



Victoria County Municipal Council
March 14, 2022

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held in Council Chambers in Baddeck on March 14 2022, at 5:00pm with Warden Bruce Morrison in the Chair.

Present Were:

- District #1- Paul MacNeil
- District #3- Bruce Morrison, Warden
- District #4- Barbara Longva
- District #5- Fraser Patterson
- District #8- Norman MacDonald

Also present were:

- Leanne MacEachen, CAO
- Allan Bragg, Manager of Accounting
- Stephanie MacLeod, Recorder
- Dan Coffin, Tourism Officer

Absent:

- District #2- Perla MacLeod
- District #6- Larry Dauphinee, Deputy Warden
- District #7- Jackie Organ

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.



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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 MacDonald that the Agenda for March 14, 2022, be approved.

Motion carried.

Warden Morrison initiated a moment of silence for Inverness County Warden Laurie Cranton and former Chair of the Village of Baddeck, Eddie Keeling, who both passed away last week and extended our sympathies and acknowledged their many years of community service.

Warden Morrison mentioned the Councillor absences this evening; Councillor MacLeod is absent due to a medical reason, Councillor Organ and Deputy Warden Dauphinee are out of the province.

RAISING THE VILLAGES PRESENTATION – JIM MUSTARD

Mr. Mustard presented information on Raising the Villages. Some of the highlights from that presentation were:

- Early Childhood Investment
- Patchwork and Silos with economic development, education, health, community services and federal government.
- Advocating for needs in communities.
- B.O.L.D and BSL Models with One-Stop Inclusive Coordinated Hubs
- RTV Policy and RTV 2022

Warden Morrison thanked Mr. Mustard for his presentation and opened the floor up to questions.

Councillor Patterson congratulated Mr. Mustard on the work he has done and continues to do and mentioned that BOLD is doing exactly what Raising the Villages is promoting.

Councillor Patterson mentioned the number of younger families moving in so hopefully that means more money being invested into the schools and with programs like Raising the Villages.

Councillor MacDonald thanked Mr. Mustard for the presentation and asked what the biggest hurdle is for Raising the Villages.

Mr. Mustard says everything takes time, but Raising the Villages is responding to what is happening in our community right now and we are hoping this becomes the model of the province, but it takes money, and more than the municipalities can afford.



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Councillor MacNeil said he sees a rise in the number of younger families coming into the area so it is a benefit to be able to educate residents on early childhood education.

Councillor Longva thanked Mr. Mustard for his presentation and agrees with the importance of early childhood education.

Warden Morrison also mentioned the increase of younger families moving into Victoria County so Raising the Villages is well timed.

THEATRE BADDECK PRESENTATION – CHRISTY MACRAE ZISS

Ms. MacRae Ziss went over the 2021 season and discussed the upcoming 2022 season.

2021 Highlights:

- No Covid related cancellations or complaints.
- They did 3 productions and employed 22 people.
- Attendance was 2,045 and had 23 sold out performances.
- 88% total capacity sold.
- They received a \$100,000 grant from the Federal Government for accessibility work that was done at the Masonic Hall.
- They did not incur a deficit due to various relief funding, that relief funding won't be available this year.

2022 Season:

- Revive the Charles Dickinson Christmas play.
- 4 planned productions.
- Projecting 3,600 in attendance.
- Projecting 2,900 visitors to Victoria County.
- Season pass budget reach to date is 67%.

Theatre Baddeck asked for \$10,000 this year and asked for the same amount to be awarded in 2023. She is not asking for it to be provided at this time, just to secure it so they can budget for it for 2023.

Warden Morrison thanked Ms. MacRae-Ziss for her presentation and opened the floor up to questions.

Councillor Longva thanked Ms. MacRae-Ziss for her presentation and said she enjoyed the Christmas play and the theatre is a great thing for the County.



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Councillor MacNeil thanked and congratulated Ms. MacRae-Ziss on her plays and success and said that Theatre Baddeck is a great asset for the County. It would be nice to see an off-site production, throughout the County, maybe even one show. Ms. MacRae-Ziss agreed and said because lack of resources, we can't travel at this time with our productions. Touring shows are certainly in our future plans as are educational programs.

Councillor MacDonald thanked Ms. MacRae-Ziss for her presentation and loves her enthusiasm.

Councillor Patterson thanked Ms. MacRae-Ziss and said it is nice to see such passion in the presentation and asked how much a season pass is.

Ms. MacRae-Ziss said the price changes when they are available but right now, they are on sale.

Warden Morrison commented that he sees firsthand what Theatre Baddeck has added to the community. Warden Morrison said you exceeded expectations and said ask for a multi-year request when you apply for 2022-2023 funding.

It was moved by Councillor MacNeil and seconded by Councillor Longva that the request be deferred to budget.

Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the February 28TH, 2022, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

It was moved by Councillor Longva and seconded by Councillor MacDonald that the Victoria County Municipal Council minutes of February 28TH, 2022, be approved.

Motion carried.

Old Business

Councillor Patterson said he could not find any concrete information yet regarding the cell service funding.

Councillor Patterson also went over a policy on Minutes and had a few ideas to discuss that could be formed into a policy.



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Some discussion points were:

- Should committee Minutes be posted on our website?
- Which committee Minutes are to be posted?
- How should they be approved and who will be posting them?
- Roberts Rules suggests an executive committee be created that can approve Minutes.

Warden Morrison mentioned that Minutes are available to anyone who requests them.

There was discussion if the Alderwood and Highland Manor Board Minutes should also be posted since the County owns them.

Warden Morrison said because of the discussion, there clearly needs to be a policy around this issue.

Councillor MacNeil said it would be a good idea to post Committee Minutes so other Councillors can see what is going on with other Committees.

Councillor Longva asked if Victoria County owns Alderwood and Highland Manor and Warden Morrison confirmed that we do.

Councillor MacDonald appreciated Councillor Patterson bringing this forward and thinks it's a good idea.

Warden Morrison, on behalf of Councillor MacLeod, requested an update from CAO regarding the bus drivers and CAO said she forwarded that correspondence off and it said they are still training drivers.

Councillor MacDonald mentioned that Susan Kelley was going to provide him with updates as well and he has yet to hear from her.

CAO MacEachen went over her old business and said that regarding the RCMP increases, there will be an 11.5% increase, not including retroactive pay.

Councillor Patterson asked what that is in dollar value and CAO MacEachen said roughly around \$200,000.

RECESS

15-minute recess at 6:25pm. Reconvened at 6:46pm.



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CAO REPORT

Tourism

- Multi skilled training for employees to help with the labour shortage.
- Attended a meeting with DCBA regarding having a Waterfall Season
- Attended a virtual Innovate the Plate conference.
- Tourism Nova Scotia launched their new campaign.
- Waterfront Baddeck update meeting, they are going to be doing a community update in May.
- ACOA funding is coming in for organizations based on 2021 applications.

Rec/AL

- Working on the Active Transit Grant proposal
- Recreation Report was submitted.
- Placemaking community engagement session in Cape North on March 24th at 6:30pm.
- Putting together a survey for the accessibility committee
- Set up an ACAP meeting. Initiatives to be included in Budget talks.

Finance

- Not for profit groups need to have their applications in by March 31, 2022.

EDO

- Working on a business plan with the rink.
- Analysing the housing survey data, 17 business that are going to talk about the AIP program.
- Going to ICSC conference in BC next week, focus on property development and retail.
- Foreign Direct Investment project with NSBI.

Public Works

- We are not equipped to take the dredging material from the site from Little River.
- Strait Engineering is preparing the tender for public works building upgrades.
- Water Plant is being commissioned this week. Water operators will be getting training on the generator this week.



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- Still waiting on a quote for the wireless water meter readers.

Senior Safety

- UnCommon project is going ahead, the seniors at the housing are really happy with it.
- VCHS received a grant for Canada Day looking for ideas for spending it.
- ACTing Collectively, we received the full grant of \$25,000.00

Other

- Regional EMO exercise planning in progress
- Best practice mission snowmobile trip in March!
- Courthouse assessment in person with Nick Charlton, JS HELD. Next step is to have a drone do a further assessment of the building which Council gave the go ahead for this.
- Labour lawyer session on Covid vaccination policy - need to assess/re-assess our policy. Will discuss more at next Council session.
- Tax on gas prices, wanted to write a letter to the Province, asking to take this tax off because of the high cost of gas right now. Council to consider.
- Resolution on Asset Management Grant application. We're applying for \$50,000 in FCM funding and if our application is accepted, we will be responsible for \$12,500. This is the second phase of our asset management project. The first phase captured all our linear assets, and the second phase will capture our fixed assets, which includes our municipal structures.

CAO MacEachen asked Council if they are interested in passing the resolution. Warden Morrison read the resolution:

Be it resolved that the Municipality of the County of Victoria directs staff to apply for a grant opportunity from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Municipal Asset Management Program for the development of a Asset Management Inventory, Prioritization and Strategy

Be it therefore resolved that the Municipality commits to conducting the following activities in its proposed project submitted to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Municipal Asset Management Program to advance our asset management program:

- Asset inventory
- Prioritization, and
- Strategy

Be it further resolved that the Municipality commits \$12,500 from its budget toward the costs of this initiative.

It was moved by Councillor MacNeil and seconded by Councillor MacDonald that the Municipality commits \$12,500 from its budget toward the costs of this initiative.

Motion carried.



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Councillor Longva asked if it was possible for the County to trade property with the Federal Government for the dredge site so the dredge site is not on a waterfront property.

CAO MacEachen said that is up to Council, if you are willing to give up land to make the trade. The County owns 100 acres near that proposed site. Warden Morrison said CAO MacEachen can approach the Federal Government on this but it may be a slow process.

It was moved by Councillor Longva and seconded by Councillor MacNeil for CAO MacEachen to pursue the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture to offer a trade of property for the proposed dredge site in Little River.

Motion carried.

Warden Morrison brought up the donation that was made at last Council of \$5000.00 to the Ukraine and said other municipalities contributed far more and asked if Council wanted to increase the donation.

Councillor Longva wondered if Victoria County can welcome people from the Ukraine to come here. The refugees, if they could come here to be safe in Victoria County, is that something we can do?

Warden Morrison said yes, absolutely. I think its just a matter of contacting the federal government and immigration to let them know that we are interested in any refugees that may want to seek safety in Canada, that we would be a municipality to consider.

It was moved by Councillor MacDonald and seconded by Councillor MacNeil that the County increase the donation to the war efforts in Ukraine to \$20,000.00 for a total of \$25,000.00 donation.

Motion carried.

Warden Morrison said he received a draft submission from ACAP, outlining three programs that may pertain to us, he will circulate that to the rest of Council and ask for recommendations and comments at the next Council session.

TAXATION UPDATE

As of today, we're at \$962,989 total outstanding, compared to \$1,071,345 this time last year for a total difference of **\$108,356** ahead.

Current outstanding is **\$25,882** higher than last year, with \$567,260 as of today vs. \$541,378 current this time last year.



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Arrears outstanding is at **\$134,238** better than last year with \$395,729 for this year vs. \$529,967 this time last year.

Since the last update, nearly **\$32,411** has been collected toward outstanding taxes.

A reminder that the next tax sale is March 22nd by tender and will be for approximately 20 properties. 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 21st.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

District 1

Councillor MacNeil had the following concerns:

- Highland Hill Road is in dire need of repairs and ditching. Councillor MacNeil was in contact with Steve MacDonald, MLA Keith Bain, the OS's for the area and Jamie Chisholm (NS Public Works).
- There is still settling where the washout was repaired in Iona. Needs more gravel until it can be patched. Was in contact with Steve MacDonald.
- Will be talking to Steve about issues that need to be addressed in the spring i.e. patching and mowing and cutting.

District 2

Councillor MacLeod was absent, but Warden Morrison read out her concern about the potholes on Hillcrest Drive, passing the RCMP building, they are getting deeper and deeper.

District 3

Warden Morrison mentioned the meeting with the Deputy Minister of Public Works, asked that Councillors focus on the bigger issues, like projects and funding and we will ask Steve and Jamie for a different meeting to discuss other Public Works issues.

Warden Morrison asked council to send Steff a list of their Public Works concerns.

Warden Morrison will be driving around town on the 21st with Steve and MLA Bain.

District 4



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Councillor Longva said there was a bad washout in Tarbot from the last storm.

District 5

Councillor Patterson confirmed the meeting with the Deputy Minister of Public Works on March 22nd and said that proper ditching needs to be addressed so there aren't as many wash-outs in the future.

Councillor Patterson also mentioned that there doesn't seem to be a lot of salt on the roads and will bring that up to the Deputy Minister.

District 8

Councillor MacDonald requested we set up a meeting with the local Department of Public Works for their spring plans.

Councillor MacDonald also mentioned that a while back he made a motion for a letter to be sent to the Department of Public Works in regard to when/if the other piece of road work from Effie's Brook to Cape North would be completed and CAO MacEachen responded that she has not heard anything back from that letter.

MOTIONS

Councillor Longva asked if we could make a motion inviting people and families fleeing from the Ukraine to seek refuge in Victoria County.

Warden Morrison said absolutely. Good point and I should have picked up on that earlier. So I think that's either, I'm not sure whether Leanne is going to look though. I'm not sure if that's federal immigration or provincial but the federal immigration minister is from New Glasgow, Sean Fraser so that should be an easy contact. Yeah that is very good point Councillor. Do we have a seconder for that please. Councillor MacDonald seconded it. All in favour, motion carried.

It was moved by Councillor Longva and seconded by Councillor MacDonald that we invite those people and families fleeing from the Ukraine to seek refuge in Victoria County.

Motion carried.



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DISTRICT CONCERNS

District 1

Councillor MacNeil said there has been some work done with the lights on bridge.

Councillor MacNeil said they are Planning a Welcome Wagon Event at the Legion in Iona to welcome any newcomers to the area in April, will provide more information at next Council.

District 2

Councillor MacLeod was absent, but Warden Morrison read out her concerns, which were to send condolences to the MacDonald family for the passing of Jackie. Warden Morrison acknowledged Jackie and spoke highly of him and his contributions to the County over the years.

District 3

Warden Morrison mentioned that there is a public Village meeting on April 4, 2022 and said that it might be a good idea for Councillors to attend that meeting. CAO MacEachen added that the Village has asked the County to prepare a presentation for the Village residents as well, informing them on what it will look like if they are dissolved and become part of the County.

Warden Morrison also discussed the correspondence from the Justice Centre in Wagmatcook that he circulated to the rest of Council. We are awaiting a response to set up a meeting with them to discuss.

Warden Morrison also spoke, on behalf of Deputy Warden Dauphinee, of the County's concerns regarding the building permit delays for Cape Smokey Holding's, Tree Walk project.

District 4

Councillor Longva asked if we have a by-law against feeding wild animals, some residents are concerned about people feeding wild animals.

CAO said no we don't, they need to contact DNR for that.

Councillor Longva asked if we had a program to help low-income residents pay their taxes and CAO MacEachen said yes there is, there are applications at the tax office and on our website as well.

District 5

Councillor Patterson received an email about grant applications and wanted to ensure they are reviewed before they are presented to Council to ensure all the information needed is there.



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District 8

Councillor MacDonald reminded Council of the North Highlands Nordic Open House on March 21, 2022, at 1pm.

COMMITTEE REPORT and OTHER UPDATES

March 31, CEPI meeting.

Accessibility Committee has been formed and adopted the Terms of Reference.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee, in his absence, asked Warden Morrison to discuss the permit issues with Smokey Holdings with the Tree Walk. Warden Morrison said the County is in support of the Tree Walk and CAO met with representatives from Cape Smokey Holdings, and they are still working on moving forward and they are working through the permits and didn't need anything from us in regards to permits, at this time.

COUNCIL MEETING

Next Council meeting is March 28th, 2022, at 2:00pm.

ADJOURN

The Municipality of the County of Victoria County council session was adjourned at 7:35pm.