

Victoria County Municipal Council

February 2nd, 2021

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held via ZOOM on February 2nd, 2021 at 5:00pm with Warden Bruce Morrison in the Chair.

Present Were:

District #1- Paul MacNeil
District #2- Perla MacLeod
District #3- Bruce Morrison, Warden
District #4- Barbara Longva
District #5- Fraser Patterson
District #6- Larry Dauphinee, Deputy Warden
District #7- Jackie Organ
District #8- Norman MacDonald

Also present were:

Leanne MacEachen, CAO
Amy Liu, CFO
Dan Coffin, Tourism and Development Officer
Jocelyn Bethune, Communications Officer
Stephanie MacLeod, Recorder
Garrett Fazekas, IT

CALL TO ORDER

Warden Morrison called the meeting to order and presented the agenda for approval.

It was moved by Councillor MacNeil and seconded by Councillor Longva that the agenda be approved and presented. Motion Carried.

Councillor Patterson requested discussion regarding the Cape Breton Assembly.

Motion carried to approve the agenda.

BOLD PRESENTATION - MADISON GREENING and GABY BRAUN

Ms. Greening and Ms. Braun gave a brief introduction of themselves and provided a summary of BOLD. They currently have 26 children total, some weekly, and some daily.

They went on to explain that without the initial seed funding from the County they wouldn't be where they are today.

They have increased the revenue stream, they are operating at 33% in winter and 50% in summer but because they increased their revenue, they don't qualify for any federal Covid funding.

They are asking Council for \$5000.00 under the Community COVID-19 Operational Funding.

The Warden and Councillors all thanked Ms. Greening and Ms. Braun for their presentation and commended them on a job well done with their programs and their significant work with the children of Victoria County.

The Warden then called on each district for questions.

Councillor MacNeil commented that it was great to see the success of the project and asked about post COVID-19 plans and if they would be looking to launch a pilot program outside of Baddeck?

Ms. Greening commented that they are currently looking into that right now, but ensured that they didn't want to create a competitive environment. She mentioned that they are currently working with "Raising the Villages" in a sort of support role.

Councillor MacLeod asked what programs they have right now and what their future programs might be and what other organizations they currently partner with.

Ms. Greening responded and said that they have 5 programs right now; they run playgroups, music programs, community jam sessions; they are almost full for their summer day camp and they have just applied for funding for adult programming.

They are also running a resource network for kids who are being homeschooled and working with the Baddeck mental health group, the library and youth group.

CAO MacEachen thanked the presenters for their presentation and time and encouraged them to fill out the funding request application which can be found on the County's website.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 19th, 2021, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

It was moved by Councillor Longva and seconded by Councillor Organ that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of January 19th, 2021, be approved as presented. Motion carried.

CAO REPORT

Old Business

Department of Justice has been in touch - we have a call out for Committee members for Police Advisory In the meantime, they said what we are doing is basically the same, just not following the MGA Housing meeting took place this afternoon Two Age Friendly applications have gone in for funding Still pushing the Voyent App for Municipal issues - please encourage all to sign up.

New Business

Senior Safety

Checked in with New Horizons Federal Rep - we think this project is moving along nicely Realizing Seniors are still offline a majority of the time

Tourism

Baddeck Visioning template has been postponed to later this week.

Placemaking - 4-5 Councillors have given great feedback so far Mountain Bike Parks - next phase is community led trails development

Website - soft launch happening this week

DCBA - expecting Canada travel by fall.

The winter guide - VC has a great profile. 21 Accommodations listed

Meeting with Inverness County to collaborate/compare

LAE course - 12 applicants, and discussions on upcoming courses

Rec/AL

Walking track completed - open to public

Gender equity funding received for Ski Club - women/girls - contact ski-club about it

Events currently are on hold, until restrictions loosen

North of Smokey Councillors - meeting this afternoon on mental health initiatives

Nicholson Trail - 80 people this weekend - great its being used

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Youth wilderness workshop - 10 max, sign up ASAP
Poster being developed for winter activities around the County
Volunteer nominations are still being accepted.

Finance

Developing a Capital Asset Request form.
Working on T4's, policies
Waste Mgmt. Case study for school- should help with our Waste Mgmt. decisions
Budget day - Feb 22
Tax letters sent - over 1,000, people with taxes owing over 3 years.

Public Works

GHD final report will be presented on Wednesday.
List is out for Baddeck Bottle Depot Draw.
New Haven Recipients are being drawn this week
Collaborating around Island on ReCollect program
Energy assessment with Efficiency NS being worked on
Ramp is coming along - new power door early March

EDO

Mountain Bike Park Development- 4 business plans, 8 additional businesses asking. 68 Inquiries so far.
Adventure Tourism - 3 new businesses exploring options
TIANS training
Business reviews – Districts 1, 3 and 5.
Investment Opportunities – Districts 1, 3, and 8.
3 Businesses working on funding applications for expansions

OTHER

Received a draft of the Tourism Strategy from DCBA. We are trying to align our vision with theirs.
Having a discussion this week with Keith Bain on Cell/Internet issues.

Had a housing strategy meeting today, looking for a list of available land from each district and see if there is something we can do with it.

CORRESPONDENCE

CAO MacEachen presented two motions for Council to consider:

- 1) Given that the Municipalities of the Counties of Inverness, Richmond, Victoria and Antigonish as well as the Towns of Antigonish and Port Hawkesbury are contributing partners in a district planning commission working together to support regional economic development through consistent regional planning and given that the*

Municipal Innovation Program is intended to support such initiatives it is moved that the Municipality of the County of Victoria supports the application of our District Planning Commission for funding under the program and agrees to participate through the planning commission in this regional planning initiative in partnership with the Cape Breton Regional Municipality to hire, on a term basis, planning services to create municipal planning documents that meet the minimum planning requirements instituted by the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing and where appropriate harmonize these by-laws.

Councillor Patterson asked if the intent of this project is to detail things out or just a general overview and as we go we will fill in the other parts of it.

CAO MacEachen commented that it's part of the mandate for the municipal planning standards and then we can add on to it.

Councillor Patterson made the motion to support this. Seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee. Motion Carried.

- 2) *Given that the Municipality of the County of Antigonish, Town of Antigonish, Municipality of the County of Inverness, Town of Port Hawkesbury, Municipality of the District of St. Mary's and the Municipality of the County of Victoria would like to consider the establishment of an inter-municipal information technology (IT) service, and the Municipal Innovation Program is intended to support such regional initiatives, it is moved that the (insert your municipality's name here) supports the application for funding under this program to obtain advisory services to develop a formal three-year start-up plan that will facilitate a final decision on participation by the partnering municipalities.*

Councillor MacNeil made the motion to support this. Seconded by Councillor Longva. Motion Carried.

TAXATION UPDATE

Total outstanding is \$1.33 million, \$101,000 lower than last year.

Current outstanding is \$757,000, \$142,000 lower than last year.

Arrears \$582,000, \$101,000 higher than last year.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION CONCERNS

District 1

Ongoing_erosion issue in Grass Cove.
Culvert issue down the hill right below the sharp turn in Iona.

District 4

Residents are requesting a sidewalk built from Bell Museum all the way down the Bay Road on the water side, possibly a boardwalk.

A resident was concerned with the amount of deer on the highway between the two exits in Baddeck and asked if a fence can be put in along the highway.

Inquired as to whether or not that instead of a weather camera on Smokey, could there be something different up there, possibly a wind indicator.

Councilor Longva wanted to formally thank Steve MacDonald for the TIR issues that have been addressed.

District 3

Request to set up a quarter meeting with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

District 5

Condition of the upper part of Kempt Head Road is good, as it has been graded.

District 7

Councilor Organ wanted it noted that the concerns that have been brought up for her district previously, still have not been addressed.

District 8

Same issues that have been brought up the last few council meetings.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District 1

Councillor MacNeil made a motion to send a letter of support to the board of the Grand Narrows Waterfront Development Association. They are applying for upgrades at the port. Even though they are in the CBRM, any project that occurs at that waterfront seems to have a benefit to Iona and Victoria County.

Councillor MacLeod made the motion to send a letter of support. Seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee and Councillor MacLeod. Motion Carried.

Councillor MacNeil commented that there is a coyote issue at Ottawa Brook and asked who at Natural Resources he could contact to discuss that with.

Warden Morrison said that Morley MacNeil would be the best person to contact.

Councillor MacNeil also wanted to thank Cassandra for following up with a resident on the phone program for seniors

District 2

Councillor MacLeod asked if there could be a Youth Council update.

Councillor MacLeod made a motion to send a letter to Bobby Buchanan on his retirement after 55 years of service at the Baddeck Volunteer Fire Department.

Councillor MacLeod made the motion to send a retirement letter. Seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee. Motion Carried.

Councillor MacLeod made a motion to send a letter to Margaret MacPhee who will be 106 years old on February 9th.

Councillor MacLeod made the motion to send a congratulations letter. Seconded by Councillor MacNeil. Motion Carried.

District 3

Warden Morrison wanted to thank and recognize Patrick Austin and Dan Coffin for the mountain bike strategy and the positive exposure it brought to the County.

Warden Morrison made a motion to contact the Minister of Transportation to allow a pilot project to allow golf carts to travel legally within the confines of the village.

***Warden Morrison made the motion to send a letter to the Minister of Transportation.
Seconded by Councillor Longva. Motion Carried.***

District 4

Councillor Longva inquired as to how the public gets information, in particular, by-law notifications and it was decided that a meeting would be set up with Councillor Longva, CAO MacEachen and Communications Officer Jocelyn Bethune to discuss and explore options.

Councillor Longva expressed concern on behalf of residents and business owners in her district in regards to the qualifying parameters in the CDDI By-Law. She asked if there could be incentives offered to those that don't qualify for the bylaw.

CAO MacEachen commented that the County is not allowed to offer financial incentives outside of the CDDI by-law, the province does not allow it.

Councillor Longva mentioned that the street light is still on all the time at 45143 Cabot Trail and said that the light is off at St. Ann's United Church.

Councillor Longva requested that a 60th Wedding Anniversary certificate be made and sent to Jack and Mary Matthews.

District 5

Councillor Patterson received a call from a resident about Covid restrictions at places of worship. Councillor Patterson was wondering if there could be changes made to those restrictions.

Warden Morrison commented that the County is following the protocol of the province. Councillor Patterson said that he would follow-up with the resident on specifically what was being asked of Victoria County.

District 6

Deputy Warden wanted to recognize the great work of all the volunteers with the North Highlands Nordic and pass on his congratulations on this project and commented that it will be a great asset to the area. It aligns well with adventure tourism.

District 7

Councillor Organ had two water department concerns that she has discussed with the CAO and one of them is fixed and the other one is currently being looked at.

District 8

Councillor MacDonald made a streetlight request at a prior meeting but did not provide the civic address. That address is 29483 Cabot Trail.

Councillor MacDonald also mentioned that there would be naloxone training at the Bay St. Lawrence Community Centre on February 4th and at the Cape North Cultural Centre on February 5th.

BYLAWS

Warden Morrison stated that we had a public bylaw hearing earlier in the evening and turned it over to CAO MacEachen for comment.

CAO MacEachen indicated that we had a public hearing for the Commercial Development District Improvement By-Law (CDDI) and it was the third reading of that by-law. CAO MacEachen requested a motion to pass the CDDI By-Law.

Councillor Patterson made the motion to pass the CDDI By-Law. Seconded by Councillor MacLeod. Motion Carried.

Councillor Patterson made a motion to send a letter to the NSFM to lobby them to broaden the scope of their improvement initiatives to include other areas and other businesses.

Councillor Patterson made the motion to send a letter to the NSFM. Seconded by Councillor Longva. Motion Carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councillor MacNeil mentioned that in 2008 CEPI produced a Bras d'Or Lake Development Standard report and 2 years later they came out with a pamphlet with recommendations. They are looking into collaborating with municipalities on land development issues and standards for the

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municipalities. They will have more information that they will present to different municipalities, including ours in the near future.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee mentioned that the Housing Committee met earlier that day and requested that the Councillors take a look at the housing study, in particular the Victoria County section and look at the needs in their district especially affordable housing vs. short term housing. There will be a meeting set to discuss those issues further.

Councillor MacLeod mentioned that Victoria County Transit is looking for drivers and asked to pass along that information to anyone interested.

Councillor MacLeod also commented that on Monday she sent out an application for funding for an age friendly grant.

Councillor Patterson asked that there be a discussion regarding the Cape Breton Assembly at next council session as it was not discussed, as requested, due to weather and power concerns during this council session.

NEXT MEETING

February 22nd, 2021.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:42.

Bruce Morrison, Warden
Leanne MacEachen, CAO