



**Victoria County Municipal Council**  
May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held via Zoom on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 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

Also present were:

- Leanne MacEachen, CAO
- Amy Liu, CFO
- Jocelyn Bethune, Communications Officer
- Stephanie MacLeod, Recorder
- Garrett Fazekas, IT

**Absent:**

- District #8- Norman MacDonald



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**CALL TO ORDER**

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

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

***Motion Carried.***

**DESTINATION CAPE BRETON PRESENTATION – TERRY SMITH**

Terry Smith presented an overview of tourism updates and Destination Cape Breton’s future plan(s) for tourism.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/ffbuwbivv7wxlko/Cape%20Breton%20Tourism%202030%20Presentation%20to%20Victoria%20Co.pptx?dl=0>

All the Councillors thanked Terry and the Warden opened it up to questions.

Councillor MacNeil asked about the major projects going on in Ingonish and the Highland Village, is there a specific advertising initiative for these projects, especially for over in the Iona area.

Terry said that the vast majority of visitors are from Nova Scotia and have been here before and have been around the Cabot Trail, but we want to promote and gradually educate people on the other areas as well.

Councillor MacLeod asked about washrooms and how Destination Cape Breton plans to address the lack of washrooms around the island and how the government can help us with this as well.

Terry I agree, and things such as this are often overlooked.

Councillor Longva is also concerned about the lack of washrooms and garbage bins.

Councillor Longva also mentioned the digital training that Terry talked about in his presentation and thought that was a great initiative.

Councillor Patterson asked if there is a call centre where visitors can call for info rather than going to the website and asked about preparation plan for the influx of tourists next year.

Terry said that they are looking into that right now but people can certainly call the office for now and the staff there will be happy to answer any questions and they are preparing for a “Year of Music” celebration to help welcome back tourists and people coming back home.



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Deputy Warden Dauphinee thanked Terry for his presentation and it's been great working with Destination Cape Breton with the Cape Smokey development.

Councillor Organ brought up road conditions and high speed internet and how that is a major complaint from tourists and getting people staying in more communities and community involvement.

Terry said that is part of that ongoing education and one of the things that we are looking at is supporting our events even more including the development of new events. And road conditions and stronger internet are being added to our new strategy, but we must keep advocating for it.

CAO MacEachen commented that our tourism officer, Dan Coffin works very closely with Destination Cape Breton to ensure our tourism strategy aligns with theirs. Adventure and Eco- Tourism is high on our list so its good to see we are aligning our strategies.

Warden Morrison invited Terry on a tour of some of the new projects in Victoria County, such as the waterfront in Baddeck and said he looked forward to continuing working with Terry and Destination Cape Breton.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

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

***It was moved by Councillor Longva and seconded by Councillor MacLeod that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of April 19th, 2021, be approved as presented.***

***Motion carried.***

**CAO REPORT**

***Old Business***

Had a discussion with Irving - looking into having preliminary meeting.

John Bain has been discussing with Franey Estates.

Housing /Land meeting scheduled.

Contacted Dep't of Environment - voicemail is full, sent 2 emails.

Sent a request to Council for Civic addresses for signs on poles issues.



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Deputy Warden Dauphinee requested the CAO to contact Premier Rankin's office directly and MLA Keith Bain and ask them the questions related to the Ingonish Wilderness Area and the lack of response back from the Minister of Environment.

The CAO said that was a good idea and she would reach out see what I can do to move it up the line.

***New Business***

***Senior Safety***

Dealing with some concerns from Seniors over getting a vaccine

In 3rd wave, VFD's are continuing to do grocery deliveries for those that need it

Gathering Housing Reps from around County, and Province, looking into Housing Gaps

Continuing to deal with Digital issues with Seniors

***Tourism***

Teri Shovbrook thanked Council for bringing her industry's concerns forward -

She did an interview with CBC about it and we wrote the Minister in support.

***Rec/AL***

Lydia is passing on her Housing Contacts to Senior Safety Officer to pursue.

Volunteer awards are all in - Lydia will be in touch about distribution.

Mental Health 1st Aid - Ingonish - went very well. Unfortunately, need to postpone the rest, for now.

Working on annual MPAL report.

Presenting at MPAL Inspiration seminar, on Cape North Walking Track.

Looking at website tweaks, so orgs can find grant applications online.

Covid Relief Initiatives - looking to see if there's a way to stay safe, and active.

Ongoing meetings with Develop NS Re: Placemaking.

***Finance***

Moving forward with Home Energy Pace Program. Details will be released once its up and running.

Circular cities application has been submitted.



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Looking for office space North of Smokey for collections/payment office.

RFP went out for short term Title Search help.

Working on updating our network/backup - going to Cloud Based Backup.

***Public Works***

Monitoring Covid and Heavy Garbage start

ReUse - both areas are postponed/on hold because of 3rd wave.

Working on potential sites for WWTP in Ingonish

New North Site - issues. May need to look at alternative

The land that we own down there is very rocky and not an ideal location but there is a recommendation for another spot about 1.8km up the road but it is crown land so we may have to start to engage with the province for a potential land exchange.

Councillor Patterson asked how we will advertise heavy garbage if it is postponed.

CAO said we will use everything we can, Voyent, Facebook and website and a heavy garbage newsletter.

Adjusting our operations for Covid updates.

Setting up an automated maintenance program.

***EDO***

Ad for the job went out again. Another week before closing

***Other***

New Covid Protocols in place for 2 weeks. Following Dr Strang's Advice

7 from Courthouse, 8 from Transfer station participated in Earth Day cleanup. Collected 238kgs of garbage in

Councillor MacLeod requested we have more reminders for Covid protocols. CAO said yes we will see what Communications can do to ramp this up a little bit.

Warden Morrison thanked staff for cleaning up all that litter and asked if the mental health first aid will be extending to the southern party of the County as well.

CAO said yes, Lydia is looking to expand to other areas as well.



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**TAXATION UPDATE**

Total outstanding is \$782,000 which is \$249,000 lower than last year.

Current outstanding is \$366,000.

Arrears outstanding are \$415,000.

We collected \$36,000 tax from April 19, 2021 (last council meeting) to today.

We sent out 550 tax reminders on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021.

CAO said that the new tax bills will be sent out in June and said that a discussion has to be had regarding setting the tax rate. She asked if they wanted to set the rate this evening or wait until the next budget session. The CAO recommends that it stays the same.

Warden Morrison said that we will wait for next budget meeting to set the tax rate.

Warden Morrison indicated that there was a meeting with Council and the Director of Taxation prior to the Council session and there are some go forward recommendations regarding this meeting.

CAO will be meeting with CFO and Director of Tax before next council session. The Director will be coming forward with some clear objectives and processes on things to do before our next council session.



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**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND RENEWAL**

**District 1**

Councillor MacNeil said the gravel roads in his area are in terrible shape. Steve said they should be starting grading tomorrow and he is in contact with TIR on issues.

Another hole appeared at the Gypsum outcrop in Jamesville. TIR is aware there is a pylon in the hole it is dangerous because traffic has to cross the lane to avoid it.

**District 2**

Councillor MacLeod asked the CAO if she has had lucky setting up a meeting time with Steve and Jamie with TIR and CAO MacEachen indicated she hasn't heard back from them regarding dates that work and that she would reach out again.

Councillor MacLeod said the gravel roads are also terrible in her district as well.

**District 3**

Warden Morrison said that he forwards any concerns directly to the Department.

**District 4**

Councillor Longva indicated that the road washed out on Rear Little River Road, it has been reported to Steve MacDonald.

Councillor Longva also mentioned that the Meadow Road is badly eroded and that there is flooding in Englishtown by the old wharf. There is water going over the road, causing a deep puddle.

A small section of road near the old Red Head schoolhouse in Beinn Bhreagh is in bad shape.

**District 5**

Councillor Patterson said the gravel roads are in bad shape, Steels Cross to Kempt Head, practically impassible, terrible shape. A resident put a post in one of the holes it was so deep.

**District 6**

Deputy Warden Dauphinee mentioned that the gravel roads in the area are in need of grading.

**District 7**

Councillor Organ indicated that there are no concerns that aren't already on the list.



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**MOTIONS**

Councillor Patterson gave motion to Council regarding the Solid Waste ByLaw. He is unsure of the wording and he wants to make sure he gets the wording right. Councillor Patterson has an issue with the number of bags. He thinks that with the number of bags it is important that we keep in mind that there be some flexibility in that number, if they have one or 2 extra, we don't want the collectors to leave them behind. Especially when there is a holiday and collection days are changed.

CAO MacEachen agreed with Councillor Patterson and said the wording will be changed for the next reading.

**DISTRICT CONCERNS**

**District 1**

Councillor MacNeil said that the Community Cleanup was postponed because of Covid restrictions and he said hopefully it will take place again when things open back up.

Councillor MacNeil indicated to the CAO that there are still no lights on the bridge in Iona.

**District 2**

Councillor MacLeod said that the Community Cleanup in her district was partially done and will resume again when restrictions lift.

Councillor MacLeod mentioned that the construction prices are higher because of the high cost of lumber and requested a letter be sent to Keith Bain so it can be addressed in the House to bring it to the attention of Minister Porter.

***It was moved by Councillor MacLeod and seconded by Councillor MacNeil to send a letter to Keith Bain to request that the high construction costs be brought up in the House.***

***Motion carried.***

Councillor MacLeod mentioned that FemPower was cancelled and will be rescheduled.

The solar light for Beverly's Hill came April 22<sup>nd</sup> and we are waiting for it to be installed. Councillor MacLeod asked if the CAO knows when it will be installed. CAO MacEachen that Covid restrictions are currently holding up the installation of it.





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**District 3**

Warden Morrison also mentioned that the Community Cleanup will be rescheduled once restrictions lift and he wanted to wish his mother a Happy 93<sup>rd</sup> Birthday!

**District 4**

Councillor Longva said that in a quarter mile area 56 bottles and cans were collected during the Community Cleanup and will continue clean up after Covid restrictions lift.

Councillor Longva said that there are 5 families living on the Old Mill Road and that the sign is incorrect and should read Old Sawmill Road. Also, the road is in a state of disrepair. TIR told Councillor Longva that it is not responsible for the road repair or the signage change. Councillor Longva requested to have the road listed.

Warden Morrison suggested that Councillor Longva request a letter be sent to TIR so that they can confirm and clarify that the road is a private road. After we receive clarification back from them then we can move forward with how we will deal this the issues on this road.

Councillor Longva indicated she received clarification via email that it is an unlisted road and asked what the process is to get a road listed.

CAO MacEachen commented that the private residents on that road have to make the request to TIR and it is up to TIR to make that road listed or not depending on their standards.

Warden Morrison mentioned that to bring a road up to TIR standards is quite expensive and takes a lot of work.

**District 5**

Councillor Patterson warned residents to look at all the details when signing up for FibreOp. The price of items, such as long distance may change.

***It was moved by Councillor Patterson and seconded by Councillor Longva for a streetlight at 6968 Kempt Head Road (southside).***

***Motion carried.***

Councillor Patterson also thanked the residents on Victoria County for their patience and cooperation with this latest Covid 19 lockdown.

**District 6**

***It was moved by Deputy Warden Dauphinee and seconded by Councillor Organ for a streetlight at 36 Ryerson Lane Ingonish.***

***Motion carried.***



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***It was moved by Deputy Warden Dauphinee and seconded by Councillor MacNeil for \$1,000.00 be taken from his District budget for the Ingonish Baseball Association for field repairs.***

***Motion carried.***

***It was moved by Deputy Warden Dauphinee that a letter be sent to MLA Keith Bain and Dr. Strang to have vaccinating first responders as a priority, seconded by Councillor MacLeod.***

***Motion carried.***

**District 7**

Councillor Organ also mentioned that homebound and individuals with special needs be also placed on high priority for the vaccine.

Councillor Organ thanked all the people who participated in the Community Clean up and wanted people to know that she still has bags and gloves available if needed.

**BYLAW/POLICY REVIEW**

The Solid Waste Bylaw was presented for second reading.

CAO MacEachen indicated that the only change made to the Solid Waste Bylaw from the first reading, was upping the amount of organic waste bags from 2 to 4. And CAO MacEachen agreed with Councillor Patterson's earlier statement and that we could look at our discretion for the number of bags particularly when there is a holiday.

Warden Morrison indicated that prior to the next council session on May 17<sup>th</sup>, there will be a Director of Taxation meeting and CAO will confirm with the CFO when the next budget meeting will be scheduled.

Councillor Longva asked about the grants that have been approved and whether or not she was allowed to disclose that information and CAO MacEachen commented that there is a few that we have a couple of questions for but the rest are getting cheques done up and will be sent out. Once those are done, we will prepare a letter and send that off to those organizations that have been approved. After that, the information will be posted on the website and Facebook page.

Councillor Longva asked for clarification and wanted to know if the information was secret right now.

CAO MacEachen mentioned that Council made a recommendation at the last council session to approve the grants so as long as they are confirmed, the information is not a secret.



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Warden Morrison indicated that it was public knowledge but to ensure you tell them the correct amount, make sure you are accurate.

Councillor Patterson made the motion to adjourn.

**ADJOURN**

The Municipality of the County of Victoria County council session was adjourned at 6:46pm.