

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held in Council Chambers at Baddeck on January 22, 2024, at 2:00pm with Warden Morrison 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

Steff MacLeod, Recorder

Alix Redden, CFO

Jennifer Dagsvik, Communications

Six members of the public were in attendance and Municipal Advisor, Ross MacDonald was also in attendance.

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 Councillor MacNeil seconded by Councillor Organ that the Agenda for January 22, 2024, be approved.***

***Motion Carried.***

## RCMP UPDATE – DISTRICT COMMANDER JOSHUA WIESE

- Staffing, running 33% vacant but backfill every shift so it doesn't mean less officers.
- District Commander Wiese went over a handout that was supplied to Council. It included stats, call volume, offences, etc.

## QUESTIONS

There were questions about the stats and District Commander Wiese answered and clarified.

There were questions around mental health training for officers and District Commander Wiese said there is on-going training but there is never enough training but there have been some policy changes that are making things a little better.

District Commander Wiese will send the traffic offences list to Steff MacLeod, and she can send out to Council.

Councillor Patterson discussed the recent murder in Big Bras d'Or, there has been a lot of talk about public safety, we are not used to seeing these activities in the rural communities, what can these communities do to help the RCMP with these situations, or anything that can be done for prevention? District Commander Wiese said prevention is such a complex question and in relation to the murder, the preventative steps would have had to be taken years ago. Rural areas are not immune to crime, just when it happens there, it's more shocking.

Councillor Patterson said from the community's point of view, they feel like they should be given more information when something happens, and District Commander Wiese said this would be a task that would be very invading and it's not reasonable to alert for everything. There is a lengthy and legal process to alert, and we can't alert based on rumors and what is being said on Facebook. We have to think of the victims families as well and ensure they have all been contacted.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee praised the officers in Ingonish and to encourage the new officers to get to know the community and people in it. The RCMP have assisted the volunteer fire departments with rescues and asked if the officers could be trained properly in the highlands to be better assistance.

Councillor MacNeil requested more RCMP presence in his district.

Warden Morrison asked how we stack up compared to other municipalities and District Commander Wiese said he speaks with the District Commander in Richmond, and they seem to have higher call volume and crime stats are good. Victoria County has remained one of the safest places I have ever worked in. Our comparative district would be Guysborough.

### **CAPE BRETON VICTORIA REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION (CBVRCE) – SUSAN KELLEY and LEWIS MACDONALD**

- Permanent substitutes, Rankin School of the Narrows has this position. The purpose of this type of position is to ensure that, that school always has a substitute. This is also going well, North of Smokey.
- The 7 schools are doing well, consistent enrollment and services. Still having housing issues in getting a social worker placed in Ingonish.
- Transportation update provided by Mr. MacDonald.
- Published a long-range outlook, available on CBVRCE website.

### **QUESTIONS**

There were questions concerning the bussing policy, particularly on more rural roads and there has been some updates to the policy but the policy is a provincial one.

Councillor Patterson gave acknowledgment to Brenda Lavery, the principal at Boularderie School and the use of the school during the Celtic Colours Festival.

Councillor Organ thanked the board for the new sign at Cabot Education Centre and the new bus drivers. Councillor Organ asked about a cleaning concern at Cabot last week and Mr. MacDonald said some custodians were brought in from elsewhere to catch up on the cleaning.

Councillor MacDonald brought up the conveyance issue of ensuring that students in Meat Cove are getting to school as no bus is available to go to Meat Cove. A van was purchased to get these students to school but because of a health issue, we had to cancel that run but there is now plenty of spare drivers for that position.

School cancellations were also discussed, and that call is made by Mr. MacDonald.

The Special Permit teaching was also discussed, and Ms. Kelley said if there is concern about the performance of these Special Permit teachers, those concerns need to be brought forward.

Warden Morrison mentioned the requested sidewalk at Fownes Drive and have been waiting for over 2 years for Public Works and requested CBVRCE to send or contact Public Works in support of this request and Ms. Kelley and Mr. MacDonald said they would do that.

**EASTERN DISTRICT PLANNING COMMISSION (EDPC) UNSIGHTLY PREMISES  
PRESENTATION – SEAN DONOVAN**

Mr. Donovan went over a presentation for the property of MacAulay Resorts Ltd, Cabot Trail, Ingonish NS, PID 85052777 and of 3336306 NS Ltd, Cabot Trail, Ingonish, NS, PID 85080661 where there is a dilapidated shed that is located on both properties. EDPC recommends a demolition order be served and the building be torn down.

**QUESTIONS**

The owners of the 2 properties, Catherine Ann MacKinnon (representing the property owner) and Scott MacAulay were in attendance.

There were questions around who actually owned the building as it sits on 2 properties.

Catherine Ann MacKinnon, spoke on the owner's behalf for 3336306 (Glenghorm Resort) NS Ltd, Cabot Trail, Ingonish and went over a brief history of interactions she had with MacAulay Resorts Ltd. regarding the shed.

Mr. Scott MacAulay spoke on behalf of MacAulay Resorts Ltd. Mr. MacAulay gave some background information on this issue. Mr. MacAulay requested that if Council wishes to grant them more time before demolition, that there be a strict timeline for that and said that he concurred with the EDPC's recommendation for demolition.

Councillor Patterson asked Mr. Donovan if Council can extend the 30-day order and Mr. Donovan said that is a Council decision to extend.

Councillor MacLeod asked if MacAulay Resorts Ltd. would allow Ms. MacKinnon to get the repair done in 60 days and Ms. MacKinnon said I am not sure if it could be done in 60 days.

***On Motion of Councillor Patterson, seconded by Councillor Longva to extend the demolition order to 60 days with no further extensions and the shed needs to meet the EDPC standards for permit.***

***Motion Carried.***

**WASHROOM REPORT – DAN COFFIN**

Mr. Coffin gave a brief presentation on the background of the washroom projects over the last few years and provided feedback/results from a survey that was given to the Operators who are currently getting funding from the Municipality to run their washrooms.

**RECESS**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the December 11, 2023, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was presented for approval.

***On Motion of Deputy Warden Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor Longva to accept the Minutes of December 11, 2023.***

***Motion Carried.***

CAO MacEachen mentioned that there will be a Budget Engagement Survey being put out by Finance and Communications.

Warden Morrison mentioned that we have not heard a response from the local department of DNRR, could we contact ECC regarding illegal dumping and who to contact.

**DISTRICT CONCERNS**

**DISTRICT 1**

- Ottawa Brook flooding at the Wynn property. The area has been flooded for years now. Told they are monitoring but more has to be done. When flooded the owners have to use a boat to get out to the main road. The culvert is blocked and too small has to be replaced.
- Property assessments: doesn't seem to be any reasoning behind the assessments some properties in my local area went up 6% some went up 35% with no work done on the property for years. Neighbours are not pleased.

**DISTRICT 2**

- February 9th, Margaret MacPhee will be 109 years old.
- Passing of Joan MacInnis, a former employee of the County. Could there be some recognition for Heritage Day.

**DISTRICT 3**

***On Motion of Warden Morrison, seconded by Councillor Longva to contact Bell to confirm that Fibre Op service is not offered in the Village of Baddeck***

***Motion Carried.***

- Requested a card for Margaret MacPhee for her 109<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- Petition DHA

Warden Morrison asked which Councillors were interested in attending the FCM Conference in Calgary.

***On Motion of Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee to send Councillors' MacNeil, MacLeod, Dauphinee, Patterson, and Morrison to the FCM.***

***Motion Carried.***

#### **DISTRICT 4**

- Dave Williams with Natural Resources came to SABDA'S latest meeting, and the Federal Government will be giving funding for the North River Falls trail and the Red Island Trail is going to get some Federal funding for work to be done there as well.

#### **DISTRICT 5**

- As a result of a lunch and learn session, interest has been expressed for a community garden.
- There is some interest around some form of seniors housing. Parker Horton has been contacted.
- Work at the Ross Ferry Marine Park to begin soon.
- Concerns are being expressed about the safety of our community. As was discussed under the RCMP update.

#### **DISTRICT 6**

***On Motion of Deputy Warden Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacNeil to contact PVSC (Property Valuation Services Corporation) to request representatives to come to Council to discuss the newly released property assessments.***

***Motion Carried.***

- Thanks to the local snowmobile club on the trail work that has been done.

#### **DISTRICT 7**

- A resident concern that needs a transformer replaced, also taking a long time with NSP (Nova Scotia Power) to get serviced.
- Lack of ambulance North of Smokey.

- A sanding issue contacted Mr. MacDonald and the issue was taken care of.

## **DISTRICT 8**

- Received numerous calls with questions and concerns with the new assessments, looking forward to having PVSC come to Council.
- Had an inquiry from a local resident who is in the process of wanting to start up sewage, septic removal service, namely North of Smoky and surrounding areas. Is this something that could be implemented if a business proposal was viable what are steps that a business would need from the municipality to move forward? And why was the original lagoon removed. Warden Morrison said it was taken out due to environmental concerns and this resident should contact the Department of Environment for further information.
- Nova Scotia Power service hook ups for residential customers. A local resident has waited since the end of September to have a residential hook up. All steps have been taken from the homeowner, but still waiting on Nova Scotia Powe. I have contacted representatives and was told they are on the list; I am requesting that we have representatives from Nova Scotia Power come to council for an update. CAO MacEachen said we are working on dates with them to come to Council.

***On Motion of Councillor MacDonald, seconded by Councillor Patterson to write a letter to Nova Scotia Power to inquire about the long wait times for residential hookups and service. CC' UARB.***

***Motion Carried.***

## **BYLAWS AND POLOCIES DISCUSSION**

Council requested the following bylaws be reviewed:

- Auctioneers, Peddlers, Hawkers and Traders
- Dog Control
- Minimum Housing Standards
- Solid Waste Management
- Subdivision

Council requested the following policies be reviewed:

- Electronic Meeting
- Municipal Grants
- Municipal Travel Expense
- Public Participation
- Social Media
- Streetlight
- Tax and Water Collection

- Out of Province Committee Appointment and Compensation

CAO MacEachen discussed livestreaming Council meetings, is this something Council want to continue? If so, there will need to be budget decision because if we want to do it right, we need to make some upgrades to the equipment.

Internal acoustics need to be considered too.

***On Motion of Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Patterson to request staff to look into what it would cost to continue livestreaming and improving sound quality in Council chambers.***

***Motion Carried.***

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

All forwarded.

## **COMMITTEE REPORT**

Councillor MacLeod mentioned the VCT AGM held prior to Council.

***On Motion of Councillor MacLeod, seconded by Councillor Longva for staff to look in the 2023 Budget to see if there is money for the purchase of a new van for VCT.***

***Motion Carried.***

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Loreto Doyle had concerns over correspondence she sent, that has not been responded back to, Warden Morrison asked her to re-send it to himself and the CAO.

## **NEXT MEETINGS**

Council Meeting: February 20, 2024, at 2pm.

## **ADJOURN**

Councillor MacNeil made a motion to adjourn at 4:54pm.