

A Committee of the Whole meeting was held via Teams on January 10, 2024, at 10:00am with Deputy Warden Dauphinee in the Chair.

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

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

STAFF PRESENT

Leanne MacEachen, CAO

Alix Redden, CFO

Stephanie MacLeod, Recorder

Deputy Warden Dauphinee 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

Deputy Warden Dauphinee called the meeting to order.

Addition of a Bylaw and Policies discussion to be added to the agenda.

On Motion of Councillor Longva seconded by Councillor MacNeil that the Agenda for January 10, 2024, be approved with the noted additions.

Motion Carried.

On Motion of Warden Morrison seconded by Councillor Longva that the Minutes for November 27, 2023, be approved.

Motion Carried.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE – PARKER HORTON

Highlights & Events

- **Low Carbon Community Funding** - The Municipality of the County of Victoria was successful in its application for the Low Carbon Community Fund, securing \$75,000. This funding is dedicated to a feasibility study on the establishment of a municipally owned and operated EV Charging Corporation. Currently, the Request for Proposal is undergoing its final review, poised for imminent release. This initiative represents a forward-thinking step in the municipality's journey towards sustainable and innovative community development.

EDO

- ▶ **Tourism Economic Impact Study** – We recently completed a tourism economic impact study, encompassing the entirety of Cape Breton Island. This comprehensive analysis, conducted in collaboration with KPMG and various stakeholders, highlights Cape Breton's substantial contribution to Nova Scotia's tourism sector. Despite representing only 13% of the province's population, Cape Breton remarkably accounts for 20% of Nova Scotia's tourism GDP, outperforming provincial averages across all metrics. This study underscores the region's vital role in driving Nova Scotia's tourism economy.

EDO

- ▶ **Ingonish Tourism Economic Impact Study** - Following the comprehensive tourism economic impact study covering Cape Breton, a specific recommendation emerged: conducting a secondary, more focused study on Ingonish. This initiative aims to provide a detailed analysis of the current and potential economic impacts specific to Ingonish, delving into a more granular understanding of its tourism dynamics. The study will be managed in partnership with the Economic Development Officer and led by KPMG, in collaboration with the Cape Breton University World Tourism Institute. The statement of work for this significant project is nearing completion, and the study is expected to commence in the upcoming months. This targeted approach is poised to yield crucial insights, shaping the strategic direction for Ingonish's tourism sector.

EDO

- **Czechia Fact Finding Mission** A dedicated team from the Municipality, including the Chief Administration Officer, Tourism Manager, Economic Development Officer, and members from Eastern District Planning, conducted a fact-finding mission in Czechia. This mission aimed to assess regional impacts and best practices in similar operations, pertinent to our county's development. A highlight was the visit to Lipno, where discussions with the long-serving mayor revealed insights into sustainable tourism growth, paralleling the situation in Ingonish in terms of geography, population, and demographics. The experience in Lipno, showcasing world-class, sustainable development, mirrors the transformative journey underway in Ingonish. The final economic impact report, capturing these learnings and comparisons, is in its final review stages and will be released soon, promising valuable insights for our county's future planning.

EDO

- **Housing Accelerator Fund Application** - A focused housing accelerator strategy, supported by council, has been submitted to the Housing Accelerator Fund, reflecting our county's commitment to resolving housing issues. Anticipating a response soon, we are ready to work with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) on implementation. This initiative, which was detailed in an earlier briefing, showcases our proactive and collaborative approach to enhancing local housing solutions.

EDO

- **CGC's Little Narrows Quarry Revitalization in Cape Breton**- Since the announcement of the Canadian Gypsum Corporation's (CGC) initiative to reopen the Little Narrows gypsum quarry, our team has been actively engaged, providing continuous business advisory support. As CGC rolls out their operation, our involvement is crucial in facilitating the regional economic benefits of this CAD 104 million investment. This project, instrumental in creating over 100 local jobs, represents a significant boost to the local economy. Our commitment to supporting CGC in this venture aligns with our dedication to fostering community growth and economic development in the region

Comms Team

- ▶ **Invest in Cape Breton Podcast**– he Cape Breton Partnership launched its podcast series, *Invest in Cape Breton*. This series was developed to challenge assumptions about the Island's economy through in-depth interviews with local change makers. In the inaugural episode, host Michelle Samson explores the Island's innovation ecosystem with the help of three leaders representing diverse corners of tech industries, who prove that innovation is thriving in Unama'ki– Cape Breton. The episode features interviews with Chad Munro of Mabou-based Halifax Biomedical, Beth Mason of the Verschuren Centre, and Darren Gallop of Carbide. You can listen to the first and subsequent episodes by visiting: <https://welcometocapebreton.ca/investpodcast/>.

LSI

- ▶ **Opening Doors to Collaboration** – The Cape Breton Local Immigration Partnership is hosted its fourth annual partner update event on Friday, November 17th in Ben Eoin. *Opening Doors to Collaboration* brought together Unama'ki - Cape Breton organizations and service providers who are working to support newcomers to Canada as they settle on the Island

Creative Economy

- ▶ **Unama'ki – Cape Breton Motion Picture Co-operative** – The Cape Breton Partnership's Creative Economy Development Officer, Bill Culp, has been working on the creation of the Unama'ki – Cape Breton Motion Picture Co-operative. A strategic plan has been developed to provide a roadmap to highlight rural Nova Scotia, especially Unama'ki - Cape Breton, as a desired location for the film and television industry. The plan also identifies ways educational institutions and the provincial government can provide support that could help significantly increase the revenue of the industry for the province over the next 10 years.

Creative Economy

- ▶ **Comedy Festival** - The Creative Economy Development Officer provided support to the island-wide Cape Breton Comedy Festival which included performances in Big Baddeck and Ingonish. The events for the first -time festival were successful and the promoters are currently planning for 2024
- ▶ **Theatre Baddeck** -The Creative Economy Development Officer provided support and guidance to Theatre Baddeck regarding their business plan. The CEDO coordinated meetings for Theatre Baddeck with ACOA and CCTH, attended events, and provided promotional support.

Upcoming Events

- ▶ **Tourism Sector Strategic Planning Engagement Session - Baddeck 24 Jan**
- ▶ **International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) Whistler Conference 21-24 Jan**

Victoria County Metrics Jan – Dec 2023			
Activities	Total Started (as of Nov 23)	Total In Progress (as of Dec 23)	Total Completed
Business Support, Sustainability, & Growth	Total - 20	Total - 35	Total - 44
Continuous Improvement & Business Advisory	8	20	3
Business Planning & Startup/Entrepreneurship	9	9	41
Succession Planning	2	5	
Creative Economy	1	1	
Economic Development Projects & Strategic Sector Support	Total - 2	Total - 5	Total - 4
Sector Analysis (Strength & Weaknesses)			
Other Economic Development Projects	2	5	4
Addressing Talent Needs (Labour & Population)	Total - 27	Total - 44	Total - 6
Human Resources Advisory Services	3	4	1
Business Immigration Consultancy	2	12	1
Immigration Advisory Services	22	28	4
Retention Activities	Total - 2	Total - 2	Total - 0
New Connectors	1	1	
Welcome Network	1	1	

QUESTIONS

CAO MacEachen advised Council that there was supposed to be a meeting with the Province to discuss wind projects but the Province is not making near shore wind development a priority right now so those meetings will not be happening.

There was some discussion around the International Council of Shopping Centres (ICSC) Whistler Conference and CAO MacEachen encouraged Council to contact Mr. Horton about certain businesses that there might be a need for in their districts, i.e., a Dollar Store.

Warden Morrison requested Mr. Horton to share some posts while attending the conference.

Councillor MacNeil asked Mr. Horton about getting gas pumps in central Cape Breton with Little Narrows Gypsum starting back up again, people will need more access to gas. Deputy Warden Dauphinee added that rural gas stations are in jeopardy and asked Mr. Horton to push the Province for better incentives and regulations.

BYLAWS AND POLICIES DISCUSSION – CAO MACEACHEN

There was a discussion around the current bylaws and policies and CAO MacEachen asked for direction from Council as to which ones Council wanted to revise, repeal, or new ones to add.

BYLAWS

AUCTIONEERS, PEDDLERS, HAWKERS AND TRADER OF GOODS BYLAW (1982)
BUILDING BYLAW (1993)
BUILDING PERMIT FEES BYLAW (2010)
CIVIC ADDRESSING BYLAW (2012)
COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT (CDDI) BYLAW (2021)
DEED TRANSFER TAX BYLAW (2021)
DOG CONTROL BYLAW (2017)
ELECTRONIC VOTING BYLAW (2020)
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT BYLAW (2017)
EXTERNAL ORGANIZATIONS TAX EXEMPTION BYLAW (2014)
MARKETING LEVY BYLAW (2023)
MINIMUM HOUSING STANDARDS BYLAW (1986)
PROPERTY ASSESSED CLEAN ENERGY (PACE) BYLAW (2021)
SMOKING BYLAW (2002)
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT BYLAW (2021)
SUBDIVISION BYLAW (2016)
WATER SUPPLY OR SEPTIC UPGRADE LENDING PROGRAM BYLAW (2020)

Where to start?

- Most Important?
- Alphabetical?
- Oldest to newest?
- Are there any that need to be repealed?

POLICIES

BREASTFEEDING POLICY (2013)
CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COUNCIL POLICY
COUNCIL COMMUNICATION POLICY (2019)
DANGEROUS AND UNSIGHTLY (D&U) PREMISES POLICY (2017)
ELECTRONIC MEETING POLICY (2020)
ENGAGEMENT WITH ABUTTING MUNICIPALITIES POLICY (2023)
FLAG POLICY
MUNICIPAL FEE POLICY (2023)
MUNICIPAL GRANTS POLICY (2021)
MUNICIPAL TRAVEL EXPENSE POLICY (2014)
MUNICIPAL WASTE COLLECTION ON PRIVATE ROADS POLICY (2023)
PROCUREMENT POLICY (2013)
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICY (2013)
RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY (2016)
SAFETY POLICY (2010)
SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION POLICY (2016)
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY (2016)
STREETLIGHT POLICY (2022)
TAX AND WATER COLLECTION POLICY (2019)
WORKPLACE HARASSMENT DISCRIMINATION POLICY (2016)

Where to start?

- Most Important?
- Alphabetical?
- Oldest to newest?
- Are there any that are no longer needed?

Council are to pick their top 5 each of bylaws and policies and email them to Ms. MacLeod by next Council, January 22, 2024.

DISTRICT 5 CONCERNS – COUNCILLOR PATTERSON

Councillor Patterson went over the following concerns:

1. Assessments Dec 31/23

Need to consider this because of the increase in assessments, might have to look at lowering the tax rate.

2. FCM report

Virtual committee meetings Feb 20-22/24

In-Person meetings March 5-7/24 Prince George, BC

Would like to attend in person. Deputy Warden Dauphinee asked what the cost is and Councillor Patterson thought it would be about \$2,500. Deputy Warden Dauphinee said it seems like a long distance and I think if you can attend virtually, you should attend virtually with consideration of cost. Councillor Patterson said it is a good networking opportunity and the President of the FCM is from Nova Scotia.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee asked Council for their thoughts, Warden Morrison sees the value in attending in person but this is a far distance so if you can attend virtually then

that would be better. And there is an FCM conference in Calgary where at least 4 councillors will be attending.

Councillor MacLeod asked what topics will be covered and Councillor Patterson said he didn't get the agenda yet.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee asked where we are at in the budget with conferences and CFO Redden will get back to Council with this information and Deputy Warden Dauphinee asked Councillor Patterson to send costing.

3. Fences Arbitration Committee

Canada (Nova Scotia)

Fences and Detention of Stray Livestock Act (R.S.N.S. 1989, c. 166).

An Act to provide for fences and detention of stray livestock.

The present Act lays down provisions relating to fences and detention of stray livestock. For each municipality a committee to be known as the "fences arbitration committee" shall be established. In particular, section 5 specifies that the owner of a livestock farm shall build and maintain fences adequate to prevent his livestock from escaping from his farm. Moreover, the owner of a non-livestock farm adjoining a livestock farm shall not plant or cultivate any crop other than hay or pasture that would constitute an enticement to livestock closer than eight feet to a fence built or maintained. The Act consists of 20 sections.

CAO MacEachen will look into what other municipalities have.

5. Community Standards By-law

CAO MacEachen said this was tabled as there were concerns around the wording. If there is interest, we can take another look, add it to your priorities list for next Council.

6. Land Use – Uplands

CAO MacEachen said it is still in the draft phase and there still needs to be community meetings, at least four of them. We are still waiting for a draft from Upland. CAO had heard that Upland overextended themselves on the projects they took on so that is why there is a delay.

Councillor Patterson has also had issues with campgrounds, we have no rules to stop it from happening.

7. Wait list for a Doctor.

Could we send a letter to the Minister asking for doctors in Baddeck be added to the list when residents from Victoria County are looking for a new doctor. Right now, residents are only be added to the weight list for doctors in the CBRM.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

January 10, 2024

Warden Morrison agreed, Victoria County residents should first be given a Victoria County doctor as an option first.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

Councillor Longva asked if there was any discussion on VCT doing deliveries. Councillor MacLeod said she doesn't remember that discussion, but the next VCT AGM will be on the 22nd and it can be brought up there.

Councillor Longva asked for an update from senior safety. And CAO said she will look to get an update at an upcoming COW meeting.

Councillor Longva asked about accessibility funding and wondering if we could find out what they are and there may be organisations in the community that might qualify for it.

Councillor Patterson mentioned the NSFM newsletter and the grants list that is there every month, perhaps Longva could look at that and share with the organizations.

Warden Morrison requested to look at strategic priorities at a COW as well.

NEXT MEETING

Next Committee of the Whole meeting is February 5, 2024.

ADJOURN

Councillor MacNeil made a motion to adjourn at 11:32am