

A Meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council was held in Council Chambers at Baddeck on February 10, 2025, at 2:00pm with Warden Organ in the Chair.

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

District #2- Perla MacLeod, Deputy Warden

District #3- Jess Kerr

District #4- Rosella Born

District #5- Fraser Patterson

District #6 – Tim Donovan

District #7- Jackie Organ, Warden

District #8 – Wanda Hennick

STAFF PRESENT

Leanne MacEachen, CAO

Steff MacLeod, Municipal Clerk and Executive Assistant, Recorder

Alix Redden, CFO

ABSENT

District #1- Donna Matheson-Lefort

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councillor Patterson requested to add Notice of Motions to the Agenda.

On Motion of Councillor Donovan seconded by Councillor Kerr to approve the Agenda for February 10, 2025, with the addition of Councillor Patterson's Notice of Motions.

Motion Carried.

Warden Organ stated to Council that agenda items need to be sent 4 days prior to the Council Meeting, otherwise they will not be accepted/added to the Agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the January 27, 2025, meeting of Victoria County Municipal Council were presented for approval.

On Motion of Deputy Warden MacLeod seconded by Councillor Born to approve the Minutes of January 27, 2025.

Motion Carried.

PRESENTATIONS

Rural Communities Foundation of NS – Hugh MacKay gave a presentation to Council and had the following the requests:

- Provide individual and corporate awareness and support for the campaign.
- Consider providing a donation to the campaign.
- Consider us for a Community Grant.
- Support a Dave Gunning Zero Hunger fundraising concert in Antigonish County.

On Motion of Councillor Patterson seconded by Councillor Donovan to move Rural Communities Foundation of NS request to Budget discussions.

Motion Carried.

Theatre Baddeck – Christy MacRae-Ziss and Hannah Ziss gave a presentation to Council and had the following the requests:

- Re-commit to 10k over 3 years.
- Additional \$100,000.00 for phase 1 of the renovations.
- To commit to additional \$75,000.00 for phase 2 of the renovations in the 2026/2027 Fiscal Year.

Deputy Warden MacLeod made the recommendation to take Theatre Baddeck's requests to budget discussions and for Theatre Baddeck to apply for the \$10,000.00 under the Municipal Grant application process.

Property Valuation Services Corporation Overview – CFO Redden

- CFO Redden went over the difference between assessments and taxes.
- Overview of commercial and residential taxes.
- Tax Rate considerations.
- PVSC's appeal deadline is February 13, 2025.
- Requesting residents fill out the County's Budget Survey, return by February 24, 2025.

RECESS

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

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

DISTRICT 2

- Congratulated Highland View Snowmobile Rentals on the re-opening of their business.

DISTRICT 3

- Potholes are a big issue in the Village.
- Happy birthday to Louis Ihazs.
- Baddeck Winter Festival is February 21 – March 1, there will be daily events and everyone is welcome.
- There will be an announcement for Waterfront Baddeck tomorrow.

DISTRICT 4

- Thanked MLA Timmins on email requests for list of road concerns.
- Passed on road concerns to the Provincial Department of Public Works.

On Motion of Councillor Born seconded by Councillor Kerr to write a letter to the Provincial Department of Public Works regarding the bridge debris left in the river in Tarbotvale.

Motion Carried.

- North River Hall is having a neighbourhood gathering hosted by the Welcoming Committee on February 16th from 2pm-4pm.

DISTRICT 5

- Ross Ferry Volunteer Fire Department and Stewardship Society are hosting a dinner on Saturday, February 14th.

On Motion of Councillor Patterson seconded by Councillor Donovan to take \$2,000.00 from District 5 Budget for the Big Bras d'Or Volunteer Fire Department.

Motion Carried.

DISTRICT 6

- Smokey Recreation Society has their weekly Kitchen Parties every Sunday at 1pm encourages all to attend.
- Received several calls/emails regarding the Ingonish Wastewater Project and the following points were brought to my attention:
 - Community consultation with an engineer.
 - Feasibility Study.
 - Amendment made to the existing CDDI bylaw passed on the changes to the system.
- Requested a daycare update and CAO said they are coming in March and also added that communications and consultation will be done regarding the Wastewater Project.

DISTRICT 7

On behalf of Councillor Matheson-LeFort, Warden Organ made the following motion:

On Motion of Warden Organ seconded by Councillor Donovan for a streetlight at 3620 Washabuck Road.

Motion Carried.

Warden Organ made the following statement to Council:

After receiving several correspondences from a couple of residents, it seems there has been some confusion and misinformation about recent decisions made by the council. Let me clarify: Council have been undergoing Good Governance Training, which included recommendations to streamline our meetings. It was pointed out that when public are at meetings of Council, they are there to observe government, not participate. To participate in government, constituents should reach out to their elected councillors directly if they have concerns and those concerns will be brought forward by their local councillor.

Committee of the Whole (COW) meetings provide an important opportunity for councillors to engage in open, honest, and effective discussions without the pressure of a livestream. By keeping the COW meetings more flexible, councillors can explore ideas, ask questions, and debate issues freely, which leads to better decision-making when it's time to make formal motions in Council meetings.

At our last meeting, the rescinded motion was necessary because a previous motion had been passed to livestream both Council and COW meetings. The new motion made by Deputy

Warden MacLeod and seconded by Councillor Matheson-LeFort, “was to livestream only Regular Council Meetings held in the Council Chambers.”

All Council and Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes are recorded and available on the County website for anyone to view. Those Minutes are posted after they are approved at the next Council and Committee of the Whole meetings as is standard practise for many municipalities.

As a newly elected Council, we are committed to making positive changes. Some of these changes will be effective, while others may require adjustments. We ask for your patience and respectful conduct so we can stay fully dedicated to navigating the challenges and responsibilities of our roles, which you entrusted us with.

- A local reporter is working for the Victoria Reporter please contact Jeremy or Adam if you have some good news stories happening in Victoria County.

DISTRICT 8

- \$500 out of District Budget to North Highlands Nordic.
- The Provincials at North Highland Nordic February 16th and 17th.
- There will be a Snowshoe Loppet on February 22nd in memory of Margaret Fraser with pub and music to follow at 7pm.
- There was an electrical fire at the Bay St. Lawrence Community Centre that caused extensive smoke damage.
- Congratulations to Amy MacKinnon and Deidre Fraser on being awarded the King Charles III Coronation Medal for Community Impact. Amy and Deidre have worked and continue to work tirelessly in our community, and we are very proud for all their hard work and dedication.

MOTIONS/RESOLUTIONS

- INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, EQUITY & ACCESSIBILITY (IDEA) TERMS OF REFERENCE ADOPTION AND COUNCILLOR COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT

On Motion of Councillor Macleod seconded by Councillor Born to adopt the Terms of Reference and Matheson-LeFort is on the committee.

Motion Carried.

- MUNICIPAL GRANTS POLICY

On Motion of Councillor Kerr seconded by Councillor Donovan to accept the recommendations made at COW and to approve the Municipal Grants Policy.

Motion Carried.

- 2028 SPECIAL OLYMPICS CANADA WINTER GAMES LETTER OF SUPPORT

On Motion of Councillor Hennick seconded by Deputy Warden MacLeod to approve the letter of support.

Motion Carried.

Councillor Patterson submitted the following Notices of Motions that he will bring forward at the next Regular Council Meeting:

MOTION # 1

Move to reconsider motion made at a meeting of Victoria County council held on January 27, 2025 to rescind a motion made on July 22, 2024, to require live streaming of Committee of the Whole meetings.

MOTION # 2

Move to reinstate public question period.

MOTION # 3 Move to allow comments on Face Book posts.

The following is from “**Who’s Driving the Grader**” **page 16**:

“I also see this on social media, when thin-skinned elected officials block communications from their constituents because those constituents have differing opinions than the elected official does.”

In camera held prior to Council to discuss a real estate matter.

On Motion of Councillor Donovan seconded by Deputy Warden MacLeod to accept the recommendations made at the In Camera Session.

Motion Carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no committee reports.

NEXT MEETING

March 24, 2025.

ADJOURN

Deputy Warden MacLeod made a motion to adjourn at 3:45pm.