



**Victoria County Municipal Council**  
January 9, 2023

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at Council Chambers in Baddeck on January 9, 2023, 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

Also present were:

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

Absent:

- District #8- Norman MacDonald

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.

***On Motion of Deputy Warden Dauphinee seconded by Councillor MacLeod that the Agenda for January 9, 2023, be approved.***

***Motion Carried.***

There were many members from the public in attendance today. Warden Morrison acknowledged Ellen Morrison who celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on New Years Day and sent condolences to the family of Hugh Mueller who passed away.

**NEW EDO (Economic Development Officer) OFFICER INTRODUCTION – PARKER HORTON**

CAO MacEachen introduced Mr. Horton and he gave a brief introduction of himself and Council congratulated Mr. Horton on his new position and welcomed him to Victoria County.

**VICTORIA HIGHLAND CIVIC CENTRE PRESENTAION – JOHN TRICKETT and DAVE PARKINSON + COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Where we've been:

- Meetings with provincial cabinet ministers
- Various multi-purpose facilities/community centres
- Municipal representatives
- Community organizations

Where we are:

- Formal funding applications, 98.5% complete.
- 75% completion of potential tenants for new facility
- 98% completion of operating budget
- Concept drawings of the new facility, which Mr. Parkinson went over.

Mr. Parkinson went over some of the details, highlighting the non-ice surface space making it a multi-use building as was requested from the community. The gym being one of the organizations that have expressed they want a better facility for the gym and would like to move into the rink.

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Where we are going:

- Meeting with federal and provincial resources to discuss the funding applications
- Further County engagement
- End of February submission of formal funding applications to the Government.

Questions:

Councillor MacNeil asked about the status of the old rink, will it be able to operate over the next few years before or if funding is available. Mr. Trickett said the engineers did an assessment and the building is safe for use. It isn't efficient and the side walls are still decaying but there are mitigations for that, including monitoring snow loads on the roof over the winter. In September this year the insurance broker said they will not be insuring the building any longer but then we along with our insurance broker, reminded them that we have never had a claim for insurance and our broker was able to get us liability insurance. Mr. Trickett said we hope to be ready in spring of 2024 to start a new build and the aim is for 2025 for an opening date.

Councillor Organ had no questions but looks forward to another update.

Councillor MacLeod asked is there enough room for a parking lot and Mr. Parkinson said they got direction from EDPC for parking, the building will go back further to ensure we have enough parking.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee looks forward to other updates as well.

Councillor Longva asked if they looked at other options for locations to make the facility even bigger to accommodate all groups and organizations in the community. Mr. Trickett said we met with Theatre Baddeck to see what they require and what our business model dictates to us and it was decided it wasn't a good fit to house Theatre Baddeck in the new facility. The Archery Club may or may not come into the facility, the library does not fit within the footprint or contribution expectations, but they do want to meet again.

Mr. Parkinson said one of the challenges is the cost, there is only so much money available. If we wanted to add to this facility, it could be a separate building, it doesn't necessarily have to be an all-in-one building.

Councillor Patterson commented about the Municipal Green Solutions Fund and there can be a cooperation with municipalities and organizations.

Councillor Patterson asked how many spectator seats there are, and Mr. Parkinson said just under 400 people/seats.

Questions were opened to the public.

Stephen Kerr has a concern about fitting into a box and if you don't fit into the box that the rink has proposed, then that's too bad. I would like to see a building that can house many more organizations.

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Stephen Kerr also pointed out that not one of the Councillors brought up the budget. It was \$14 million and now it is \$22-25 million and it was not brought up.

CAO said cost overruns shouldn't be a council concern as we are still committed to the same amount of funding whether their costs go up or not, the County will not contribute more for cost overruns.

Chris King asked about outdoor space within the multiuse space and Mr. Trickett said we are limited by the footprint and trying to keep our costs down and reminded Mr. King that the rink does back on to the trailhead behind the rink.

CAO reminded members of the public about Beacon Baddeck and encouraged community members to attend these meetings to have their say on what residents want to see in this community.

Joe Harvey said there has been very little public engagement. Any meetings that the committee is having should be open to the public. Mr. Trickett said that point is well taken, many meetings were to deal with financial aspects of the rink, but we do have more engagement sessions planned.

Christy MacRae Ziss confirmed that Theatre Baddeck wasn't a fit, there was a very limited box that we had to fit into, and we just couldn't. This committee had a particular mandate and couldn't take more risks and that played a factor in Theatre Baddeck not continuing their pursuit in moving into the new facility. It is hard not to feel concerned; this is very expensive and there isn't enough public input and encourages Council to think about, what is the bigger picture, what about public engagements and other organizations.

Mr. Parkinson said that yes, we have a box, the challenge is money, and we need to ensure we have a revenue stream from those organizations that will be going into the new facility.

## **RECESS**

Warden Morrison called for a 10-minute recess. Reconvened at 3:18pm.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the December 12, 2022, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was presented for approval.

***On Motion of Councillor Longva, seconded by Councillor MacLeod that the Victoria County Municipal Council Minutes of December 12, 2022, be approved.***

***Motion Carried.***

## **CAO REPORT**

### ***Action Items***

- EMO Post Fiona Report- sent out previously

CAO MacEachen discussed backup generators from the report and said if organizations got the 80% for generators, CAO suggested the Municipality cover the other 20%. CAO asked Council to agree in principle to that at a cost of up to \$92k.

***On Motion of Deputy Warden Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacLeod that Victoria County cover the other 20% of the cost of generators for comfort stations at a cost of up to \$92,000.***

***Motion Carried.***

Councillor MacLeod asked about the extra costs if the generator price goes up and CAO said the province will still cover the 80% no matter the cost of the generator.

- Minimum Planning Regulations - we received an extension, but a conditional one. Based on the extension, we will have to consult with neighboring municipalities, and update the Provincial Director of Planning on our progress.
- New Neil's Harbour Transfer Site - still waiting on Cabinet Approval, however, the field work on the survey has been completed, and sent to Dept of Natural Resources and Renewables for their review. This needs to be done before the plan is registered and conveyance can proceed

### ***Finance***

- Revenue department is official as of January 1 – now responsible for tax, utility, and tipping fee billing/collections
- Working on better documenting and “automating” tax sale process with instructions, templates, etc.
- VCT – wrapping up 2021 year-end review
- Have received 2023 municipal profile, growth report and assessment roll from PVSC
- Bargaining prep – tentative early February
- RFP for compensation review services posted in December, closed January 6<sup>th</sup>
- FCI's released – we are in the Green! For taxes
- Next tax sale is March 28, 2023, at the Inverary Inn.
- Municipal grant application is available as of today. Due March 31, 2023. Note new email address for submissions. Submissions need to be emailed to [grants@victoriacounty.ca](mailto:grants@victoriacounty.ca)

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**Public Works**

- Draw for Depot donations was complete, all the groups have been notified.
- Met with Appleseed Energy regarding solar panels.
- The new collection truck might be arriving sooner than expected, could have it by end of April.
- North Shore washroom- Strait Engineering was down to survey that area. Next step is to do a test pit.

Water:

- Got operating approval for the Neil's Harbour Plant.
- Generators: one is supposed to be delivered by end of January.
- With the new C&D Regulations, we don't have room for all services at our Dingwall site. We need to decide the future direction, based on Fire, and C&D regulations

**Tourism and Recreation**

Tourism:

- Playground funding application is complete, playground will be in Dingwall and 5 accessible chairs, if we receive the funding
- Beacon Baddeck initiative – looking at getting a committee together.

Recreation:

- following up about disc golf courses, possibly Dingwall area and some potentially in the schools.
- Multi-Sport program follow up with the schools

Community Development:

- Focused on the website listings
- Upkeep on STEP files in Ingonish and looking into contractors in Ingonish for that project

Trails:

- Push is on for RFP's for trail work.
- ACOA funding received– will be going forward with the next phase
- Looking for funding for Crowdis Snowmobile Club.

**Senior Safety**

- heard from a few seniors by phone who were struggling over Christmas period with connectivity issues (cell, wifi, roads, isolation)

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- RCMP still doing Frauds and Scams public presentations, reach out to Cassandra if you have a group who would like to hear it
- weekly bulletin being circulated on Tuesdays, reach out to Cassandra if you'd like to receive it
- Transit, fare increase; FAP. Fare went up to \$7.50.
- new mobile foot care available North of Smokey
- still recruiting participants for ACTing Collectively survey – if you are over 65 and willing to participate, reach out to Cassandra.
- 2022-2025 NS Government Accessibility Plan has been released. We have submitted our plan and will be posting on our website shortly.

***Other***

- Village is now moved out to separate space. No longer on our accounting system. Just cleaning up what we owe them.
- New Transit number for driving issues 1-877-833-0060
- Setting up bi-weekly meetings with Keegan.
- IT training is not complete for many. If you received an email to complete training, and you haven't done it, the email is legit.
- Mayors/Wardens/CAO's Island wide meeting – we are arranging, for Mar 2/3.
- Strategic Planning meetings on February 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee asked about the washroom on the North Shore and CAO said we are looking at the property that the old school sat on.

**DISTRICT CONCERNS**

**District 1**

Councillor MacNeil is continuing to work on road issues with Steven MacDonald.

**District 2**

***On Motion of Councillor MacLeod, seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee to request the NSHA to come to Council with an update regarding the Urgent Treatment Centre at Victoria Memorial Hospital.***

***Motion Carried.***

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**District 3**

Warden Morrison acknowledged that former Councillor; Athol Grant was in attendance.

**District 4**

Councillor Longva passed along her sympathies to the family of Ronnie Bona.

***On Motion of Councillor Longva, seconded by Councillor MacLeod to send a sympathy card to the Bona family.***

***Motion Carried.***

Councillor Longva made a request for a streetlight at Plaister Park, it has never been replaced.

There is a lot of areas in her district that have no cell service and asked if the broadband meeting that we are going to have will be dealing with that? CAO said we, with many other municipalities in NS have written a letter and will be following up with that letter soon.

Councillor Longva said that the last rain caused a lot of extreme erosion in the River Bennett area, the road was washed out to the pavement. Areas in Wreck Cove also have clogged drains and causing no access to a resident's driveway.

Bridge on the Meadow Road still needs guardrails.

**District 5**

Councillor Patterson said there is a completely eroded shoulder on Kempt Head Road and have sent pictures to MLA Bain.

Councillor Patterson had a call about a dog issue on MacKenzie Drive and CAO MacEachen said to call Terry, he is covering both North and South areas.

**District 6**

Deputy Warden has been receiving lots of calls from subdivision developers. They are having issues with serviced or not serviced roads. Information about serviced and un-serviced roads have been never passed on to them. The roads are already there, but not up to provincial standards. Deputy Warden asked if staff could look at the process for services, should it go through EDPC first, or the County? What are the policies? Deputy Warden requested a staff report.



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**District 7**

Councillor Organ is still working with the Provincial Department of Public Works about still not having a “no parking” sign in White Point and is still waiting on a streetlight request from NS Power.

**COMMITTEE REPORT**

Councillor MacLeod said the bus for the North is in the shop but will be out soon and the transit dispatcher will be taking appointments as of Thursday for the North. And reminded residents that the number for driving concerns for Transit is 1-877-833-0060.

**OTHER**

Warden Morrison reminded Council that there is a strategic priorities meeting on February 1 and 2. CAO told Council to come prepared for what their strategic priorities are for your area and for the County. CAO said Councillor’s should think about what each Councillors election platform was/is. Good time to reach out to residents in your districts to see what their priorities are and what they would like to see.

**COUNCIL MEETING**

Next Council meeting is January 23, 2023, at 2pm.

Warden Morrison mentioned that MP Batiste wishes to come to Council and will be in touch with Steff to schedule.

**ADJOURN**

Councillor MacNeil made a motion to adjourn at 3:55pm.