



**Victoria County Municipal Council**  
May 31, 2021

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held via Zoom on May 31<sup>st</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 #7- Jackie Organ

District #8- Norman MacDonald

**Also present were:**

Leanne MacEachen, CAO

Amy Liu, CFO

Dan Coffin, Tourism and Development Officer

Stephanie MacLeod, Recorder

Garrett Fazekas, IT

**Absent:**

District #6- Larry Dauphinee, Deputy Warden



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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 MacNeil and seconded by Councillor Organ that the agenda be approved.***

***Motion Carried.***

Warden Morrison requested a moment of silence in honor of the remains of the 215 children that were found at a former residential school site last week in Kamloops BC.

Warden Morrison acknowledged that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People.

**RCMP UPDATE – JOSH WIESE**

District Commander, Josh Wiese came to Council this evening to provide updates on the RCMP.

Mr. Wiese introduced Travis MacDonald, the new team lead in Baddeck. There has not been a lot of changes, they are just trying to navigate the Covid restriction challenges. They have taken a measured approach and did not have covid check stops contrary to rumors.

Mr. Wiese said that he would provide the April to April stats to CAO MacEachen later this week.

They are getting an officer transferred out and one officer transferred in. The new officer will be living in the Bouladerie area so it will be good to have another officer living in a rural spot in the county.

Councillor MacLeod commented that there speed concerns around the Big Baddeck loop.

Councillor Longva commented about the littering and suggested that people need to be fined.

Mr. Wiese understands the frustration with litter but the enforcement is tough because they have to catch them in the act. He also mentioned that there is a lack of refuse bins around the County and that could be a contributing factor.

Councillor Patterson mentioned the break-ins last fall and Mr. Wiese said there were charges laid on some people, some stolen property was recovered.

Councillor Organ commented that she has noticed a more consistent RCMP presence in Neil's Harbour, New Haven and White Point area and requested that they please keep it up.

Councillor MacDonald thanked the officers for their work and he looks forward to seeing the report once it is given to the CAO.



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Warden Morrison asked how much Covid related issues they have been seeing.

Mr. Wiese said that he pulled over some speeders who aren't from here and again commented that they are trying to use a measured approach. He also commented that they haven't had any major non-compliance issues.

Warden Morrison mentioned that when Council sits down with Irving regarding the traffic congestion issues, we will bring the RCMP up to speed on those discussions.

**NOVA SCOTIA POWER UPDATE – LIA MACDONALD**

Vice President of Transmission, Distribution and Delivery, Lia MacDonald and some members of her team provided Council with some updates on what Nova Scotia Power is doing in Victoria County.

Ms. MacDonald discussed the changing weather patterns and the effects of that, especially as it relates to power outages. She also discussed vegetation management and their approach with tree trimming and hazard tree mitigation removal.

Ms. MacDonald reviewed some of the recent investments that were completed in Victoria County which included the \$1.1 million equipment upgrade in Wreck Cove. She also provided a brief overview of planned work and projects already in progress.

Councillor MacDonald thanked Lia for the presentation and commented that residents noticed that there haven't been as many outages, and he commended the workers/crews that get the power restored.

Councillor MacDonald asked if there are certain sections of the County you try to focus on?

Ms. MacDonald said that we prioritise with our forestry team with what is causing the problem, how often and for how long, then we determine which one is the highest priority. It is an ongoing process.

Councillor MacDonald also asked when consumers can start to see the data from their new smart meters.

Ms. MacDonald said that the software that enables users to view their data should be up and running later this year.

Councillor Organ thanked the workers and the phenomenal job they do and said the work on the Park and the clear cutting was great. Councillor Organ also commented that there have been less power outages.

Councillor Patterson also had questions about the smart meter's data and asked how many people have not taken up the offer to change over to smart meters. Councillor Patterson said that he



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has heard concerns over radiation exposure being the reason some people are not switching over to the new meters.

Ms. MacDonald said there is no safety concern with radiation, she didn't have the exact numbers of how many opted out but it is about 1%. She is hopeful that everyone one will eventually switch.

Councillor Patterson also brought up issues around the restoration estimates when the power goes out and suggested they say something like "restoration time is not available at this time. "

Ms. MacDonald said that they have looked at many options with restoration times, but she does take Councillor Patterson's point and will look into it.

Councillor Longva thanked Ms. MacDonald for her presentation and thanked all the crews and commented that we notice how fast the power comes on when there is an outage.

Councillor MacLeod thanked Nova Scotia Power for their presentation and commented that she was happy to see some work being done in her are. She is happy with the crews in Baddeck and said that Sean MacSween is great.

Councillor MacLeod asked if there were any updates about the Big Baddeck area. There was cutting there a couple of years ago and Councillor MacLeod was just wondering about further maintenance.

Ms. MacDonald said that she will follow up with that.

Councillor MacNeil thanked Ms. MacDonald for the presentation and thanked the crews and commented that it was good to see tree cutting done and it made a difference with the power not going out as much.

Warden Morrison asked about the poles at the top of Cape Smokey and their plans to remove them and place them close to the roadside.

Sean Borden with NS Power said they could provide a map as to where the existing poles are and where the news ones will be installed.

Warden Morrison asked if street lights could be considered to be put up on Cape Smokey.

Mr. Borden said that they could a planner look at that.

Warden Morrison also wanted to thank Sean MacSween for helping put the Christmas lights up at the courthouse and thanked NS Power for their presentation. Warden Morrison also commented that in the past, discussions have not always gone well with NS Power but he is happy to see that, that is changing and recent discussions with NS power have been going very well.



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CAO MacEachen mentioned that Baddeck Bay residents would be happy to have the poles taken out of the woods there as well.

Councillor MacLeod requested updates for the North Gut area as the power always seems to go off in that area.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

***It was moved by Councillor MacLeod and seconded by Councillor Longva that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021, be approved as presented.***

***Motion carried.***

**CAO REPORT**

***Old Business***

Baddeck Washrooms now open 10-5 Daily until the late fall, for now.

Census questions - have a note in to Jaime, who passed it along. Administration at each home is to take care of gathering Census info.

Garbage on Black Rock Road was dealt with Keith Bain is looking into No Littering signs.

***New Business***

***Senior Safety***

Inaugural "Coffee with a Cop" happened last week.

Hearing very little on vaccines. Homebound vaccines supposed to be starting soon

Need to have a discussion on Newsletter - no funding for this, looking for other avenues.

Working with Housing Authority on an "unCommon Room" initiative for housing areas.

Working with VCHS on Community Links - working on a database for senior's concerns that seem to fall through the gaps.

Seniors are finding 3rd wave to be very hard.



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***Rec/AL***

Placemaking -we did not get our funding. Looking for other funding avenues.

Trails - reaching out to ICTF, and Regional Trail Foundation, for next steps.

Countywide Step challenge - for residents, and will hopefully help local businesses - check our website.

Asked to be part of the "Healthy Alcohol Use" Coalition Initiative.

***Finance***

PACE Bylaw

Year End Audit

Draft Tax collection strategy - presentation in June.

Contacting New Dawn on Housing.

***Public Works***

Looking at a safe opening plan - as numbers go down, and CBRM gets vaccinated, we will be slowly opening

Currently transporting C&D out of Dingwall

RFQ on Courthouse going out this week

Finalizing Maintenance Agreement with Parks on Parks Water Utility

PCAP Applications going in for Generators, and LN Well

Waiting for info from DFO related to Ingonish WWTP next steps

**TAXATION UPDATE**

Total outstanding is \$703,215.98 which is \$257,396.91 lower than last year.

Current outstanding is \$322,823.77 which is \$218,476.69 lower than last year.

Arrears outstanding are \$380,392.21 which is \$38,920.22 lower than last year.



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1. We collected 33,917.00 tax from May 17, 2021 (last council meeting) to today.
2. 98 Final Notice 60 Day Letters were sent out for tax sale.
3. Preparing for the new tax bills which will be sent out in June.
4. The most recent Tax Sale date is July 20. It is a tender tax sale.

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND RENEWAL**

**District 1**

Councillor MacNeil is going to be talking to Steve about the parking area around the Red Barn, the guardrail needs repaired and it needs some gravel and also thanked Steve and Jamie for the meeting held last week.

**District 2**

Councillor MacLeod had nothing new to report.

**District 3**

Warden Morrison had nothing new to report.

**District 4**

Councilor Longva would like to thank Steve and Jamie for the great meeting last week. Nothing new to report.

**District 5**

Councillor Patterson received an email from residents on the southside about the condition of the road and addressed it with Steve and it was being addressed today.

**District 7**

Councillor Organ had nothing new to report, will forward concerns to Steve and Steff.

**District 8**

Councillor MacDonald thanked Steve MacDonald and Jamie Chisolm with the Department of Transportation for meeting with Council.

Councillor MacDonald also wanted to thank them for mentioning the importance of the Dingwall Road and Cape North and for the removal of the burned out vehicle in the Capstick area.



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**DISTRICT CONCERNS**

**District 1**

Councillor MacNeil mentioned the littering in the area and the entire County and recognizes that the CAO is looking into it and thanked Councillor Longva for bringing it up with the RCMP earlier in the meeting.

**District 2**

Councillor MacLeod said that some residents are concerned about teachers coming from the Sydney area, where Covid numbers are still higher, into Baddeck Academy. Councillor MacLeod requested a letter be sent to Minister Mombourquette and MLA Keith Bain to address these concerns.

***It was moved by Councillor MacLeod and seconded by Councillor Organ that a letter is written to Minister Mombourquette and MLA Keith Bain to address concerns regarding teachers coming from Sydney to teach at Baddeck Academy.***

***Motion carried.***

Councillor MacLeod is also requesting a letter is written to the NSHA on behalf of residents who are asking about Covid mobile testing units. They are requesting these units come to Victoria County once or twice a week.

***It was moved by Councillor MacLeod and seconded by Councillor MacNeil that a letter is written to NSHA to request Covid mobile testing units come to Victoria County once or twice a week.***

***Motion carried.***

Councillor MacLeod asked CAO MacEachen about flying the flag for Pride Month for June and the CAO said there was a concern about the developments out of Kamloops, where the remains of 215 children were found. Out of respect for that, we are looking into possibly raising the pride flag after June 9<sup>th</sup>.

**District 3**

Warden Morrison thanked and acknowledged Dr. Genge for his 50 years of ER Service at Victoria County Memorial Hospital. His last shift in the ER is today, May 31, 2021.

**District 4**

Councillor Longva is in support of waiting to raise the pride flag and requested clarification on the restrictions that were lifted today.

CAO said to refer to the NS website for any Covid related questions around restrictions.





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Councillor Longva asked about the process for dealing with derelict buildings residents are having issues with a couple of them in the in River Bennett area.

CAO MacEachen said to direct those residents to Eastern District Planning. Eastern District Planning has forms that need to be filled out and a process will be followed after that.

**District 5**

Councillor Patterson mentioned the loss of Wayne Jardine out of Big Bras d'Or. Wayne was the fire chief at the Big Bras d'Or Volunteer Fire Department and sent condolences along to all his family and friends.

Warden Morrison also acknowledged Mr. Jardine's 50+ years of service with the fire department.

**District 7**

Councillor Organ thanked CAO for looking into vaccines for homebound residents.

Councillor Organ asked CAO MacEachen if she heard anything back from Aliant in regards to potentially installing a gate and CAO MacEachen indicated she had not heard back from them but would follow up on it.

Councillor Organ also wanted to wish Ron Ingraham a Happy 101<sup>st</sup> Birthday.

Councillor Organ mentioned that she is seeing a lot of litter in the Park and could we reach out to Park's Canada to have their staff help clean the litter up.

Councillor Organ also agreed with Councillor MacLeod in regards to the teachers coming to Cabot High from Sydney.

**District 8**

Councillor MacDonald had concerns about heavy garbage and residents that have brought it to the end of their driveways that maybe don't know that heavy garbage is cancelled. Councillor MacDonald asked if Public Works could put a sticker on the garbage or let the residents know that it is cancelled.

CAO MacEachen indicated that we can get some messaging out there again in relation to the cancellation of heavy garbage pickup.

Councillor MacDonald also mentioned that Morrison's Restaurant in Cape North would be reopening soon and encouraged everyone to visit.



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**BYLAW/POLICY REVIEW**

A public hearing took place this afternoon prior to Council for the amended Solid Waste Bylaw.

***It was moved by Councillor MacLeod and seconded by Councillor Organ to approve the second reading and changes made to the Solid Waste Bylaw.***

***Motion carried.***

**PROCLAMATIONS**

June 15<sup>th</sup> is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

***Motion to declare June 15<sup>th</sup> World Elder Abuse Awareness Day made by Councillor Longva seconded by Councillor MacDonald.***

***Motion Carried.***

**MEETINGS**

Next Council is June 14, 2021 and prior to that, we will have to public hearings for the proposed PACE and Community Standards bylaws.

Warden Morrison also mentioned that Council is having a meeting with the Minister of Environment on June 8<sup>th</sup> at 1pm.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

CAO said a message came in through the chat that the Ingonish Irving is installing new fuel tanks and securing fuel supplies.

**ADJOURN**

The Municipality of the County of Victoria County council session was adjourned at 6:51pm.