



**Victoria County Municipal Council**  
April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held via Zoom on April 7th, 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



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**CALL TO ORDER**

Warden Morrison called the meeting to order and presented the agenda for approval with the noted change of recognising the volunteers.

***It was moved by Councillor MacLeod and seconded by Councillor MacNeil that the agenda be approved.***

***Motion Carried.***

Warden Morrison recognized the list of volunteers that were nominated:

**-Diane Hart**

Baddeck- Board member and volunteer for Taigh Curaim Day Care Society and the Bras d'Or Wellness Society

**-John & Val Sobel**

Kempt Head- St. Joachim Church

**-Rev. Brian MacLeod**

Baddeck- Youth Groups, Rugby Club, Lions Club, Local Legion

**-Greenwood Church Welcome Ladies**

Baddeck & Area

**-Gabrielle Braun**

Baddeck- Baddeck Youth group, Knox Church, Mental Health group, Lions Club

**-Angus Nicholson**

Big Baddeck- Baddeck Valley Community Club

**-Rachael Germani**

Baddeck- Soccer coach, basketball coach, volunteer referee, race organizer, CTRR volunteer, physician recruitment, day care volunteer

**-Wendell MacPhee**

Baddeck-President of Baddeck Valley Community Fair Committee

**-Bobby Gordon Buchanan**



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Baddeck- Baddeck Volunteer Fire Department, Curling club, Lions club

**-North Highlands Nordic Volunteer Team**

Cape North

Each nominee will be getting a small token to show the County's appreciation.

**CROWDIS MOUNTAIN SNOWMOBILE CLUB PRESENTATION**

Wilf Kaiser presented an overview of the Crowdis Mountain Snowmobile Club.

Mr. Kaiser expressed that the club would like to purchase new equipment. Very encouraged to hear that trails is one of the priorities of Council and is willing to help out with anything Council needs from the club to get the trails developed.

Mr. Kaiser commented that there was a lot of extra business that has come into the County over the last 3 months. Most of the snowmobilers that came the last few months have previously gone to New Brunswick and beyond but with the border being closed because of Covid, they traveled to Cape Breton. These people kept coming back again and made repeat business.

Mr. Kaiser said that the trails in New Brunswick are still way ahead of Cape Breton as far as trail maintenance. Well maintained and groomed trails leading to services is key and crucial.

The Crowdis Mountain Ski Club currently maintain hundreds of kilometers of trails and they interconnect with other clubs within Cape Breton.

The biggest challenge for the Club is their trail groomer. Their current groomer is almost 30 years old. If they use it 1 day, they repair it for 2 days...supposing it doesn't break down on the trail. To repair the current groomer is would cost approximately \$40,000 dollars to fix it.

They are looking to fundraise and trying to get funds from all three levels of government and ACOA said that they would most likely fund 1/3 of the project.

Warden Morrison thanked Mr. Kaiser for his presentation and opened the floor up to questions.

Councillor MacNeil commented that there was lots of traffic through Iona and local inns and bed and breakfasts that were used even though there are no trails in district 1. It's an economic boom for the county.

Councillor MacLeod asked how many km's of trail they maintain. Mr. Kaiser said that maintain about 400kms.

Councillor Longva asked if Leo Fownes was part of the group and Mr. Kaiser said that he was and Councillor Longva also commented that supporting a new groomer and appreciated all the volunteer time.



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Councillor Patterson commented that it is an economic benefit to the whole county.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee thanked Mr. Kaiser for all the work he does and commented that there is someone from every district that benefits from the trails.

Councillor Organ agreed and sees the benefit of the trails and thanked Mr. Kaiser for his presentation.

Councillor MacDonald commented that there were two rallies this year with over 300 sleds so we can see the benefit of proper trails.

CAO MacEachen indicated she was fully supportive of the trails and using them and sees the benefit and asked if Mr. Kaiser was able to tell the difference from year over year and if there a lot of unfamiliar faces.

Mr. Kaiser said there definitely was a difference, we don't have stats but the traffic this year was up exponentially. As it stands this year, the traffic was way up and had great positive feedback.

CAO MacEachen mentioned that Destination Cape Breton is looking into doing a survey among the snowmobilers. This will help with trail development in the future.

Warden Morrison said that we are looking forward to reviewing your applications in the next few weeks.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

***It was moved by Councillor Longva and seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021, be approved as presented.***

***Motion carried.***



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**CAO REPORT**

***Old Business***

Water collection/disconnection policy sent out to Council

Private Road guidelines - received from EDPC - sent to Councillor

Voting in Municipal election - follow Elections Canada/NS guidelines. Must be a Canadian citizen to vote in our municipal election.

Letters went out on Bill 4.

Contacted Lynk Electric, as well as TIR dispatch - Ops Super knows about the lights, waiting on instructions.

Councillor MacNeil indicated that the lights have not yet been repaired or replaced.

Developing a Community Standards Bylaw, for noise/graffiti.

Councillor Longva asked about the Community Standards bylaw, had a resident concerned with agricultural properties related to this.

CAO MacEachen instructed to make note of those comments, suggestions, concerns for when the next reading takes place.

Councillor Patterson asked about the summary offences and enforcement.

CAO MacEachen said that it is presently with the Department of Justice. The dog catcher is in the process of getting training to write these summary offences.

Councillor MacDonald asked about the 5 year capital plan correspondence and asked if we have heard back from the province yet.

CAO MacEachen indicated that we have not heard anything back as of yet.

Councillor Longva asked about the voting rules and asked if they could be updated.

CAO MacEachen said we follow Elections Canada and Elections Nova Scotia. MGA has lots of outdated items but for voting she doesn't see that changing.

Councillor Longva asked if there was anything we can do to change that.

Deputy Warden suggested one option is to apply to become a Canadian citizen.

Warden Morrison said we can ask the opinion of our municipal advisor but we are restricted by federal and provincial regulations.



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Warden Morrison asked if the CAO has heard anything back from the Department of Transportation regarding Irving property.

CAO MacEachen said that we did receive something back and they are going to do another traffic study and we asked if it was going to be conducted by a third party or not. CAO said TIR has not gotten back to her with that answer.

***New Business***

***Senior Safety***

Senior transport to Vaccines.

Newsletter has been sent last week; if there is anyone you know of who is not getting flyers, please contact us and/or the post office.

***Tourism***

Trail development- ongoing meetings.

Baddeck Visioning happening next week.

Placemaking -- Meeting with Leanne Jennings with Develop NS this week.

Ongoing Engagement sessions throughout the County on Tourism discussions.

Dan presented at Strait Area Chamber meeting on March 31 regarding the Mountain Bike Strategy.

***Rec/AL***

Mental Health Workshops happening, 20 registered in Ingonish and 10 for Bay St. Lawrence.

Wilderness Workshop May 1 in Tarbot.

Will be presenting Walking Track Initiative at Upcoming MPAL Inspiration session later this month.

***Finance***

PACE Program - Need a motion to accept the Concept/Support the program.

Working on Bylaws/Year end... Get all invoices/Expense claims in ASAP.

Will be planning a full 2nd draft budget/grants day - late April/early May.



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***Public Works***

ReUse Building opening April 24th.

Ideas on garbage collection - see separate sheet sent. Also propose a staff day for cleanup.

Fish offal is starting this week and it will be monitored closely.

Staff getting trained in computer basics.

NH Water system upgrade starting ASAP.

Over the last 3 years, the reuse centre, this project has given just over \$23,500 dollars to groups.

Earth Day is April 22<sup>nd</sup>, good gesture of councillors to get out to pick up some garbage and send some pictures in using a hashtag.

Litter initiatives that we could potentially be involved with, The Great Nova Scotia Pick Me Up. Still waiting to hear back from ACAP on the "Trashformers" and hiring summer students so we are looking at having an application sent out for that and we are also advertising for a summer student.

Looking into have a staff event where we go and pick up some litter as a team building exercise for Earth Day.

***EDO***

Patrick started at Cape Smokey April 7th, 2021.

Job ad description posted - will be interviewing mid/late April.

Documented status of his files will be left with his replacement.

***Other***

Getting meetings set up with all trail groups.

Neil's Harbour WTP upgrade came in substantially over budget. Need to discuss options for financing

We need approval and acceptance from Council for the PACE program.

***It was moved by Councillor MacLeod and seconded by Councillor MacNeil to accept and support the PACE program for home energy.***

***Motion carried.***

Warden Morrison said we will proceed with this initiative.



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Councillor MacDonald wanted to pass on thanks to the CAO and Robert Dauphinee for the re-use centre project.

Warden Morrison talked about vaccine availability in the North. Warden Morrison asked Dr. Strang when vaccines will be available and he has not heard a response back from him nor has the CAO.

Warden Morrison made a motion to write a letter to Dr. Strang regarding the lack of available vaccines in the North.

***It was moved by Councillor Organ and seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee to write a letter to Dr. Strang when the residents of the North of Smokey will be vaccinated.***

***Motion carried.***

**TAXATION UPDATE**

CAO MacEachen indicated we had some good news. We get graded from the province on our March numbers and as of March 31<sup>st</sup>, we had \$889,089.86 outstanding which is \$220,059.08 lower than last year's \$1,109,148.94. We are headed in the right direction but still a long way to go.

Total outstanding is \$843,223.91 which is \$228,420.91 lower than last year's \$1,071,644.82.

Current outstanding is \$411,324.33 which is \$213,074.83 lower than last year's \$624,399.16.

Arrears outstanding are \$431,899.58 which is \$15,346.08 lower than last year's \$447,245.66.

There were 8 properties on the tax sale and of those 8 properties, 5 were sold.

Tax installment program is expired as of March 31, 2021. There were three new applications before March 31, 2021.

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND RENEWAL**

**District 1**

Councillor MacNeil said that there was flood damage on a number of dirt roads in the District 1 and they have to be looked at. The following areas in particular need to be looked at ASAP:

- Especially the new work that was done on the Red Point Road between the railway Tracks and Route 223.
- St Columba Road
- Walker Road
- Dunn road





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Councillor MacNeil said that residents are wondering if there will be work done on the John Neil George Road. Some gravel and ditching are needed. Councillor MacNeil indicated he would be in touch with Steve MacDonald regarding these issues.

**District 2**

Councillor MacLeod talked to a TIR Supervisor, Mr. Green. Mr. Green indicated that they know that there is a lot of road work that needs to be done but they have to wait until spring road restrictions are lifted at the end of April to start the work.

Councillor MacLeod also wanted to remind the residents in District 2 to please call 1-844-696-7737 to report bad roads.

**District 3**

Warden Morrison addressed his concerns with Steve, in particular the flooding along the Shore Road.

**District 4**

Councillor Longva indicated there were a lot of road damages reported in her district after the rain storms and she wanted to thank Steve MacDonald for his quick response in particular to Long Hill Road. A lot of work was done on that road.

Councillor Longva said there was a misunderstanding in Plaister Mines, they were told that the culvert was clear but actually one side was collapsed and washed the road out completely. Englishtown road is eroding; residents are concerned that they will lose the road completely.

Councillor Longva mentioned that a resident who lives on Old Saw Mill Road, which is off the Port Bevis Loop, it currently says it is the Old Mill Road but that is incorrect. It is supposed to be Old Saw Mill Road, this is causing an issue with deliveries because the road sign is incorrect. The road also needs work done. The resident also inquired as to whether her road, the Old Saw Mill Road, is listed as a private road or is it TIR's responsibility? Councillor Longva is waiting to hear back from Steve regarding this issue.

**District 5**

Councillor Patterson had no major damage due to the recent rain storms.

**District 6**

Deputy Warden Dauphinee mentioned the he spoke to Steve MacDonald directly addressing any TIR concerns.

**District 7**



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Councillor Organ had a call from 493 New Haven Road about flooding during the last rain storm, they stated they called you and someone was supposed to come look at the situation, but no one arrived. Councillor Organ requested an inspection to see if the culvert is plugged.

Councillor Organ provide the address for the speed concern in Ingonish, it is 36028 Cabot Trail.

Councillor Organ said that there is always water pooling at the bottom of Ocean View Drive in Neil's Harbour. Councillor Organ said that she has contacted the County utilities department and they have tested the water and it is not a leak from the County water system.

Councillor Organ also stated that the shoreline erosion across from Highland Manor 175 New Haven Road is going to soon be a safety issue.

**District 8**

Councillor MacDonald said that the MacNeil Road in St Margaret's Village is in need of review and repairs are required, the road is and has been neglected and culverts are exposed along various driveways, residents have called TIR and are looking for much needed upgrades.

Councillor MacDonald also mentioned that a South Ridge Road resident has concerns with road conditions and has reached out with concern of the inability for emergency services that are unable to drive into area and has asked numerous times for assistance with the situation from TIR. Councillor MacDonald requested that this be a priority be looked at ASAP.

Councillor MacDonald said that a sink hole is located in front of a residence at Courtney Road is measuring 3 feet deep. Recent rains have undermined the culvert that was slated for replacement last fall. Presently there is a tree placed in the exposed hole to warn motorist of area of the concern.

Councillor MacDonald also mentioned that there is a shoulder in front of Morrison's restaurant that is washed out and needs attention.

CAO asked if Councillor MacDonald contacted Steve about these issues and he has over email.

**DISTRICT CONCERNS**

**District 1**

Councillor MacNeil had a correction in the Minutes of February 22, 2021. I was in contact with the Warden, CAO and Steff about it but want to bring it up to council also.

Councillor MacNeil commented that residents in the district with unsightly and unmaintained property should look into cleaning up their premises. There are a lot of unsightly properties and



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dangerous structures that have to be looked cleaned up in a legal manner. Or a list of properties will be given to Planning Commission.

**District 2**

***It was moved by Councillor MacLeod and seconded by Councillor MacNeil to write a letter to Patrick Austin, thanking him for his service and good luck in his new endeavours.***

***Motion carried.***

Councillor MacLeod wanted to remind residents that the Seniors Drop In is now in BOLD. The first day they had 15 people. It is opened Tuesday's and Thursday's from 9:00am to 12:00pm.

Councillor MacLeod mentioned Circular Cities application deadline is April 30<sup>th</sup> and asked if CFO Liu was working on that. CAO MacEachen indicated that yes, she was working on it but she wasn't going to do a presentation on it but that she would need a letter of support from me. The Circular Cities is an FCM mentoring program offered across the Country. Municipalities can get matched up with one another to share ideas.

***It was moved by Councillor MacLeod and seconded by Councillor Longva to support the Circular Cities application.***

***Motion carried.***

***It was moved by Councillor Organ and seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee to have Councillor MacLeod attend and be a panelist for the virtual Social Enterprise World Forum's Policy Forum.***

***Motion carried.***

**District 3**

No concerns to report.

**District 4**

Councillor Longva asked about the status of the funding application from the St. Ann's Timebank.

CAO MacEachen said that Council gets together to approve those grants and will be doing so on April 19.



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Councillor Longva read a letter from Aaron Schneider regarding the lack of maintenance and upkeep of the North River Trail.

***It was moved by Councillor Longva and seconded by Councillor MacDonald to send a letter to Premier Rankin to show the County's support for the letter written by Aaron Schneider regarding North River Trail.***

***Motion carried.***

**District 5**

Councillor Patterson provided an update on Bell's Fibre Op project on Boularderie and there seems to be progress being made.

Councillor Patterson mentioned that Carla Arsenault sent out maps last week and the map that was sent out 2 months ago for Ross ferry hasn't changed and it doesn't complete Victoria County on Boularderie, there is a gap. Councillor Patterson said he believes there is a gap because the area that is being done is on the 674 exchange and the area that it's not showing is the 736 exchange. The 674 exchange comes from North Sydney and the 736 exchange comes from Sydney Mines. Councillor Patterson said that he has never been able to verify that and he doesn't think there are maps available for Southside Boularderie. Councillor Patterson said that Patrick Austin was working on this a little before he left. Councillor Patterson said that he reached out to the Bell representative John Swantee regarding this but he has yet to hear back from him.

Councillor Patterson is getting calls from residents from Southside Boularderie inquiring if and when they are going to get Fibre Op. Councillor Patterson is going to email CAO MacEachen more details for her to look into this mapping issue further.

CAO MacEachen commented that she will look into and see what she can do but mentioned that she also has difficulties getting informative responses back from John Swanti as well.

**District 6**

Deputy Warden Dauphinee made a motion to a request a meeting with the Minister of Environment Keith Irving regarding the Ingonish Wilderness area.

***It was moved by Deputy Warden Dauphinee and seconded by Councillor Organ to request a meeting with the Minister of Environment.***

***Motion carried.***

And to send a copy of that letter to the new Premier as well.



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Deputy Warden Dauphinee also made a motion to write a letter to acting Premier Rankin stating the County's disappointment with the lack of consultation and disregard to previous commitments with Victoria County regarding the Ingonish Wilderness area. Deputy Warden Dauphinee also wants a meeting request in the letter.

***It was moved by Deputy Warden Dauphinee and seconded by Councillor Longva to write a letter to Premier Rankin in regards to the Ingonish Wilderness area.***

***Motion carried.***

**District 7**

Councillor Organ expressed that some residents are still concerned about the vaccine coming North of Smokey.

Councillor Organ delivered the letter of congrats to Mr. Ron Ingram and Councillor Organ sent in a picture Jocelyn for the Seniors Newsletter.

Councillor Organ mentioned that Jaime Battiest was in the area yesterday to meet with the fishermen to address any concerns they had.

**District 8**

Councillor MacDonald said that area residents and business are requesting a meeting with TIR in relation to Dingwall Road. Residents have written letters /emails with no response from the Provincial government.

CAO MacEachen indicated she would contact the representatives and see their availability to request a meeting to see what their plans for the road are and why they haven't responded back to residents.

Councillor MacDonald mentioned that student Minister Rick Gunn finished his locum and wanted to thank the Minister for his work in the community and he will be missed.

Councillor MacDonald said that Fibre Op is now run throughout the entire community and thanked everyone for all the work.

**BYLAW/POLICY REVIEW**

CAO MacEachen indicated that she would be sending out a Community Standards Bylaw tomorrow and requested each Councillor to read and review it and send comments back to her.

CAO MacEachen also mentioned the Local Improvement Charge Bylaw and said she would appreciate any comments back on that.



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CAO MacEachen said there are 2 spots to fill at the Re-Use Centre for September and October.

Communications Officer Jocelyn Bethune was brought into the meeting and through the use of an App, two names were randomly drawn to decide what groups would be selected to take the remaining 2 spots at the Re-Use Centre.

Baddeck Valley Community Hall and Baddeck Rugby were the 2 names drawn.

Warden Morrison indicated that there was meeting held today, prior to Council in regards to Municipal properties and asked for a motion to approve the recommendations made at that meeting.

***It was moved by Councillor MacLeod and seconded by Councillor MacNeil to approve the recommendations made at the Municipal Buildings meeting held today prior to Council session.***

***Motion carried.***

Next council is April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and it is also the second session of Budget 2021-2022.

**ADJOURN**

The Municipality of the County of Victoria County council session was adjourned 7:09pm.