

Victoria County Municipal Council
December 12, 2022



A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at Council Chambers in Baddeck on December 12, 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 #6 – Larry Dauphinee, Deputy Warden

District #7- Jackie Organ

District #8- Norman MacDonald

Also present were:

Leanne MacEachen, CAO

Alix Redden, CFO

Stephanie MacLeod, Recorder

Dan Coffin, Tourism and Recreation Manager

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.

On Motion of Deputy Warden Dauphinee seconded by Councillor MacNeil that the Agenda for December 12, 2022, be approved.

Motion Carried.

QUEEN'S JUBILEE PRESENTAION – LYLE DONOVAN AND CASSANDRA YONDER

Warden Morrison went over a brief description of what the medal is.

CAO MacEachen presented the awards to Lyle Donovan and Cassandra Yonder to honor their services of going over and above during the Covid 19 pandemic.

Cassandra said it was an honor and it's a pleasure to work with the County and Lyle said thank you and I will continue to be dedicated.

EMCI/EHS PRESENTAION – MR. ELDEN MACDONALD, MIKE GILLIS, AND TROY BENNETT

Mr. MacDonald explained that they came to Council as a follow up to the NSHA meeting in October.

Highlights included:

- Responsible for Eastern Region, starts in Antigonish and into Cape Breton
- Fleet of ambulances, ptu's, mts, SEPAR, ECP a, CP and OPS.
- Employ over 1,500 of various roles
- Responded to over 200,000 requests for service. Average daily is 700 cases.
- Know your civic address
- Paramedic levels: PCP – primary care, ICP – intermediate care (no longer train ICP's), ACP – advanced care and CCP – Critical care (mostly on life flight)
- CTAS Canadian Triage Acuity Score: used by NS hospitals to range the emergency of the case/patient.

CAO MacEachen asked if she is a CTAS 5, non urgent, does a paramedic stay with me since I was brought in by ambulance. Mr. MacDonald said it is a case-by-case basis and we assess with the nurses. If you can't be left alone due to other health issues, a paramedic will stay with you.

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Deputy Warden Dauphinee said he's been hearing for years that ambulances are stuck in the hospitals so why can't we get more ambulances. Mr. MacDonald said SSP trucks were handling 83% transfers and now they are handling around 20% because of more transport vehicles on the road. Adding more ambulances doesn't necessarily help when they hit a bottleneck at the hospital, they don't have that consistent healthcare at the hospitals. The ERs are tremendously overworked.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee said we don't see the transfer vehicles in rural areas. Mr. MacDonald said when we started out, we went for the big centres first and as we move forward with these transfer vehicles, we will go to smaller, more, rural areas.

More highlights of different ambulatory streams to alleviate hospital visits:

- EHS Life Flight, serves NS but also extend to other provinces if requested.
- Extended Care Paramedic – going to homes to do assessments and follow ups requested by doctors. Also, in nursing homes as well.
- Community partners: EPSO emergency preparedness special operations. Training in mass casualty incidents, biotesting, chemical/biological emergencies.
- Palliative Care Program
- Community Relations, every year EHS paramedics spend lots of volunteer time at community events, such as school events, parades charitable events, presentations.
- Move Over Policy – the law is to slow down to 60kms/h when passing an emergency vehicle that is on the side of the road.

Questions:

Councillor Longva thanked them for the presentation.

Councillor MacNeil thanked them and commented on a personal situation and said the dispatch at the time there was no civic address as to where the incident took place, the ambulance was delayed in getting there, civic addresses are far behind in rural areas. Mr. MacDonald said we have to have somewhere to send an ambulance, an option is to wait and flag down the ambulance.

Councillor MacLeod said we can better understand how the organization works. If we can help in any way, please come to Council. Its important to keep the conversation going.

Councillor Patterson said he applauds you and your colleagues on the work you do every day.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee said he has the utmost respect for paramedics. Back in 2005 the community North of Smokey lobbied to get funding for a second ambulance, and we got it but now it gets taken from us all the time.

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Mr. MacDonald said there are 13 SSP zones in the province, the trucks go to the most probable place for a call to go in. It is unnerving and North of Smokey is not the only place experiencing it but it is what we are dealing with right now.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee said I understand this, but rural lives are being affected by this and its not fair, we are being treated like second class citizens and I want you to take that message back to the province and your management.

Councillor Organ said thank you for your service and Deputy Warden voiced all my concerns.

Councillor MacDonald said thank you for coming today and seeing the initiative and responsibility to commit to communications. I know you all at a personal level and kind of hard to comment with my supervisor sitting at the table.

CAO MacEachen asked if there is there more that can be done? Is there anything the County or council can do to help, we can contact the province, etc. we welcome you to contact us.

Mr. Bennett said help with recruitment would be great, getting into the schools, etc. CAO said we are having a job fair in March; we can be in contact with you if you would like to have a table there.

CAO MacEachen is very aware of the mental tolls that is involved with being a paramedic, is there a process in place with keeping paramedics mentally healthy and Mr. MacDonald said we are trying to approve more time off and avoiding burnout, but we are still seeing a struggle with lack of resources. The programs we have in place are far better than what we had 10 years ago.

Warden Morrison acknowledged that Lee Norman, a local paramedic provided an AED to the waterfront in Baddeck.

Warden Morrison echoes all the comments made from the other councillors and said we have some struggles with our local situation. With no ER in Baddeck, ambulances are having to bring patients to further away hospitals which increases wait times for other patients who need an ambulance. Mr. MacDonald said we are looking for other options to transfer less severe patients to free up the ambulances for more severe cases.

RECESS

Warden Morrison called for a 10-minute recess.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the November 28, 2022, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was presented for approval.

On Motion of Councillor Longva, seconded by Councillor MacDonald that the Victoria County Municipal Council Minutes of November 28, 2022, be approved.

Motion Carried.

CAO REPORT

Action Items

- Municipal Boundary Review submitted to UARB this week
- North Shore Washrooms – Kelly is taking the lead on this, and the site has been scoped out and in talks with an engineer.
- UARB Hearing on Water Rate Study was held Nov 29/22 and only one undertaking so well done everyone who worked on this. No members of the public were in attendance.

Councillor MacNeil asked when we will know of the decision or not and CAO said we are unsure, it might be January. If we hear back from them by January, then the new rates will take effect in March 2023.

- Trans Canada Trail sign, the Village had it installed, contacted them to have it removed. Village responsibility to move that sign.
- Island Mayors Wardens meeting, all the CAOS are interested in, open to all Council, potential date in February. Will keep everyone posted on it.
- The Village is sending off a letter to the Minister to convey ownership of the BVFD property to BVFD. The Village is sending the letter of to the Minister for approval. We don't need Ministerial approval, and already have a motion done at an earlier Council

Tourism and Recreation

Tourism:

- Attended TIANS – Tourism Summit Coming up on Nov 29 & 30th.
- Hosted a Winter Operator meeting with Tourism NS on Compelling Tourism Communities: Emerging Winter Destination Pilot Program for Ingonish. This program will see Tourism Nova Scotia working with us and operators in the Ingonish area to create compelling and

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attractive winter packages and clusters of activity that will be promoted and marketed for this and future years.

- Work continues on the beginning stage for the Ingonish STEP Project. Staff are currently setting up a committee communication plan, conducting an Asset Inventory and Project Screening Tool as one of the Steps of STE.

Recreation:

- Youth Engagement initiative at Cabot Education Centre, I had the opportunity to talk to every class to provide a platform for the students to voice what types of recreation activities/sports they would be interested in seeing within their school and community.
- Developing a Multi-sport pilot program for grades 3 to 5.
- Attended an Sport and Recreation Inclusion Workshop where the focus was to identify some of the barriers for participation, develop strategies to help eliminate those barriers as well as help identify possible support and resources available.

Trails:

- Congratulations to Cabot Snowmobile Club on the arrival of their new groomer. Wishing all sledders many Happy Trails ahead for this winter!
- No information yet received on the Large Infrastructure Canada Grant for trails from March of 2022. All indications are that this approval process can sometimes take years, so we are progressing along plan B for now as if the funding has not been received so our ground work is not delayed any further.
- After 3 years of preparation and applications work we have received final approval of ACOA funding for next 2 sections of the trail development as per the ARIA final report. A request for proposal will be sent out prior to Christmas for this work to begin as soon as weather and conditions allow.

Community Development:

- Baddeck Waterfront held a successful Community Update meeting last week. Their strong work is a perfect **Beacon in the Fog** for Comprehensive Community Planning process to begin in Baddeck and Area. A small committee of residents have been formed to work from Jan to March 2023 to prepare the terms of reference for the project as well as nominate and select a steering committee to oversee the **Baddeck Beacon Comprehensive Community Plan** over the next 12 to 16 months.
- Placemaking – A quick synopsis of our first 5 projects have resulted in over \$200,000 in funding from Provincial or Federal funding sources for improvements to the sites in these areas. The work is not yet all complete, but the early signs are showing strong success for these early projects.

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Finance

- Interviews for PW Clerk are done.
- Solid Waste Educator declined the offer so we will readvertise the position.
- WCB Audit has to be submitted by the end of the year
- Look through all the grants and draft letters to those who have not submitted final reports. Will be sending letters to all organizations that have not submitted their final report.
- Looking at the Survey Services RFP.

Public Works

- C&D issues with new changes sent to Environment December 9. We will get some communications out to the public on this as there will be huge changes and the Municipality are against these changes.
- Sat in on an EPR meeting – accepting what recycling materials is still not clear on how things will be collected.
- Now accepting applications for Depot donations for the bottle depots in Baddeck and New Haven.
- Remainder of the ghost gear that Coastal Action collected in Neil’s Harbour has been picked up.
- Good progress with the roof repairs at the Rec Society in Ingonish
- Fishing Gear Coalition is going to provide a container for fishing rope and possibly a machine to load the container.
- Deficiencies in the warehouse renovation project are being addressed

Water:

- Well pump has been replaced in Ingonish
- Repairs in Ingonish have been completed
- Department of Environment was in Neil’s Harbour Water Treatment plant and will be issuing our new permit
- Two operators will be taking their class 2 tests next week
- Weather cancellations - no longer doing double days, will be collected following week on regular scheduled day, with more material collected per limit, if required.

Seniors Safety

- continuing to visit with community partners (public seniors’ groups such as “Seniors Lunch”) to assist RCMP to deliver their presentation about Frauds and Scams which is being well received
- first Senior Safety Weekly Bulletin was circulated this week and will continue to be sent out to everyone on our email list each Tuesday. Please contact SSP if you know someone who would

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like to receive the emails. They do not include any information that is not also posted (and much more) in our Facebook group, but it is designed to meet the need of those who do not participate online.

- Victoria County's Accessibility Plan has been approved by the Accessibility Committee and is ready to be approved by Council
- recruitment for ACTing Collectively Project is underway and we hope to hear from those over 65 who are willing to participate. Reach out to learn more!

Other

- Computer security training is only 29% complete. All staff and council who have not completed this training need to. CAO will ask IT director to resend out the email related to this.
- Post Fiona funding is closing December 16, 2022.
- Planning a meeting with admin staff for next steps of the Courthouse.
- Received an EMO report on Fiona, will be sending that out soon.
- We should set a date for strategic plan updates. Would like to include governance updates and refreshers and preliminary budget talks.
- Meals Plus Program, Jenn Ripley said she received requests from residents who are not part of the program who would like to receive food. Asking Council if they would like to support these residents at a cost of \$2,100.

On Motion of Deputy Warden Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Patterson that Victoria County Council support the Meals Plus Program with providing meals to Victoria County residents who are not part of the program at a cost of \$2,100.00 to be taken from the general coffer.

Motion Carried.

Councillor MacNeil asked if we could get a list of what districts these residents are in, who are in need.

Councillor MacNeil asked about the new collections schedule and asked about what if a storm happens two Fridays in a row, and CAO said if this happens, we can adjust it as is needed.



DISTRICT CONCERNS

District 1

On Motion of Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor MacLeod that \$1,500 be taken from District 1 budget for the Little Narrows Community Development Association for repairs to the hall.

Motion Carried.

District 2

Councillor MacLeod mentioned that the Christmas Parade of Lights will be taking place around District 2 and 3 on December 19th and 20th and encouraged everyone to light their houses up and take a drive around the neighbourhoods to see the displays.

Councillor MacLeod wished everyone a safe holiday and said Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

District 3

Warden Morrison mentioned that there was a Committee of the Whole meeting earlier today and that there was an In Camera session held at the end of that meeting.

On Motion of Deputy Warden Dauphinee seconded by Councillor MacLeod to approve the recommendations that were in made at the In Camera meeting that was held earlier today.

Motion Carried.

Warden Morrison attended a Waterfront Baddeck meeting this week and said there was a great turnout from the community and there has been a lot of great work done with this committee thus far.

On Motion of Warden Morrison seconded by Councillor MacNeil to send a thank you note to the Waterfront Baddeck Committee on the work that has been done.

Motion Carried.

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On Motion of Warden Morrison seconded by Councillor Longva that a letter be sent to Minister Masland with the Department of Public Works to ask what Victoria County will receive from the \$4 million that was just announced for gravel road upgrades in Nova Scotia.

Motion Carried.

On Motion of Warden Morrison seconded by Councillor MacLeod that a letter be sent to the Cape Breton Victoria Regional Centre for Education to request permission to allow tour buses to park in the school parking lot after passengers disembark for the months of July and August.

Motion Carried.

On Motion of Warden Morrison seconded by Councillor Organ that a letter be sent to Minister Masland with the Department of Public Works and Minister Halman with the Department of Environment to allow electric modes of transportation be used in the Village of Baddeck as per the new Climate Change plan for Nova Scotia.

Motion Carried.

Warden Morrison mentioned an email from Deputy Warden that addressed how many times he gets contacted from residents regarding provincial issues and asked for permission to forward that email off to the NSFM and Deputy Warden agreed.

Warden Morrison commented that the Accessibility Plan is in the final draft and is requesting Council to approve the plan in principle.

On Motion of Councillor Patterson seconded by Councillor MacNeil that Council accept the Accessibility Plan in principle.

Motion Carried.

District 4

Councillor Longva had the following concerns:

- Received requests from constituents on the Meadow Road regarding the bridge on the Goose Cove end of the Meadow Road. Councillor Longva has been receiving these requests for almost 2 years. The bridge is extremely dangerous especially in winter and as winter is soon upon us

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again those seniors who drive on it are getting worried. Would be great if there could be a guard rail or something put there to put them at ease.

- Getting complaints from residents on Big Harbour Road with deplorable road conditions. Residents said they were thankful for the repairs that were done but there was ditching to be done on the west side of the hill and it was not, as a result the heavy rain the next day washed out part of the road and made a huge rut which is getting bigger with each rainfall. If not looked at asap the road will be impassable for any vehicles.
- Took a drive out to Tarbotvale and happy to see the guardrails are going up. Thanks for all the road work you and your crews are doing.
- The Tarbotvale Road is still not cleaned up from the damages done by Fiona and the installation of the new bridge. The old bridge is still in the river and needs to be removed before it causes another blockage that could cause problems. Also, there was land taken from a constituent on that road to accommodate the road repair and the bridge and promises were made to him that it would be cleaned up and reseeded. I see some guard rails have been installed but there are more needed to replace the jersey barriers that are still there.
- Long Hill Road is long overdue for repairs as one side of the road is compromised and the other side of the road has 2 big holes in it, which people are forced to hit with their vehicles as it is dangerous to drive on the eroded and undermined side of the road.
- Englishtown Road has a section close to the highway that floods and freezes, it was doing this last year and it is still an issue, it was frozen this morning and extremely slippery. This is a high traffic road especially this time of year with the holidays coming.
- Tir Nan Og road needs gravel.

District 5

Councillor Patterson went to a luncheon with the Big Bras d'Or Volunteer Fire Department and was happy to see new members joining.

District 6

On Motion of Deputy Warden Dauphinee seconded by Councillor Organ that \$500.00 each from Districts 6, 7 & 8 be taken out of their district budgets to cover the costs of the smoke detectors that were given to each student from Cabot Education Centre after a presentation by EMO officer Lyle Donovan.

Motion Carried.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee would like a review of the gravel road speed policy. Presently, if there are no posted speed signs on side and gravel roads, the speed limit is 80km/h. This is not an acceptable speed. One example of it being excessive is on Harbour View Road in Ingonish where it is less than 2 lanes on that road that has homes on it. Residents on that road were told that a road assessment

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would need to be completed by Bernie Murphy. It has been over three years since this assessment has been requested and it is still not completed.

On Motion of Deputy Warden Dauphinee seconded by Councillor Longva that a letter be sent to Minister Masland with the Department of Public Works to request a review of the speed limit policy on side and gravel roads. 80km/h is too fast for most gravel roads. Also requesting an assessment of the Harbour View Road in Ingonish.

Motion Carried.

District 7

Councillor Organ said there are still no “no parking” signs in White Point for the school bus and said hopefully this gets taken care of soon as she has been asking since May of this year.

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

On Motion of Councillor Organ seconded by Councillor MacDonald that a streetlight be installed at the intersection going into White Point.

Motion Carried.

Councillor Organ asked for an update regarding the north bus with Victoria County Transit being down for repairs and Councillor MacLeod said she would provide an update in Committee Reports.

District 8

Councillor MacDonald wanted to pass along congratulations to Jade Wilkie who successfully passed her Paramedic Primary Care provincial exam.

Councillor MacDonald also added that all his Provincial Department of Public Works concerns have been sent to Steve MacDonald.

MOTIONS

On Motion of Councillor Organ seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee to approve a road name change from 5606 Road to Rose Way.



Motion Carried.

OTHER

Deputy Warden Dauphinee asked if there has been any response regarding the Cabot Trail letters that were sent out in August for the 100th anniversary and CAO said there was no response, but the Tourism and Recreation Manager is constantly engaging with this initiative.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Councillor MacLeod indicated that Victoria County Transit met today and are aware that the north bus is broken down but hopefully it will be back on the road in a couple of weeks.

The next Victoria County Transit meeting will be held in January.

FCM REPORT

Councillor Patterson said that the report is not complete but will send Steff a copy later. Some of the highlights of Councillors Patterson's recent meetings in Ottawa included:

- There were over 100 elected officials in Ottawa for Advocacy Week
- Had a meeting with MP Battiste, discussed the RCMP retroactive pay, funding applications, Hurricane Fiona, the cell and phone lines not working, discussed the courthouse and the rink. MP Battiste said the rink was one of his top priorities. Discussed coastal erosion and protected lands and, boundary reviews for the province.
- Canada community fund doubled again (formerly gas tax)
- Disaster mitigation fund
- Wastewater infrastructure
- Public transit fund
- Broadband
- Spoke with Minister Dominic LeBlanc, and he said decisions about the RCMP retro pay from the federal government will be coming in the near future
- Harassment of elected officials
- Green municipal fund – might be helpful to the courthouse and the rink

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COUNCIL MEETING

Next Council meeting is January 9th, 2023, at 2pm.

Warden Morrison said on behalf of Council, we wish everyone in the Municipality, Season's Greetings and Happy Holidays!

ADJOURN

Councillor MacNeil made a motion to adjourn at 4:05pm