

A meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held in Council Chambers at Baddeck on June 20, 2024, at 2:00pm with Warden Morrison in the Chair.

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT**

District #1- Paul MacNeil

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

Steff MacLeod, Recorder

Jennifer Dagsvik, Communications

**ABSENT**

District #2- Perla MacLeod

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 with the noted addition of the funding request from the Village of Baddeck and a presentation by Councillor Longva.

***On Motion of Councillor Organ seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee that the Agenda for June 20, 2024, be approved with the noted change.***

***Motion Carried.***

## **SABDA PRESENTATION – JITKA ZGOLA, PATSY LEBLANC AND MARCELLA BLACK**

Ms. Zgola discussed the correspondence previously sent to Council that requested Council to integrate a TimeBank as a complementary adjunct into the Seniors Safety Program.

Ms. Zgola clarified that they are looking for a contract position to work alongside TimeBank to coordinate the efforts. They are requesting a part time contract position that would serve the whole County at a cost of about \$15,000.00.

Councillor Longva highlighted the benefit of the County being responsible for a coordinator of the TimeBank.

Warden Morrison said staffing is not the responsibility of Council, that is administrative responsibility and would refer it to the CAO for consideration.

## **RCMP UPDATE – STAFF SERGEANT JOSH WEISE**

- Currently in the hiring process for a new Administrative assistant at Ingonish Barracks
- Staffing issues but coverages are being provided through overtime.
- No significant changes in crime in Victoria County.
- Haven't received many seasonal B&E's (Break and Enters) in Victoria County.
- Surplus position was created in Baddeck, not billed back to the County but this position has not been filled yet.
- Reserve members to supplement, retired officers who are still younger and healthy.

## **QUESTIONS**

Councillor Organ said she is getting some complaints about local teenagers who are spinning tires in front of the Irving Garage in Ingonish and that the RCMP are not getting there in time and Staff Sergeant Weise said he will let the Ingonish officers know and to put more presence there.

Councillor MacNeil has seen a stronger police presence in his area since his request at last Council and mentioned that he has seen a bit more vandalism in his district.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee requested the Corporal in Ingonish meet with North councillors and Staff Sergeant Weise will introduce the Corporal to the North Councillors.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee said residents are seeing the patrol cars parked at the barracks more and not patrolling and Staff Sergeant Weise there are some vehicles there that are broke down, but a new vehicle is coming and some of the officers are still being trained on the computer systems in the vehicles.

CAO MacEachen requested Staff Sergeant Weise to put some stats together and she will send to Council and to arrange a meeting with the EMO Officer and Staff Sergeant Weise said he would to both requests.

Warden Morrison mentioned drug trafficking and drug use in his area seems to have increased and Staff Sergeant Weise said it hasn't increased, but people are just hearing about it more. Addictions are difficult to manage and there are not enough treatment options, and the drug dealers are also a problem.

Councillor Organ asked if there was a Drug Recognition Expert Officer in Ingonish and Staff Sergeant Weise said currently, there is not but hoping to have one by the end of December.

## **RECESS**

Warden Morrison called for a 10-minute recess.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the May 27, 2024, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was presented for approval.

***On Motion of Councillor MacNeil seconded by Councillor MacDonald to approve the Minutes of May 27, 2024.***

***Motion Carried.***

## **CAO REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Next steps in the transfer of the Baddeck Library branch are also being looked at.
- Surveys have gone out for the Ingonish wastewater, and they are starting to come back in.
- FCM green funding available for municipal building options.
- Upland planning report, there is one last area that needs to be completed before the final draft can be presented for first reading. Waiting to hear from NSECC on water protection zones.

- Maia Transport will be collecting the stockpile of tires down North in the next couple of weeks, businesses should contact Maia Transport or Divert NS to get on the list to get the tires picked up.
- Solar energy groups for a solar panel garden initiative, we might contribute a piece of municipal owned land for lease, for this project. Will be planning meeting to discuss.
- We have to have an equity, diversity, inclusion plan by March 2025, waiting on more details for this.
- Municipal Comfort Centres are now on the website.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

- Focus on residents for the next newsletter. Looking for events that are coming up in June and July. Will be reaching out to all Councillors to submit events that are going on in their districts.
- Doing profiles on some of the volunteers who were nominated this year.
- June 21<sup>st</sup> is National Aboriginal Day.

## **FINANCE and HR**

- Tax bills are printed and will be sent out soon.
- Working on a resolution for the Temporary borrowing resolution for a portion of the cost for the Dingwall water tower.

## **PUBLIC WORKS**

### Waste Management

- We are expected to enforce the Provincial treated wood ban beginning July 5th, 2024. New rates will be \$96.41, \$85.00/MT and \$42.50 ½ ton.
- Waste collection that is regularly scheduled for Friday, June 21st will be collected on Wednesday, June 19th.
- Started discussions with GFL regarding options for them to collect our organics and take it to CBRM for processing.

### Water

- Ingonish waterline extension project has begun.
- Sludge removal is happening at the NH water plant = \$40,000
- The quarter ends June 30th, therefore new water bills will be going out early next month. This will be the first bill with the April 1st rate increase.
  - Dingwall service has been restored.

## **TOURISM**

### Recreation:

- Working with Park's Canada (AGB) to establish a small Disc Golf Course on site at the Museum. Stay tuned for more info on this program
- Attended the Jays Care Affiliated Schools Jamboree and witnessed the program in action. Continue to work on the program to be delivered here in Victoria County.

### Trails:

- Met with Helen Smith from DNRR for update on some work being done by them on Trails in Victoria County. Most notably are the North River Falls trail and Red Island Trail where a big project is underway to review fish habitat before deciding on the next steps for repairing a storm damaged trail.
- MV2301 (Highway bridge to WMF) – Section of Trail work that has been on-going since fall of 2023 has been completed.
- A new Request for Proposals will be upcoming for a 10 plus KM section through Big Hill to connect into New Glen. This is all existing Public Works road system.

## **NSHA UPDATE**

- Buchanan Memorial celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. To celebrate this milestone, the Buchanan Memorial Hospital Foundation is hosting a celebration on Saturday, July 27 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Cabot Education Centre.
- Victoria County Memorial is also a busy site for visiting specialty clinics.

## **QUESTIONS**

Deputy Warden requested copies of the low-income forms for property tax as he is getting more requests for them.

Tax arrears are a little behind right now and CAO MacEachen said we know people are struggling a bit more now, but we are still in a good spot.

## **DISTRICT CONCERNS**

### **DISTRICT 1**

***On Motion of Councillor MacNeil seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee that the County will take over the cost of the streetlight at 504 Gillis Point Road. The County is and will not be responsible for any costs associated with that light prior to today's date, June 20, 2024.***

***Motion Carried.***

***On Motion of Councillor MacNeil seconded by Councillor Longva to send a congratulations letter to Central Cape Breton Ventures on the success of the World Ocean's Day Festival.***

***Motion Carried.***

- Forwarded road concerns to MLA Bain and Provincial Department of Public Works.

### **DISTRICT 3**

***On Motion of Warden Morrison seconded by Councillor MacNeil to send a letter of concern to the provincial and federal departments of Environment expressing concerns over the lack of EV charging stations in Victoria County.***

***Motion Carried.***

### **DISTRICT 4**

- Donated a Bio-sphere plaque to the County to be erected in the Municipal Building. If residents are interested in getting one, please contact the Bio-Sphere Committee as it is a fundraiser.
- Condolences to the Ryan family on the loss of Francis Ryan.
- Mentioned the light removal in Goose Cove, received notification from NSP that they are behind

***On Motion of Councillor Longva seconded by Councillor Patterson to livestream all meetings of Council.***

***Motion Carried.***

- CAO MacEachen said we are working on a communications plan and that will be brought forward to Council and requested that it be discussed at that time.
- Councillor Patterson said its not fair to residents that want to watch all meetings of Council.

### **DISTRICT 5**

- Joella Foulds is back on the board of Celtic Colours and had a discussion around recruiting volunteers for sound and stage assistance. Explored some funding options but

the deadlines are a hindrance for the timeline for the Festival. Would some Councillors contribute some funding from their budgets.

***On Motion of Councillor Patterson seconded by Councillor Longva to take \$2,000.00 from District 5 Budget to the Celtic Colours Festival to help with the cost of specialized volunteers.***

***Motion Carried.***

## **DISTRICT 6**

- Bridge at Ingonish Harbour needs to be fixed and the Provincial Department of Public Works has been notified and will be doing a temporary repair soon.

## **DISTRICT 7**

- Grant form assistance from the province
- Brought road concerns forward to MLA Bain and DPPW

## **DISTRICT 8**

- Illegal dumping in Capstick, should contact RCMP.
- Calls from residents in Meat Cove, missed 9 days in June because of bussing issues but since heard that the school board had a meeting with residents yesterday.

## **MOTIONS**

Property Tax Exemptions:

Councillor Patterson asked about the Aidan Foundation being ineligible this year but wasn't last year and CAO MacEachen said as per the policy, the County does not support religious organizations.

CAO reported to Council that this year, staff followed policy, this is the first year that staff did the leg work for recommendations first for grants and tax exemptions, based on policy. If Council want to make decisions that was outside of the policy, that is their final decision. As was presented in a Staff Recommendation report passed by Council earlier this year.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee asked if the Village of Baddeck charge taxes to the County for the municipal building and CAO MacEachen said no, we are exempt and then there were further discussion around exemptions.

Councillor Organ requested that the funds that were exempted from the Village for taxes should be put toward future funding requests from the Village, including the one from the Village meeting held earlier today, prior to Council.

***On Motion of Deputy Warden Dauphinee seconded by Councillor MacNeil to approve the Municipal Property Tax Exemptions for 2024-2025***

***Motion Carried.***

***On Motion of Deputy Warden Dauphinee, seconded by Councillor MacDonald to endorse the Liaison Oversight Committee's (LOC) acceptance of the Forward. Together plan as the Economic Development Strategy of the CB REN and commit to aligning Richmond County's economic development efforts with Forward. Together. as well***

***and;***

***Agree to sign the Multi-Party First Nations and Municipal Agreement, as endorsed and recommended by the CB REN Liaison Oversight Committee (LOC).***

***Motion Carried.***

CAO MacEachen to send a copy of the Municipal Fee schedule to Councillor Longva.

***On Motion of Councillor Patterson, seconded by Councillor MacNeil to amend the current Municipal Fee Policy to include a newly established tip fee rate for disposal of treated wood for ICI customers.***

***Motion Carried.***

Deputy Warden Dauphinee asked that the Village of Baddeck funding request be deferred to the July Council meeting and ask staff to look at the financial implications and impacts.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

All Forwarded.



## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Fences Arbitration Committee met, received older complaints but committee won't deal with retroactive complaints, and Councillor Patterson will draft a letter to those complainants to follow the new process under the newly adopted Terms of Reference.

## **OTHER**

Deputy Warden Dauphinee mentioned a resident currently without a sewer, and mentioned the County lending program that is currently set at \$10,000.00 and asked have Council ever considered giving more? CAO MacEachen said it is a County By-Law so that is a Council decision to amend the by-law.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee asked the CAO to come back with a recommendation.

Warden Morrison would like consideration of a Yard Sale By-Law for discussion at the next council meeting. CAO asked council to come forward with their suggestions.

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

No members of the public were present.

## **NEXT MEETING**

TBA

## **ADJOURN**

Councillor MacNeil made a motion to adjourn at 5:16pm.