

***VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL***

***April 9, 2018***

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, April 9, 2018, beginning at 5:00 p.m. with Deputy Warden Larry Dauphinee in the Chair.

Present were:

District #1 – Paul MacNeil  
District #2 – Perla MacLeod  
District #4 – Merrill MacInnis  
District #5 – Fraser Patterson  
District #6 – Larry Dauphinee, Deputy Warden  
District #7 – Wayne Budge  
District #8 – Norman MacDonald

Also present were:

Leanne MacEachen, CAO  
Heather MacLean, Recorder

Absent was:

District #3 – Bruce Morrison, Warden (Out of Town)

**CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

Items to be added to the agenda included a moment of silence for the Humboldt Broncos Hockey Team and a Seniors Safety Officer.

**It was moved and seconded that the agenda be approved with the noted additions. Motion carried.**

Council then stood and observed a moment of silence for the Humboldt Broncos Hockey Team.

**THE FISHERY IN VICTORIA COUNTY**

Deputy Warden Dauphinee extended the courtesy of Council to Veronika Brzeski who was in attendance to make a presentation on the fishery in Victoria County (copy attached).

Council provided introductions to Ms. Brzeski and she advised that she was employed by the Cape Breton Fish Harvesters Association, which comprises all ports in Victoria County from Bay St. Lawrence to Big Bras d'Or, and all ports in CRBM from Point Aconi to Gabarus.

Ms. Brzeski presented the sources of data she used in compiling her report. She indicated that seafood accounted for 31% of the exports in Nova Scotia in 2015, compared to tires at 22% and pulp and paper at 10%. The fisheries export growth from 2010 to 2015 was 95%.

Statistics on population and employment in fisheries in 2016, indicated that there is an estimated 792 employed in the fisheries. This accounts for 24% of the labour force in Victoria County. The species fished and cultured in Victoria County include:

- Lobster
- Snow Crab
- Flounder
- Mackerel
- Halibut
- Mussel
- Cod
- White Hake
- Monkfish
- Herring
- Pollock
- Oyster

Ms. Brzeski presented statistics on the fisheries income for Victoria County and Cape Breton Counties from 1975 to 2015. Although catches landed in 1975 were larger, the price was less and the income received was less. The price has increased and even though the landed weight was less in 2015, over \$70 million dollars was derived from the fisheries.

Statistics received from the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture indicated that the top three ports for snow crab in Victoria County were Bay St. Lawrence, New Haven and North Ingonish. In terms of lobster, the top three ports were North Ingonish, Big

Bras d'Or and Bay St. Lawrence. Aquaculture value in 2016 was \$866,000.00, with 37 employed in this industry.

Victoria Co-op Fisheries fish purchases were \$30,500,000.00 and world-wide sales amounted to \$36,500,000.00. This includes 1.22 million pounds of live lobster; 2 million pounds of processed snow crab and 450,000 pounds of processed lobster.

Ms. Brzeski outlined that the inshore fishery offers employment to at least 23% of the labour force. Total income is not known, but there are 209 license holders, 372 crew members, buyers staff, night watchmen, harbour masters, 144 VC Co-op Fisheries employees, truckers and the list goes on. The County without a local fishery would be unimaginable. The challenges to the inshore fishery were outlined.

Comparison statistics were provided on the provincial government support for Fisheries, as compared to Agriculture.

The Cape Breton Fish Harvesters Association focuses on representation, empowerment and innovation and Ms. Brzeski indicated that their vision is to develop as an organization serving these three key functions.

Science activities include at sea data collection for lobster and groundfish; monitoring of catches in areas of large project developments; monitoring of marine protected areas; monitoring the various life stages of fish species; and following stock assessment of all species.

Recommendations going forward included:

- Collect data on employment and incomes from the fisheries
- Support inshore fish harvesters in their battle to survive
- Government investments must benefit Victoria County
- Provincial government's goal is to double fisheries income – determine who and how will benefit
- Ensure processing investment in Victoria County.

Discussion took place and various questions were addressed and Deputy Warden Dauphinee extended a thank you to Ms. Brzeski for her presentation.

### **PLASTIC BAG BAN PRESENTATION**

Courtesy of Council was extended to Pamela Morrison who was in attendance to present on the topic of a plastic bag ban for Victoria County.

Mrs. Morrison introduced Marion Thompson, Jeff Brownstein and Deannie Cox who were in attendance with her.

Mrs. Morrison indicated that in the middle of January, a letter was forwarded to the County with regard to a plastic bag ban. At the time discussions were ongoing with the Victoria Farmers Co-op with regard to a plastic bag ban at their store. Since that time, it was felt that all retail outlets should be included in the ban.

Mrs. Morrison indicated she would like to see Victoria County take the lead and be the first to totally eliminate single use plastic bags in the County. She presented a resolution for Council's consideration requesting the total elimination of single use plastic bags by Christmas 2018.

Whether Council had the legal ability to do so and how and who would enforce it was discussed. It was felt it would take some time to look into this issue. Council agrees that something has to be done, but felt an education campaign could go a long way and that with small incremental changes, big changes can be achieved.

The fact that China has banned the acceptance of these plastic bags was discussed, as was the fact that there are other municipalities who have banned such products. It would be a great way for our County to shine and maybe even the whole province would listen and get on board.

Council and staff support this initiative, but how to do it has to be investigated further. Other municipalities who have banned this material will be investigated as to how they did so.

There are three Co-op stores in Victoria County and it was felt they we should begin with them and again approach them with regard to eliminating the use of plastic bags.

The Municipality has purchased a number of reusable bags which are being given away. An education campaign will be developed.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee indicated that the Municipality could send a letter to the Province in support of the elimination of plastic bags province-wide.

**It was moved and seconded that a letter be forwarded to the Province in support of the elimination of single use plastic bags across the province. Motion carried.**

Deputy Warden Morrison extended a thank you to the delegation for the presentation.

**RECESS**

Deputy Warden Dauphinee advised that Council would recess for 10 minutes.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MARCH 27, 2018**

The minutes of the March 27, 2018, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

**It was moved and seconded that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of March 27, 2018, be approved. Motion carried.**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Heavy Garbage Collection**

Leanne MacEachen indicated that in discussion with Public Works staff, the date for heavy garbage collection will commence as planned, beginning the week of April 30, 2018. It will be advertised and notices will be also forwarded to CBRM to ensure that residents who have summer residences in Victoria County are aware of when the collection will take place.

**Tax Rates**

The CAO reminded Council that tax rates will increase by 2 cents both residentially and commercially. The residential rate will be \$1.22 and the commercial rate will be \$2.12.

**Cannabis Sales**

At the last Council meeting, Patrick Austin, EDO, suggested that Council write a letter to the Province requesting that the NSLC consider a location closer to Victoria County for the sale of recreational marijuana.

**It was moved and seconded that a letter be forwarded to the Province requesting that both NSLC stores in Victoria County be included in those who sell recreational marijuana. Motion carried.**

**TIR Traffic Counts**

A traffic count will be completed by TIR in the area of the Irving/Tim Hortons. The Municipality must pay for any further traffic counts requested.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Seniors Safety Program**

Councillor Patterson updated Council on the Seniors Safety Program through the Province. This program has been in existence for approximately 10 years, but this is the first year that Municipalities are eligible. He outlined the different structures and how the Municipality can apply. \$25,000.00 is available for a coordinator to develop a program and applications for further phases can be done in subsequent years. April 20, 2018, is the deadline to apply for the Seniors Safety Program.

**It was moved and seconded that Victoria County apply for the Seniors Safety Program through the Department of Seniors by the April 20, 2018, deadline. Motion carried.**

Councillor Patterson will meet with the CAO to develop an application for submission.

**Audit Committee Member**

The CAO indicated that it is a requirement to have a lay member on the Audit Committee. The expression of interest for members on this committee yielded two applications and one of the candidates was qualified.

**It was moved and seconded that Graeme Steele be appointed to serve on the Audit Committee. Motion carried.**

**Cannabis Legalization Workshop**

Councillor MacLeod indicated that a Cannabis Legalization Workshop will be held in Antigonish on May 8, 2018, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Councillors MacLeod, MacNeil, Patterson and Deputy Warden Dauphinee expressed an interest in attending.

**TAXATION UPDATE**

The CAO indicated that taxes owing at the end of March amounted to \$1.473 Million, compared to \$1.525 Million at the same time last year. Taxes collected since the last update was \$38,411.00.

She advised that a meeting will be held with Tax Department staff on Wednesday to come up with the date for the next Tax Sale.

Tax accounts that have been taken to Tax Sale for some time that have not been sold were discussed. How these properties can be sold for a lesser amount will be investigated.

A meeting has not been held with Inverness County as yet on their Tax Sale procedure and risk. Ms. MacEachen indicated that there will be a meeting with Inverness County on a number of different topics.

**DISTRICT CONCERNS**

**District #8**

Councillor MacDonald indicated he had a request from a resident of South Harbour with regard to a postal code for this community. He is asking for the Municipality's support.

Whether all residents of this community are on board with this request was questioned. There may be some who do not wish to go through a change of address process.

Councillor MacDonald will follow up with residents on this matter.

The Money Point Quarry Expansion has been approved. Councillor MacDonald questioned whether any correspondence was received to Council's letter concerning this issue. The CAO advised that a reply was not received to date.

**District #4**

Councillor MacInnis brought up the matter of the unsightly condition of the former Plaster Provincial Park in North Shore.

**It was moved and seconded that a letter be forwarded to the Department of Natural Resources expressing concern on the appearance of the former Plaster Provincial Park and requesting that the condition be remediated. Motion carried.**

Councillor MacInnis indicated that there are a number of unsightly premises throughout the Municipality that require attention. Whether these matters will be expedited when David MacKenzie assumes this responsibility was discussed.

Councillor MacInnis brought up the lack of washrooms around the Cabot Trail and the possibility of erecting facilities at the former North Shore School which the Municipality owns.

This matter was discussed at a budget planning meeting. Who would maintain the facilities was questioned.

This and other locations around the Cabot Trail will be discussed at Budget Committee.

Councillor MacInnis indicated that he has been a member of the Lobster Council of Canada and requested permission to attend their conference tomorrow.

**It was moved and seconded that Councillor MacInnis be authorized to attend the Lobster Council of Canada Conference. Motion carried.**

**District #2**

**It was moved and seconded that a letter be forwarded to the Department of TIR with regard to the culvert at 124 Zion Road which is deteriorating and resulting in a hole in the middle of the road. Motion carried.**

Councillor MacLeod indicated that at the meeting with fire chiefs the topic of emergency contact numbers was discussed. Cell phone contact numbers should be provided.

The recommendation to collect data and income from the fisheries should be further pursued.

How to keep the momentum going with regard to investing in Victoria County is to be reviewed.

**District #1**

**It was moved and seconded that a further letter be sent to Darren Blunden, TIR, concerning the condition of the John Neil George Road culverts and the hole in the road. Motion carried.**

**It was moved and seconded that once the gravel roads dry out in the spring, a full spring grading of all dirt roads be completed and a second grading be conducted later in the season. Motion carried.**

Councillor MacNeil indicated he will be having a Broadband meeting in his district to hear residents' concerns with regard to internet service.

**District #6**

Deputy Warden Dauphinee sent an email to Stephen Macdonald and Nelson Dixon on the condition of the gravel roads in his district.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

1. There will be a public discussion about the Baddeck Public Library at the Baddeck Community Centre on April 14, 2018, from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon.
2. Discussion on an Arts Council for Victoria County will be held at the Court House, Baddeck on Tuesday, April 17, 2018, at 10:00 a.m.

Andrew Brooks indicate that another meeting on an Arts Council for Victoria County will be held in Ingonish Beach on April 16, 2018.

3. The Victoria County Community Health Board survey is now out and will be available until May 15, 2018, when the survey boxes will be collected.
4. Letter requesting that May, 2018, be declared Lyme Disease Awareness Month in the Municipality.

**It was moved and seconded that the Municipality proclaim May, 2018, as “Lyme Disease Awareness Month” in the Municipality of the County of Victoria. Motion carried.**

**NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council will be held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, April 23, 2018, at 5:00 p.m.

**ADJOURN**

**There being no further business, it was moved to adjourn at 6:55 p.m.**

Leanne MacEachen, CAO

Bruce Morrison, Warden