services offices in Victoria County.

It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor Grant, that a letter be forwarded to the Department of Community Services requesting an update on their plans for the Department of Community Services offices in Victoria County over the next few years. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison updated Council on physician recruitment to Victoria County. A meeting was held with a prospective doctor last evening.

The status of the transfer of the house adjacent to the Victoria County Memorial Hospital to the County was questioned.

It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that a letter be forwarded to Honourable Leo Glavine, Minister of Health and Wellness, questioning on the status of the request to transfer the property to the Municipality. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison returned to the Chair.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Meeting with Minister Samson

Warden Morrison updated Council on the meeting with Honourable Michel Samson, Minister of ERDT. He, Councillors Dauphinee and Buchanan, Deputy Warden Patterson and the CAO attended. A number of issues were addressed with the Minister and overall it was an excellent meeting and he was receptive to the issues.

A letter is to be forwarded to Minister Samson thanking him for taking the time to meet with Council and reminding him of the issues addressed.

Land Asset Database

Deputy Warden Patterson advised that a notice received from Colleen Wheeliker indicates that the consultants for the Land Asset Database under the Prosperity Framework wish to meet with the Councillors on Wednesday, February 11, 2015.

A number of Councillors indicated they were not available on that date.

Immigration Task Force

Deputy Warden Patterson attended a meeting at the AG Bell Museum on the Immigration Task Force. Cape Breton University has set up the task force to come up with a strategy to encourage people to come to Cape Breton. The task force includes representatives from the Cape Breton municipalities, CBU, NSCC, First Nations and business organizations.

Deputy Warden Patterson updated on the meeting and indicated that business succession planning was a big part of the discussion. The project will wrap up in the spring with a summit to discuss the strategy and recommendations and set immigration goals for Cape Breton.

Age-Friendly Communities

Deputy Warden Patterson updated Council on the Age-Friendly Communities Committee. A webinar has been scheduled for February 20, 2015, at 1:00 p.m. He also indicated that the Minister of Health and Wellness and Seniors, Honourable Leo Glavine, will be coming to Victoria County to meet with the Age-Friendly Communities Committee on March 9, 2015.

CONSULTATION – BRIDGE AT ENGLISHTOWN

Councillor MacInnis questioned whether the Municipality has been contacted with regard to public consultations for a bridge at Englishtown. Honourable Geoff MacLellan, Minister of TIR, has indicated consultations will be scheduled in Victoria County regarding a bridge at Englishtown.

The CAO will see the Deputy Minister of TIR tomorrow and will bring this matter up with him.

CAPE BRETON DAYS – OTTAWA

Warden Morrison indicated that although Victoria County representatives were unable to attend the Cape Breton Days in Ottawa due to weather, he was advised that those who were able to attend were quite happy with the meetings.

DAN WHITE & ASSOCIATES

Council was reminded that the report from Dan White & Associates was distributed to them for review.

REN6 UPDATE

The Board of Directors of the proposed REN6 is meeting today and an update on REN6 will be provided at the next Council meeting.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, on motion of Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, the meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Bruce Morrison, Warden

Sandy Hudson, CAO