



**Victoria County Municipal Council**  
September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at Council Chambers in Baddeck on September 20<sup>th</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

District #8- Norman MacDonald

Also present were:

Leanne MacEachen, CAO

Stephanie MacLeod, Recorder

Dan Coffin, Tourism Officer

Jocelyn Bethune, Communications

Garrett Fazekas, IT



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Warden Morrison welcomed everyone and acknowledged that this meeting is being held in Unama'ki, One of seven traditional districts of Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw People.

**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 MacNeil that the agenda be approved.***

***Motion Carried.***

**CAPE BRETON VICTORIA REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION (CBVCE) – SUSAN KELLY (REGIONAL DIRECTOR) AND LEWIS MACDONALD (DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS) AND TARA GASKELL (MANAGER OF TRANSPORTATION).**

Lewis MacDonald opened the presentation up and went over the Nova Scotia School Transportation Policy. Some of the highlights of that policy were:

- 3 bus stops per km and at least 150 meters apart.
- Courtesy bussing if seats are available and bussing is available for program transfers.
- Proposed Changes in June 2021
- They wanted to limit the amount of bus stops and increase the meter limits.
- We wanted to get the students on school on time and not have them on the bus for over an hour.
- Program Bussing
- Direct impact to Victoria County students. There is a bus that takes students from Victoria County to Memorial. They tried to get a direct bus route with no transfers and their intention was to ensure that little kids weren't on the bus with the older kids going to Memorial.
- Rankin School of the Narrows
- If you lived within the web you could apply for courtesy bussing. If there was space on the bus than courtesy bussing would be approved.
- Process to apply for Courtesy Bussing
- There needed to be an update on the policy because of the abundance of courtesy bussing requests.

Warden Morrison thanked the presenters for the information and opened it up to questions from the Councillors.



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Questions:

Councillor MacDonald asked about side road bussing and asked if the .8km is from the residence to the bus stop?

Lewis said it could be from the residence to bus stop, if you are less than 800m they wouldn't go up, if you were more, they may go part way up.

Councillor MacDonald also mentioned that on Fraser Road, there were a couple of special needs children at that stop and that stop was removed, why?

Tara said that changed 2 years ago because of the safety of the road. The bus couldn't get back up or turn the bus around with addition to the distance and it was less than 800m to the student's home.

Councillor Organ asked if there were any new busses this year for down this year?

Tara said yes, several new busses north of Smokey, one bus that is over 5 years old, the other ones are 3 years old or newer.

School bus turning in White Point and said that it would be taken care of it right away as she talked to Steve MacDonald about as well.

Councillor Organ asked if there were cameras on all busses and Tara said there isn't. 48% have cameras and this will help with catching cars that are going through the red light stops.

Councillor Organ asked if the percentage of cameras is the same north of Smokey as everywhere else and Tara responded that no, it is not and said there are a couple of busses with cameras on them north of Smokey.

Councillor Organ said she would like to see more cameras on buses.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee asked when these policies are made is there public consultation or does it follow what Halifax does?

Tara said there was some public consultation, but she is not sure how the province rolled that out.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee said rural needs are very different than urban centres. No sidewalks, no plowed roads. It is very different living in the country vs the city. Deputy Warden requested the board raise these concerns as they are a huge safety issue.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee asked if the road is deemed unsafe, does the board go after the department of highways and said If the roads are not being cleared enough for school busses, then please keep on them to get these roads open.

Tara said yes we do discuss road issues with the department of highways.



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Councillor Patterson congratulated the school board and parents for the challenging year and a half and commented that these distance regulations were probably made up 50 years ago. Family life has changed a lot in the last 50 years, there needs to be accommodations for modern living.

Councillor Patterson asked how many of the courtesy bussing applications do you approve?

Lewis said he doesn't have a number and that he is still working through them for this year. This may be something that can be gathered in the future.

Councillor Longva said her children have had long rides to school from Wreck Cove. Weather can be completely different down North so she can see how cancelling school could be a challenge.

Councillor MacLeod mentioned that sometimes extra services, i.e., speech and language specialists, coming from Sydney won't come if they think there will be bad weather here and they can't get over the mountain. Councillor MacLeod requested a review of this and suggested to start hiring people from this local area.

Susan asked if they are from our school board? Councillor MacLeod said you have to tell me that. Susan will check on this and said that it isn't really fair that services stop when there is a storm.

Councillor MacLeod said who hired these extra services? Susan said I don't know, good question.

Councillor MacLeod asked about the cafeteria at Baddeck Academy and how the contract is almost up. Chartwells is out and now we are in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year without cafeteria services. Councillor MacLeod asked if volunteer organizations can be used to provide these services?

Susan said she will look into this.

Councillor MacLeod mentioned that the soccer field and surrounding track area is a mess, it's all grown in with bushes and long grass.

Lewis said he will review this.

Councillor MacLeod also commented about the rough state of the road by the bus garage at Baddeck Academy and Lewis said there will be some patching done on the larger potholes.

Councillor MacLeod thanked the board for the breakfast program, active learning programs and asked whether there will be any other schools that will offer the trades programs like the ones Memorial High School offers.

Susan said skills trades are now a mandate with this new government, so we are looking into more options for schools in Victoria County and they will put in application into the province to bring more trades into Victoria County.



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Councillor MacNeil asked about the policy of picking up students on an H class road but not on an I class road and mentioned a student who had to walk 2.4 kms because it was an I class road then a section of it changed to an I class so the student then had to walk .7kms. It is said that the policy came from the province but we haven't seen any information coming to us when these polices are changed.

Lewis said there are all kinds of different areas in the policy. The policy is our go by document.

Councillor MacNeil said there needs to some consideration for rural areas. There are no shoulders on the roads, in the winter they are walking in the middle of the road. At Hector's Point there are no shoulders on the roads, so they are walking right on the road and it is a blind turn, it is so unsafe and it is an accident waiting to happen. The buss should stop from little marrows to Iona.

Lewis said in this particular situation, they are bussed, they could use the courtesy bussing.

Councillor MacNeil said the rural roads don't have shoulders and the maintenance isn't being done so that policy must be looked at and re done.

Warden Morrison requested the board to look at the policies and make considerations for rural living and our limitations.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee said there is a lack of substitute teachers and that he is hearing a rumor that if you have a degree you can teach. Susan said that is not true but in some subject areas we issue a special certificate to qualified individuals rather than cancelling a class.

Lewis added if you know someone looking for a position, send them our way.

Warden Morrison reminded the Board that the County does contribute \$2.5 million to the Board so keep that in mind when considering the policy and potentially coming back to us and give us an update and he said Council will submit our requests and considerations and look forward to welcoming the Board back for further discussions and answers regarding Councils' requests.



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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

***It was moved by Deputy Warden Dauphinee and seconded by Councillor Longva that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, be approved.***

***Motion carried.***

**CAO REPORT**

***Old Business***

Have requested NSP come to Council to discuss streetlights. Waiting on a date.

PAC - update- sent to Council. Can't do anything until after the election, however we are meeting the new staff sergeant in Ingonish on Wednesday.

Request has been made to have CBVCRE to come to Council. Sept 20 Council session.

CBVRCE will be patching the bus terminal.

Gateway funding? Still waiting on other Councils to decide.

Ingonish land - have contacted the surveyor, waiting on them to get up to start the project.

Road name change - application needs to be completed - our role is merely to support it.

Councillor Patterson asked if we heard back from NS Power and waiting for them to give us a date to come to Council.

Councillor Organ asked CAO MacEachen to ask the school board to come back in 6 months for updates and CAO MacEachen said absolutely.

***New Business***

Bad garbage rejection rates for the summer.

***Senior Safety***

BOLD changes will affect Cyber Seniors group.

Seniors Drop In is also over, but looking at options to continue

Looking to produce a bigger Anchor Project, to get SSO out in the public



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UnCommon Room has been taken over by VCHS

Looking at Initiatives to get Seniors on VCT

***Rec/AL***

Placemaking - meeting with Parks on next Ingonish Placemaking project, discussing ideas

Walking group has been moved to Dalem Lake - going well

Accessibility - reaching out to group to find out what other equipment/needs they have, to help accommodate

Working with schools- looking for ideas on how to spend Recreation School funding

Mental Health 1st Aid - looking to do a session in Baddeck, finalizing BSL one.

Working with BOLD, partnership ideas.

looking for opportunities to partner Active/Smarter schools - training will be happening in October

Working on Newsletter, and Website content - keep checking website

***Finance***

Working on Year end

Tax bills were due Sept 15

Amending/tightening up the Tax Exemption Bylaw.

Producing Tax Facts Tuesday on Social Media

***Public Works***

Tipping fees bills will be starting Sept 30

ICI Tag Program will be starting Nov 1

Building condition assessment of Courthouse is happening

Water Rate Study is happening NH WTP is progressing - expecting a December completion

Security fencing to be tendered for water reservoirs

Next PW Meeting will discuss water receivables, and lead sampling

***Tourism***

Global TV were tickled pink with the showing from Victoria County - left with swag bags :)Fibre Op would have helped



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Working on a Baddeck Branding Initiative with some locals

Discussions with DCBA - labour issues,

Winter Tourism, Digital Training Tourism Best Practice Mission - Ontario group visiting July 6, 2022

Baddeck Bike Friendly Initiative.

Working with Shoreline on Mountain Bike Park concerns

Trails - Moving forward, Next phase is to around the Waste Management Facility Having discussions with DNR/TAT/PW on next steps with Trail

Placemaking - Session on Sept 14 - Ross Ferry

***EDO***

Erica is meeting with Councillors, exploring their areas.

Working with Accommodation operators - what she's hearing - They are wanting to Winterize for 4 Season.

ACOA is coming to do a Feasibility study on next steps for Winterization Program Labour shortages are a real issue.

***Other***

Heavy Garbage - Sept 27 start.

Courthouse assessment started week of Sept 7.

Report to be generated by Fall Corvette Club coming to Baddeck to do the Trail Oct 11/21

Taken over the water contract in the Park.

***Tipping Fees***

After the Public Works meeting last week we are moving forward with an ICI tag pilot project.

CAO MacEachen gave an overview of the pilot project:

***ICI Tag Pilot Project***

The Municipality of the County of Victoria is pleased to announce a new commercial program and an innovative first for Cape Breton. It will begin November 1, 2021 and run for a year as a pilot project.





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The ICI-Tag program in Victoria County is in response to concerns raised by our commercial community recently. It is our expectation that this will help those that are some distance from our facilities and have been using our collection crews to get their waste to our sites.

Other municipalities in Ontario & Alberta have used this program to ensure waste collection costs are distributed more fairly among the population and in proportion to the amount of waste each user generates.

It is also a helpful tool to highlight waste separation, recycling and reducing.

Instituting limits like this allow for a more predictable volume of waste collected curbside which assists in determining the collection fleet requirements for the municipality. Our services are not limitless and the rules put in place for waste collection are due to a number of concerns including our capacity to collect across the county and the provincial & federal rules & regulations the municipality must follow.

**How does the program work?**

This program will allow commercial businesses an additional 4 items to be placed curbside per week using our ICI-Tags. Businesses that purchase tags can use them in whatever combination to suit their needs.

For example, in addition to the weekly totals of 4 clear bags, 4 blue bags, 4 green bags and 2 bundles of cardboard (14 waste units), commercial customers can place an *additional* 4 items out for collection, for a total of 18 waste units per week for business.

The cost for a bundle of 10 tags is \$25. Tags will be available at all Victoria County facilities the week of October 25. Tags can be used beginning November 1.

**Look for more information on our website in the coming days.**

***Correspondence***

All previously forwarded Meetings Community Wind - 3 large projects on CB Island, 2 in Victoria County - requested to come to Council as they get closer to starting. Will have Community meetings

Exempt charitable properties - need a motion to accept write offs/exemptions - looking to update parameters, and qualifications

EDPC Quarterly meeting

AMANS - first in person since prior to pandemic!

PW Garbage Bag initiatives (ICI Bags)

Staffing Update Pauline Davis retired after 45 years with the County - congrats to her!



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Shane has decided to take another job in Sydney. We wish him luck!

Councillor Organ said that there are a lot of black bags in the heavy garbage pickup, will they be refused, CAO said yes, they will be refused.

After the presentation with Port Hawkesbury Paper the CAO got a call from Community Wind, they want to put 2 projects in Victoria County and CAO invited them to come to council to present.

Councillor Patterson asked if there was a community fund set up from that windmill we have. CAO said we don't have it, but the organization is supposed to do a community project with the wind generated.

CAO will look more into this to see if this is still being done.

Warden Morrison asked CAO to have an open house with the ICI pilot project. CAO said yes, we will get this done.

**RECESS**

Warden Morrison called for a 15-minute recess at 6:18pm, reconvened at 6:39.

**TAXATION UPDATE**

As of today, we have \$3,664,288 total outstanding, compared to \$5,234,046 this time last year for a difference of **\$1,569,759** ahead!

Current outstanding is ahead of last year by **\$1,307,790** with \$3,143,814 in current as of today vs. \$4,451,604 in current this time last year.

Arrears also ahead at **\$261,969** better than last year - \$520,474 in arrears outstanding for this year vs. \$782,442 this time last year.

We have already sent a combined total of 90 notices out for our next two tax sales (both within December and January). The first batch had a deadline of the end of August and the second batch is the beginning of October. Those who haven't paid/made suitable arrangements will move on to the next stage of the tax sale process but, as always, are subject to legal review. With the never-ending ups and downs of COVID, we are expecting one sale to be a tender and the other to be a public auction.



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CAO MacEachen indicated there was a tax exemption meeting to go over the list of organizations that qualify for the tax exemption. We need a motion to approve changes.

***It was moved by Councillor MacNeil and seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee that Council approve:***

- the commercial to residential adjustments for community halls in the amount of \$15,342.72;***
- provide the grant to write-off the remaining balance owing by the community halls in the amount of \$12,297.96;***
- and write-off the fully exempt charitable properties in the amount of \$70,281.62 all for the 2021-2022 fiscal year.***

***Motion carried.***

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS (PW)**

**District 1**

Councillor MacNeil had the following PW concerns:

- Road Signs throughout the area need to be looked at and replaced
- Still no mowing and cutting in the area.
- Shoulder Subsidence along guardrail in Ottawa Brook. Looks like a possibility that road will cave in and crumble. Very dangerous
- Also no work done throughout Hazeldale (From Gypsum Plant to Lower Washabuck) and on Washabuck Bridge.
- Have Been in contact With Steve MacDonald and working with MLA Keith Bain and Dianne about these and more issues.

**District 2**

Councillor MacLeod thanked Public Works for all the work that has been done in her area.

**District 3**

Warden Morrison said there are multiple significant potholes that require maintenance within the Village.

Warden Morrison also said there was a request for a crosswalk by the Bell Museum years ago and PW said it was not warranted at the time, he would like PW to revisit that decision and requests a crosswalk in that area.



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Warden Morrison mentioned that he believes the new Minister be informed of the speed reduction issue at the Tims/Irving on hwy 205 and asked for a motion that a letter be sent to the new Minister of Public Works.

***It was moved by Deputy Warden and seconded by Councillor MacLeod that a letter be sent to the Minister of Public Works regarding the repeated requests to lower the speed limit at the Tim's Irving on Hwy 205 outside Baddeck.***

***Motion Carried.***

**District 4**

Councillor Longva said there have been complaints about the speed of vehicles travelling on the Bein Breagh Road and Steve said they don't post limits on dirt roads. Councillor Longva requested a speed sign on Bein Breagh Road. There is no speed limit posted which allows the limit to be 80, which is much too fast for a dirt road.

Councillor Longva believes the limit should be 50 km and also slower speeds posted on turns. There are families with young children on that road as well as many people walk along it.

Councillor Longva has also received complaints about potholes on Long Hill Road. Councillor Longva asked Steve if the grader can make the rounds to all the dirt roads again before the snow flies.

Councillor Longva said the brush cutter is badly needed all along the North Shore and around St. Ann's Bay as visibility is bad pulling out of driveways and for wildlife coming on the road.

Councillor Longva also mentioned that the Skir Dhu sign is missing and residents would like it back and there are Issues on New Campbellton Road and Steve is looking into it.

***It was moved by Councillor Longva and seconded by Councillor MacLeod that Old Big Harbour sign be added to the Plaister Mines sign.***

***Motion Carried.***

**District 5**

Councillor Patterson thanked Public Works for the patching in Upper Kempt Head Road.

**District 6**

Deputy Warden Dauphinee said there are a lot of washouts on top of Smokey and will be making a call to Steve in the morning.



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**District 7**

Councillor Organ had one call about school bus turning in White Point. She has an email sent into Steve.

**District 8**

Councillor MacDonald had the following PW concerns:

- Shoulder washout at 564 Bay St Lawrence Road. Needs a hazard notification sign until repair is done.
- Shoulders again throughout the district namely hill by Winston Briand's. Cape North hill by Cabot Fire Department.
- A call for brush cutting in sugarloaf area, alders are right out to the main roadway.

**DISTRICT CONCERNS**

**District 1**

Councillor MacNeil had the following district concerns:

- Still no streetlight on the causeway to South Cove Road. Ordered it a year ago.
- Thank the Public Works Department and the individual who mowed at the water station in Little Narrows, did a great job.

**District 2**

Councillor MacLeod asked if NSHA was coming to Council. They had to postpone from today's meeting.

CAO MacEachen indicated she is waiting for Donna MacDonald and Brett MacDougall to get back to her.

Councillor MacLeod also asked if EHS had gotten back to the CAO and she indicated they have not.

Councillor MacLeod requested a certificate be made for Pauline Davis to thank her for her 45 years of service.



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**District 3**

Warden Morrison mentioned that there was a virtual ceremony for volunteers and showcased our own Rev Brian MacLeod who was recognized for his volunteer work in the community.

Warden Morrison thanked Global for selecting Baddeck for their news broadcast location and thanked Scott MacAulay for mentioning the county's trail development to Global news.

Warden Morrison said that he heard that individuals and businesses that could always take their water samples into local labs in Neil's Harbour and Baddeck and have them transported with other blood samples, etc.; to the lab at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital in Sydney are no longer accepting those water samples.

Warden Morrison is not sure if this is accurate or not but would like to confirm that. Restaurants and hotels are required to take 4 samples a year and now those businesses will have to take those samples to the lab in Sydney themselves and at a significant cost. Warden would like to confirm this information and ask why they can't continue sending these samples along with the other samples.

***It was moved by Deputy Warden Dauphinee and seconded by Councillor MacLeod that a letter be sent the Head of Lab Services for the District Health Authority to confirm this information and ask why they can't continue sending these samples along with the other samples.***

***Motion carried.***

Warden Morrison acknowledged Dystonia Awareness month.

**District 4**

Councillor Longva asked when the street light calendar starts again and CAO MacEachen said it is April but we are looking into changing our policy.

Councillor Longva got to spend the afternoon with EDO Erica and it was great and very appreciated by businesses.

Councillor Longva said there is still confusion on the garbage bag issues, several businesses where they have their home as well and CAO MacEachen said the policy is straightforward, each PID is allowed a max of 14 bags.

Councillor Longva requested \$250 to the Cabot Highlanders from her district budget.

**District 5**

Councillor Patterson mentioned the placemaking in Ross Ferry and noted that there will be a meeting next Monday. A resident from Big Bras d'Or donated land with the stipulation that it be used for senior housing.



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Councillor Patterson mentioned that EDO Erica is coming to district 5 on September 28<sup>th</sup>.

Councillor Patterson mentioned that he has 6 zoom meetings this week with different committees he is part of and that he was impressed with the Global News coverage in Victoria County.

**District 6**

Deputy Warden said that the new Bell Aliant fibre lines are hanging low across Beach Crossing Rd (just after 176 B C Rd) route for launching fishing boats. Size of boats has been increasing and asked if it was possible to raise lines before they are taken out by boats.

***It was moved by Deputy Warden Dauphinee and seconded by Councillor Organ that a letter be sent to Bell Aliant to request them to raise the lines.***

***Motion carried.***

***It was moved by Deputy Warden Dauphinee and seconded by Councillor MacLeod that a letter be sent to the Minister of Environment, Minister of Natural Resources and cc MLA Bain to request a meeting with them regarding the proposed Ingonish protected area.***

***Motion carried.***

Deputy Warden Dauphinee also added that he would make himself available to travel to Halifax to meet with them if that is requested.

***It was moved by Deputy Warden Dauphinee and seconded by Councillor MacDonald that a letter be sent to the Minister of Environment, Minister of Natural Resources and cc MLA Bain to request assistance with snowmobile trail approval from Ski Cape Smokey to Wreckcove.***

***Motion carried.***

Deputy Warden Dauphinee said that it has been three years of requesting assistance with little headway. He asked if this new government would be willing to work with volunteer groups or will they just be following the previous governments lack of assistance and development?

**District 7**

Councillor Organ asked about Victoria County Transit (VCT) bus in the north and inquired as to if they had a new driver yet.

Councillor MacLeod responded to Councillor Organ and said VCT committee just had a meeting and they are still taking applications.

Councillor Organ asked about recycling depot applications in New Haven and CAO MacEachen indicated that nothing has been dropped off.

CAO MacEachen said she was asking Tanner in Dingwall about the reuse centre and he doesn't think its going to go. If we can find someone to work it and things to sell they should apply.



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Councillor Organ said they are short a worker in New Haven and asked if anyone would be hired soon and CAO MacEachen said we are still getting applications.

Councillor Organ asked how to apply for the \$1000 grant for community groups, the tax exemption.

CAO MacEachen indicated that we passed the ones for this year and revamping the policy and application process for it but CAO MacEachen asked Councillor Organ to get a little more info to her and there may be other financial assistance available.

Councillor Organ asked how people get on the list for bottle money donations and CAO said to contact Kelly and she will add them to the list.

***It was moved by Councillor Organ and seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee that the \$1000.00 be taken from District 7 Budget to St. Andrew's Parish Hall and \$1000.00 to St. John's Hall.***

***Motion carried.***

Councillor Organ also requested \$500.00 be taken from her District Budget for Pinkalicious fundraiser, \$200.00 to the Lions Club and \$500.00 each from her budget, District 6 and District 8 budget for Cabot Educational Centre.

### **District 8**

Councillor MacDonald thanked the public works department for the new Victoria County sign.

Councillor MacDonald said he is getting calls from business asking for a better clarification with the bags but that has been addressed with the ICI pilot project.

Councillor MacDonald requested \$500.00 be taken from his district budget for Pinkalicious fundraiser.

### **COMMITTEES**

Age friendly will be scheduling a meeting by the end of the month.

Councillor Longva shared a poster from the Biosphere group and requested it be put up on the first level of the courthouse and Councillor Longva is looking forward to being appointed to the board.

### **MEETINGS**

- ***It was moved by Councillor MacNeil and seconded by Councillor Longva to contact Develop Nova Scotia for an update on broadband and to ask them for a contact for Bell Aliant.***

***Motion carried.***

- CEPI had a management meeting last Friday and had a report on their planning standards and planning commission with CBRM in regards to the proposed Coastal Protection Act.





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**COUNCIL MEETING**

Next Council meeting is October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021. And we have asked NSHA to come to that meeting.

**ADJOURN**

*It was moved by Councillor MacNeil to adjourn.*

The Municipality of the County of Victoria County council session was adjourned at 7:20pm.