



Victoria County Municipal Council
January 31, 2022

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held via Zoom on January 31, 2022, 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

Alix Redden, CFO

Allan Bragg, Manager of Accounting

Stephanie MacLeod, Recorder

Dan Coffin, Tourism Officer

Erica Holgate, EDO



Victoria County Municipal Council
January 31, 2022

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 Deputy Warden Dauphinee and seconded by Councillor MacNeil that the Agenda for January 31, 2022 be approved.

Motion carried.

HOUSING AUTHORITY – SHAWN LUKER, RAMI KAYED AND STEPHEN MACISAAC

Mr. Luker and Mr. Kayed gave an overview of the public housing structure and how it works. They went over the steps to acquire public housing and who and why certain people/groups are put on a priority list for public housing.

They also went over public housing shortage issues and said that currently in Victoria County the wait list has 33 applications, there are 14 families and 19 seniors.

The Councillors thanked the Housing Authority for their time and presentation and Warden Morrison opened it up to questions.

Councillor MacDonald commented that in his district there are 2 houses available and before there were 6. That housing has been sold off and he asked why and Mr. Luker commented that they were sold off for a number of different reasons and Mr. Kayed added that one of the sold off properties was sold because there was a fire in one of the units and they were not able to keep that property because the damage was too severe.

Councillor MacDonald asked if there is any emergency housing in the County and Mr. Luker said he didn't think there was but added that they have multiple shelters in the CBRM. The Department of DCS looks after that when there is no community shelters in place in a community.

Councillor Organ asked if there is a greater need for public housing and what are those numbers for North of Smokey and how many are on the wait list

Mr. Luker said between the wait list is 28 and 35 for Victoria County. The most of increase in demand has been in the CBRM, he hasn't seen significant increases in rural areas.



Victoria County Municipal Council
January 31, 2022

Councillor Organ asked if there are plans to increase housing in Victoria County and Mr. Luker said there is but wasn't sure what that will look like, whether it be a partnership with the province, or if it will all be public housing. Mr. Kaye added that 19 people are on the wait list for north of Smokey.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee said we are in a housing crisis here and asked who actually built the housing that is down in Ingonish now and Mr. Luker said it was contracted through a tender from the Province.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee asked if they could share any information that is coming out in the future for housing and Mr. Luker said there are some programs that are rolling out in the future and he will be sharing that information with the County.

Councillor Patterson asked what the average wait time for housing is and Mr. Luker said it was 2 years and 4 months but it all depends on where they are asking to live.

Councillor Longva asked for a copy of the presentation and Steff will send a copy of it and commented that she is interested in receiving information on the funding for the private sector.

Councillor MacLeod wanted to confirm that public housing doesn't build the housing, they just manage housing and Mr. Luker confirmed this.

Councillor MacNeil asked if accessibility is being considered for public housing and Mr. Luker said they are always working with the Province to try and convert units to meet accessibility needs.

Warden Morrison said we will follow up with you at a later time with upcoming projects.

CANCER CARE CENTRE – BOB MacEachern, PAULA MACNEIL, MIKE MCPHEE AND DR. REX DUNN

Ms. MacNeil introduced the group and gave an overview of the Foundation.

Mr. MacEachern went over the programs and what they are doing to make sure they get more programming for the facility.

Mr. McPhee went over the \$10 Million Campaign and the campaign team. They are over the halfway mark.

Dr. Rex Dunn went over the campaign causes and what medical equipment is needed at the centre.

Mr. McPhee asked Council for \$100,000 over 5 years. In 2021 there were 155 Victoria County residents visited the centre.

Warden Morrison thanked the team for the presentation and assured the group that this is something they should expect to see full support of from Victoria County and it will be taken to Budget very favourably.



Victoria County Municipal Council
January 31, 2022

Councillor MacDonald added that they have 100% support from him and Councillor Patterson asked how would one make a personal donation and Ms. MacNeil said they can make a personal donation directly to the foundation at www.cancercarehereathome.ca or call 902-578-3561.

Councillor MacNeil's community supported the centre through a dinner over the years in his district and donated over \$70,000 and he hopes to start those dinners again once covid restrictions lift.

Councillor Longva and Councillor MacLeod thanked them for their work and presentation.

It was moved by Councillor MacNeil and seconded by Councillor Longva that the request of \$100,000 over the next 5 years from the Cancer Care Centre be taken to budget deliberations.

Motion Carried.

CAO MacEachen also added that we will send Ms. MacNeil an application for municipal funding as well.

RECESS

Warden Morrison called for a 15 minute recess at 6:18pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 10th, 2022, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

Councillor Longva had a minor correction under Public Works and will forward to Steff for corrections.

It was moved by Councillor Organ and seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of January 10th, 2022, be approved with the noted correction.

Motion carried.



Victoria County Municipal Council
January 31, 2022

CAO REPORT

Old Business

- Canada Games Bid - CBRM has declined to apply this year
- Police Advisory Committee - update - going to go with a Community Consultative Group
- VCT started operating Jan 13/22. Notice has gone to SAT about taking over services by Victoria County starting April 1, 2022.
- Water was pooling on OceanView - have been advised this has been fixed.
- Rapid tests - there have been at least 2 drive thru services for Rapid Test pickups.
- Climate Change ACAP has reached out to District 4 to present to Council, or at least meet.
- Streetlight policy - meeting held prior to Council Jan 31, for first discussions regarding changes to current policy.
- We have 2 contacts for Aliant for landlines so will be looking into issues that arose after the recent power outages.
- 5434 Kempt Head Road Name Change request has been sent to NS PW.
- Bell – I have made contact with a rep, we will continue to contact them with issues.

Councillor MacNeil said the streetlight at South Cove Road has been finally installed.

Warden Morrison had heard that CBRM is submitting an application for the Canada Winter Games so we will go back to confirm what they are doing.

New Business

Tourism

- Trail updates with the team. Need to work with the Provincial Dept of Public Works to do a better job on the roads if we are going to promote winter tourism.

Rec/AL

- Lydia will now be sitting on the Accessibility Committee and will be leaving the Age Friendly Committee.
- Have a request in for a quote for an accessible chair for Parks Canada.
- Working with an individual north of Smokey on a mental health bursary, working with Cabot High.
- Smokey hike went well, 12 showed up. Having another one at North Highlands Nordic on February 1st at 7pm.
- Setting up the meeting with Councillors for ACAP.



Victoria County Municipal Council
January 31, 2022

- Need to schedule a placemaking meeting with the group to discuss the Dingwall site.

Senior Safety

- Group of seniors in Iona started Light Watch with the RCMP.
- More involved in resource mapping around community halls, lunches, etc. might look into more funding for this next year. Might use St. Ann's as a model for seniors lunches.
- Working on the seniors pen pals project with Cumberland County.

Finance

- Storm damage report for the province to recover some funding.

EDO

- The new Creative Economy Development Officer has been hired. Bill Culp joined our team last week and I'm working to connect him with larger arts entities in Victoria County (Gaelic College and Highland Village) as his predecessor was primarily focused on the Job Creation Program (JCP) and grant writing
- The Ingonish housing survey has about a 50% response rate so far. I've had a couple emails from self-employed, sole proprietors in Ingonish who felt it didn't apply to them and I'm now following up with all of these businesses, because I want them to think about the future – expansion and growth possibilities
- Had a meeting with the HART Assessment team – looking forward to our meeting on the 7th of February.
- Working with Dan and other partners to get the momentum going on the Mountain Bike Park strategy again. Reviewing documents and interested parties and have begun follow-up with people who were originally contacting in the initial strategy

Public Works

- We are without a water operator as of the 26th. County of Inverness is willing to help us out while we are in the process of hiring new operators.
- Two new generators have been ordered.



Victoria County Municipal Council
January 31, 2022

Other

- We have new legal representation, Wickwire Holm.
- Fishing Coalition, there is an ask for \$3,500.
- Rezoning in Village – Need a motion to approve first reading.
- Need a motion to appoint a Council member to the Accessibility Committee we need a motion for one council member.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Dauphinee and seconded by Councillor Longva to appoint Councillor Patterson to the Accessibility Committee.

Motion carried.

- We are going to have a new RCMP Consultative Committee instead of an PAC.

It was moved by Councillor MacNeil and seconded by Councillor MacDonald to appoint Councillor Organ and Councillor MacLeod to the RCMP Consultative Committee.

Motion carried.

Councillor Patterson asked CAO for any updates regarding the pay raises for the RCMP and she has not received anything yet.

- Also, looking for a NOS Workplace wellness committee member.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee said he would sit on this committee.

- Regional EMO exercise planning – looking to do an Island wide exercise
- Tax exempt was in the paper, please note, all organizations that want a tax exemption must complete the municipal grant application on our website, it doesn't matter if you received it in the past; you must now apply each year.

Meetings

Regional EMO planning

EDPC

Inverness County DRC discussions

Common Good solutions – Social Procurement



Victoria County Municipal Council
January 31, 2022

TAXATION UPDATE

As of today, we are at \$1,136,093 total outstanding, compared to \$1,539,721 this time last year for a total difference of **\$403,628** ahead.

For current outstanding, we are ahead of last year by **\$96,962** with \$689,605 as of today vs. \$786,567 current this time last year.

Arrears outstanding is at **\$306,665** better than last year with \$446,488 for this year vs. \$753,153 this time last year.

Since the last update, **\$141,845** has been collected. Reminder letters are working and we intend to send a new batch early next week.

The next tax sale is expected to be around March 22nd. The initial list contains 37 properties and the 60-day letters were issued on January 14th.

It has not yet been determined if the upcoming tax sale will be by tender or public auction due to Covid-19 protocols. A decision regarding the type of tax sale, by tender or public in the courtroom, will need to be determined by February 16, 2022.

The notification of the type of sale (tender vs public), when determined, will be included in the Cape Breton Post newspaper ad expected to be published on February 19, 2022.

Councillor MacNeil mentioned the increase in assessments and CAO MacEachen said the market value is based on the value. It's based on the previous year and she thinks that the assessments will be even higher next year.

Councillor Patterson said residents are saying not to raise taxes over this.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

District 1

Councillor MacNeil had the following concerns;

- Concerns about ice on gravel roads: made phone calls yesterday and the grader was out and working on them. Thank You to the Workers
- Concerns about plow breakdowns the past few storms.
- Thank you to crews that worked on the washout on the road at old Causeway Area in Iona
- Has to be a study/inventory done on the culverts throughout the district.

District 2

Councillor MacLeod all the roads need sand and salt.



Victoria County Municipal Council
January 31, 2022

District 3

Warden Morrison received more calls this winter than any other years with lack of snow removal. Inventory of equipment.

District 4

Councillor Longva also agreed with Councillor MacDonald regarding the roads in Meat Cove.

Councillor Longva requested the following updates;

- the railing on the box culvert on the Meadow Road
- the yield sign on the Stewart Rd. where it meets the New Campbellton Road
- the large hole on the highway in South Haven
- the reuse of the foot bridges on the Smith Brook at Tarbotvale and also on the North River Falls trail in the park
- the sign replaced for Skir D'hu
- the correct placement of the Gaelic College directional arrows signs
- all the back roads are in bad shape, need salt and sand.

District 5

Councillor Patterson roads are a crucial piece of infrastructure for tourism and economic development in Victoria County.

District 6

Deputy Warden Dauphinee wants to discuss the Cabot Trail as a crucial link and requested to meet with the Minister to discuss to get these roads fixed and would like to discuss the ferries more as well and added MLA Bain should attend that meeting as well.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Dauphinee and seconded by Councillor Organ to request a meeting with Minister Masland and MLA Bain to discuss the state of the roads in Victoria County.

Motion carried.



Victoria County Municipal Council
January 31, 2022

This motion will be added to the letter requested by Councillor MacDonald under his Public Works concerns.

District 7

Councillor Organ had no new public works concerns but did have a call about paving on Ocean View Drive. Water is still pooling on the bottom of Ocean View Drive.

District 8

Councillor MacDonald said the Parks Canada signage board is not functioning properly and that there is a pothole at the bottom of the hill by the Cape North fire department that needs to be addressed.

Councillor MacDonald also noted that residents are saying the Public Works ticketing system is not working, they either don't get through or if they do, their complaints are still not being addressed.

Councillor MacDonald said Meat Cove residents are asking why they always have to call to get sand and salt on these roads, why aren't they sanding and salting regularly?

Councillor MacDonald had questions regarding the paving project that is slated for the 5-year plan and said the people off the main road are asking why they are being left off the list.

Councillor MacDonald also had questions and concerns around the Effie Brook project as part of the Cabot Trail Facade and was told by MLA Bain said that project is from a different pot of funding that comes from a federal and provincial funding.

It was moved by Councillor MacDonald and seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee to request a meeting with Minister Masland and MLA Bain to discuss the state of the roads and to discuss if there is a share funding initiative that will be taking place in Victoria County.

Motion carried.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District 1

Councillor MacNeil had the following district concerns;

- Had a Pitu'Paq meeting and Mayor Beaton (Port Hawkesbury) and Warden Mombourquette (Richmond County) brought up that its about time to do something about learning about Treaty rights and better aboriginal relations. I indicated that Victoria County was in contact with Robert Bernard about having sessions about this very topic. Since Mr Bernard had health issues it was delayed.
 - I wonder is this still in the works?



Victoria County Municipal Council
January 31, 2022

- They mentioned maybe work through Pitu' Paq and CEPI to contact the Office L'nui Affairs to conduct Treaty Education.
- Councillor Parsons from CBRM indicated they hired a person for aboriginal relations.
- MLA Keith Bain made some inquiries on bridge lights he was told they were replaced last year but did not work very long. I told him they must have stopped working when they left the bridge because I never seen them working. They are looking at sourcing lights that will work in that environment.

District 2

Councillor MacLeod requested to send a letter to CBVRCE for driver updates for Baddeck Academy.

District 3

Warden Morrison mentioned the biographies for councillors and to please send those along to Steff so the website can be updated.

Warden Morrison requested to send a reminder to NSHA to provide the information requested at the October meeting.

Best wishes to Jessie Wong on her Olympic journey with the China Women's Hockey Team.

District 4

Councillor Longva had the following updates/concerns;

- I'd like to congratulate Sally MacInnis on her Canada Wide Tourism Award for Employee of the Year. Quite an honour considering how large our tourism sector is and she won for the whole country. I would like to send a letter from the County congratulating her. She is known as the reservation guru at the Keltic Lodge.

It was moved by Councillor Longva and seconded by Deputy Warden to send a letter to Sally MacInnis congratulating her.

Motion carried.

Victoria County Municipal Council
January 31, 2022

- Nova Scotia Power is applying to the UARB asking for a 10% increase for residential customers over the next 3 years. All levels of government are saying as a way to cut back on green house omissions we should be steering toward solar energy, to that end Efficiency NS started to give rebates a few years ago, it started as a \$10,000 dollar rebate and now has gone down to a \$3,000 dollar rebate. It costs a family approx. \$29,000, a constituent in district 4 had it installed a few years ago when the rebate was at 6000, so he paid 23,000 to have the panels installed and would pay it of over 10 years. Now NSP is asking to implement an extra system charge to those solar customers who get solar panels after Feb. 1st. This will deter people from buying into solar energy and deter those environmentally aware people from moving here. It will have a negative impact on the panel installer industry. One NS company saw their orders cut in half as soon as the announcement was made.

It was moved by Councillor Longva and seconded by Councillor MacLeod to send a letter to Premier Houston, the UARB, Tory Rushton, the Minister of Natural Resources expressing our concerns as these decisions will have a negative impact on our rate payers and the solar industry.

Motion carried.

- Requested a list of all lights and their civic addresses in District 4.
- Update on the bridge at Tarbotvale; they poured a cement abutment on Friday, on Monday they were taking off the forms and said hopefully by Tuesday they would be able to drive across the bridge.
- In regard, to the new Multi Purpose Building: the Cape Breton Partnership hired VIBE to facilitate the public engagement meetings and put together a report from information gathered at that meeting. In the next step part of this report, it said, the next step would be a public meeting called by the Rink Committee, mid to end of January to create a working committee and executive. Consideration must be given to individuals with a good cross section of desired skills (business planning, fundraising, building design and construction, governance, operations etc. Has there been a date set for that meeting? I was told recently that there has been a subcommittee been formed. How was that chosen? Who is on it? Is district 4 represented on it, I feel all districts should have representation if they wish to on this project. I am on a rink sub committee through council, and I wasn't aware that there was a committee forming. I have received many calls on this and I have constituents in my district that want to be involved in the planning from the ground up and have a lot to offer this process.

Warden Morrison asked CAO MacEachen to contact John Trickett to get an update on the status of meeting.

Warden Morrison said the members of the Rink Committee, which is separate from the sub-committee created through council, is Dave Parkinson, Sandy Campbell, Chief Norman Bernard, John Trickett and myself.

Warden Morrison also indicated to Councillor Longva that he would provide updates later in the week and Councillor MacLeod said residents should contact the board if they want to be on a committee or sub committee.



Victoria County Municipal Council
January 31, 2022

- I talked at last council meeting about us as council, finding ways to be and promote environmentally friendly initiatives. I discovered a new clothes soap product that are small soap strips that come in a small cardboard package. This product has already saved the landfill from over 6,000,000 since April 2019. This product will eliminate many plastics going into the landfill and will also cut down on gas emissions transporting these large and heavy containers of soap. I love this new product as it is a small step we can take as individuals and can have a big impact on the environment.
- Councillor Longva also brought up the frustrations with the lack of cell service in parts of her district, and CAO MacEachen knows this is an issue and unfortunately it's millions of dollars to erect new towers and Aliant possibly doesn't want to invest in that infrastructure. The County has had discussions for years with Aliant regarding the cell issues and they don't want to invest in that area.

District 5

Councillor Patterson had nothing new to report at this time.

District 6

Deputy Warden Dauphinee nothing new to report.

District 7

Councillor Organ nothing new to report.

District 8

Councillor MacDonald mentioned that he had some discussions with Canada Post regarding the post office in St. Margaret's Village and will have updates regarding location and postmaster in the next couple of weeks and in the meantime, they will install super boxes to help with the transition.

Councillor MacDonald asked for a Municipal Public Works meeting and CAO MacEachen said yes we can do that and have a boundary review meeting at the same time.



Victoria County Municipal Council
January 31, 2022

COMMITTEE REPORT

There was a Planning Advisory Committee meeting that was held relating to an amendment on a Village property.

It was moved by Councillor Patterson and seconded by Councillor Longva to approve the first reading of the amendment.

Motion Carried.

CEPI Steering Committee meeting on February 16th.

Councillor Patterson wanted to thank Steff and Dan for fixing his computer issues.

Councillor MacLeod confirmed that it is adding to the amendment to the zoning bylaw.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Fishing Gear Coalition project asked us to be part of it. Trying to repurpose end of life fishing gear. The asked us to support this pilot project for wire lobster traps.

It was moved by Deputy Warden Dauphinee and seconded by Councillor MacNeil for Victoria County to commit \$3500 to the Fishing Gear Coalition Project.

Motion carried.

COUNCIL MEETING

Next Council meeting is February 14, 2022, at 2:00pm

ADJOURN

The Municipality of the County of Victoria County council session was adjourned at 7:45pm.