



**Victoria County Municipal Council**  
February 28, 2022

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held in Council Chambers in Baddeck on February 28, 2022, at 5:00pm with Warden Bruce Morrison in the Chair.

Present Were:

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

Absent:

District #1- Paul MacNeil is out of the Province.



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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.

CAO MacEachen requested an In Camera session at the end of Council to discuss real estate.

Councillor Patterson asked to have his FCM report added to the Agenda.

***It was moved by Councillor Longva and seconded by Councillor MacLeod that the Agenda for February 28, 2022 be approved with the noted changes above.***

***Motion carried.***

**BOLD PRESENTATION – GABY BRAUN AND PENNY CHAPMAN and DR. FITZGERALD**

Dr. Fitzgerald introduced himself, Ms. Braun and Ms. Chapman.

Ms. Braun went over the programs and the struggles they faced due to Covid and how they were able to stay open during the pandemic.

Some highlights include:

Ms. Chapman started a drama group, and the programs were full.

The Seniors drop-in Centre has been well attended.

BOLD healthy food program.

Launching a new pilot program, BOLDability aimed at people living with disabilities.

Ms. Braun thanked the County and many other organizations for their ongoing support.

Last summer they had the highest number of children in attendance since BOLD started.

There have been some changes in the last 6 months, but Ms. Chapman and Ms. Braun work very well together with the Board.

They just handed in another funding application to receive an accessibility grant to ensure they are fully accessible for 2030.



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Dr. Fitzgerald talked about the vision of BOLD and acknowledged the other members of the Board.

Dr. Fitzgerald also added that the library is looking to share the current facility and can be added onto the back of the already existing building.

Warden Morrison opened the floor up to questions.

Councillor Patterson congratulated them for their work and mentioned that you never know what influence you have on child.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee thanked them for their presentation.

Councillor Organ thanked the presenters.

Councillor MacDonald said great presentation and thanked them for coming to Council and asked about the daycare funding that was just announced and asked if that has any effect on them and Ms. Braun said it does not and Dr. Fitzgerald also added that they have reached out to the daycare in town to ask about collaboration.

Councillor Longva thanked them for their presentation and stepping up to the fill the void for children.

Councillor MacLeod thanked them and she is happy to see the growth of the program. Councillor MacLeod also asked about the online aspect and Ms. Braun said that when schools closed, they opened the space up for children to come and do their online school day at the building.

Warden thanked them for the good work and thanked the children for the cards they made for Council.

Warden Morrison acknowledged that prior to Council there was a public hearing for an amendment to the Baddeck Land Use By-Law.

***It was moved by Deputy Warden Dauphinee and seconded by Councillor MacLeod to amend the bylaw to allow churches permitted use within the general commercial zone.***

***Motion carried.***



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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022, 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 February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022, be approved.***

***Motion carried.***

**CAO REPORT**

***Old Business***

- Community Wind said they are nowhere near starting any projects in our area right now.
- Rink Committee meeting, looking at spacing to see if our offices were to move to the rink.
- Motion made to have a committee minutes policy. CAO MacEachen is taking it back to Council to create the policy.

Councillor Patterson suggested that when we approve the Council Minutes, we can approve the Committee Minutes. CAO said we could but we need to be careful and look at it because for example, there are no Minutes for Alderwood.

Councillor MacLeod also said she wants more details for this as well. Warden Morrison asked Councillor Patterson to draft a Policy and bring it to Council. CAO will send a list of Committees to Councillor Patterson.

- Dates may switch for municipal boundaries and public works meeting.
- Highland Village are going to take our archives they had a visit here last Friday.

Regarding the Courthouse, Warden Morrison said that we have requested numbers on what it would cost to rebuild, refurbish, or relocate and Deputy Warden Dauphinee wanted to ensure that we are exploring all options as well as looking at different locations.

***New Business***

- EDPC motions tonight, there was a public hearing.
- Water rate study, need to bring updated numbers.
- NSFM are proposing changes to their bylaws. Encourage Councillors to attend their regional virtual meetings.



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***Tourism***

- Tourism labour market forum from TIANS. Reforms coming to the EI system for seasonal workers. In NS there about 20,000 tourism positions that need to be filled.
- 2022 tourism marketing campaign is launching this week.
- Mountain bike strategy discussions this week with Erica and Adam Shore.
- Winter market readiness is well on its way
- Working on a pilot project for Baddeck and Ingonish for Community
- Dingwall engagement session in the works-looking for community feedback
- ARIA is underway for trail development.
- Working on the Trails application for active transit funding as well.
- Dept of environment meeting this week on trails.
- Best practise mission this week.

***Rec/AL***

- Two reports on active trails funding
- Sending out a final funding reminder to rinks/schools
- Placemaking meeting for an update for the Dingwall space.
- Winter Field training on Saturday
- Need to look into the trail policy with NS trails and they need to get them to change the info on their website
- Research on accessibility and the toolkit.
- Touch base with ACAP, they are doing a report up for Council and looking into some initiatives.
- The rink is going to be open for March Break.
- Schools Plus north of Smokey reached out for funding for training programs for students over the march break.

***Finance***

- Allan met with SAT regarding VCT.
- We need to submit a final claim for the Neil's Harbour water treatment plant from the November storm.
- Budget meetings coming up

***EDO***

***Report from Erica:***

- I've been following up with businesses with outstanding business plans to gain momentum and check in
- Seeing an increase in one-on-one business advisory (Exciting side note: We officially welcome the new owners of Four Mile Inn to Cape Breton today in Cape North.



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- Housing survey is officially closed with a last call going out last week. There were just a couple businesses I was trying to get last minute (got one of two)
- My focus has been highly MTB park-based these past couple weeks; I've had meetings with The Gorge, Railyard, MTB Atlantic, trail builders (in addition to Adam), as well as reviewing the Action Plan. Learning a lot...and frankly excited to try mountain biking.
- I initiated a conversation regarding EcDev planning for Natural Disasters; based on the changing climate, I feel this is somewhat of a priority. Have materials from British Columbia's EcDev team that I'm planning on going through later this week.
- Lastly, I've been diving into housing funding for private development: provincial funding, as well as CMHC

***Public Works***

- Things are getting back to normal post covid.
- Clean leadership applications opened up today, so we are going to promote that. Check out our website.
- The new hires in the water department are doing great.
- The new membrane for the water treatment plant is hopefully going to be installed next week.
- New Haven heaters aren't operating efficiently in the type of cold weather we are investigating.
- Met with our meter supply representative-investigating wireless meters.
- Environment did a site visit at the Neil's Harbour Water Treatment Plant.

***Senior Safety***

- Home Warming Program – looking into what the community thinks.
- UnCommon Room project has started and its going great.
- Letter writing project with Baddeck grade 3 students and long term care homes.
- ACTing Collectively is asking for 2 people to do the training.
- Accessibility has formed a committee and next steps are drafting a plan.

***Other***

Water rate study still progressing.

District Planning sent a letter looking for recommendations for their building and fire inspectors.



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CAO MacEachen indicated we need a motion to appoint the following for EDPC;

Building Inspection

Building Inspectors: David MacKenize, Amanda Esterbrooks and Sean Donovan

Alternates: Harry Martell, Johnathan Martin and Andre Sampson

Special Constable: Sean Donovan and Johnathan Martin

Development Officer

Wanda Ryan

Alternates: John Bain, Andrew Jones, Lee-Ann Martin and Dawn Sutherland

Fire Inspector

David MacKenzie

Alternates: A. Sampson, A. Esterbrooks, S. Donovan, H. Martell and J. Martin

Dangerous or Unsightly Premises

Administrators: Johnathan Martin and John Bain

Alternate: Amanda Esterbrooks, David MacKenzie and Andre Sampson

Special Constable: Sean Donovan and Johnathan Martin

***It was moved by Deputy Warden Dauphinee and seconded by Councillor MacLeod to accept the EDPC appointments.***

***Motion carried.***

CAO MacEachen mentioned the deadline for job applications are coming up this week and that we have had low applicants so far.

Councillor Longva asked what the UnCommon Room was and Cassandra Yonder explained what it was, it is a support system for low-income seniors.

Councillor Longva also asked what ACTing Collectively is, and Cassandra said it is a research tool, it is a survey tool to identify what the needs are for our seniors.

**TAXATION UPDATE**

First just to note that the last few updates include our 2020 COVID tax installment program amounts owing but, just to keep with prior consistency, this amount will be excluded as it's technically not taxes receivable.

But, more importantly, this is an exciting update.



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As of today we've dipped below \$1m in outstanding. Just to show progress:

- In 2021 this milestone happened in mid-March.
- In 2020 it was mid-June.
- In 2019 we didn't go below \$1m at all until after the new bills were sent out in July.

This is just one way that show the great efforts that have been coming from the tax departments that we continue to commend.

As of today we're at \$995,400 total outstanding, compared to \$1,192,924 this time last year for a total difference of **\$197,524** ahead.

For current we are ahead of last year by **\$38,216** with \$597,394 as of today vs. \$635,610 current this time last year.

Arrears outstanding is at **\$159,308** better than last year with \$398,006 for this year vs. \$557,314 this time last year.

Since the last update, nearly **\$48k** has been collected toward outstanding taxes.

A reminder that the next tax sale is March 22<sup>nd</sup> by tender. Information is on our website and the listing is updated every Friday.

The next tax sale will be an on-site public event with a target date of June 14<sup>th</sup>.

**RECESS**

15-minute recess at 5:55pm. Reconvened at 6:16pm.

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

**District 2**

Councillor MacLeod said on Big Baddeck Road around civic addresses 1167 and 1302, there are multiple potholes near the middle line, and they are getting deep.

Councillor MacLeod also mentioned that there is a rough part of the road on the off ramp heading west (toward Halifax). Cars are hitting the area just as they are trying to get on the highway.

**District 3**

Warden Morrison reached out to Steve and MLA Bain to drive some of the streets in Baddeck and some in District 2 to highlight some of the bad spots.





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**District 4**

Councillor Longva said there is bad ice buildup on the Englishtown Road and mentioned that there is an area on the Meadow Road that floods so badly that it takes out a resident's driveway. She was wondering about a permanent fix for this.

**District 5**

Councillor Patterson had one report of a washout in Big Bras d'Or.

**District 6**

Deputy Warden Dauphinee said Ingonish, including Ingonish Harbour flooding, was hit quite hard again with the rain last week, all have been reported to Steve.

**District 7**

Councillor Organ had a call from a resident about flooding and Steve said he would send some crew.

**District 8**

Councillor MacDonald had no real concerns this evening but had some reports of washouts in St. Margaret's Village from the last rain but wanted to thank Parks Canada for the better communication regarding road closures.

**DISTRICT CONCERNS**

**District 2**

Councillor MacLeod had no concerns but suggested that we honour and invite Jessie Wong to a council session to present her with something from the County.

Councillor MacLeod requested \$500 out of her district budget for the Red Cross in support of the Ukraine in their time of need with the ongoing war with Russia. Warden Morrison suggested that rather than taking it out of Councillor MacLeod's district budget, the Municipality should donate.



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***It was moved by Councillor MacLeod and seconded by Councillor Longva that the Municipality donate \$5000.00 to the Red Cross in support of Ukraine.***

***Motion carried.***

**District 3**

***It was moved by Warden Morrison and seconded by Councillor MacLeod for a streetlight at 221 Shore Road.***

***Motion carried.***

Warden Morrison wanted to clarify that the artifacts are leaving the Courthouse and going to the Highland Village in the summer and anyone who owns artifacts can make a request to get them back from the Highland Village with proper identification and documentation.

FCM is having a conference this year. 4 Councillors were chosen to go along with Councillor Patterson who is on the board.

Councillors: Longva, Organ, MacDonald and MacNeil and the Warden will be attending. Councillor MacDonald has chosen not to attend this year. Those interested must let Steff know so she can book accommodations and flights.

***It was moved by Deputy Warden Dauphinee and seconded by Councillor Organ that the Municipality send those noted Councillors to the FCM Conference in Regina in June 2022.***

***Motion carried.***

**District 4**

Councillor Longva had a resident inquire as to when the County is taking applications for the Re-Use Centre. CAO said the application is online and it may have already closed.

Councillor Longva mentioned that she is taking a course online about climate crisis.

**District 5**

Councillor Patterson had no concerns.

**District 6**

Deputy Warden Dauphinee had no concerns but asked CAO if she heard anything about the land swap with Lands and Forests and she has not.



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**District 7**

Councillor Organ had a call about an obstruction on the road and our Public Works staff looked after it.

**District 8**

***It was moved by Councillor MacDonald and seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee to take \$500.00 from his district budget to the North Highland Nordic Ski Group, for the Loppet and \$500.00 to Northern Cabot Landing Society.***

***Motion carried.***

**COMMITTEE REPORT and OTHER UPDATES**

Councillor Patterson gave a report from his FCM meetings and some of the topics included the following;

RCMP raises

Canada Community Building Fund (formerly the gas tax fund), looking for an increase with that.

Payment in Lieu of Taxes, negotiating an independent assessor comes in and base the tax on that.

Working with Stats Canada on Municipalities and their population.

Wastewater

Fishery Regulations

Boating Regulations, in particular small crafts.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee also mentioned that Housing was discussed as well and it was a hot topic so hopefully something will be coming out of the budget with this.

Councillor Patterson also mentioned that you can apply for federal funding for broadband even if you are getting provincial funding and this also includes cell service as well. Councillor Patterson will let CAO know what fund this is.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

All has been sent out.



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**COUNCIL MEETING**

Next Council meeting is March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 5:00pm.

Warden Morrison asked if Council wanted to change the time of Council to 2pm instead and most were in favour.

**ADJOURN**

The Municipality of the County of Victoria County council session was adjourned at 6:45pm.

***It was moved by Councillor MacLeod and seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee that Council move to an In Camera to discuss real estate and finances.***

***Motion carried.***