

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
February 5, 2018

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, February 5, 2018, 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, Interim 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.

PRESENTATION – CONSTABLE FABIAN KENNY

Warden Morrison extended the courtesy of Council to Constable Fabian Kenny. Constable Kenny was then presented with a certificate of recognition from Councillor Perla MacLeod for his Commendation for Bravery for courage and compassion in rescuing a suicidal male on the Seal Island Bridge on December 20, 2015.

Constable Kenny thanked Council for the presentation and advised that in attendance with him were other RCMP members. The members provided introductions and were Constable Terry Gautreau, Constable Joseph Wallace and Constable Ed Newell.

Constable Kenny advised that charges are pending with regard to the school bus/trailer accident on Kelly's Mountain. At this point, the investigation is ongoing and that is all the information that can be released.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 22, 2018

The minutes of the January 22, 2018, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

It was moved and seconded that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of January 22, 2018, be approved as presented. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

PLANNING

The issue of a Trailer By-Law for the Municipality was brought up. John Bain, EDPC, was to provide additional information on this matter which has yet to be received.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee indicated that a meeting will be held in Ingonish later in February with regard to planning and zoning for the area. Councillors and Planning Advisory Committee members available are requested to attend.

Discussion took place on the possibility of a land use by-law for the entire Municipality.

INCREASE IN ILLEGAL PARKING FINES

Councillor MacLeod questioned on the status of the increase in fines for illegal parking.

Leanne MacEachen advised that she contacted the Municipal Advisor for direction in this regard and was advised to go through our MLA to request changes in the appropriate government Acts. A letter was forwarded to Keith Bain, MLA, today.

CAPE BRETON-VICTORIA REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD

Leanne MacEachen advised that she spoke with Paul Oldford, CBVRSB, and they are not interested in purchasing the property adjacent to the former Rankin Memorial School, Iona.

The Solicitor will be contacted for the steps to be undertaken with regard to this property.

FIRE SERVICES COORDINATOR

At the Budget planning meeting last week, it was decided to proceed with a Fire Services Coordinator position. This will be discussed during the budget presentation.

NEW BUSINESS

TAX WRITE-OFF

The Province has expropriated a property adjacent to the Englishtown Ferry and is not willing to pay the tax arrears on the property. They will pay the current and future taxes through the Provincial Grant in Lieu. The outstanding taxes are \$3,276.92.

It was moved and seconded to approve the write-off of taxes in the amount of \$3,276.92 related to Assessment Account #10393698. Motion carried.

Councillor MacNeil indicated that he had a resident who wished to have their property put on Tax Sale as they no longer have an interest in the property.

2018-2019 BUDGET SCENARIOS

Leanne MacEachen provided three budget scenarios as a result of the Budget meeting held on January 29, 2018. Maintaining the current tax rates would show a \$122,184 deficit. An increase in the tax rates of 5 cents would provide a \$211,804 surplus and 3 cents on the tax rate would yield a \$76,076 surplus.

Discussion took place on other possible scenarios and it was decided to bring back other options to a Budget meeting to be scheduled in March, 2018.

An update on taxation was also provided. Since the last meeting, \$40,701.00 has been collected on the current levy and \$24,087.00 on arrears. Total current owing is \$934,558.00 and arrears are \$866,144.00.

The next Tax Sale is scheduled for March 20, 2018, with an estimated 9 to 11 properties up for sale.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #1

Councillor MacNeil advised that there are six streetlights out on the Barra Strait Bridge. The Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal is responsible for the lights.

There are also plowing issues. The plows have been slow to get on the road the last two storms and the road from the Little Narrows Ferry to the TCH is often not being plowed.

Flooding is also an issue throughout District #1 and all culverts should be checked and repaired in the spring.

A letter is to be forwarded to Darren Blunden, Area Manager, TIR, concerning these issues.

District #2

Councillor MacLeod indicated that there is a Family Medicine Retreat to be held in Nova Scotia and felt it would be beneficial to have a presence at this function to attract doctors to our area.

Leanne MacEachen will investigate this matter.

Councillor MacLeod advised that she been appointed to the UNSM's Tourism Digital Rental Accommodations Committee.

Councillor MacLeod provided a copy of the transit survey questionnaire she will be using. She indicated she will be at the Victoria Farmer's Co-op on February 20, 2018, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. regarding this survey and having forms completed.

This same survey could be used in other districts of the Municipality.

It was moved and seconded that the transit survey questionnaire be approved as the official municipal survey to be used in all districts. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison thanked Councillor MacLeod for taking the lead on this initiative.

District #4

Councillor MacInnis questioned if other districts saw any of their concerns acted upon since the meeting with Department of TIR officials was held. Nothing has occurred in his district.

District #8

Councillor MacDonald indicated that he has received numerous calls about the lack of sanding on the side roads in his District. Sanding is done by a private contractor and he questioned on the TIR protocol for when sanding commences. This will be investigated.

Also the status of the snow removal equipment north of Smokey was questioned. The complement and status of the operational equipment is to be investigated.

District #6

Deputy Warden Dauphinee indicated that with the recent rain, there are areas where water is being pumped out of basements and discharged over the sidewalk and on to the highway where it freezes and creates a hazard.

It was moved and seconded that the matter of discharging water on to sidewalk be referred to the solicitor. Motion carried.

District #3

A meeting will be held at St. Michael's Parish Hall on Tuesday, February 6, 2018, at 7:00 p.m. to discuss housing and seek volunteers for the Syria to Baddeck family.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Correspondence from "To Far To Fast" concerning cannabis stores.

As this is not in the Municipality's jurisdiction, the matter was tabled.

2. Letter from Darren Blunden, Area Manager, TIR, advising that the culvert on the Jimmie Gills Road will be repaired in the spring of 2018 and signs have been posted for the traveling public.
3. Letter from Stephen MacDonald, Area Manager, TIR, indicating that his department will monitor the gravel roads in District #2 and take appropriate action as warranted and consider all the calls placed to the Operations Centre which are directed to them.
4. Letter from Warden Vernon Pitts, Municipality of the District of Guysborough, requesting support in their request to the Province to lift the fracking ban to allow for exploratory drilling and hydraulic fracturing of the natural gas resource.

It was moved and seconded that this correspondence be tabled. Motion carried.

5. Letter from the Aquaculture Association of Nova Scotia concerning membership.

It was moved and seconded that the Municipality become a member of the Aquaculture Association of Nova Scotia. Motion carried.

6. Notice from Joan MacInnes, Victoria County Heritage and Archives, advising that Heritage Day will be celebrated on February 21, 2018, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Court Room.
7. Warden Morrison received correspondence from the Epilepsy Association of Nova Scotia requesting that March be proclaimed "Epilepsy Awareness Month" in the Municipality of the County of Victoria.

It was moved and seconded that March 2018 be proclaimed "Epilepsy Awareness Month" in the Municipality of the County of Victoria. Motion carried.

PILOT TRANSIT SERVICE – DISTRICT #6

It was moved and seconded that the motion advancing \$1,500.00 from the 2018-2019 District #6 budget for the pilot transit service in District #6 be rescinded. Motion carried.

There are funds remaining from the age-friendly communities' transit project that can be used for this purpose.

It was moved and seconded that \$1,500.00 be approved for the District #6 pilot transit program from remaining funds in the age-friendly communities transit project. Motion carried.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council will be held on Monday, February 26, 2018, at 5:00 p.m.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, it was moved and seconded to adjourn.

Bruce Morrison, Warden

Leanne MacEachen, Interim CAO

