



**Victoria County Municipal Council**  
February 21, 2023

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held at Council Chambers in Baddeck on February 21, 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

District #8- Norman MacDonald

Also present were:

Leanne MacEachen, CAO

Alix Redden, CFO

Allan Bragg, Manager of Finance

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.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Warden Morrison called the meeting to order and presented the agenda for approval.

There was an In Camera session prior to Council and it will be reconvened after Council.

***On Motion of Councillor Longva seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee that the Agenda for February 21, 2023, be approved.***

***Motion Carried.***

**BUILD NS BROADBAND UPDATE – KEVIN KLINE AND KELLY ROSE**

Mr. Kline and Ms. Rose gave a brief presentation.

Presentation Highlights:

Provincial goal: (bring high-speed Internet to as close to 100% of Nova Scotian homes and businesses as possible)

- Initial investment of \$193M
- Build Nova Scotia role:
  - lead strategy and recommend projects to Trust
  - manage Service Delivery Agreements
- Implementation of solutions across province; leading Satellite Internet Service Rebate Program as well

Broadband Internet – Our Approach:

- Reach at least 95% NS homes and businesses –Now moving towards 100%
- Focus on outcomes, not technology
- Deliver minimum speeds (50Mbps/10Mbps wired/ 25Mbps/5Mbps wireless)
- Hold ISPs accountable to deliver reliable service over time.

Performance

10-year Service Delivery Agreement that covers:

- Network Performance
- Customer Service
- Network Scalability

- Pricing to Consumers

Overall Update (\*as of February 2023):

- 71,500 homes and businesses with access to broadband internet through terrestrial projects. (of 92,500 in projects announced by Build Nova Scotia)
- Satellite rebate program expanded to reach +99%
- \$165M from Trust & \$138M leveraged (\$118.5M from private sector)

## Victoria County Update (\*as of February 2023)

Project	Status	HUs Remaining	Expected Completion
Dingwall	Complete	0	-
Meat Cove	Underway	21	Dec 2023
Neils Harbour	Complete	0	-
Ingonish	Complete	0	-
St. Anns	Underway	697	Dec 2023
Boularderie	Complete	0	-
Scope Expansion - Boularderie	Underway	134	Dec 2023
Baddeck	Underway	832	Nov 2023
Iona	Underway	319	Oct 2023
Washabuck Area	Underway	252	Dec 2023

Project Challenges:

- Delays in implementation due to 'make-ready' work required to be performed by NSPI. (permitting, tree trimming, pole replacement, etc.)
- Steps to mitigate include:

- Additional NSPI contractor to help with 'hot-line' work
- Bury cable to avoid make ready work in key areas
- Redesign of additional Grade 1 crossings
- Bore under 100 series highways to avoid additional aerial crossings
- Prioritize any public works and DLF permits
- Exemption for spring weight road restrictions

#### Cell Coverage

- Working to better understand service levels and identify gaps
- 12,000k of new fibre infrastructure through INSI projects help to facilitate connectivity to new cell towers

#### Satellite Internet Service Rebate Program:

- Direct to consumer rebate program on upfront costs for satellite system up to \$1,000
- Announced in Jul. 2022 to reach the 3,700 homes and businesses where there is no wired or wireless solution
- Expanded to include those in project areas that are yet to complete. Total eligible ~35,000
- Eligible providers must meet CRTC minimum speed targets. Starlink only qualified provider at present

#### Few Common Questions:

##### **Q. Why do you need my SIN for the satellite application?**

A. The independent Nova Scotia Internet Funding Trust is the issuer of the rebates who must disclose to the CRA any distribution of capital property to beneficiaries, including the name and tax identification number of the beneficiary, and a description of the property.

##### **Q. Are there other qualified satellite options?**

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A. Other qualified provider(s) that can meet the minimum CRTC speeds could also be eligible. Currently, Starlink is the provider that meets or exceeds these speeds.

**Q. They've come to do work in our area but haven't been back.**

**Why?**

A. To help projects stay on track, crews may move from project area to project area depending on what work can be completed or advanced at the time in a certain area.

**Q It looks like fibre is now outside of my house. How do I know?**

A. Access to connections is the final step in the process. Items including networks that are downstream, termination equipment, and back office support must be in place prior to making service available to customers.

Contacts:

Internet for Nova Scotia Initiative

<https://internet.buildns.ca/>

Satellite Internet Service Rebate Program

<https://internet.buildns.ca/satellite/>

Email: [satellite@buildns.ca](mailto:satellite@buildns.ca)

Toll-free: 1-833-422-6591

Questions:

Deputy Warden Dauphinee asked about the loss of telephone services in a power outage. Mr. Kline said because everything is fibre now that is why there is a loss of service, Bell used to provide backup batteries, but they don't provide these services anymore.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee also commented that it is hard to get Bell back into the area when there is a line that goes down. Mr. Kline said we want to track that because Bell is supposed to have the line back up within 7 days. Deputy Warden Dauphinee will forward resident information on to Mr. Kline so he can report that back to Bell.

Councillor Longva asked which communities are under the St. Ann's heading. Mr. Kline said there is a community search function on our website. Mr. Kline said if there is a resident

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that is not included in the project area, please tell them to contact us but reminded Councillor Longva that the project isn't finished yet.

Councillor Longva confirmed with Mr. Kline that FibreOp will help with cell services and Mr. Kline said yes, it should help.

Councillor Patterson asked about the SIN having to be provided and asked if that means the service is taxable and Mr. Kline said no, SIN is just being used to report back to CRA.

Councillor Patterson asked what they meant by "Boularderie North", according to his knowledge, this area hasn't been done. Mr. Kline said he will look into this.

Councillor MacDonald brought up service interruptions, and they seem to be happening often. Mr. Kline said this shouldn't be happening that often and requested to send him the resident information so they can inform Bell.

Councillor MacDonald asked about the timeline for Meat Cove and Mr. Kline said the residents are further away from the access point from where the Fibre is so Bell had to re-engineer the project, but it has been re-scheduled for December 2023.

Councillor MacNeil asked why the project stopped in the Estmere area and Mr. Kline said there are several reasons why projects stall, it could be water crossing issues, permits, etc. but he will check on this.

Councillor MacNeil asked if they have a third-party company inspecting Bell's work afterward and Mr. Kline said Bell has to give us a set of performance tests and BuildNS audits the sites as well. There are also fines built into the contracts if they don't meet performance tests.

Councillor MacLeod asked if the maps are up to date. Ms. Rose said updates were made last week.

Councillor MacLeod asked if the Starlink rebate is only for new customers and Mr. Kline said no, if you purchased your Starlink last year, you could submit your receipt for a rebate.

Councillor MacLeod mentioned that it is difficult for many residents to put out \$1000.00 before they get the rebate and BuildNS did look into programs to help with this and nothing has been found yet but if any funding opens up, they will let Council know.

EDO Officer Parker Horton asked if there was ever a cost analysis on installation and subsidization since Starlink is supposed to be in the interim. Mr. Kline said it not part of our mandate right now, just covering the cost of installation of Starlink right now. We aren't looking at covering the monthly cost.

CAO MacEachen mentioned online comments and one was concerning cell services and Mr. Kline recognized the challenges with that.

Warden Morrison said residents feel that broadband is a basic level of infrastructure that should be provided.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the February 6, 2023, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was presented for approval.

***On Motion of Councillor MacLeod seconded by Councillor MacNeil that the Victoria County Municipal Council Minutes of February 6, 2023, be approved.***

***Motion Carried.***

### **CAO REPORT**

#### ***Action Items***

- Doing communications on water rate increase, there is about a 15% increase.
- Municipal Boundary Review Public Hearing on April 18, 2023, at 2pm. It is on the Municipal Calendar on the website.
- Need a Boundary Review Motion.

***On Motion of Deputy Warden Dauphinee seconded by Councillor Longva to approve sending the Boundary Review Recommendations off to the UARB.***

***Motion Carried.***

- We are sending our Strategic planning document to a designer for drafts. Will circulate Draft once we receive.

***On Motion of Councillor MacLeod seconded by Councillor MacNeil to carry on with the Meals Plus Program for another year.***

***Motion Carried.***

#### ***Finance***

- Budget Day one is February 21, 2023. Starting with Capital.
- T4's going out soon.
- Tax Sale March 28, 2023.

### ***Public Works***

#### Waste Management:

- Still waiting for truck to be delivered from Halifax.

#### Water:

- Approved for a Clean Internship student again, will be working with the Water Department.
- Leak detection is ongoing, very hard time of year to find the leaks. May experience continued interruptions.
- Level 2 Tests being written by our operators.

### ***Tourism and Recreation***

#### Tourism:

- Met with Destination Cape Breton Marketing Committee to review upcoming 2023 Marketing plan.
- Met with Tourism Nova Scotia to re-schedule the influencer visit to Ingonish for early March as the February trip was cancelled. The goal of the program is to help promote the area a Premier Winter destination.
- Met with Donald Hanson from Wagmatcook to open ongoing discussions around how we can be of assistance to the Wagmatcook community in growing their tourism story and experiences. (Inclusive of trails development projects)
- Reviewing and sharing upcoming grant opportunities with the tourism industry.

#### Recreation:

- Attended NS Walk training and now certified group walk leader.
- Finishing the final touches on the Pilot Multi-Sport program.
- Working on the AT Core Network initiative. (Blue route with Bicycle Nova Scotia)
- Processing funding applications for schools' programs and other active Living programs being offered by our community groups across the county.

#### Trails:

- Planning a meeting with potential trail builders to discuss upcoming projects for the summer of 2023.



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- Working on private landowner agreements and Dept Nature Resource permits now for Phase 2 through Big Baddeck.

Community Development:

- Facilitated the evaluation, scoring and selection of a consultant to conduct the Ingonish Step Project for the next 12 months. This project is on track and has some great momentum in moving forward with community commitment for sustainable growth in the coming years.
- Planning a series of meetings in different communities around the county in the coming weeks and months. If you have a tourism experience or community development idea reach out to chat or watch for when we are in your area.

**Senior Safety**

- Senior drop ins and lunches are all starting back up again post Covid.
- Had great engagement with a senior group in Ingonish.
- Ukelele class just started on the North Shore.
- Got a grant through Age Friendly Communities for marketing for community resources.

**EDO**

- Getting out to the businesses to introduce myself.
- Met with 2 businesses about microloans and business development.

**Other**

- Met with ABO Wind, to discuss Alternative Energy solutions. Will be meeting again early March. They will be coming to meet with Council in the near future.
- Ingonish Roof - tender has closed. Received one bid.

We are looking into getting a line of credit with the RBC for \$3.5 million. We are not going to use it; we just want to have it in case.

Be it resolved that the Council of the Municipality of the County of Victoria authorizes the Municipality to borrow a \$3.5 million Line of Credit from the Royal Bank of Canada.

The following motion was made and passed on February 21, 2023:

***On Motion of Councillor Longva seconded by Councillor MacLeod that the Council of the Municipality of the County of Victoria authorizes the Municipality to borrow a \$3.5 million Line of Credit from the Royal Bank of Canada.***

***Motion Carried.***

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Councillor Longva asked about the NS Walks Training and CAO said it is through Hike NS.

**RECESS**

Warden Morrison called for a 10-minute recess at 3:19pm.

**DISTRICT CONCERNS**

**District 1**

Councillor MacNeil had the following concerns:

***On Motion of Councillor MacNeil seconded by Councillor Patterson that a letter be sent to whoever oversees the Federal Boundary Review to convey Council's displeasure of the proposed boundary change. Geographically will put Victoria County at a disadvantage.***

***Motion Carried.***

**District 2**

Councillor MacLeod had the following concerns:

- Met with residents from Middle River and Margaree regarding the situation of the rivers in Middle River, Big Baddeck and Margaree. It is a huge concern of how the rivers are changing and they are in need of maintenance because the rivers are flooding lands. They are going to have meetings and Councillor MacLeod will pass the information along.
- Councillor MacLeod asked about NSHA will come to council to give us an update. CAO MacEachen said she has nothing; she did speak with Brett MacDougall about UTC numbers, and he passed it on to someone else and haven't heard back yet.
- Requested a status update for the pedestrian sidewalk between Fownes Drive and Baddeck Academy.
- Margaret MacPhee turned 108 this month so congratulations to her!

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**District 3**

Warden Morrison mentioned a climate change conference in Sydney and if any other Councillors wish to go, they can. It is on April 22, 2023, Warden will send the link around.

Received the signs for Jessica Wong Lane, hoping to have an unveiling in March.

**District 4**

Councillor Longva had the following concerns/requests:

- Mentioned the ukulele classes on the North Shore.
- Attended the Seniors Lunch, 59 people attended and were appreciative of the information she provided from the Strategic Priorities sessions.

**District 5**

Councillor Patterson had the following concerns:

- Meeting with NSPI officials – there is a Resolve Team and Councillor Patterson will send around the number to the other Councillors.
- Grant application can a "Staff Member" give a letter of recommendation and CAO said yes but one from a Councillor would be even better.

Councillor Patterson gave an FCM Report:

**Virtual meetings**

- Feb 23/23 - Community Safety and Crime Prevention Committee
- Feb 24/23 - Environmental Issues and Sustainable Development Committee
- Mar 7/23 Rural Forum
- Mar 8/23 COW, FCM Board talks

Councillor Patterson commented that if there are any topics you want me to bring up, let me know.

- Registration for Toronto FCM (May 25-28, 2023) opens today - Feb 21/23

**District 6**

Deputy Warden Dauphinee had no concerns.

**District 7**

Councillor Organ had the following concerns:

Went to the Highland Manor with MLA Bain and Cecil Clark, presented Stella Capstick with an award, and Warden Morrison also sent his congratulations.

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Had an issue with garbage pickup on lighthouse road, thank you to the CAO for her assistance with that.

**District 8**

Councillor MacDonald had the following concerns:

Asked when the Provincial Department of Public Works was coming to council and CAO MacEachen indicated they will be here March 6, 2023 to present to Council and hear district concerns.

**MOTIONS**

CAO MacEachen indicated we need a motion to appoint the following for EDPC;

**Building Inspection**

- Building Inspectors: David MacKenize and Sean Donovan
- Alternates: Harry Martell, Johnathan Martin, Andre Sampson and Luke Ross
- Special Constable: Sean Donovan and Johnathan Martin

**Development Officer**

- Wanda Ryan
- Alternates: John Bain, Andrew Jones, Dawn Sutherland, Kristen Knudskov and Mikayla Tait

**Fire Inspector**

- David MacKenzie
- Alternates: A. Sampson, S. Donovan, H. Martell, J. Martin, and L. Ross

**Dangerous or Unsightly Premises**

- Administrators: Johnathan Martin and John Bain
- Alternate: Luke Ross, David MacKenzie and Andre Sampson
- Special Constable: Sean Donovan and Johnathan Martin

***On Motion of Deputy Warden Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Organ to accept the EDPC appointments.***

***Motion Carried.***

**MOTIONS**

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Council received a memo from EDCP regarding the Public Participation Program Engagement with Abutting Municipalities.

***On Motion of Councillor MacNeil seconded by Councillor MacLeod that Municipal Council adopt by policy, the Municipality of the County of Victoria public participation program regarding engagement with abutting municipalities, as set out in Appendix A of this planning report dated 21 February 2023.***

***Motion Carried.***

**CORRESPONDENCE**

All previously forwarded.

**COUNCIL MEETING**

Starting in April we will be moving to one Council Session a month and one Committee of the Whole meeting a month.

April 24, 2023 Council will be held in Indian Brook and Councillor Longva will arrange this.

Next Council meeting is March 6, 2023, at 2pm.

**ADJOURN**

Councillor MacNeil made a motion to adjourn at 3:59pm.