

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

February 24, 2020

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Court House, Baddeck, on Monday, February 24, 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 #7 – Wayne Budge
District #8 – Norman MacDonald

Also present were:

Leanne MacEachen, CAO
Jocelyn Bethune, Communications Officer
Heather MacLean, Recorder

Absent was:

District #6 – Larry Dauphinee, Deputy Warden (Family Related)

CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Warden Morrison called the meeting to order and presented the agenda for approval. He indicated there would be a brief In Camera meeting held at the conclusion of the agenda to deal with a property matter and financial issues.

It was moved and seconded that the agenda be approved with the addition of an In Camera meeting. Motion carried.

***CAPE BRETON HIGHLANDS NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN
CONSULTATION***

Warden Morrison extended the courtesy of Council to Robert Howey, Acting Superintendent, Cape Breton Highlands National Park, who was in attendance to present on the Park's Management Plan Consultation (copy attached).

Mr. Howey outlined the Parks Canada Mandate and the Government and Agency priorities including:

- Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples
- Open, transparent and evidence-based decision making
- Engaging citizens in science and conservation
- Partner-based, landscape-scale conservation
- Climate change and species at risk
- Innovative storytelling, new perspectives and approaches to presenting history
- Connecting with a broad diversity of Canadians, particularly youth and urban dwellers
- Inclusiveness and accessibility

The Cape Breton Highlands National Park Management Plan sets a vision and important management considerations that will be moved forward. It is 10 year cycle, with a 10-15 year look ahead. The Management Plan will become part of the government's commitment to Canadians.

Phase 1 consultations, such as tonight's presentation to Council, will provide feedback and Phase 2 consultation will be further feedback on the draft management plan. This will occur in May-June, 2020, and hopefully it will be tabled in Parliament in the fall of 2020.

The partners and stakeholders include:

- Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia
- Visitors
- Functional experts (tourism industry, researchers, land managers)
- Advocacy groups
- Gateway communities
- Government (MPs, MLAs and municipalities)
- Youth

Mr. Howey advised that online engagement was completed on February 16, 2020 and discussion has been held in communities and with municipalities and other partners. He also provided the Management Plan questionnaire.

The Draft Vision is for healthy ecosystems, meaningful experiences, Mi'kmaq relationships, cultural appreciation, economic opportunities and greening operations.

The key areas for consideration were outlined as well as the next steps. The feedback received through sessions and online engagement will be collected and a draft report on what was heard will be developed and distributed in March. The draft management plan will be presented in April, 2020.

The number of online responses received was questioned and Mr. Howey indicated that there were in excess of 200 responses and that is considered a fairly good engagement level. They also hosted a session in Cape North in January, 2020, and were pleased with the participation there.

The new project at Ski Cape Smokey was discussed and the Park is working with these stakeholders. They both sit on the Ingonish Development Society and Mr. Howey meets with Martin Kejval, Cape Smokey Developments, regularly.

Whether the Park is prepared for an increase due to the Ingonish development was questioned and Mr. Howey indicated that they saw a 30% plus increase in 2017 and handled it relatively well.

Robert Howey explained how the Parks Canada funding was disbursed.

The current status of the moose population was questioned and Mr. Howey indicated that Parks and the Department of Lands & Forestry will be conducting an aerial survey in the Highlands counting the moose population within the coming weeks. This is a random sampling method of over 900 different areas. The data is fed into a computer program and is established from there.

Climate change was discussed and the County indicated their willingness to partner with Parks Canada in this regard. There will be a climate change session held at the Court House, on April 29, 2020, with provincial representatives and ACAP Cape Breton to start looking at various initiatives. Mr. Howey was invited to attend.

Four season tourism was discussed and whether the Park had been approached by the local snowmobile associations with regard to a snowmobile trail through the Park corridor was questioned. This does not fit with the current legislation and policies and there are challenges with regard to the highly sensitive eco-systems within the Park, but they are willing to listen.

After further discussion, Warden Morrison extended a thank you to Robert Howey for his presentation and he was excused at this time.

CAPE BRETON HIGHLANDERS

The Cape Breton Highlanders presentation has been postponed due to a health issue with one of the presenters.

PROVINCIAL VOLUNTEER NOMINEE

Lydia Kerr, Recreation and Active Living Coordinator, provided Council with a list of volunteer nominations received to date and provided a scoring method to choose the representative to attend the provincial ceremonies.

Councillors are to score the submissions and their scores will be tabulated. The volunteer will be announced tomorrow when the scores have been determined.

VICTORIA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL – FEBRUARY 4, 2020

The minutes of the February 4, 2020, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

It was moved and seconded that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of February 4, 2020, be approved as presented. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

The CAO advised that the process of obtaining quotes for a washroom at the Gaelic College is underway. The proposals will be received this week.

A Climate Change Workshop for Council and select staff will be held on April 29, 2020. Robert Howey, CBHNP, will be invited to attend.

A meeting of the Public Works Committee will be held in April where recommendations with regard to tipping fees will be presented.

Leanne MacEachen advised that no applications were received for a Victoria County representative on the Cape Breton Regional Library Board (CBRLB).

Terry Murray, who was in the audience, expressed an interest in the position. Warden Morrison advised that the CBRLB meet quarterly on a Monday at 5:00 p.m. in Sydney. The meetings last about 1 ½ hours. She will provide a resume for consideration.

Councillor MacNeil felt that consideration should be given to a County work project where students are hired to collect garbage on the roadsides throughout the County. Amanda McDougall, ACAP Cape Breton and CBRM Councillor indicated CBRM has this summer program.

This request can be brought to the Budget meeting for consideration.

NEW BUSINESS

The CAO advised that an RFP has been requested for site evaluation of the Dingwall Solid Waste Facility and the Neil's Harbour Enviro-Depot. Proposals will be received until 3:00 p.m. on March 11, 2020.

An RFP has also been requested for Ground and Surface water monitoring for the Baddeck and Dingwall waste sites. The proposals will be received until 3:00 p.m. on March 12, 2020.

The Seniors' Safety Program has been successful in receiving a \$24,000.00 New Horizons for Seniors Grant.

Karen Furneaux, a Canadian Olympian in the sport of sprint kayaking, will be coming to Victoria County on April 21-22, 2020. She will be visiting all county schools.

An advertisement has been placed for a Returning Officer for the upcoming October municipal election. Applications will be received until March 9, 2020.

Any Council or staff members who have taken municipal equipment (computer, phone, etc.) outside the province are to notify Jocelyn Bethune by tomorrow. She has to submit reporting of use outside Nova Scotia as part of the *Personal Information International Disclosure Protection Act* (PIIDPA) reporting.

The Budget Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, beginning at 10:00 a.m. at the Court House, Baddeck.

The April, 2020, Council meeting dates will be April 6 and April 20, 2020. A Victoria County Transit meeting will be held on April 20, 2020, at 4:00 p.m. prior to Council.

The CAO advised that Warden Morrison achieved a milestone in turning 65 last week.

The precautionary water boil order is still in effect on the Dingwall system. Two clean samples must be received before the order is lifted. It is anticipated the order will be lifted on Tuesday, February 25, 2020.

The schedule for use of the Baddeck ReUse Centre is to be determined. It is anticipated the building will be opening the end of March. To date nine non-profits have submitted their names for consideration.

The names were placed in a hat and a draw by lot took place. The facility will operate in the order selected.

- Victoria County Hospice Gardens
- Baddeck Bay Hospital Auxiliary
- St. Ann's Bay Community Health Group
- Baddeck & Area Cat Rescue
- Hospice Society of Victoria County
- BOLDC
- Bras d'Or Archers

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities Conference will be held in Toronto in June, 2020.

Councillor MacNeil, Budge and MacDonald, who were eligible to attend this year, have decided not to attend. Warden Morrison is eligible to attend this year and will be attending. The four remaining Councillors have expressed an interest in attending – Councillors MacLeod, MacInnis, Patterson and Deputy Warden Dauphinee.

The four names were placed in a container and selected as follows:

- Deputy Warden Larry Dauphinee
- Councillor Fraser Patterson
- Councillor Merrill MacInnis

Warden Morrison indicated that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of BABTA will be held on February 27, 2020 at 12:00 noon if any Council members are interested in attending.

RECESS

Warden Morrison advised that Council would recess for 10 minutes.

TAXATION UPDATE

The CAO advised that as of today we are at \$1,378,603, compared to \$1,513,307 at this time last year - \$134,704 ahead.

Arrears are \$525,040 compared to \$678,871 this time last year for a difference of \$153,832 ahead.

Current is back below last year with a difference of \$19,128 below this time last year.

Since the last Council, \$74,000 has been collected on both current and arrears.

Whether the Municipality can sell the municipally owned properties was questioned and they can be put up for sale for the market value.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL CONCERNS/ISSUES

District #5

Councillor Patterson indicated he is awaiting pavement this construction season and expressed appreciation for the winter snow removal service this season.

District #4

Councillor MacInnis questioned if there was any movement on the call for an inquiry into the operation of the Englishtown Ferry.

There has been no reply to date and a letter is to be forwarded to the Premier requesting an update on the Municipality's call for an inquiry into the operations of the Englishtown Ferry. The Ferry is still out of service and is currently at dry-dock in North Sydney. It has been out of operation since December, 2019.

District #1

Councillor MacNeil brought forward the concern with regard to potholes on the Washabuck Road.

District #3

Warden Morrison brought up the pothole on Chebucto Street by the Needs intersection. He requested it be repaired immediately.

It was moved and seconded that a letter be forwarded to the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal outlining Council's concerns. Motion carried.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District #1

Councillor MacNeil indicated that there are six (6) streetlights out on the northern side of the Barra Strait Bridge.

It was moved and seconded that Lynk Electric be contacted to repair the lights on the Barra Strait Bridge. Motion carried.

District #2

Councillor MacLeod requested that Joan MacInnes be contacted to provide a picture of former Councillor Mary Alice MacDonald for the Women in Government School.

Councillor MacLeod also brought up the issue of waste and coming up with ideas to deal with waste on the roadsides.

Councillor MacLeod also mentioned the plastic caps that are presently placed in clear bags.

The response to the acknowledgement of Jimmie Bradley being a rock star with regard to recycling has been positive and whether the depot building could be named in his honor was discussed. This matter will be investigated.

District #4

An invitation has been extended to a meeting at the Gaelic College. They would like to enhance their months of operation by developing trails to access their facility. They can provide lodging and meals. The meeting will be held on March 4, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. at the Gaelic College. Councillors MacLeod and MacInnis and Warden Morrison are to attend.

District #8

Councillor MacDonald brought up a concern with regard to the channels being blocked and North and South Harbour in Dingwall.

This matter is to be left with the CAO to investigate.

District #5

Councillor Patterson indicated that two events in his district – a Halloween party for children and a senior’s supper – had a record number of participants. All left feeling great and face to face interactions are great for the community.

District #3

Warden Morrison brought up the Baddeck Waterfront Committee and the public meeting held with regard to development of the wharf and area on February 12, 2020. Representatives from Develop Nova Scotia were in attendance. Repairs are necessary to ensure the future of the Baddeck Wharf.

It was moved and seconded that the Municipality support in principle the work being undertaken by the Baddeck Waterfront Committee with regard to the Baddeck Wharf and waterfront. Motion carried.

VICTORIA COUNTY TRANSIT

The Victoria County Transit Committee met at 3:00 p.m. today and requires the appointment of officers.

Councillor Perla MacLeod is the Chair of the Committee.

It was moved and seconded that along with Perla MacLeod as Chair, Merrill MacInnis be appointed Vice-Chair and Norman MacDonald be appointed Treasurer of Victoria County Transit. Motion carried.

BY-LAW/POLICY REVIEW

The Community Grants Policy was to be brought to the meeting for approval tonight. It will be provided to Council electronically and approved at the next Council meeting.

PROTECTED LANDS

There has been information circulating that Nova Scotia is considering increasing protected lands. Victoria County has a large portion of the protected lands in Nova Scotia and do not want any further lands designated.

It was moved and seconded that a letter be forwarded to the Department of Lands & Forestry opposing any further protected lands in Victoria County. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Victoria County Transit met earlier today, as did the Seniors' Safety Advisory Committee.

It was moved and seconded that a letter be forwarded to Minister Leo Glavine, Communities, Culture and Heritage thanking them for their past financial assistance and requesting \$60,000.00 in funding this year to continue Victoria County Transit. Motion carried.

Councillor MacNeil indicated that he will be attending a Pitu'paq meeting on Thursday and a CEPI meeting on Friday.

An update was provided on Provincial Broadband. Aliant was awarded the first phase which will include upgrades to Boularderie, Ingonish and Dingwall. Aliant was not in attendance, but Seaside was there to answer questions.

IN CAMERA

It was moved and seconded to move In Camera to deal with a property and a financial issue. Motion carried.

Council returned to regular session.

It was moved and seconded to approve the recommendations from the In Camera meeting. Motion carried.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Strategic Priorities Chart is to be reviewed and updated.

Warden Morrison indicated that the Committee will be conducting the performance appraisal on the CAO in the near future.

ADJOURN

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

Bruce Morrison, Warden

Leanne MacEachen, CAO