

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
November 14, 2017

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Tuesday, November 14, 2017, beginning at 5:00 p.m. with Warden Bruce Morrison in the Chair.

Present were:

District #1 – Paul MacNeil
District #2 – Perla MacLeod
District #3 – Bruce Morrison, Warden
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, Acting 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.

KITCHENFEST AND WEDNESDAY NIGHT CEILIDH SERIES, THE GAELIC COLLEGE

Courtesy of Council was extended to Honourable Rodney MacDonald, CEO, The Gaelic College, who was in attendance to present on KitchenFest and the Wednesday Night Ceilidh Series at The Gaelic College.

Mr. MacDonald thanked Council for the opportunity to appear and introduced David Rankin, Director of School Operations, who was also in attendance. He presented Council with a token of appreciation for the support received from the Municipality.

He indicated that Sandy Hudson, retired CAO, was a past Board member and Councillor Fraser Patterson, is currently a Board member, and he extended appreciation for their service.

Mr. MacDonald indicated that KitchenFest was first introduced in 2014, having completed its fourth year. From its inception, KitchenFest has developed to become an

unofficial kick off to summer. In 2017 there were 30 venues and 70+ eat local participating restaurants. This has grown from the 12 venues in 2014. Attendance in 2014 was 5,279, to 10,153 in year four.

Mr. MacDonald outlined the 2017 patron survey results indicating the origin of the visitors and their main travel motivators. 89% stay in paid accommodations for an average of 13 nights and spent an average of \$1,224.00 in Cape Breton. 94% were highly satisfied with the performances and he outlined the top 6 experiences identified while visiting Cape Breton.

Sponsorship of KitchenFest was outlined and Mr. MacDonald indicated that the Municipality has been a silver sponsor (\$10,000.00) since its inception. Mr. MacDonald indicated he was requesting Council consider sponsorship for the 2018 KitchenFest. He indicated he would be going to other municipal units with this request.

He requested Council make their decision as soon as possible to allow them to get their promotional and sponsorship material ready. The possibility of multi-year funding was discussed.

Mr. MacDonald also updated on the Wednesday night ceilidhs that are planned to take place all winter. The cost of sponsorship for one ceilidh is \$250.00. He requested Council consider sponsorship of the ceilidhs.

How advertising is done was questioned and Mr. MacDonald indicated advertising is done via social media, print media, radio/TV, etc. The gift shop is open 12 months per year and the College employ 30 to 35 workers, with 12 being full-time workers.

Mr. MacDonald was commended for the increased profile of The Gaelic College since he assumed the CEO position.

The possibility of a snowmobile trail to the College was questioned and Mr. MacDonald indicated they would be interested in seeing this happen, but he could not speak to this matter.

Mr. MacDonald indicated that The Gaelic College will be hosting an Autumn Auction Fundraiser on November 18, 2017.

It was moved and seconded that the Municipality commit \$10,000.00 for KitchenFest in 2018 and refer an additional 2 year commitment to budget considerations. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison presented a cheque for \$200.00 for one table at the Autumn Auction Fundraiser and \$250.00 for Wednesday Ceilidh sponsorship from his District #3 budget.

The remaining 7 Council members agreed to sponsor one Wednesday night ceilidh from each of their district budgets at a cost of \$250.00 per ceilidh.

Mr. MacDonald thanked Council for the generous support and was excused at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – OCTOBER 30, 2017

The minutes of the October 30, 2017, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

It was moved and seconded that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of October 30, 2017, be approved as presented. Motion carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

SPCA

The SPCA constables have been approved and coverage in the Boularderie area commenced on November 1, 2017. Calls will still be placed to John Berk, Dog Controller, and he will refer any District #5 issues to the SPCA,

Our Dog Control Officers will receive their training to issue Summary Offence Tickets in the near future.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Christmas Party will be held at the Bras d'Or Yacht Club, Baddeck, on Saturday, December 9, 2017, at 7:00 p.m.

Recyclable shopping bags will be ordered for distribution during the Christmas parades by Council to encourage residents to fill these bags and give to the local food banks.

PHYSICIAN RECRUITMENT

A small committee of Council met with representatives from the NSHA – Mary Lou O'Neill, Dr. Warren Wilkes and Greg Boone – to discuss physician recruitment. They listened to concerns and took notes, and agreed to come prepared to meet with Council at a regular Council meeting in January, 2018.

Janet Knox, CEO, NSHA, will be in Baddeck on November 21, 2017, and will be meeting with stakeholders and Councillors available to attend are to let Heather MacLean know as soon as possible.

TAXATION UPDATE

The total taxes owing as of today is \$2.2 million, with current accounting for \$1.05 million of this amount and \$1.45 million in arrears. Over \$100,000.00 has been collected since the last update.

Concerted efforts are being undertaken to reduce the taxes owing. Staff are making phone calls and learning how other municipalities handle tax arrears. Leanne MacEachen will be meeting with each staff member in the Tax Office to find out who, how many, when residents were called and how much was collected in taxes.

The Communications Officer is doing up an advertising campaign for tax collections within the next two weeks.

A further update will be provided at the next Council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

CROWDIS MOUNTAIN SNOWMOBILE CLUB

Leanne MacEachen indicated she was visited by Syl MacDonald, and a follow up letter was received from Sheldon Garland, Crowdis Mountain Snowmobile Club, with regard to funding to redirect a trail from the Baddeck Solid Waste Facility.

When the c & d cell was being developed, access to a snowmobile trail was cut off and Sandy Hudson agreed to replace and re-route the trail at that time.

The tender for the overpass across the TCH 105 to Baddeck was discussed and will be proceeding. This is a \$1.2 million dollar project to allow ATV's, snowmobiles access to the Village of Baddeck. Landowners are being contacted with regard to access and things look quite positive.

How the County could assist was discussed.

MINING ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA

Warden Morrison advised that additional correspondence has been received from Shawn Kirby, Mining Association of Nova Scotia, with regard to protected areas, a land swap policy, mineral exploration and the effect on the economy.

This matter was tabled at the last meeting for further discussion at a future meeting. This matter was discussed with opinions received on both sides of the issue. It was felt that this matter is not the County's issue to fight.

It was moved and seconded that the correspondence from Shawn Kirby, Mining Association of Nova Scotia, be tabled. Motion carried.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #5

The SPCA is providing coverage to the District #5 area of Victoria County. Councillor Patterson hasn't received any dog concerns since they have begun their duties.

District #6

Deputy Warden Dauphinee requested that David MacKenzie, Building Inspector, be requested to come to a future Council meeting to explain the requirements for obtaining a building permit.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee updated on the taxi service project being undertaken in his district. The response to this service has been amazing and a report should be provided on the uptake within the next couple of weeks.

Councillor Patterson, Chair of the Age-Friendly Communities Committee, congratulated Deputy Warden Dauphinee on the initiative to provide transportation services in his district.

District #7

It was moved and seconded that \$3,000.00 be approved from the District #7 budget to be distributed \$1,000.00 each to St. John's Hall, Ingonish; St. Andrew's Hall, Neil's Harbour and St. Francis of Assisi Hall, Smelt Brook. Motion carried.

District #8

Councillor MacDonald brought forward the water issue in the Cape North area. The water shortage in the area is very concerning.

The Director of Public Works is to provide an explanation of the options and costs for extending the water line to Cape North. The Province and MLA Keith Bain are aware of the situation and Lyle Donovan, EMC, will be contacted.

This matter can be brought to the capital planning day on January 29, 2017.

District #4

Councillor MacInnis brought forward a concern with regard to a campground being developed in his district where 50 to 100 travel trailers of all types are to be situated. The developer is only assessed for the land and no taxes are received from the trailers.

It was moved and seconded that this matter be referred to John Bain, Director, Eastern District Planning Commission, to update on the land use issue. Motion carried.

It was moved and seconded that a letter be forwarded to the Department of Natural Resources requesting that the appearance of the former Plaster Provincial Park in the North Shore be remediated. Motion carried.

Councillor MacInnis questioned if the Municipality would consider the possibility of leasing the former North Shore School property.

He was advised that the interested party should make formal application and the matter will be brought to Council for consideration then.

District #2

It was moved and seconded that a letter be forwarded to Hon. Derek Mombourquette, Minister of Municipal Affairs, requesting that he send a letter to the Minister of Transportation advocating on behalf of the Municipality for a decrease in the speed limit at the Baddeck Irving/Tim Hortons. Motion carried.

Councillor MacLeod indicated that there are 11 student athletes at Baddeck Academy who would like to train at the school after classes end at 3:00 p.m. The fitness room is open from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and they would like to see if open from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. also.

This matter is to be forwarded to Vince Forrestall to investigate a solution to this request.

Chris van den Heuvel, Inverness-Victoria Federation of Agriculture is to be contacted with regard to doing a review of agriculture lands in Victoria County and opportunities available for agriculture development. The CAO will contact Mr. van den Heuvel.

District #3

Warden Morrison indicated that long service awards were presented to Councillor MacNeil (10 years) and Councillor Budge (30 years) at the recent UNSM conference and he offered congratulations.

Warden Morrison was also congratulated on receiving his 20 year long service award at the UNSM Conference.

Warden Morrison advised that Jocelyn Bethune would contact Council with regard to the plans for the November 25, 2017, parade in Baddeck.

NEXT MEETINGS

The next meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council will be held on Tuesday, November 28, 2017, at 5:00 p.m.

Council agreed that only one session of Victoria County Municipal Council be held in December, on Monday, December 11, 2017, at 5:00 p.m.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, it was moved to adjourn at 6:30 p.m.

Bruce Morrison, Warden

Leanne MacEachen, Acting CAO