

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

March 25, 2019

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, March 25, 2019, 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 #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 #5 – Fraser Patterson (Personal Reasons)

CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Warden Morrison called the meeting to order and welcomed Councillor MacLeod back to Council.

The agenda was presented for approval.

It was moved and seconded that the agenda be approved as presented. Motion carried.

BRAS D'OR LAKE BIOSPHERE RESERVE ASSOCIATION PRESENTATION

Courtesy of Council was extended to Jim Foulds, Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Reserve Association.

Mr. Foulds provided a power point presentation on the Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Reserve Association's – A Forum on Climate Change Adaptation. (copy attached).

He extended a thank you to Councillor MacNeil, for being Council's representative on the Board of Directors and advised that his input and all members of the Board's, is very important to the Association.

A Forum on Climate Change Adaptation will be held at the Inverary Resort, Baddeck, and the Wagmatcook Culture Centre, Wagmatcook, from June 18-21, 2019. The key partners of the Forum are the Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Reserve Association (BLBRA), Collaborative Environment Planning Initiative (CEPI), and the Canadian Biosphere Reserves Association (CBRA).

Mr. Foulds outlined that Canada has 18 UNESCO designated Biosphere Reserves. These Biospheres are areas of exceptional natural history where people see themselves as part of the ecosystem. They showcase sustainable development, promote best practices and consider the needs of nature and the needs of people.

The BLBRA was designated in June of 2011. It is comprised of 3600 km² - 2500 km² of land and 1100 km² of estuary or "inland sea".

Climate change is the biggest ecological challenge facing humanity. The Forum will explore how we adapt to climate change that is beneficial to nature and to people. Canada's Biospheres and guest experts will share examples of programs and strategies. The Forum will be held in conjunction with the annual general meeting of the Canadian Biosphere Reserves Association.

Mr. Foulds outlined the highlights of the Forum. The Forum will have representatives from all 18 Biospheres, all Cape Breton First Nations, and the three levels of government. This Forum will develop a Guide which will help Canadians adapt to the changing climate in their communities.

Mr. Foulds indicated that an application for funding has been submitted to the Municipality for \$10,000.00 to assist with this Forum.

Mr. Foulds indicated that the BLBRA have revamped their website – www.blbra.ca.

Discussion took place on UNESCO Biosphere Reserves and it is believed the oldest in Canada is in Quebec and has been in existence for approximately 35 years.

Mr. Foulds indicated that in 2021 the BLBRA will have to reapply for their designation. They will have to show that they are doing things and engaging people. This focus on climate change adaptation will show that BLBRA are in sync with the national focus.

The number of registrants for the Forum is anticipated to be in the vicinity of 100. The sources of anticipated funding for the Forum were outlined.

Warden Morrison advised that their application has been received and they will be looking at all funding requests in mid-April. He extended a vote of thanks to Mr. Foulds for his presentation.

A cheque for the Municipality's portion of the BLBRA signage project was presented to Jim Foulds by Councillor MacNeil.

Mr. Foulds left at this time.

MASKELL'S HARBOUR PROPERTY OWNERS LETTER PRESENTATION

Warden Morrison extended the courtesy of Council to Mary MacLean who read a letter on behalf of the Maskell's Harbour property owners addressed to Tom Wilson, Director of Tourism and Recreation, District #1 Council Member and Victoria County Tourism Strategy Committee Members (copy attached).

The subject of the letter was tree cutting conducted on their private property. They wished to express their dismay and outrage on the tree cutting authorized and conducted earlier this year on their property at Maskell's Harbour Beach and the Red Point by the Municipality.

The tree cutting has provided easy public access to a potentially dangerous look-off on private land. The Red Point is unstable sandstone with an eroding cliff. As owners, they are concerned that they would be liable for injuries incurred by people wandering on their property. They have sought legal advice to protect themselves and are asking Council to come up with a plan to rectify the situation.

They acknowledged that one of the owners did give limited permission to cut a few trees along the road, not to cut down all the trees on their Point. They also advised that this was not communicated with all of the owners and acknowledged that this was not a fault of the Municipality.

They feel the Municipality should clear the trees left hanging over the bank and install guard railing, no trespassing and private property signs.

The property owners wanted to make it clear that nothing is to be done on this property by the Municipality without the express permission of all the property owners. The two principal contacts will be Mary MacLean and Jacinta MacKinnon.

After reading the entirety of the letter, they requested that they receive a written reply to their concerns, preferably by email, within 14 days, from tonight's date.

Copies of the letter were presented to all Councillors and Warden Morrison advised that as Council has just received this letter they would have to discuss the issue. He thanked the property owners for bringing the matter to Council's attention and it will be forwarded to the CAO to deal with and have addressed.

It was moved and seconded to table the letter and accept as read and presented. Motion carried.

CABOT SNOWMOBILE CLUB

Warden Morrison extended the courtesy of Council to Gordie LeBlanc, representing the Cabot Snowmobile Club.

Mr. LeBlanc indicated he was in attendance to make a presentation on behalf of the Cabot Snowmobile Club. He indicated the Club would be submitting an application for funding under the Community Grants Program to assist with the Phase 2 upgrade of Wreck Cove Trail #755 by the March 31, 2019, deadline.

Mr. LeBlanc presented background information on the Cabot Snowmobile Club which was incorporated in 1973. They have been self-supporting since 1973 and are the oldest snowmobile club in Cape Breton. The Club is responsible for the majority of the trails in

Victoria County. They maintain groomer stations, the Pig & Whistle building, pay for streetlights at the Oregon Trail head and other infrastructure in their jurisdiction.

He presented visuals of snowmobiles in various spots in their jurisdiction and outlined their contribution to the economy by buying gas, food, etc. at various locations. Pictures of their infrastructure were also provided.

Phase 1 of the Wreck Cove Trail #755 consisting of tree cutting was completed. Their application for funding to the Municipality will be for \$10,000.00 to assist with the completion Phase II. The total project cost for Phase II is \$56,750.00 and Mr. LeBlanc outlined other funding being requested/received.

Mr. LeBlanc indicated their application will be sent to the Municipality by the March 31, 2019, deadline.

A general discussion was held and Mr. LeBlanc was extended a thank you for his presentation.

RECESS

Warden Morrison announced that Council would recess for 10 minutes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MARCH 11, 2019

The minutes of the March 11, 2019, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

It was moved and seconded that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of March 11, 2019, be approved as presented. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

No response has been received from the Department of TIR to Council's concerns as yet.

NEW BUSINESS

Solid Waste

The CAO presented the waste rejection numbers for the past week. A total of 19 bags were rejected – 2 on Monday, 6 on Tuesday, 3 on Wednesday, and 4 on both Thursday and Friday.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee indicated that every garbage bin in the National Park is full with residential garbage and he indicated that he is wondering what the snow melting will uncover. An education campaign should be done again this spring.

More information will be obtained when a meeting is held with the solid waste collection crew. Council also indicated that they would like to know the tonnage also.

Heavy garbage collection will be done again this spring and Public Works feel that the week of May 6, 2019, would be the most appropriate week to start. Information on this will be out shortly.

Washroom Project

Quotes have been received for the washroom project and work will be done to have them approved as soon as possible. More information will be provided at a later date.

Strait Area Transit

Strait Area Transit meetings have been scheduled for all districts. As of this morning there were 3,624 views on the online information.

IT Project

An assessment of our IT needs is being done as part of a bigger group of municipalities. More information will be coming on this matter also.

Tourism and Development Officer

A job description for Tourism and Development Officer has been developed with assistance from BABTA. This position will be advertised shortly.

A job description will be developed for a Recreation Officer and this job will be advertised in the future.

The Volunteer Award ceremonies will be held on April 9, 2019, at the Gaelic College, St. Ann's for the southern area of the County and April 10, 2019, at the Cape North Cultural Centre, Cape North, for the northern area of the County. The deadline for nominations for volunteers is March 27, 2019.

TAXATION UPDATE

The CAO was pleased to report that the arrears balance is under \$600,000.00, down from \$724,537.00 at the same time last year – a difference of \$131,609.00.

Current taxation is \$758,513.00 at present vs \$790,452.00 at this time last year for a difference of \$50,000.00.

Overall, tax collection is \$163,549.00 ahead of last year and we still have a Tax Sale scheduled for tomorrow afternoon so the numbers should be even better after the Tax Sale.

The Tax Sale started with 92 properties and is now down to 10.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #6

Deputy Warden Dauphinee brought up today's announcement that the lab technologist position has been reinstated at Buchanan Memorial Hospital in Neil's Harbour. This is good news.

It was moved and seconded that letters of appreciation be forward to Keith Bain, MLA; Dr. Bernie Buffett and the medical staff; and the Buchanan Memorial Hospital Foundation for their efforts on working to restore the lab technologist position at Buchanan Memorial Hospital. Motion carried.

Councillor MacDonald was also complemented on the eloquent, passionate letter he wrote on this issue.

District #4

Councillor MacInnis felt that due to the close ties our area has with New Zealand, he felt a letter of condolence should be sent to the City of Christchurch on the recent Mosque shootings.

It was moved and seconded that a letter of condolence be sent to the City of Christchurch, New Zealand, on the recent Mosque shootings that left 50 dead and another 50 injured. Motion carried.

District #2

It was moved and seconded that the Department of TIR be contacted to see when the Cabot Trail construction in Middle River will be completed; the status of the West Side Middle River Road project; the upper section of Hunter's Mountain and the MacLean Road towards Inverness and the status of the signage for the Big Baddeck Road. Motion carried.

“Raising the Villages” meeting is scheduled for Saturday, April 6, 2019, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the BOLDC in Baddeck.

District #3

It was moved and seconded that a letter of congratulations be forwarded to Erin Bradley, Village of Baddeck Clerk, who is leaving the Village of March 31, 2019, and relocating to HRM for employment. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councillor MacNeil updated on the CEPI meeting and Warden Morrison advised that he and Councillors MacLeod, MacDonald and MacNeil, attended the Victoria County Community Health Board meeting at Wagmatcook earlier today.

The meetings with regard to Victoria County Transit have been scheduled at Councillors are encouraged to attend and spread the information on this proposed service within their districts.

BY-LAWS

A Public Hearing on the Water Supply Lending Program By-Law will be held on Tuesday, April 23, 2019, at 4:30 p.m. prior to Council. The second (final) reading of the by-law will take place at regular Council on this date if acceptable.

POLICY REVIEW

There are no policy items to review at present.

CORRESPONDENCE

There is no correspondence to be presented.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council will be held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, April 8, 2019, beginning at 5:00 p.m.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, it was moved to adjourn at 6:50 p.m.

Bruce Morrison, Warden

Leanne MacEachen, CAO

