

***VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL***

***May 21, 2019***

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Tuesday, May 21, 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 #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

**CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Warden Morrison called the meeting to order and presented the agenda for approval. It was indicated that Strait Area Transit would not be presenting this evening.

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

**PAN CAPE BRETON FOOD HUB**

Warden Morrison extended the courtesy of Council to Alicia Lake, Executive Director, and Jim Mustard, Board Chair, PAN Cape Breton Food Hub, who were in attendance to provide an update on the Food Hub (copy attached).

Ms. Lake outlined that the Food Hub has local producers who sell their product to the Food Hub. The Food Hub has an online marketplace, delivery trucking and pick up locations. They have a small staff contingent and a number of volunteers.

She presented a testimonial from Osborne Burke, Victoria Co-op Fisheries indicating that the Food Hub is an excellent opportunity to sell more products locally and he 100% supports the Food Hub. Mr. Burke is a member of the Board.

Ms. Lake provided the numbers of producers by County in 2018. Inverness had 18; Victoria had 10; CBRM had 12 and Richmond had 7. There are 32 primary producers, 3 seafood and 12 value-added producers.

The sales increases for the period 2015 to were provided. The weather during the 2018 season was the worst year for production and proved to be challenging for the producers and the Food Hub but overall there was an increase in sales from the previous year.

The Food Hub is putting Victoria County on the culinary map. Victoria County has the top restaurant sales per County and the highest number of restaurants per County. Participating restaurants in the County include; Telegraph House, Bitehouse, Crusin' Cuisine, Periwinkle Café and Cabot Shores. A testimonial video from the Telegraph House was then viewed by Council.

The upcoming plans for Victoria County include expansion of the pick-up location in Baddeck and the launch of a pick-up location in Ingonish and in future, Iona. There is also potential for new drop-off locations for producers. The Hub will continue to work with others on food projects, expand their restaurant reach, and work on food festivals in the County.

Key recommendations are to address gaps in the infrastructure, improve access to information and education, develop partnerships to address larger issues and explore new markets.

Jim Mustard commended Ms. Lake and her staff of one for the important work being undertaken. Food is as important as water and solid waste. It is the only island-wide initiative. They are seeking funding for all municipalities in the amount of \$15,000.00.

Councillor MacInnis questioned when the Food Hub would foresee itself as being sustainable financially. They have developed a business plan and hope to reach sustainability in 5 years.

The weather during the past few years has proved challenging. The producers set their prices and the Food Hub increases they price by 12% for restaurants and 25% for individual purchasers. The Food Hub will continue to find more producers and extend their storage facilities.

Council was encouraged by the number of new, young farmers, who have established in Victoria County.

Mr. Mustard indicated that the PAN Cape Breton Food Hub is looking for \$15,000 from each of the Municipalities over the next 5 year period to take them to where they feel they will be sustainable.

Warden Morrison indicated Council would make a decision on the funding and it would not go beyond the current Council term, as they do not want to handcuff the incoming Council in 2020.

Council will advise when a decision has been made.

**VICTORIA COUNTY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL FOUNDATION**

Courtesy of Council was extended to Angus Nicholson and Theresa Buchanan, VCMH Charitable Foundation Coordinator.

Mr. Nicholson indicated that when he travelled to Scotland a few years back, he encountered a kilt walk and thought it would be a good thing to do to raise funds home.

Mr. Nicholson approached the VCMH Charitable Foundation to see if they would be interested in being the recipient of the proceeds of the walk, which they were.

The date for the Annual Kilt Walk will be October 12, 2019 and will commence at the Baddeck Valley Community Hall (BVCH) and he is proposing 3 walks:

- From BVCH to Uisge Ban Falls Provincial Park - approximately 12 kms.
- From BVCH to the Falls by MacPhee's Cross and picked up by shuttle at the Falls – approximately 7 kms.
- Uisge Bank Falls parking lot to the Falls and back – approximately 3 kms.

At the Falls, participants will be greeted by a bagpiper and receive a “Proof of Destination”.

Wearing kilts is not a requirement, but would be welcomed. Participants can wear a tartan item of any kind or a small swatch of tartan will be provided.

Participants can be individuals, families, teams or theme groups. Entertainment will be provided along the walk and there will be drink and snack stations organized by volunteers. A shuttle service will be available.

The BVCH will have a beer tent and outdoor music, children's entertainment, food, bake table and other possibilities.

The goal is to raise money for the VCMH Charitable Foundation for the purchase of TV's for the inpatient rooms. The estimated cost of the 12 TV's is \$19,000.00.

Mr. Nicholson outlined the budget and indicated where he felt the revenue will come from. Donations received will be provided with a tax receipt for the donation.

Council felt this was a great project and advised that sponsorship was approved for the amount requested.

Theresa Buchanan expressed appreciation to Council for their support of the Foundation.

Mr. Nicholson indicated that he hopes this will be an annual event that can be held in different areas of the County each year.

Warden Morrison extended a thank you for the presentation.

**DESTINATION CAPE BRETON ASSOCIATION**

Warden Morrison extended the courtesy of Council to Terry Smith, Chief Executive Officer, Destination Cape Breton Association (DCBA), who was in attendance to provide an update on DCBA – the destination marketing organization for Cape Breton Island.

Mr. Smith thanked Council for the opportunity to appear. He indicated that Warden Morrison was on the DCBA Board of Directors and the CAO on the Product Innovation Committee.

He provided Council with statistics on the tourism, room nights sold in Cape Breton and rooms nights sold in Victoria County. He outlined the target audience in the psychographic, demographic and geographic areas.

Mr. Smith indicated that DCBA are looking to develop more value added experiences, develop the shoulder and winter seasons, further promote festivals and events (22 events supported last year) and develop a Destination Development Plan.

Mr. Smith presented information on communities of interest – outdoor adventure, Celtic culture and the Bras d’Or. Digital marketing is done through Tourism Nova Scotia. He presented Council members with a copy of the experience guide – *Be Here, Be Inspired*. This publication includes 22 experiences for Victoria County.

DCBA hired an ultimate summer job intern last year who attended festivals and events and hopes to expand on this program this year.

He outlined niche markets such as small ports, cruise and super yachts. Baddeck is included with Cheticamp and Louisbourg as ports that can accommodate small ships. DCBA is a member of the Atlantic Canada Cruise Association.

Councillor Patterson mentioned that the Cabot Trail is listed as one of the top five drives in Canada by CAA Magazine.

Council indicated that they liked seeing an increase in the number and mentioned that the winter market is where Victoria County can grow.

Councillor MacNeil brought up the Port of Iona and the possibility of small ships of super yachts visiting the area. He questioned whether Mr. Smith would meet in Iona to discuss the promotion of this port and he indicated he would attend.

Council collectively congratulated Mr. Smith on his new position and looked forward to working with him and getting regular Council updates on tourism.

The CAO advised that Mr. Smith was part of the Recruitment Committee and assisted in the interview process for the Tourism & Development Officer, which was much appreciated.

Mr. Smith was excused at this time.

**RECESS**

The Warden announced that Council would recess for 5 minutes.

**WELCOME**

Warden Morrison extended a welcome to Keith Bain, MLA for Victoria-The Lakes, who was in attendance in the audience.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MAY 6, 2019**

The minutes of the May 6, 2019, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

**It was moved and seconded that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of May 6, 2019, be approved as presented. Motion carried.**

**OLD BUSINESS**

The CAO advised that interviews were completed on Friday past for the Tourism & Development Coordinator. 47 applications were received and it was pared down to 5 for interviews. Reference checks are now being completed.

Councillor Patterson indicated that he and Kristi Farrier, Seniors' Safety Officer, attended a conference in Bridgewater last week. There were a large number Seniors' Safety Officers from across the province in attendance and Kristi made good contacts.

Councillor Patterson felt the Council members of the Seniors' Safety Committee should meet prior to the full committee meeting to discuss some issues.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**CAO REPORT**

The rejections stickers for the week prior to this week were 11 in total – 5 on Monday, 2 on Tuesday, 0 on Wednesday, and 2 on both Thursday and Friday.

The heavy garbage collection has been completed and was up about 50% from last year. 75 loads were collected this year, compared to 55 loads last year.

Councillor Perla MacLeod is the Victoria County representative on the One Cape Breton/Unama'ki Committee.

Letters were sent to all fixed roof accommodations reminding them of the marketing levy and tax payments and wishing them a successful season.

There was a washroom announcement at the TIANS Conference on Thursday by the Honourable Geoff MacLellan.

Leanne MacEachen indicated that a resolution of Council is required for PCAP funding.

**It was moved and seconded that the Municipality apply for PCAP funding to support the Little Narrows Backup Well Development project and the Municipality commit \$40,000.00 for this project. Motion carried.**

Strait Area Transit (SAT) will be meeting at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, to discuss the start-up and operation of the Victoria County Transit. Victoria County Transit will have their own governance and this will be on the agenda for the meeting.

The make-up of the Victoria County Transit Board will be 2 members of Council (Councillor MacLeod and Councillor Patterson) and 2 Council members from the northern area will also be appointed. There will also be public members on the Board.

The Re-Use Building at the Baddeck Solid Waste Facility was operated by the Baddeck Valley Community Hall this past month and they achieved a record of \$1,400.00 in sales.

Application will be made for an innovation award for the Re-Use Building.

### **TAXATION UPDATE**

A taxation update report was received from the CFO. Tax bills will be sent out within the next month and if \$1k more in arrears is collected, the arrears balance will be under \$500k. If \$188k is collected in total the total outstanding will be under \$1m.

Since the last Council, \$17,900 has been collected in arrears, making the balance as of today \$518,020. This time last year the arrears balance was \$618,836. Arrears collection is ahead by \$96,817 from the same time last year.

The current is \$669,539, compared to \$604,217 this time last year, for a difference of \$65,322. The gap did decrease by \$13k since the last meeting.

**BUDGET MEETING**

**It was moved and seconded to accept the recommendations from today's Budget Committee meeting. Motion carried.**

**DISTRICT CONCERNS**

**District #1**

Councillor MacNeil brought up the recent announcement of a new ferry for Little Narrows.

**It was moved and seconded that a letter be forwarded to the Minister of TIR, with copies to the Premier and MLA, indicating Council's surprise on the announcement of a new ferry for Little Narrows and questioning on the status of the bridge study now and if it is still a possibility, as spending \$6M on a new ferry could go towards the location of a bridge and the elimination of the ferry fee is a must. Motion carried.**

Councillor MacNeil indicated that he is receiving phone calls from residents with regard to the \$1,000.00 connection fee to municipal water. This is a deterrent to connect to the system.

The connection cost was determined by the NSUARB. The CAO and Director of Public Works are to look at the policy and a meeting of the Public Works Committee will be arranged in the near future.

**District #2**

Councillor MacLeod brought up June being "Pride Month" and questioned when the pride flag will be flown. The CAO indicated the flag would be up by Monday, June 3, 2019.

**District #4**

Councillor MacInnis questioned if adjoining municipalities could be contacted requesting that they follow Victoria's lead with regard to clear bag collection. He also mentioned the elimination of the plastic grocery bags that was discussed earlier and the promotion of reusable bags. This matter is to be referred to Jocelyn Bethune.



**District #8**

Councillor MacDonald indicating he is receiving calls about the crab shells and fish offal dumping and composting at the Dingwall Transfer Station. The smell is repugnant.

Whether the Municipality can discontinue accepting these materials was questioned.

Woodchips are used as an amendment for this compost and they are extremely costly. The CAO advised that she has committed to increasing the amount of wood chips purchased this year.

Whether or not the Municipality can discontinue accepting these shells is to be investigated and this matter will be on the agenda of the Public Works Committee.

Osborne Burke, Victoria Co-op Fisheries is to be asked to attend the Public Works meeting.

Councillor MacDonald indicated that a tourist was recently intimidated by a dog off leash at the Cabot Landing Park.

**It was moved and seconded that a letter be forwarded to the Department of Lands & Forestry requesting “dogs on leash” signs be erected in the Dingwall and Sugarloaf areas. Motion carried.**

The Dog Control Officer was notified and he is requesting that clothing identifying his position be provided.

**It was moved and seconded that \$1,800.00 be approved from the District #8 budget and provided to the following:**

- **\$900.00 for the Cape North Masonic Hall**
- **\$500.00 for the Bay St. Lawrence Crab Fest**
- **\$400.00 to upgrade the kitchen at the Bay St. Lawrence Fire Hall**

**Motion carried.**

**District #6**

**It was moved and seconded that \$500.00 be provided to Cape Smokey Elementary Home & School for their lunch program from the District #6 budget. Motion carried.**

The Department of TIR is to be requested to give a time frame on the repairs and upgrades to the Beach Crossing Road, Ingonish.

**District #5**

Councillor Patterson read an email from a business on the Kempt Head Road regarding the internet service to the area. They have Bell Ultra DLS and it is unacceptable. They want access to high-speed internet and for it to be a priority for business and growth throughout Victoria County.

**District #3**

**It was moved and seconded that \$1,000.00 be approved from the District #3 budget for the Bras d'Or Yacht Club. Motion carried.**

**It was moved and seconded that a letter be forwarded to BABTA thanking them for the recent community clean-up in the Village of Baddeck. Motion carried.**

**District #1**

Councillor MacNeil thanked the Public Works staff for the recent successful heavy garbage pickup and to the skeleton staff left behind for manning the Baddeck Solid Waste Facility.

Councillor MacNeil indicated that the CEPI Steering Committee will be meeting at Potlotek First Nation on Friday at 2:00 p.m. if any Council member wishes to attend.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council will be held on Tuesday, June 25, 2019, beginning at 5:00 p.m. at the Court House, Baddeck.

A Committee of the Whole meeting will be held prior to Council to discuss minimum planning standards with John Bain, Director, EDPC, as well as with SAT and the Seniors' Safety Officer.

The CAO advised that the next round of negotiations will be held on the second week of July, 2019.

**ADJOURN**

**There being no further business, it was moved to adjourn at 7:00 p.m.**

**Bruce Morrison, Warden**

**Leanne MacEachen, CAO**