

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
June 13, 2016

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, June 13, 2016, 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 moved and seconded that the agenda be approved as presented. Motion carried.

TOM WILSON, DIRECTOR OF RECREATION AND TOURISM

Warden Morrison extended the courtesy of Council to Tom Wilson, Director of Recreation and Tourism, who was in attendance to update on the Tourism Strategy, Cabot Trail Façade proposal and provide a Broadband Strategy update (copy attached).

Mr. Wilson outlined the need to do a Tourism Strategy for Victoria County. He is presently drafting a Request for Proposal which should be finished by the end of the week and once reviewed, will be advertised. He anticipates the cost to be in the \$15,000.00 to \$20,000.00 range and that the normal process will be about 4 to 6 months, with a consultant hired by October, 2016.

The success of the Tourism Strategy requires a partnership between the tourism industry and the Municipality.

The Cabot Trail Façade, Streetscapes and Viewscapes project was outlined. 50 to 60 properties will be participating in the Façade Program. Five to ten new Cabot Trail signs will be erected and 30 plus sites along the Cabot Trail will be developed under the Viewscapes Program.

Mr. Wilson outlined the Broadband Survey results and speed tests. Four meetings have been held with Seaside High-speed and one meeting with the Committee in Sydney.

Seaside would like to present to Council their Connecting Canadians Plan 2016-2018. A date will be set after the Council election in the fall.

Mr. Wilson outlined the Broadband Standards to Council. He indicated that Victoria County should be aiming at 10-25 meg on downloads.

It was questioned whether not-for-profit organizations were eligible under the Façade Program and Mr. Wilson advised that at present, it is strictly for businesses.

The cutting of the viewscapes was discussed. Whether there were any guidelines on how the cuttings were to be dealt with was questioned.

Deputy Warden Patterson indicated that Rogers provided a presentation at the recent FCM he attended on their increase in speeds.

Mr. Wilson indicated that there is a Broadband Facebook page. Broadband has been declared a vital service and is now recognized as a gas tax funded project.

Councillor Grant commented on his Seaside service to his home. It has gone downhill and is getting worse. Mr. Wilson indicated that he spoke with Seaside's engineer and power is presently being installed at Cain's Mountain and once this hook up is finished, there should be a positive change.

Whether there is any chance of fibre op coming to our County was questioned and Mr. Wilson indicated that fibre op is very expensive and would not likely be a possibility.

After further discussion, Warden Morrison extended a thank you to Tom Wilson for the updates provided.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Courtesy of Council was extended to Keith MacDonald, President and CEO, Cape Breton Partnership and Nicole Lucas-Richardson, Economic Development Officer for the Municipality of the County of Victoria. (copy of presentation attached)

Mr. MacDonald thanked Council for the opportunity for the Cape Breton Partnership to advance economic development in Victoria County. He outlined the hiring process which led to Nicole Lucas-Richardson being hired as Victoria County's Economic Development Officer in November, 2016.

Nicole Lucas-Richardson updated on the Economic Development Action Plan and the contributing factors to building the action plan. She outlined the consultation that took place and the development of a priority list with the main themes being tourism, business retention and expansion (BRE) and collaboration.

The Business Retention and Expansion surveys were outlined and going forward Ms. Lucas-Richardson indicated that 12 businesses have been identified and 12 more are in the process of being qualified.

Business roundtables were held throughout all districts of the County from December 21, 2015, to March 8, 2016. These sessions were held to update and research on the opportunities, challenges and business environment in Victoria County. 61 people participated, representing 50 businesses. The meetings were 1.5 to 2 hours long and the five identified priorities included:

- Support – overarching theme
- Tourism – encompassing Victoria County
- Collaboration – amongst businesses
- Infrastructure – roads, internet and child care
- Entrepreneurship and employment – promoting opportunities

Ms. Lucas-Richardson advised that the key takeaway is that there is an enthusiastic and motivated atmosphere in Victoria County to foster the success of economic development efforts. Going forward, the next steps will include communications, sharing and collaboration.

She then provided an activities summary to date and showed an article and visual from The Globe and Mail that identifies Victoria County as a very high hot spot in Canadian e-tailing. This is very encouraging and comes back to Victoria County being a great place to do business.

Council thanked Ms. Lucas-Richardson for all the positive work to date and also for resurrecting the Economic Development Committee and bringing it back to where it should be.

After further discussion, Warden Morrison extended a thank you to Keith MacDonald and Nicole Lucas-Richardson for the information provided.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MAY 30, 2016

The minutes of the May 30, 2016, session of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

Councillor MacNeil indicated that the \$100 from each district budget approved at the last meeting for the Cape Breton Bike Fest, should be changed to be payable to the Island Strong Motorcycle Association.

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the May 30, 2016, Victoria County Municipal Council session, be approved with the noted change. Motion carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Councillor Grant indicated that the Councillors from Districts 1-4 agreed to provide \$500.00 from each of their district budgets, for a total of \$2,000.00, to the Baddeck & Area Cat Rescue.

NEW BUSINESS

AGREEMENT TO USE INFORMATION – MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Sandy Hudson presented a draft Agreement to Use Information between the Municipality and SCYTL Canada Inc. for the 2015 Nova Scotia Municipal and School Board Election.

It was moved and seconded to enter in an Agreement to Use Information with SCYTL Canada Inc. for the 2016 Municipal and School Board election. Motion carried.

BORROWING RESOLUTION

Sandy Hudson advised that renewal of our borrowing resolution with the East Coast Credit Union in the amount of \$1.7 Million is required. The interest rate is Prime +0.75% per annum.

It was moved and seconded to renew the borrowing resolution for \$1.7 Million with the East Coast Credit Union. Motion carried.

PAN CAPE BRETON FOOD HUB

A request was received from the PAN Cape Breton Food Hub for bridge financing of \$3,000.00, which will be repaid if funding is received from the Province. This request has also been made to Richmond and Inverness Counties. This is over and above the \$4,900.00 previously committed.

It was moved and seconded to approve the request for \$3,000.00 Bridge financing for the PAN Cape Breton Food Hub, contingent on the funding requested being received from Inverness and Richmond Counties. Motion carried.

STAFF EVENT

Sandy Hudson advised that on the afternoon of June 24, 2016, a staff event has been scheduled. All sites will be closed at 12:00 p.m. This is in keeping with the Stacey Pineau report.

Leanne MacEachen advised that in the fall, a staff trip is being considered around the Cabot Trail so our workers can become more familiar with our County and worksites.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #5

Deputy Warden Patterson brought up an issue with roaming dogs in his district.

How such situations are dealt with was outlined. It was felt an education program is required with regard to dog tags, Dog By-law, etc.

It was moved and seconded that the Communications Officer be requested to do a public information campaign on the Dog By-Law. Motion carried.

District #6

It was moved and seconded that a street light order be placed for installation at 138 Maplewood Drive, Ingonish. Motion carried.

District #7

It was moved and seconded that \$1,000.00 be approved from the District #7 budget for the North of Smokey Food Bank. Motion carried.

District #8

Councillor Buchanan brought up the matter of the ownership of the old bus garage on the Bay St. Lawrence Road. He indicated that a resident advised that the property was surveyed and that she owed the property in question.

The CAO will investigate this matter.

Councillor Buchanan also questioned on when the water tower in Dingwall would be painted. This work is to be completed this summer and the CAO will check on the timeline for same.

District #1

Councillor MacNeil questioned on the status of the old school property in Iona. Sandy Hudson advised that this matter is still in the hands of the School board and is to be completed in one transaction. The easement will be provided to Lawrence MacKinnon.

Councillor MacNeil updated Council on the successful World Oceans Day held in Iona and indicated they wished to thank Council for their contribution.

District #2

Councillor Grant indicated that he is having difficulty finding a representative to sit on the BABTA VIC Committee and for the time being he advised that he was putting his name forward to sit on the Committee.

The purpose of and commitment on this Committee was questioned and discussed.

Councillor Grant questioned if there is a record kept when a dog bites someone. Discussion took place on this matter.

District #4

The Liberal Caucus are meeting at the Inverary Resort, Baddeck, and will be hosting a “meet and greet” tomorrow evening. They will also be meeting with Council on Wednesday, June 15, 2016, at 2:30 p.m. at the Court House, Baddeck.

District #3

Warden Morrison advised that the Minister of Justice will be meeting with representatives from Wagmatcook with regard to a possible Court system. Warden Morrison will be in attendance.

Councillor Grant indicated that the Biosphere Northeast Trails Association met last Wednesday with Legacy Corporation, a tourism research group hired for tourism related matters with regard to First Nations. Councillor Grant spoke on the Humes River Trail and the possible participation of First Nations and there may be possible opportunities in the future. A close eye will be kept on this matter.

Warden Morrison indicated that CBRM has officially withdrawn from REN6. At a meeting held on June 7, 2016, the three remaining municipalities agreed to continue to participate in REN6.

It was moved and seconded that Victoria County continue to participate in REN6, along with Inverness and Richmond Counties. Motion carried.

A question was raised on the Small Business Development Centre. This is a separate organization from Business Cape Breton. It is funded by ACOA and partnering municipalities, with a coverage area of all Cape Breton and Mulgrave.

Warden Morrison indicated he attended the installation of officers for the Baddeck Volunteer Fire Department yesterday and two members were recognized for their 50 years of service – Shane MacFarlane and Bobby Buchanan.

The possibility of coming up with an appropriate recognition from the County for future presentations for all qualifying Victoria County Fire Department members was discussed.

It was moved and seconded to investigate the cost and feasibility of a municipal medal of recognition for long serving fire department members. Motion carried.

The proposed Artists in Residence Program being considered for the Baddeck area was discussed. This would provide a forum for local artists to display and sell their work. The Blue Heron Gift Shop is closing the end of June and has agreed to rent the facility for this program for a four month period – July to October.

The venue would be for new and existing artists and would add to the streetscape of the Village. Wendy Smith, Cape Breton Glass Artisans, is the person behind this project. The Friends of Victoria County Creates has been established for this project.

It was moved and seconded that Victoria County approve \$5,000.00 for the Friends of Victoria County Creates for their “Artists in Residence” program. Motion carried.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, it was moved to adjourn at 7:10 p.m.

Bruce Morrison, Warden

Sandy Hudson, CAO

