

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

February 5, 2020

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Wednesday, February 6, 2020, 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
Alix Redden, CFO
Jocelyn Bethune, Communications Officer
Heather MacLean, Recorder

CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Warden Morrison called the meeting to order and presented the agenda for approval. He indicated that the Affirming Committee of Greenwood United Church would be presenting first, followed by Amanda McDougall, ACAP Cape Breton.

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

AFFIRMING COMMITTEE – GREENWOOD UNITED CHURCH

Warden Morrison extended the courtesy of Council to Norm MacMullin, who was in attendance to present on behalf of the Affirming Committee of Greenwood United Church, Baddeck.

Mr. MacMullin thanked Council for the opportunity to meet. He introduced other members of the Affirming Committee in attendance, including Glenda Kaiser, Rev. Mary Jo Harrison and Roseanne McNeil.

Mr. MacMullin advised that sometime ago, Greenwood United Church formed an Affirming Committee to take the steps to become an Affirming Ministry. This included being a more welcoming and engaging church. They have been certified as an Affirming Ministry and are working on a number of initiatives with the LBGTQ group.

The Committee was pleased with the Municipality's initiative on flying the Pride Flag at the Court House this past summer and is seeking support for their initiative to have two crosswalks painted with the rainbow colours this year.

Mr. MacMullin indicated that having the flag flying and rainbow painted crosswalks will make their church and the community a safe and welcoming place to live and visit.

They are seeking a letter of support from the Municipality for the crosswalk painting initiative.

Whether the Village of Baddeck had been approached in this regard was questioned and Mr. MacMullin indicated they haven't approached the Village yet, but will do so.

Mr. MacMullin indicated that they would like to see the rainbow painted crosswalks in two high traffic, high visibility locations. Discussion took place.

It was moved and seconded that a letter of support be provided to the Greenwood United Church Affirming Committee in their request to have two crosswalks within the Village of Baddeck painted in rainbow colours. Motion carried.

Warden Morrison extended a thank you to the Committee members for attending Council with this important initiative.

GRAEME STEELE

Warden Morrison introduced Graham Steele, a member of the Municipality's Audit Committee, was in attendance at tonight's Council.

ECO-PARTNERSHIP – ACAP CAPE BRETON

Warden Morrison extended the courtesy of Council to Amanda McDougall, Executive Director of ACAP Cape Breton, who was in attendance to present on Eco-Partnerships (copy attached).

Warden Morrison indicated that along with being in her capacity with ACAP Cape Breton, Amanda McDougall is also a CBRM Councillor.

Ms. MacDougall advised that ACAP Cape Breton is a non-profit charitable community organization that was established in 1992. Their vision is for a clean and healthy environment, a prosperous economy and a population that is educated and empowered to make responsible choices for a sustainable future.

Ms. McDougall indicated that ACAP Cape Breton has a staff complement of five (5), comprising of herself as the Executive Director, a part-time financial person and three (3) core staff members. She outlined the work undertaken by ACAP Cape Breton, including:

- Community Gardening
- Bat Monitoring
- Living Shorelines
- Stormwater Management
- Climate Change Adaptation
- Rain Gardens
- Stream Restoration
- Eastern Bras d'Or Erosion Project
- Sedimentation Impact Monitoring
- Wastewater
- Water Conservation
- Tappy (CBRM Water Utility Mascot)
- Trashformers
- Low Flow Toilet Rebate
- Teachers Portal
- Eco Shop

ACAP's community eco-partnership organizations were outlined. Municipal Eco-Partnerships include Wastewater, Solid Waste, Source Water Protection and Water Conservation. Ms. McDougall outlined the work undertaken and the successes in each of the four Municipal Eco-Partnership categories.

She requested Council to identify concerns they are hearing from residents and if they are priorities already identified by Council. She also questioned on the programming/education that is lacking in the County.

Climate change and coastal erosion are issues that are certainly a concern of Council. The education component for children is a positive action.

The use of clear bags for waste and having a standardized waste for all Cape Breton is a topic for consideration.

Illegal waste dumping is a concern and Ms. McDougall indicated that CBRM is hiring an illegal dumping investigator through funding from Divert Nova Scotia. This individual will be able to issue tickets and names of offenders will be published in the Cape Breton Post.

Leanne MacEachen indicated that she will be talking to Debbie Nielsen, NSF, with regard to the climate change issue and will be sitting down with Council in April to come up with priorities.

Discussion took place. Ms. McDougall indicated she would take all items mentioned and develop a menu to see what ACAP Cape Breton could potentially offer to Victoria County.

Ms. MacDougall is to contact the CAO when the menu is complete and the CAO will report back to Council with possible programs.

Warden Morrison extended a thank you to Ms. McDougall for the presentation and she left at this time.

RECESS

Warden Morrison advised that Council would recess for 10 minutes.

GRANTS POLICY

Leanne MacEachen presented the Grants Policy which was brought up at the Committee of the Whole meeting. The changes resulting from the Council review were incorporated.

Graeme Steele also reviewed the document and made recommendations of edits he felt should be considered. Discussion took place on the changes.

The grants application is to be completed and placed on the County website as soon as possible and the Grants Policy will be finalized and brought to the February 24, 2020, Council meeting for approval.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 20, 2020

The minutes of the January 20, 2020, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Victoria County Municipal Council meeting of January 20, 2020, be approved as presented. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

The CAO advised that she checked on the old caterpillar motor at the Baddeck Solid Waste Facility and indicated that this item, and other surplus items, will be placed on a surplus equipment sale in the near future.

The letter of support for the Re-Use Centre to accompany the FCM funding application was provided.

NEW BUSINESS

Cape North Washroom

Leanne MacEachen advised that the Committee established to review the Expressions of Interest received for the Cape North Washroom met and the North Highlands Community Museum was the successful facility to house the public washroom.

The tender process for the washroom will completed as soon as possible.

Public Works

RFP's are going out for Groundwater Sampling and the Consolidation of Operations North of Smokey.

An RFP has closed for the Neil's Harbour Water Treatment Plant Upgrade engineering services. Four RFP's were received and will be evaluated in the next week.

Councillor MacNeil questioned on the Water Operator for Little Narrows. The CAO advised that they are looking at the position again and reviewing the job description. It is in progress.

Planning Advisory Committee

The applications for membership on the Planning Advisory Committee were reviewed in conjunction with John Bain, EDPC. Council approval is required for the appointments.

It was moved and seconded that Stephen Kerr, Paul Harvey and David Fairchild be appointed to serve on the Planning Advisory Committee. Motion carried.

Volunteer Awards

The CAO advised that no nominations have been received to date for volunteers and no applications have been received for the Healthy Eating in Recreational Settings.

The possibility of doing something different for the volunteer awards was discussed. The idea of allowing individuals to also nominate worthy volunteers was discussed.

It was moved and seconded that the criteria for nominating volunteers be changed to allow individuals to nominate a person they feel is a worthy nominee from the community at large and continue to accept nominations from organizations as done in the past also. Motion carried.

The CAO is to meet with Lydia Kerr, Recreation and Active Living Coordinator, to come up with the logistics for the volunteer wards and the Communications Officer draw up the appropriate press release concerning the nomination criteria. Motion carried.

Municipal Heritage Day

The Municipal Heritage Day will be held at the Baddeck Library on Wednesday, February 19, 2020.

TAXATION UPDATE

The CAO indicated that as of today, we are at \$1,453,014, compared to \$1,634,730 at this time last year for a total difference of \$181,717 ahead.

Arrears are \$541,192 compared to \$712,162 last year. This is a difference of \$201,583. Current is at \$911,822 compared to \$922,568 last year – a difference of \$10,746 to the good. In the last two weeks \$95,000 has been collected towards current and arrears.

Leanne MacEachen advised that the draft results of the Financial Condition Indicators (FCI) was received for 2018-19 and she was happy to report that we've moved from red (bad) to yellow status. The County has moved to 13.9% which is an impressive change of 3.6%. This is good news.

The Warden acknowledged the staff for their efforts and to Council as tax collection has been a priority of Council - a job well done to both.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL CONCERNS/ITEMS

District #4

Councillor MacInnis brought up concern with regard to the undermined road adjacent to the Bell Bay Golf Course. The road is washing away and needs to be remediated.

Whether a reply was received with regard to Council's request for an inquiry into the Englishtown Ferry was questioned. A reply has not been received to date.

Councillor MacInnis indicated that he would like to express thanks to the DTIR for a job well done on clearing the roads this season. Councillor MacLeod agreed with Councillor MacInnis with regard to clearing of the roads.

District #1

The surface on the Barra Strait Bridge needs to be repaired.

District #3

The Victoria County Trails Federation is interested in meeting with Minister Lloyd Hines to allow them to access the Red Bridge as a route to the Highlands. There is an access light on this bridge and they want to be permitted to allow snowmobiles to cross the bridge.

They are requesting Council to facilitate this meeting and Council has already requested a meeting with Minister Hines.

It was moved and seconded that Council offer support and assistance to set up a meeting with the Minister of TIR and the Victoria County Trails Federation. Motion carried.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #2

It was moved and seconded that the minutes and recommendations of the Committee of the Whole meeting of January 29, 2020, be accepted and the Municipality approve up to \$2,000.00 for the Women in Government Program. Motion carried.

Councillor MacLeod requested that a brighter Pride Flag be obtained for use this year.

District #4

Councillor MacInnis brought up the matter of the collection of recyclables conducted by Jimmie Bradley.

Since the monthly schedule was approved, a concern was expressed with regard to Mr. Bradley's ongoing collection. It was agreed, that along with the monthly group for recyclable donations, a constant bin be located at the Enviro-Depot for recyclables for Jimmie Bradley also.

Councillor MacInnis brought up a concern that there could be a crisis looming with the lobster industry in the wake of the Corona Virus. Lobster prices have dropped 50% and shipments are not being made to China. This is critical for our County and detrimental to the economy.

Councillor MacInnis requested that the County flag at the Court House be replaced.

District #7

It was moved and seconded that \$1,000.00 be approved for St. John's Hall and \$1,000.00 be approved for St. Andrew's Hall from the District #7 budget. Motion carried.

District #5

It was moved and seconded that \$2,500.00 be approved from the District #5 budget for the Boularderie Island Connected Society. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councillor MacNeil advised that he attended a CEPI Senior Council meeting on Thursday past and they will be setting their budget in March.

The Pitu'paq Committee is also interested in reactivating and meeting with Council in the future.

The Victoria County Transit Meeting will be held on February 24, 2020, at 3:00 p.m.

Two elected municipal officials are requested to meet with the Minister of Business and Cape Smokey Holdings with regard to the operations. The Warden and Deputy Warden will be the two Council representatives.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Cape Breton Highlanders Ride will be in support of L'Arche this year.

It was moved and seconded that the Municipality provide support for the Cape Breton Highlanders ride in support of L'Arche by donating \$1,000.00. Motion carried.

A call for applications for the Order of Nova Scotia was received if anyone has someone they would like to nominate.

NEXT MEETINGS

The next meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council will be held on Monday, February 24, 2020, at 5:00 p.m.

A meeting of Victoria County Transit will be held at 3:00 p.m. on February 24, 2020 and a meeting of the Senior Safety Committee will be held at 4:00 p.m. prior to Council on the 24th.

COUNCILLORS INCOME TAX

Since the elimination of the 1/3 non-taxable for Councillors, they are permitted to claim the use of part of their home for an office and other expenses the Municipality does not pay. It requires a declaration signed by the CAO.

FUTURE MEETINGS

A performance evaluation review is to be conducted on the CAO this month and will be conducted by the Committee who was involved in the hiring interview process.

A review of our Economic Development Strategy is also to be conducted in the near future.

FCM

Three are four Councillors eligible to attend the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Conference in Toronto in June, 2020. Those who are eligible are Warden Morrison and Councillors MacNeil, MacDonald and Budge.

If any of these four are unable to attend, then other Council members may be considered.

Those eligible to attend this year are to advise if they will be attending by the end of next week.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, it was moved to adjourn at 7:20 p.m.

Bruce Morrison, Warden

Leanne MacEachen, CAO