



Victoria County Municipal Council
October 4, 2022

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held in Council Chambers in Baddeck on October 4, 2022, at 2:00pm 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:

- Alix Redden, CFO
- Stephanie MacLeod, Recorder
- Dan Coffin, Tourism and Recreation Manager

Absent:

- Leanne MacEachen, CAO

Two members of the public were in attendance.

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. Councillor Patterson requested an addition of an FCM report to the agenda.

On Motion of Councillor MacLeod, seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee that the Agenda for October 4th, 2022, be approved with the noted change.

Motion Carried.

TOURISM AND RECREATION TEAM – DAN COFFIN

Mr. Coffin explained that the Tourism and Recreation departments merged, and he is now the Manager of Tourism and Recreation and introduced his new team. Chris Woodford, Recreation and Active Living Coordinator and Colleen Whalen Smith, Tourism Coordinator.

Ms. Whalen Smith and Mr. Woodford introduced themselves and gave a brief background on themselves and their work history.

EMO POST HURRICANE FIONA UPDATE – LYLE DONOVAN

Warden Morrison acknowledged the work and commitment of Mr. Donovan over the last couple of weeks during Hurricane Fiona and the aftermath.

Mr. Donovan gave a presentation of Hurricane Fiona, the lead up, the situation during the storm and post storm update.

Mr. Donovan stressed that our comfort centres need some work and assistance to be able to serve residents better when the next storm hits.

Council thanked Mr. Donovan for his presentation, dedication, and service during this disaster and all that he does for residents in Victoria County.

Councillor MacDonald asked who is responsible for the comfort centres and Mr. Donovan said it is a municipal responsibility.

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Councillor MacLeod asked about generators and asked if generators should be purchased for the comfort centres and Mr. Donovan said yes, they are needed, and we can register and request funding for these through the DRF (Disaster Relief Fund).

Councillor Patterson said his main issue was the lack of communication because he lost his phone and cell service. Councillor Patterson was not satisfied with Bell's response to the post storm communications. Mr. Donovan said he is in possession of a satellite phone for just these times so he can communicate. Mr. Donovan said that Bell has redundant systems.

Councillor Organ mentioned the new bridge in Fairview, a lot more work has to be done there. The comfort station was not in a location that could be accessed by many.

Councillor Longva thanked Mr. Donovan and asked about the TMR system being down, why was it down and can this be prevented. Mr. Donovan said the Province is looking into this and making sure it gets better.

Councillor Longva asked about generator funding and the Wreck Cove General Store said he would be willing to stay open if he had help (financial) staying open.

Warden Morrison said the County is very fortunate to have Mr. Donovan and thanked him again.

Councillor MacNeil thanked Mr. Donovan for all the work that was done and thanked all the first responders and Nova Scotia Power workers that worked hard to restore power to residents.

Councillor MacLeod wanted clarification on disaster funding and CFO Redden added that nothing has been finalized yet but once we know what the Province is providing we will let everyone know.

Council agreed to a Special Funding contribution of a \$500.00 grant to community halls that opened comfort stations during the storm and include a letter of appreciation.

On Motion of Councillor Patterson, seconded by Councillor Longva that Council contribute a \$500.00 grant to community halls that opened comfort stations during the storm and include a letter of appreciation.

Motion Carried.

RECESS

Warden Morrison called for a 15-minute recess.

MUNICIPAL GRANTS APPLICATION RECOMMENDATIONS – ALIX REDDEN, CFO

CFO Redden gave a brief overview and history of the current Grants Policy.

At the August 22, 2022, Council meeting, Deputy Warden Dauphinee sought feedback on the various grant streams within the Municipal Grants policy. As a result, Council asked for a staff report with a recommendation to be brought forward related to the current structure of the Municipal Grants Policy.

The new Municipal Grants Policy includes a suggested review frequency of every two years. The policy was first approved in March 2020, so this review is also timely. In late 2019/early 2020, Council and staff underwent a process to completely revise the municipal grant structure, policy document and organizations' application process.

The revision process involved extensive research of grant policies from other municipalities, both neighboring and throughout Nova Scotia. Multiple meetings were had with Council to discuss options.

The new Municipal Grants Policy was approved in March 2020. In November 2021, the policy was revised and approved to include Property Tax Relief as its own grant stream, rather than under separate policy.

The intent of all revisions was to provide a framework based on fairness and equality, to streamline the process for applicants, staff and Council, and to ensure consistency year over year.

The current Municipal Grants Policy has four (4) categories of grants which are designated as under Council's full decision-making authority. Applications are reviewed/approved as part of the annual budgeting process.

- Development Grants
- Capital Grants
- Operational Grants
- Property Tax Relief Grants

The Policy states *"Only one application per community organization may be submitted in each fiscal year for each funding category; however, applications should pertain to separate and distinct projects, programs or initiatives."*

The current policy was designed with two main benefits in mind:

- Organizations submit applications for all their financial needs once a year in a 'one stop shop' style.
- Council receives all organizations' asks at once so Council can be aware of the full picture of financial need of community organizations and applications can be evaluated and rewarded collectively rather than in a piecemeal approach throughout the year.

The various grant categories allow for year-to-year flexibility to respond to the changing needs of community organizations and to also place specific limitations based on categories (i.e., maximum of \$10,000 for operational vs. maximum of \$25,000 for capital). Although funding is not guaranteed each year, it is assumed that the same organizations will apply each year for operational and property tax relief grants. Operational grants can help with costs such as heating, insurance, etc. Development and capital grants are intended to provide one time support for either a large event, festival, etc. or a major

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capital project such as building upgrades or equipment repair, all of which would have a start and end date.

Under the current policy, there could be circumstances where an organization, such as a community hall, submits applications for:

- an operational grant to cover heating expenses (annual ask)
- property tax relief for the property the hall is located on (annual ask)
- capital grant to support a major roof replacement on the hall (one-time)
- development grant to support a summer music event held at the hall (one-time)

All of these would be valid asks under the existing policy. In circumstances like these, it would be up to Council to evaluate each application individually and collectively against all other applications received. Grants should be awarded based on merit using the evaluation criteria listed in the appendices of the Municipal Grants Policy for each funding stream.

CFO Redden's recommendations are:

- Maintain the existing Municipal Grants Policy with separate funding applications streams.
- Enhance the application evaluation process to ensure grants are evaluated and awarded based on the evaluation criteria stipulated in the appendices of the Municipal Grants Policy.

Councillor Patterson asked if an organization submits more than one application, should we ask the organization to prioritize their needs. CFO Redden said it would work on an individual basis but when looking at them collectively it could make it more difficult.

Councillor Organ commented on the "one time ask" and CFO Redden said there are different categories, many events are a one-time event, annually but it is a different application because its technically a different event during that year.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee said he believes organizations should only be allowed to apply for one grant because we run the risk of it exploding and have for example, have \$3 million in asks and only have \$250,000 to give.

CFO Redden said she understands but restricting organizations to just one, might backfire, for example Trails. That's a strategic priority of council.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee thinks we are creating a reliance for organizations that we can't maintain; they are not being able to sustain themselves.

CFO Redden said that we need to hold organizations accountable to the policy as well and that might help with filtering some applications out.

Councillor MacLeod wanted to confirm that the recommendation is to leave the policy the same and CFO Redden confirmed that.

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Councillor MacLeod suggested organizations may be prohibited from applying every year and understands what Deputy Warden Dauphinee was saying.

Councillor MacNeil also added that a lot of organizations are not getting funding from the provincial and federal governments so they will try to find a way to apply for all four to get any extra money they can get.

Councillor Patterson said it is difficult but still thinks organizations need to prioritize what they need the most.

On Motion of Councillor Patterson, seconded by Councillor Longva that Council accept the CFO's recommendation but review the policy next year

Motion Carried.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee opposed the recommendation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the August 22, 2022, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was presented for approval.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee requested to rescind the following Motion from August 22, 2022, Council Meeting:

On Motion of Deputy Warden Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Organ to rescind the following Motion: that Council add the municipal owned property on Tower Road to the list of available properties for sale to be used for housing.

Motion Carried.

Deputy Warden made a new motion regarding the Tower Road Property.

On Motion of Deputy Warden Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Organ that the property on Tower Road and other previously identified Municipal lands be used as a resource to entice housing initiatives within the County.

Motion Carried.

On Motion of Deputy Warden Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that the Victoria County Municipal Council Minutes of August 22, 2022, be approved with the noted rescinded motion.

Motion Carried.

CFO Redden added that the applications for disaster relief funding are not open/available yet but will let Council know when they are.

CAO REPORT

Action Items

- Bathroom signage – 2 to 3 weeks time.
- MLA Bain Meeting- moved to Oct 4, approximately 30 members of the public were present.
- Upland meeting with Council on September 12.
- Signage for street name changes- sent to AMANS, compiling ideas - seems 50/50 split on who pays
- Ad for UARB hearing sent to all Councillors
- Island Wardens/Mayors meeting - working on setting up.
- Fishing Gear Coalition: End Of Life project - fisher people can take End of Life Gear to sites at no charge - Sept-March 2023
- DNRR - Dealing with Councillor MacDonald's issues - Dingwall beach metal, and dredging material has been removed
- White Point land: moving forward with this and getting an environmental assessment.

Tourism and Recreation

- New staff orientation and training and funding programs and community partners.
- Tourism strategy, placemaking and funding projects. New Tourism and Development Coordinator was out to a few Hike the Highlands events. About 40 people in attendance.
- Waterfront Baddeck: Tunes on the Town has been going really well, the new wharf on Kidston Island is being installed.

Community Development:

- Dingwall concrete was poured for garbage cans, benches, basketball court and picnic shelter.
- Ingonish steering group for Ingonish Development Society (IDS) is formed and work is underway to finalize the license agreement between Parks and IDS.
- Tunes on the Town took place in Ingonish last week.

Trails:

- Cabot Club is working on the new trail into Ingonish have gone into RFP for a consultant for an ARIA project they have to do.
- Our ARIA findings were sent to ACOA and based on that we have 2 small areas to change in the route.
- Updates to the local groups and clubs and land use agreements for private landowners, surveying the final route and sending out next RFPS for next phases.

Finance

- Grant recommendations on number of grants allowed to be applied for.
- Tax Update: As of today, we're at \$2,048,478 total outstanding, compared to \$2,237,931 this time last year for a total difference of **\$189,453** ahead.
- Tax Sale, November 22, 2022, at the Inverary Resort beginning at 11:00am. Please note the time change, it is typically held at 2pm.

Public Works

- There were waterline repairs complete in Dingwall and Neil's Harbour. Thank you to the residents for their patience.
- Transfer Stations are collecting storm waste and debris without tipping fees until October 8th. In the first 3 days of collecting this material there were 42 metric tons of trees delivered to the Baddeck site and 57,000lbs of tree and branch debris came in on Monday. It is estimated that another 40-50% was also collected at the Dingwall Transfer Station as well.

EDO

- Participated in the Municipal Engagement Session for the Nova Scotia Housing Needs with CoLab; have another meeting with them next week with other members of the REN
- Had a preliminary meeting with a prospective rapid housing project in Boularderie
- Met with the new project manager of Cape Smokey
- The economic impact RFP has been extended two weeks to September 29th
- I've been actively re-engaging Baddeck businesses on the Labour and Housing Survey.

Seniors Safety

- Draft Accessibility Plan is done. Will be taking to AAC in near future.

Other

- Meeting Re: Potential new site for SeaCan
- We have been approved for PCAP funding to replace the Dingwall Water Tower. To a max of \$140,000. The project is approximately \$550,000 so not full funding but a contribution, nonetheless.
- There is an MGA review on electronic notices, planning documents, selling and leasing properties. Comments from John Bain were circulated, they are due back this week. So just looking to find out if there are any issues that are to be discussed based on what was sent out and if not, can we move forward with submitting those comments?

Warden Morrison asked Council to have a quick look at that and CFO Redden mentioned that comments are due by the end of the week so have comments submitted by Thursday this week.

- DCB - asking Victoria County to contribute to the development of affordable housing by offering land.
- Another big thank you to Lyle Donovan for all his hard work that he did during Hurricane Fiona.
- Looking for a new Communications Coordinator and job will be posted soon.
- We need a motion related to funding that we received.

On Motion of Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor Longva that Victoria County supports the application of the ACOA funding for assistance under the Regional Innovation Ecosystem Program to develop a public space and to support events and attract people to the Main Street in Ingonish.

Motion Carried.

Councillor MacNeil asked about the PCAP funding and if the County applied to that funding for the Little Narrows project. CFO Redden said we didn't apply for the Little Narrows project because the Dingwall Tower was more urgent but added that the Little Narrows project was added into the Water Rate Study.

Councillor Organ asked to extend the acceptance of storm waste and tree removal waste. CFO said she would ask the Public Works supervisor to see if this is possible.

FCM REPORT

Councillor Patterson provided an FCM report from his recent trip to Edmonton. Some topics covered were:

Policing

Infrastructure Applications

Broadband and Cellular

Inclusion and Diversity

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District 1

Councillor MacNeil thanked Sean MacSween with Nova Scotia Power; he was very responsive. I was late to council as I was at a ceremony in Wagmatcook for the Mary Harper land trust transfer.

On Motion of Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee that a letter of congratulations be sent to Rodney Chiasson who received the Queens Platinum Jubilee medal.

Motion Carried.

Councillor MacNeil is receiving lots of phone calls concerning roads and they were brought up with the area manager and MLA Bain.

District 2

Councillor MacLeod said it has been brought to her attention that not all school busses are equipped with radios. This is very unsafe, especially for buses travelling in areas with no cell reception.

On Motion of Councillor MacLeod, seconded by Councillor Organ that a letter be written to CBRVCE requesting radios be put on all busses but especially on busses that travel through areas without cell reception. This needs to be done for the safety of the students and the drivers.

Motion Carried.

On Motion of Councillor MacLeod, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that a letter be written to Nova Scotia Power, Baddeck station, for their rapid response to Hurricane Fiona.

Motion Carried.

Councillor MacLeod requested to be permitted to attend the Atlantic LIP Gathering in Halifax.

On Motion of Deputy Warden Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacDonald to approve Councillor MacLeod's request to attend the Atlantic LIP Gathering in Halifax.

Motion Carried.

District 3

On Motion of Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacLeod that a letter be sent to the Premier to support a medical residency program at Cape Breton University.

Motion Carried.

Warden Morrison requested a name change request for Campbell Street to Jessica Wong Lane, he has submitted the applications and just needs a motion to approve the name change.

On Motion of Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor Patterson that Campbell Street in Baddeck be renamed to Jessica Wong Lane be approved.

Motion Carried.

On Motion of Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacLeod to request the rink funding be deferred until next year as their application will not qualify for this year

Motion Carried.

On Motion of Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor MacLeod to send a letter to MP Battiste asking why none of the Covid Relief funding was allocated to Victoria County.

Motion Carried.

Warden Morrison requested \$500.00 be taken from District 3 budget for the Kilt Walk on behalf of the Hospital Foundation.

District 4

Councillor Longva had some constituents concerned about hearing on CBC that the TMR system was unpowered for some time. Is this true? Why did this happen? Do we need bigger batteries or generators? Also, there was concern about the long lineups on the highway waiting for gas.

Councillor Longva also received a lot of calls and conversations about damage due to the rock chip sealing that was done on the North Shore. There were many windshields chipped or broken as well as paint chips to vehicles. There were also very long wait times up to 45 minutes.

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Councillor Longva also received complaints about the Long Hill Road. It is in desperate need of work; it needs gravel and grading, and it is down to one lane and very dangerous as it's on a turn going up the hill and those forced to go into the other lane cannot see if traffic is coming.

Councillor Longva requested the following to be taken from District 4 budget:

\$900.00 to the North River Community Hall

\$900.00 to the Englishtown Community Hall

Councillor Longva already requested \$900.00 and just received it for the North Shore and District Fire Department.

Councillor Longva requested a letter from the County to the North Shore and District Fire Department congratulating them on their 60th anniversary and also to the members who received their 25-year service pins. There are several members who have served for 50 years, the past District 4 councillor Merrill MacInnis being one of them.

On Motion of Councillor Longva, seconded by Councillor Organ that a letter be sent to the North Shore and District Fire Department congratulating them on their 60th Anniversary and congratulating the members who received their 25 Year Service Pins.

Motion Carried.

Councillor Longva thanked Melody Dauphny from the Clucking Hen who stepped up and supplied all the soup, chowder, and sandwiches to the comfort station and for all the volunteers from the Fire Department who manned it.

I would like to congratulate and thank Mary Ann Wilson and all those who have helped her on the placemaking, outdoor space behind the Fire Hall in Indian Brook. What has been done to date looks amazing and was an enormous amount of work.

The Old bridge at Tarbotvale is still floating in the river and no guardrail put up and still no streetlight.

District 5

Councillor Patterson mentioned the dog catcher position. CFO Redden said we are in discussions with the Union about a new position for this, it would move to a bylaw officer. Terry Hogan, the dog catcher in the North is handling both north and south. Councillor Organ said isn't it ridiculous to have someone who lives in the north to drive potentially drive 2 hours to catch a dog south.

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Warden said he understands but it is a short-term fix for right now. Councillor MacNeil added he wasn't aware that Mr. Berk retired, we weren't informed.

District 6

Deputy Warden Dauphinee acknowledged and thanked Jeff Gillis in Ingonish with Nova Scotia Power, his communication throughout the storm was great.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee said that after 3 years we will have the Parade Of Lights in Ingonish again.

On Motion of Deputy Warden Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacLeod for the County to contribute \$500.00 to the Parade of Lights in Ingonish to replenish the lights on the float.

Motion Carried.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee acknowledged MLA Bain for attending a meeting with Council earlier in the day and bringing Council's concerns with roads, ER and lack of ambulance service back to the Province.

District 7

Councillor Organ received many calls about the state of the roads and stressed that residents don't want a band aid approach to fixing them.

Councillor Organ said she believes many residents in her district are still in shock post Hurricane Fiona and Warden Morrison acknowledged the damage done in District 7.

On Motion of Councillor Organ, seconded by Councillor MacDonald that \$500.00 each be taken from Districts, 6,7 and 8 budgets to Cabot Education Centre for food support.

Motion Carried.

On Motion of Councillor Organ, seconded by Councillor MacDonald that \$1000.00 be taken from District 7 budget to St. John's Anglican Church to help with expenses.

Motion Carried.

On Motion of Councillor Organ, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that \$1000.00 be taken from District 7 budget to St. Andrews Anglican Church to help with expenses.

Motion Carried.

On Motion of Councillor Organ, seconded by Councillor Longva that \$1000.00 be taken from District 7 budget to North Bay Volunteer Fire Department.

Motion Carried.

On Motion of Councillor Organ, seconded by Councillor Longva that \$1000.00 be taken from District 7 budget to Neil's Harbour New Haven Volunteer Fire Department.

Motion Carried.

District 8

Councillor MacDonald thanked MLA Bain for attending the meeting with Council this morning to discuss the importance of the ambulance service and that MLA Bain is going to take that message back to the Province.

Councillor MacDonald said nothing has been done about the Aspy Bay Bridge since July. nails are protruding and the area manager is aware of this.

On Motion of Councillor MacDonald, seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee that a private lane be renamed to Big David's Lane in South Harbour. The application has already been submitted to the Provincial Department of Public Works and EDPC.

Motion Carried.

Councillor MacDonald made the following requests come out of District 8 budget:

\$500.00 North highlands Elementary School

\$500.00 to Bay St. Lawrence Sun Gym

\$500.00 to Cabot Fire Department

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter submitted by Parker Donham:

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Dear Warden Morrison:

Baddeck is a community of 769 souls. It serves as the county seat for Victoria County, whose population of 7,089 makes it the smallest in Nova Scotia.

Baddeck needs:

- A county seat to replace its antique county offices*
- A fire station that will serve a modern department*
- A rink to replace the village’s condemned rink*
- A place for the popular farmers’ market (currently meeting outdoors)*
- A meeting hall that will hold more than 80 people*
- A new library.*

It’s a big wish list for a small community.

Are the various constituencies for these infrastructure needs working together to come up with a single building that will meet their individual requirements? No. Each group is pursuing its own structure together with the real estate and funding to make it happen.

This is foolhardy. Imagine a community of 700-odd people attempting to build five separate structures. For the love of Pete, bang their heads together and insist they work creatively to consolidate these worthy projects into a single building, just as the Grand Lake Road Fire Department did with its multi-purpose building next to the Mayflower mall. That building has proven to be a wonderful community asset.

Please bring this correspondence to the attention of Council.

*Best regards,
Parker Donham
Kempt Head, NS*

Warden Morrison said he doesn’t believe this is the responsibility of Council but will forward this letter on to the economic development officer.

Councillor Patterson asked if we ever heard back from the library about what their plans were, can we initiate a discussion with the library to see what their needs are and Warden Morrison said the library has met with the rink and BOLD.

Councilor MacLeod provided an VCT update. We see ridership coming up and it was a productive meeting.



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Warden Morrison also thanked MLA Bain for attending the meeting this morning and thanked staff and CFO Redden for filling in for CAO MacEachen.

COUNCIL MEETING

Next Council meeting will be October 17, 2022, in Baddeck, at 2:00pm.

ADJOURN

Councillor MacNeil made a motion to adjourn at 4:40pm.