



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

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at the Highland Village in Iona on November 28, 2022, at 2:00pm with Warden 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 #7- Jackie Organ

District #8- Norman MacDonald

Also present were:

Alix Redden, Acting CAO

Stephanie MacLeod, Recorder

Dan Coffin, Tourism and Recreation Manager

Absent:

Leanne MacEachen, CAO

District #6 – Larry Dauphinee, Deputy Warden

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 and made note that Vince MacLean would be presenting first, then Rodney Chaisson.

***On Motion of Councillor Longva, seconded by Councillor Organ that the Agenda for November 28, 2022, be approved with the noted change.***

***Motion Carried.***

Warden Morrison acknowledged that Ross MacDonald, from Municipal Affairs was in attendance.

**CAPE BRETON COMMUNITY VENTURES PRESENTATION – VINCE MACLEAN**

Mr. MacLean gave a brief overview and presentation of Central Cape Breton Community Ventures.

Mr. MacLean is a volunteer and is speaking on the Ventures behalf. The group started in 1999. Its mission was to enhance the social and economic development of central Cape Breton.

The wharf in Iona was a major area of focus for this group. They see the Bras d'Or Lakes as a microcosm with the local wharfs.

In 2016 the Venture began with Ocean State, it is a federal program along with cooperation and recognition with the UN and that is why we celebrate World's Ocean's Day every year.

There is a weather station at the end of the wharf. You can go online and read the daily weather readings along with wind and tidal information.

In 2017 became part of the marine component of Trans Canada Trails.

They are also part of NS Trails; and received funding from Develop NS for their placemaking initiative. These funds will be used for signage, boat launch and washroom upgrades.

The wharf is beside a protected beach and picnic area, and they are always working to ensure the public are making use of this space.

Up until a few months ago, the wharf brought in no revenue but now it is shipping some aggregate offshore.

The group also promotes wellness days, foot clinics, yoga and local hikes and it is all volunteers, there is no staff.

They would like to insulate the building at the wharf and put heat pumps in and we will be requesting some funding from Council for that at a later date.

They envision the same thing that is happening in the Ingonish area, there is economic potential in the Iona area.

The Economic Development Officers have not paid much attention to Iona over the years, and we would like Council to keep this in mind when a new EDO is hired.

Pioneer Cemetery in Washabuck is washing away into the Bras d'Or Lake. About 35 people are buried there, not owned by any church and the ones that are buried there were presbyterian. The owners of the land deeded that section of property to the local community centre and the community centre would like to put some armour stone in that area but are having a hard time finding funding for that. It would approximately cost \$25,000 so please pass that along to anyone that you think that could assist with that.

Councillors all thanked Mr. MacLean for coming and presenting to Council. Councillor Longva agreed that it is a very underdeveloped area, and we all benefit from the Highland Village being there.

Acting CAO Redden mentioned our grant application will be out in January and wanted to point out that the files all stay with the Partnership so when a new EDO is hired those files will stay with them. And there is provincial funding for cemeteries as well.

Warden agreed with the potential in this area as well.

Councillor MacNeil thanked Mr. MacLean and the Ventures for promoting economic development in the area.

#### **HIGHLAND VILLAGE PRESENTATION – RODNEY CHAISSON**

Mr. Chaisson gave a presentation and update on the new building and the Highland Village. Some highlights include:

*Multi Year Site Development Strategy:*

- Process began in 2015
- \$6.8 million
- Developed with the Nova Scotia Museum
- Partnership with NS, ACOA, Canadian Heritage & Victoria County

*Structures:*

- An Taigh Fàilteachais | Welcome Centre
- An Taigh Gléidhidh | Curatorial Centre
  - •Renovation of existing 2,700 sq ft visitor centre
  - •1,500 sq ft climate controlled artifact storage room
  - •Preservation of Provincial Collection - Gaelic NS
  - •Costuming storage and maintenance department
  - •Supporting animation and public programs
  - •Exterior work completed March 2021
  - •Interior work early 2023
- Am Muileann Singlidh | Shingle Mill
  - •New 500 sq ft timber framed building
  - •Will house a working shingle mill
  - •Mill operated by Cash Family of Irish Cove
  - •Serving Gaelic communities in Eastern CB
  - •Officially Opened September 2022
- An Sabhal Beag | The Little barn
  - •Renovation of existing 600 sq ft building
  - •Hands-on programming/activity space
  - •Cruise Ship reception and programming
  - •Green room for Church Concerts/Functions
  - •Completed January 2021
- Na Taighean- Beaga | Washrooms
  - •New 650 sq ft modern washroom building
  - •On period site
  - •Serves visitors, church functions, and cruise buses
  - •Completed June 2020
- Am Buth Obrach | Workshop
  - •New modern 1,500 sq ft maintenance workshop
  - •Supports building maintenance and restoration
  - •Supports artefact and equipment restoration
  - •Meets contemporary OHS requirements
  - •Completed March 2021

*Exhibitions:*

- Orientation
- Contemporary Gaelic Nova Scotia
- Mi'kmaq
- Bras d'Or Lake

*New 7,700 square foot, year-round facility*

- Visitor reception
- Exhibition spaces - orientation & Gaelic NS today
- Library/Archives & genealogy - Seanchas Centre
  - •Library & Archives, including Victoria County's archives that were removed from the Courthouse.
  - •Roots Cape Breton Genealogical Materials
  - •Jim St. Clair's papers (in partnership with Beaton Institute)
  - •Joe MacLean Collection of Fiddle Manuscripts
  - •Celtic Serenade - Donnie Campbell's Collection of Celtic music Recordings
  - •Carl MacKenzie recordings and materials
- Multipurpose programming space
- Gift Shop & Commercial Kitchen
- Administrative offices
- High energy efficiency standard - Passive House
- Official opening spring 2023

*Project Budget:*

- Total Project Costs \$6,840,000
- Municipality of Victoria County \$100,000
- Province of Nova Scotia \$4,270,000
- Government of Canada \$1,470,000
- Total Government Contributions \$5,840,000
- Community/Private Sector Fundraising Goal \$1,000,000
- Remainder to raise (as of November 2022) \$200,000

Questions:

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Councillor Longva confirmed if the Highland Village will be open year-round, and Mr. Chaisson said that only the main building will be open year-round for programming.

Councillor Patterson congratulated and thanked Mr. Chaisson for providing a great spot and experience.

Councillor MacDonald mentioned that this is his first visit to the Highland Village and asked what the best initiative for fundraising was. Mr. Chaisson said that they engaged with RVR Promotions to help with their fundraising campaigns but then Covid happened so all their fundraising campaigns were all done through Zoom. They were able to make connections with people who understood the importance of the Gaelic culture.

Councillor MacLeod asked if the Highland Village will be reaching out to the hotels so they will inform their guests of this experience. Mr. Chaisson said they are always trying to find ways to get the word out.

Councillor MacNeil thanked Mr. Chaisson for all the hard work he and his staff have done over the years. The Highland Village employs 46 local people so its very important for the area and Victoria County.

Warden Morrison recognized the potential for this area and said that this is a great investment, and it was well supported. Warden Morrison acknowledged that Mr. Chaisson was a recipient of the Queen's Jubilee Medal and congratulated him.

**RECESS**

Warden Morrison called for a 15-minute recess.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the November 7, 2022, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was presented for approval.

***On Motion of Councillor Longva, seconded by Councillor Patterson that the Victoria County Municipal Council Minutes of November 7, 2022, be approved.***

***Motion Carried.***

Councillor Patterson asked about the windmill fund, and Acting CAO Redden said she is still looking for the agreement.

**CAO REPORT**

***Action Items***

- Working with DCB and their project manager regarding land for the Ingonish Housing Project. Subdivision plan is complete and soon to be submitted, sent the property off to legal to be migrated (required before selling and recommended before subdividing)
- Received UARB approval for the Dingwall Water Storage Tank Replacement project - \$566k project; have signed contract with Greatario to move forward. Decision regarding smart meters will come as part of rate hearing (Nov 29th - 11:30am)
- Municipal Boundary Review - community sessions held November 17 (New Haven AM / Baddeck PM), will be submitting to the UARB in December
- Minimum planning standards required due end of 2022; have requested an extension to end of 2023 as we are halfway through planning document
- Response received from RCMP regarding speed to pass emergency vehicles - sent to Barb
- Response received from Saltwire regarding cancelled newspaper delivery north of Smokey - call customer service center (1-800-565-3339) or Leo Gosse directly (709-364-6300) to discuss options

***Tourism and Recreation***

**Tourism:**

- Attended the CBU World Tourism Institute workshops on Reimagining the Tourism Workforce Nov 8&9
- TIANS – Tourism Summit Coming up on Nov 29 & 30. It will be the first in person conference since 2019.
- Hosted our first Ingonish STEP (Sustainable Tourism Expansion Program) steering committee meeting in Ingonish with local community representatives, ACOA, Tourism Atlantic, Nova Scotia Tourism, and Destination Cape Breton.
- Upcoming Program with Tourism NS on Compelling Tourism Communities: Emerging Winter Destination Pilot Program for Ingonish.

**Recreation:**

- Attended the PAPE (Physical Activity Provincial Education) meetings last week discussing common interests and trends in Physical Activity Education initiatives.
- Working on a Dynamic Trail Workout pilot project that could be rolled out to many trails in the County
- Working on a multi-sport Pilot program for potential launch across all of the county in future years.

**Community Development:**

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- Dingwall placemaking location project from 2022 has been completed with a new basketball court re-surfacing, new amenities in a picnic shelter, walking track, and solar lighting as well as waste bins. Next steps for the site will be to work towards securing funding and design concepts on a playground for the area and community events and gatherings on site next summer.
- SABDA – St. Ann's Bay Development Association hosted an open house for the new "Gathering Place" placemaking project space at North Shore and District Firehall in Indian Brook
- Ross Ferry Stewardship Society Placemaking & Beautification project has begun and should be completed before next summer with enhanced parking areas, a new garden area and a freshening up of the site, signage and amenities on the site.

**Trails:**

- Have been meeting with Snowmobile clubs in preparation for the upcoming season and digging into their challenges for the upcoming season. Much work being done right now by volunteers to get things open and safe after hurricane Fiona and things are looking good for some needed bridge upgrades in a few areas also.
- No information yet received on the large Infrastructure Canada Grant for trails from March of 2022.

**Finance**

- Tax sale - Nov 22: very successful - 33 properties originally advertised, 6 deferred to future sale, 10 paid prior to sale, 17 available at tax sale - 15 sold, 2 not sold. For properties sold, collected over \$35k in outstanding taxes + \$150k in surplus
- Tax update: As of Nov 22, \$1.318m outstanding total this year (\$1.02m current, \$298k arrears) vs. \$1.475m (\$1.016m current, \$459k arrears) outstanding last year. Perspective on arrears amount outstanding:
  - Nov 22, 2019 - \$675k
  - Nov 22, 2020 - \$655k
  - Nov 22, 2021 - \$459k
  - Nov 22, 2022 - \$298k

**Public Works**

- Attended an online meeting with CAO MacEachen and Warden Morrison regarding the proposed C&D regulations, we are not in agreeance and will be submitting our concerns to the Department of Environment by December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022.
- Baddeck Warehouse renovations are complete.
- Post Fiona C&D haul was completed November 17, 2022, we collected 382 metric tonnes.



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- We will have to haul the brush, C&D and the shingles out of the Dingwall site in the very near future – this will be at a significant cost.
- Scrap metal recycling is finished up at both sites.
- The new sideloader could be here by the end of March.
- Reached out to truck rental/leasing company in Ontario, not a long-term solution but in the short-term it could work if we needed that option.
- Asset management preliminary meeting scheduled for capturing our buildings/components at all our sites.
- Repairs to the old school in Ingonish starting Monday. There was damage to the roof from Hurricane Fiona.
- Attended a sustainable communities meeting. The next round of funding starts in the spring of 2023, might be a good thing for all departments to look at.
- EPR meeting on December 6<sup>th</sup> for printed paper and packaging for municipalities.
- Department of Environment was supposed to perform a site inspection of Neil's Harbour, the first time since the new technology has been in, now will be coming December 6<sup>th</sup> and will be issuing our new operating approval
- Investigating well pump issues in Ingonish.
- Trucked and disposed of approximately 50 lobster traps from Lighthouse Rd. in NH to Baddeck. This material was collected by Coastal Action, who was in the area collecting ghost gear that washed ashore during Fiona. Will collect the remainder this week.

### **Seniors Safety**

- Submitted Age Friendly Communities grant for project called "Municipal Assets Resource Map" requesting \$25k to hire marketing and communications company to map local resources and create a database for use in-house and possibly a front-facing resource that would be publicly searchable
- Submitted New Horizons for Seniors grant for project called "Seniors Cook at the Food Hub" requesting \$25k to rent The Food Hub commercial kitchen for facilitated cooking classes
- Reporting due for Community Connections Micro Grant called "FAP awareness" \$1k to cover printing costs for a Victoria County Transit flyer with info about fare increase and FAP resource
- ACTing Collectively Project now underway and currently recruiting anyone over 65 to participate in a survey about needs. Please have anyone who might be willing to participate contact Cassandra or Keegan
- Working with RCMP on a tour of presentations in every district to offer information about Frauds and Scams to seniors
- Accessibility Committee will meet Dec 1 to review drafted Accessibility Plan

## **HR**

- Hiring: PW Clerk - Interviewing next week
- Communications Coordinator - interviews in progress
- Solid Waste Educator - offer made
- PW Attendants Baddeck - hired
- Kelly Brett official appointment to Manager of PW
- Greg Weir appointment to PW Technician
- Allan Bragg, Manager of Accounting contract extension for a year

## **Other**

- Concern received regarding litter at Baddeck Waste Management facility - forwarded to Manager. This is an on-going issue; staff do perform general yard clean-up when able to outside regularly scheduled duties. However, we can always do better. Also installing snow fencing to catch debris. Response has been sent to resident
- Municipal Awareness week - Nov 21-27 - recognize municipal staff and councillors for their significant contributions to our local communities

Councillor MacNeil also mentioned that flyers went out in his area as well regarding the newspaper and Councillor Organ requested to have the 1-800 number to Saltwire be posted on our website.

## **MOTIONS**

***On Motion of Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor Longva to approve an increase from \$25.00 to \$50.00 for staff appreciation gift cards for Christmas.***

***Motion Carried.***

## **DISTRICT CONCERNS**

### **District 1**

Councillor MacNeil had the following Provincial Department of Public Works concerns:

- Red Point Road flooded last spring and there have been no repairs done.
- Dangerous area by Hectors Point, there is a break in the guardrail, and it hasn't been fixed
- Flooding in St. Columba due to beavers.

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Councillor MacNeil said he received a number of phone calls about water bills, late charges people didn't know about, water bills being incorrect and requested that some check and balances be completed before water bills go out.

Councillor MacNeil said washrooms were mentioned in Mr. MacLean's presentation and asked if there was any more municipal support funds available for washrooms in the County. Acting CAO Redden said she will get back to Councillor MacNeil on this.

***On Motion of Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Organ that \$1000.00 be taken from District 1 budget to Rankin School of the Narrows for their food program.***

***Motion Carried.***

**District 2**

Councillor MacLeod had the following concerns:

- Requested a letter be sent to the Minister of Education, Becky Durham, and MLA Bain, regarding an old policy that allowed students who were in grade 12, who had 100% attendance record, were allowed to be exempt from one of their final exams. Councillor MacLeod is asking why this is no longer a policy and could it be reinstated.

***On Motion of Councillor MacLeod, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that a letter be sent to Minister of Education, Becky Durham, and MLA Bain regarding the***

***Motion Carried.***

- Requested to contact MP Batiste to ask for more information about the OPHA grant, regarding heat pumps that will be available in the New Year. Councillor MacLeod is getting several calls getting about this. Acting CAO Redden said staff will contact.
- Councillor MacLeod, Warden Morrison and Recreation and Physical Activity Coordinator, Christopher Woodford had a meeting with principal Ron Muller from Baddeck Academy regarding a walking track and lights in the soccer field.
- Councillor MacLeod said that Baddeck Academy has a lot of students who are not eating and asking for a donation for the food bank from district 2, 3 and 4, \$250.00 each.
- Councillor MacLeod said the Baddeck Christmas parade went well, even in the rain. Thanks to Chris and Colleen for decorating the bus and to VCT for providing the bus.

**District 3**

***On Motion of Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor Longva to contact Trans Canada Trails to review present location of signage on Water Street in Baddeck. The signage is located in the middle of a public launch location.***

***Motion Carried.***

Warden Morrison acknowledged Belinda Garland who organized the festivities in Baddeck for Christmas in The Village and asked staff to send a note to her.

Warden Morrison acknowledged the tax sale and gave huge credit to the staff on how well organized and run it was. Thank you to staff.

**District 4**

Councillor Longva said that there was a grand opening of “The Gathering Place” in North River. Councillor Longva congratulated Mary Ann Wilson and all the other folks who contributed in any way, it is a beautiful and welcoming place. There is sheltered sitting areas, so it can be used in inclement weather too. Thank you to our MLA Keith Bain for coming to help celebrate the opening. This was funded in part by Victoria County under the placemaking initiative. Thank you to Victoria County and ACOA for their contribution.

Councillor Longva asked if staff could look into the SCCF Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund which was created to avoid/reduce greenhouse gas and emission reduction. The non-refundable funds available are between \$75,000 and \$110,000. It’s available to non-profit organizations and requires 20-40% contribution and 10 % in kind. The website is nschallengefund.ca.

**District 5**

Councillor Patterson had nothing to report.

**District 6**

***On Motion of Warden Morrison, on behalf of Deputy Warden Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Organ that a \$1,000.00 be taken from District 6 Budget for the Santa Walk in Ingonish.***

***Motion Carried.***

**District 7**

Councillor Organ wanted to thank the Provincial Department of Public Works crew for the work done in the New Haven area after Hurricane Fiona, the new bridge is great.

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Councillor Organ said there are still no “no parking” signs in White Point for the school bus.

Councillor Organ said that the intersection going into White Point is dark and the residents are asking for a streetlight.

Councillor Organ wanted to thank the Neil’s Harbour/New Haven Society for their work on the new cenotaph. It is greatly appreciated by the community.

**District 8**

Councillor MacDonald had the following concerns:

- There is a culvert collapsed at 75 Meat Cove Road and I called the Provincial Department of Public Works number I was not satisfied with the level of customer service I received from the call. I will call Steve MacDonald about this concern and with the customer service issue.
- Dingwall Road has come to completion and the community is happy
- St. Margaret’s Co-Op are closing their doors after 58 years, supply and support issues caused the closure.

**IN CAMERA**

***On Motion of Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Patterson to go In Camera to discuss a real estate issue.***

***Motion Carried.***

***On Motion of Councillor MacLeod, seconded by Councillor Organ to come out of In Camera.***

***Motion Carried.***

***On Motion of Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor MacDonald to accept the recommendations made from In Camera.***

***Motion Carried.***

**COUNCIL MEETING**

Next Council meeting will be December 12, 2022, at 2:00pm.

**ADJOURN**

Councillor Patterson made a motion to adjourn at 4:25pm