

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

August 26, 2019

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the North Shore & District Fire Hall, Indian Brook, on Monday, August 26, 2019, beginning at 11:00 a.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
Alix Redden, CFO
Jocelyn Bethune, Communications Officer
Heather MacLean, Recorder

CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Warden Morrison called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance to Council.

The agenda was presented for approval. A brief In Camera meeting at the conclusion of Council will be added to the agenda.

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

MARK EYKING, MP – SYDNEY-VICTORIA

Warden Morrison extended the courtesy of Council to Mark Eyking, MP, Sydney-Victoria and Elizabeth Arsenault, from MP Eyking's Ottawa Office.

Mark Eyking indicated that as he will not be reoffering in the next federal election, this would be his final visit to Council. He indicated that he has been a resident of Victoria County for the past 15 years and an MP for Sydney-Victoria for the past 19 years.

Mr. Eyking indicated he has always had a great working relationship with Victoria County Municipal Council. Some of the recent accomplishments include:

- Finishing roads in the Cape Breton Highlands National Park
- Cabot Trail paving – winding up in Middle River area
- Working on Cape Smokey at present
- \$1.5 million for the Nova Scotia Highland Village in Iona
- 7 Canada 150 grant approvals directly to community centres for a total of \$150,000.00
- Doubling of Gas Tax funding
- Working on the erosion of agricultural land and fisheries issues in Middle River area
- Canada Summer Jobs program worked well this year
- An announcement of \$740,000.00 towards the Neil's Harbour/New Haven Water
- Increased funding for Celtic Colours
- Requested repairs to the big hole in Bay St. Lawrence
- Will be meeting with Victoria Co-op Fisheries to make a major announcement within the next week or two.
- Work together to mitigate the effects of climate change
- Senior population is and will continue to be a challenge

Mr. Eyking indicated that there will be lots of opportunities and challenges ahead and he is positive that the next MP for Sydney-Victoria will continue to work collaboratively with Council.

Mr. Eyking also commended the Victoria County Waste Collection crew on their efficient and excellent work.

Warden Morrison thanked MP Eyking for his years of service and indicated he has always been approachable and Council is glad to see him go out on his own terms and wished him well in the future.

All Council and the CAO expressed their appreciation to Mark Eyking for the work he has accomplished in his 19 years and wished him well in his retirement.

Warden Morrison recognized Keith Bain, MLA, Victoria-The Lakes, who was also in attendance. MLA Bain also expressed appreciation to MP Eyking for his service and wished him well in the future.

ROSS MACDONALD, MUNICIPAL ADVISOR

Warden Morrison extended the courtesy of Council to Ross MacDonald, Municipal Advisor, Department of Municipal Affairs.

Ross MacDonald indicated it was nice to be back in his home area and was happy to see so many familiar faces. He served as Economic Development Officer for the County for a period of time in the early 2000's.

Mr. MacDonald also expressed appreciation to MP Eyking for his assistance and wished him well in his retirement.

Ross MacDonald indicated that he began his career with the Province with the Department of Economic Development and after 6 years switched to the Department of Labour and Advanced Education where he remained for 6 years. He was recently seconded by the Department of Municipal Affairs and now serves as Municipal Advisor for the area east of Antigonish including, Antigonish, Guysborough, St. Mary's and all of Cape Breton.

He indicated there are three municipal advisors who cover the province and he is amazed at the challenges and work done in the area. He is available to offer support and assistance to the municipal units in his area. He will be working closely with the CAO.

Mr. MacDonald indicated that he is happy to see Victoria County completely invested in the CBREN. He will assist the REN in moving initiatives along.

Council welcomed Mr. MacDonald and Warden Morrison indicated that Victoria County is pleased to have his assistance as Municipal Advisor.

Mr. MacDonald was excused at this time.

SHARON MACDONALD, DOG COMPLAINT

Warden Morrison extended the courtesy of Council to Sharon MacLeod, Black Rock Road, who was in attendance with regard to a dog complaint.

Ms. MacLeod indicated that she has been a resident of Victoria County for the past 22 years. Over the past 10 years she has experienced multiple problems with dogs running at large.

In particular, there is one dog, a yorkie/poodle mix that continually comes on her property to relief itself. This situation has caused her a great deal of stress and has caused her own dog to mark his territory on her indoor carpet. She has been complaining about the same dog for the past 10 years with no positive results from the Dog Controller or the SPCA.

On August 10, 2019, she captured the dog and tried for 4 hours to get in contact with John Berk, Dog Controller, to come and take the dog. She questioned why the owner of this dog was never issued a summary offence ticket (SOT) as included in the Dog By-Law.

Warden Morrison acknowledged Ms. MacLeod's frustration with the current situation and indicated that the CAO would provide the administrative side and thoughts moving forward.

The CAO indicated that there have been issues with dogs in District #5 for several years now. The problem is that usually the dogs are gone when the Dog Controller arrives. She indicated that she would be having a conversation with both Dog Controllers. The Dog Controllers have not received the proper training as yet to issue summary offence tickets, but this is being worked on. Our Solicitor has the ability to issue SOTs.

A letter was recently sent to the dog owner by Registered Mail, but has not been picked up at the Post Office as yet.

Leanne MacEachen indicated that she will start an administrative process to deal with Dog Control moving forward. The issue will be dealt with and Ms. MacLeod will be advised.

Warden Morrison assured Ms. MacLeod that her frustration and concerns have been recognized and he requested that she allow the CAO to deal with this administrative issue.

Sharon MacLeod was excused at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JULY 29, 2019

The minutes of the July 29, 2019, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

It was moved and seconded that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of July 29, 2019, be approved as presented. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Whether a decision was made on the funding for the Baddeck & Area Cat Rescue was questioned. The Councillors in the Baddeck & Area Cat Rescues coverage area will decide on a contribution from their district budgets.

Leanne MacEachen advised that she will be meeting with Mark Peck and Mico Schwartzenhruber, Department of Municipal Affairs, on September 12, 2019, with regard to changes in the *Assessment Act*.

NEW BUSINESS

Leanne MacEachen presented the rejection statistics for waste collection for the last two weeks of July. She advised that Jocelyn Bethune is drawing up a sheet on collection rejections since April, 2019.

Sponsorship for the Cape Breton Partnership Investor Summit to be held at the Keltic Resort, Ingonish, on October 4-5, 2019, was discussed.

Councillors interested in registering for the Investor Summit are to let Heather MacLean know and she will register them.

The CAO also provided information on meetings she attended, staffing updates and she updated on other issues currently being worked on.

TAXATION UPDATE

The CAO advised that total taxes outstanding as of today is \$3,878,848, compared to \$5,557,978, this time last year. We are overall more than \$1.6 million ahead of last year.

Current outstanding is \$1,544,879, ahead of last year and arrears are \$134,251 ahead.

In the past month \$4.2 million has come in and has been processed. This is positive news.

A Tax Sale will be held on September 24, 2019, and there are 37 properties on the sale list. The total amount this will bring in was questioned and will be provided.

DEPARTMENT OF TIR CONCERNS

The following issues are to be included in a letter to the Department of TIR.

- Intersection of the Dingwall Road and Cape North has no directional signage or arrows to provide the public with a safe entrance/exit from the intersection. Request Bernie Murphy to do a safety review of the area.
- Line painting throughout the County and also request who made decision to eliminate passing lanes in areas where there were passing lanes.

- Request that work be completed on the side roads in District #7 as they are in desperate need of repair.
- Brush cutting be completed in all areas
- Work be completed on the bottom of Maple Hill Drive, Big Bras d'Or
- Request that directional signage for the actual Cabot Trail direct traffic through St. Ann's and not via the Englishtown Ferry
- Concern about a sink hole in the North Shore area and that permanent signage should be placed at this location
- Garry Road, Middle River, is impassable and requires repairs.
- Road signs for Red Point East Road be erected and other signs that are down be put in place
- Erect a sign at the Portage Road indicating that the TCH 105 can be accessed via this road.
- Contact TIR with regard to the six street lights that require repair on the Barra Strait Bridge
- Mow vegetation growth at Exits 8, 9 and 10.
- Status of Gaelic signage for District #8

Keith Bain requested that these concerns be forwarded to him also as he is meeting with Peter Hackett and Bernie Murphy within the next couple of weeks and he will provide this list of concerns to them.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #1

Councillor MacNeil advised that he has been in contact with Logan McDaid, Eastlink, concerning a public meeting for the tower to be erected in Hazeldale and the meeting is to be held in early September.

District #2

Councillor MacLeod questioned whether application will be made for the \$200,000.00 fund approved for connecting doctors to rural areas of Nova Scotia.

The CAO advised that application will be made.

Councillor MacLeod brought up the housing issue and felt a meeting should be held to discuss this issue.

Council agreed to meet in Committee of the Whole to address the housing issue.

District #4

Councillor MacInnis indicated that internet and cell phone coverage in his district is sporadic at best.

Councillor MacNeil advised that he will attempt to set up and Broadband Committee meeting in September to discuss such concerns.

District #8

It was moved and seconded that \$1,000.00 be approved from the District #8 budget for the Bay St. Lawrence Community Centre for the recreational development of the Danny MacKinnon #11 Basketball Court to assist with the purchase of poles and hardware that will promote youth activity and development in basketball. Motion carried.

District #6

Deputy Warden Dauphinee thanked Council for the past support of Ski Cape Smokey. Without the Municipality's support, the recent announcement of the purchase and development of this facility would not have been a reality.

It was moved and seconded that a letter be forwarded to Patrick Austin, Economic Development Officer, and the Cape Breton Partnership for all the time, effort and assistance provided to make the purchase of Ski Cape Smokey a reality. Motion carried.

It was moved and seconded that a street light be erected on the Barron Road; the civic address location to be provided. Motion carried.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee indicated that he would like a listing of all municipal properties in each district for Council's information.

It was moved and seconded that \$500.00 be approved from the District #6 budget to the Ingonish Ballfield. Motion carried.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee indicated that it will be a couple of years before the work will be undertaken on Cape Smokey and in the meantime the Ski Cape Smokey Society will be operating the facility.

District #3

It was moved and seconded that a letter be forwarded to Festerville Baddeck recognizing and congratulating them on another successful event. Motion carried.

It was moved and seconded that a letter be forwarded to Elaine Allison thanking her for the assistance provided in retaining the Teepee on the municipal building grounds for the month of August, 2019. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison offered Council's congratulations to Larry Dauphinee and the Ski Cape Smokey Society for the work undertaken in the past number of years to keep Ski Cape Smokey viable. Deputy Warden Dauphinee deserves kudos for all his time and involvement.

An announcement on the Victoria County Transit will be held at the Victoria County Welcome Centre, Baddeck, on Friday, August 30, 2019, at 4:00 p.m.

NOTICE OF MOTION

The CAO advised that as of the third week of August, the East Coast Credit Union will no longer provide a credit card for the Municipality.

A Notice of Motion was introduced that the Municipality's credit card requirements be sourced out to RBC and VISA Expense Card(s) with the accumulative total of up to \$50,000.00 with proper internal controls in place be approved.

TAX SALE

The CAO advised that if all properties were to sell at the September 24, 2019, Tax Sale, \$190,000.00 would be collected.

COLLABORATIVE WORKSHOP

CBU is hosting a Collaborative Workshop at the Inverary Resort on September 18-19, 2019. Gordon McIntosh will lead to workshop and Councillors interested in attending are to register by Wednesday, August 28, 2019.

POLICY

A draft Internal Communications Policy was sent to Council for review. Councillor Patterson introduced some changes in wording and Council is to review the draft and provide comments.

CABOT TRAIL WRITERS FESTIVAL

The 11th Annual Cabot Trail Writers Festival will be held at the Gaelic College, St. Ann's from October 4-6, 2019.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council will be held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Tuesday, September 17, 2019, at 5:00 p.m.

IN CAMERA

It was moved and seconded to move In Camera to deal with property issues. Motion carried.

Council returned to the regular session of Council.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations of the In Camera meeting relating to property and Tax Sale issues be approved. Motion carried.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, it was moved that Council adjourn.

Bruce Morrison, Warden

Leanne MacEachen, CAO

