

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
March 9, 2015

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, March 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 #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

Absent was:

District #4 – Merrill MacInnis (Out of Town)

CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

It was moved by Councillor Budge, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that the agenda be approved with the addition of an In Camera meeting. Motion carried.

WORKPLACE WELLNESS ACTIVE LIVING SUBSIDIZATION PROGRAM

Courtesy of Council was extended to Vince Forrestall, Physical Activity Strategy Coordinator, and Leanne MacEachen, Director of Finance, who were in attendance with regard to a Workplace Wellness Active Living Subsidization Program.

Mr. Forrestall provided a presentation on the Workplace Well Policy and Active Living Subsidization Program (copy attached). The Workplace Wellness Policy was approved by Council on April 28, 2014, and he outlined what has been accomplished since then.

The makeup of the Victoria County Workplace Wellness Committee was outlined. The Committee is ecommending a Workplace Wellness Active Living Subsidization Program. The purpose of the program is to increase the overall health levels of our employees and improve

their quality of life. Healthy employees suffer fewer health-related injuries and are less-frequently ill and live longer with a higher quality of life.

He outlined the findings and recommendation of the Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia with regard to a Wellness Report based on interviews conducted with 38 municipalities.

The implementation of Employee Active Living Subsidization Program is a proactive approach to the health of our employees, recognizing that physical activity, healthy eating and mental health are intertwined to achieve overall wellness. The eligibility for the program was outlined. The program provides municipal staff an opportunity to purchase a variety of wellness options including fitness equipment, curling/ski memberships, golf/ski passes, pool passes, smoking cessation and nutrition/weight loss programs.

Leanne MacEachen indicated that if all employees were to take advantage of the program the cost would be approximately \$10,000.00. At present, there is \$3,700.00 in the physical activity budget. If approved, it will be shown as a taxable benefit on the T4.

The wellness credit will match qualified spending by the employee, up to a maximum of \$200.00. All full time seasonal employees are eligible at a prorated level. Employees and Council members are eligible.

An application would be filled out and submitted to the Workplace Wellness Committee for review. Upon approval, receipts are to be submitted to the Committee. No payment can be made without receipts.

Ms. MacEachen outlined what is done in this regard in other municipal units. By encouraging and supporting employees in making healthy choices, the Municipality helps to improve employees' health, and therefore, benefit from employees that are healthy and productive.

This is for consideration in the upcoming 2015-2016 budget.

It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that the Victoria County Municipal Workplace Wellness Active Living Subsidization Program be approved for the 2015-2016 budget, based on a renewal evaluation report submitted to Council annually. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – FEBRUARY 23, 2015

The minutes of the February 23, 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 February 23, 2015, be approved as presented. Motion carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Reserve Designation

The inclusion of the Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Reserve logo on County signage was discussed.

Warden Morrison indicated that Destination Cape Breton is looking at an Island-wide Municipal Tourism Strategy and the inclusion of the Biosphere logo on all Cape Breton Island signage is being discussed and considered at the regional level.

Inverness County

A cheque for \$39,000.00 was received today for services provided by Victoria County to the Meat Cove area of Inverness County.

Credit Cards

The CAO updated Council on the credit card issue. The solicitor has reviewed the MGA with regard to a by-law and a by-law may not be required and it can be done by policy.

A meeting has been set with Paymentus concerning using their services and a report will be provided after the meeting.

Committee of the Whole

The Committee of the Whole meeting with regard to the tax arrears and tax sale issues will be held in early April. Solicitor MacDowell will be in attendance.

KitchenFest

An application for financial assistance was received from the Gaelic College for their KitchenFest. They require an answer prior to budget review due to advertising deadlines, etc.

There are three levels of sponsorship – Gold \$25,000.00, Silver \$10,000.00 and Bronze \$5,000.00.

It was moved by Warden Budge, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that the Municipality provide silver sponsorship for the Gaelic College's KitchenFest in the amount of \$10,000.00. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

EDPC APPOINTMENTS

It was moved by Councillor Grant, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that the appointment of EDPC staff to Municipal positions be approved as follows:

- **Administrator – Dangerous and Unightly Premises - Sean Donovan**
Alternate – John Bain
- **Building Inspector – David MacKenzie**
Alternates – Cyril LeBlanc, Leon LeBlanc, Harry Martell
- **Assistant Building Inspector and Special Constable – Sean Donovan**
- **Development Officer – Wanda Ryan**
Alternates – John Bain, Nathan MacLeod, Andrew Jones
- **Fire Inspector – Sean Donovan**
Alternates – Cyril LeBlanc, David MacKenzie, Leon LeBlanc

Motion carried.

RESERVE ACCOUNT

Sandy Hudson requested Council's permission to transfer \$544,000.00 from the reserve account to operating to pay Bell Mobility for the cell service project. When the 50% is received from the province, it will be put back into the reserve account.

This invoice is to be paid by March 31, 2015, and the work will be completed in June/July, 2015.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that approval be given to transfer \$544,000.00 from the reserve account to the operating account. Motion carried.

TAX ACCOUNT

Sandy Hudson indicated that he would like to make application under Section 139A of the MGA to a Justice of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia with regard to a tax account that is in arrears for \$19,000.00 that has a troublesome chain of title. It is not recommended for Tax Sale and he would like to go this route to see if this can be a go forward for other such properties.

It was moved by Councillor Budge, seconded by Councillor MacNeil, that the CAO make application under Section 139A of the MGA to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia with regard to the outlined tax account. Motion carried.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #2

Councillor Grant brought up the length of time to TCH 105 was closed as a result of a car/pedestrian accident in South Haven. He questioned whether there was a need for the excessive length of closure on a busy highway.

This matter can be addressed with Staff Sgt. Craig Yorke when he appears before Council in April.

The Ride for Dad event which took place last weekend saw 197 sleds participate and \$33,000.00 raised for Prostate Cancer research. There was an increase in activity around the community and it was a great event.

Councillor Grant indicated that he attended an ATV meeting recently where the topic of the controlled highway designation between Exits 8 and 10 was discussed. This designation is hindering development of this area and he felt this required further discussion at a future meeting.

District #1

Councillor MacNeil invited Council to a Community Welcome Event in Iona on Saturday, March 14, 2015, from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Darrell Keigan and Stewart MacDonald will be providing entertainment.

District #6

Councillor Dauphinee brought up the matter of the Keltic Lodge and the delayed opening until June 5, 2015. This has a negative impact to the Ingonish area and affects employment in the area. Many long standing employees will not be returning.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that a letter be forwarded to the Minister of ERDT, expressing displeasure on the late opening of the Keltic Lodge this season and requesting an update on the status of the Keltic Lodge. Motion carried.

District #5

Deputy Warden Patterson advised that Nova Scotia Power was connecting the street lights and flashing warning lights at the Switchback turn on Kelly's Mountain today.

District #3

Deputy Warden Patterson took the Chair.

Warden Morrison brought up the controlled access highway designation between Exits 8 and 10. He attended a meeting a week ago with regard to tourism and economic development. The Municipality is losing revenue as the properties in the controlled access designation are valued and far less than they would be if they could be developed.

He indicated he asked the Mayors/Wardens for a letter of support and also Destination Cape Breton Association.

It was moved by Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that the CAO contact Destination Cape Breton and other municipal units in Cape Breton to provide a letter of support to assist in the efforts to remove the controlled access highway designation between Exits 8 and 10 in Baddeck. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison returned to the Chair.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Age-Friendly Communities Committee

Deputy Warden Patterson indicated that as a result of the February 20, 2015, Webinar which was viewed by over 120 people, the World Health Organization is looking for information on Victoria County's Age-Friendly Communities activities.

The Age-Friendly Communities Committee met with Honourable Leo Glavine, Minister for Seniors, in Baddeck. Twelve committee members were present and met with the Minister for an hour to hear seniors' issues. By 2031, 31% of the population of Nova Scotia will be over 65 and discussion took place on how to prepare for that. Housing, home care, older adults who remain in the workforce and a whole range of issues were discussed.

Deputy Warden Patterson indicated that there will be a Community Engagement on Aging Issues held in Halifax on March 23, 2015, and he requested permission to attend this event.

It was moved by Councillor Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, that Deputy Warden Patterson be authorized to attend this session in Halifax on March 23, 2015. Motion carried.

VICTORIA COUNTY HOME SUPPORT

Councillor MacNeil, a member of the Victoria County Home Support Board, brought up an issue with regard to the future of home care.

Warden Morrison declared a Conflict and left the meeting at this time.

Councillor MacNeil indicated that the topic of privatization of home care all across Nova Scotia came up at a meeting. The Board do not agree with this possible action.

Victoria County Home Support Agency has a \$1.5 million dollar budget and employees 30 people – 28 who are from Victoria County. There are home care employees in every district of the Municipality.

They will be looking to the Municipality for support in the future. The Board has not composed their letter as yet and it was felt that more information was required before the County could provide the letter of support.

It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Dauphinee, that the CAO contact Ruth Morrison, Agency Director, to obtain more information on possible changes in Home Care for the letter of support to the Minister. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison returned to the meeting.

IN CAMERA

It was moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, to move In Camera to deal with personnel issues. Motion carried.

It was moved by Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor Grant, to move out of In Camera. Motion carried.

PAY RATE ADJUSTMENTS

It was moved by Deputy Warden Patterson, seconded by Councillor Grant, that the pay rate adjustments be implemented for all staff except the CAO before the end of the fiscal year and the CAO have his performance evaluation completed. Motion carried.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Bruce Morrison, Warden

Sandy Hudson, CAO