

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF  
**ANTIGONISH**

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES**

A Committee of the Whole Meeting was held Tuesday, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 5:30pm in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Administrative Centre, 285 Beech Hill Road, Antigonish NS.

Present were:               Warden Owen McCarron, Chair  
                                  Councillor Mary MacLellan  
                                  Councillor Donnie MacDonald  
                                  Councillor Vaughan Chisholm  
                                  Councillor Rémi Deveau  
                                  Councillor John Dunbar  
                                  Councillor Gary Mattie  
                                  Councillor Bill MacFarlane  
                                  Neil Corbett

                                  Glenn Horne, Municipal Clerk/Treasurer  
                                  Beth Schumacher, Deputy Municipal Clerk  
                                  Allison Duggan, Director of Finance  
                                  Sonny MacDougall, MGM & Associates Chartered Accountants

Regrets:                     Deputy Warden Hugh Stewart

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the Committee of the Whole was called to order by the Chair, Warden McCarron, at 5:35pm.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Councillor MacLellan asked that an in-camera item be added to that part of the agenda.

*Moved by Councillor MacDonald and seconded by Councillor MacLellan that the agenda be approved as amended. Motion carried.*

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Warden McCarron called three times for any errors or omissions in the July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017 Committee of the Whole minutes.

*Moved by Councillor Deveau and seconded by Councillor Mattie that the Committee of the Whole minutes of July 25<sup>th</sup> be approved as presented. Motion carried.*

**BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There was no business arising from the minutes.

**PRESENTATION OF 2016/2017 AUDITED STATEMENTS**

Mr. Sonny MacDougall provided the Committee with an overview of the draft audited statements that had been prepared by his team for the 2016/2017 financial year. Overall, the results of the audit were very good, and Mr. MacDougall noted how the use of the Diamond Software provided staff and the auditing team with reports that were very accurate and expedited the auditing process.

One item that would be reported in the audit that would have an impact on the 2017/2018 budget was the donation agreement to the St. Martha's Hospital Foundation. The entire \$500,000 donation would need to be reported in the 2017/2018 budget year; the ten (10) year payment term by agreement is more like a financing agreement than a multi-year grant allotment that can be reviewed every year.

Words of thanks to staff, for all of their work in preparing for the audit, were given by Mr. MacDougall and the Committee, and the Committee thanked Mr. MacDougall for the work done by his team in undertaking the audit.

*Moved by Councillor MacLellan and seconded by Councillor Chisholm that the Committee recommend that Municipal Council approves the 2016/2017 Audited Statements. Motion carried.*

### **APPROVAL OF WATER UTILITY BUDGET & STATEMENT OF ESTIMATES**

Mrs. Duggan guided the Committee through a copy of the 2017/2018 water utility budget. Discussion was held regarding the timing of the next water rate study, which would be necessary to bring the metered water utility charges into effect. Early in 2019 was the estimated timeline for new rates.

Questions were asked by the Committee regarding the incorporation of depreciation in the budgeting process. Mrs. Duggan noted that the contributions were being made into a depreciation fund, which can be used to fund projects or upgrades with broad benefits to the water utility system. Further discussion was held regarding the changes in the way that the expenses incurred by the Municipality for the operation of the water utilities are tracked, in order to allow for the utility rates to reflect the full cost of the service.

*Moved by Councillor Deveau and seconded by Councillor Mattie that the Committee recommends that Municipal Council approves the 2017/2018 Water Utility Budget. Motion carried.*

Mrs. Duggan then requested approval of the 2017/2018 Statement of Estimates, which is the 2017/2018 budget formatted into an online template provided by, and submitted to, the Province.

*Moved by Councillor MacDonald and seconded by Councillor Dunbar that the Committee recommends that Municipal Council approves the 2017/2018 Statement of Estimates. Motion carried.*

### **CONSIDERATION OF A WATER AND SEWER CONNECTION AT BEECH HILL ROAD**

Mr. Horne reviewed the request as summarized in the meeting memo; Mr. John G. MacDonald has requested financial support from the Municipality for the extension of services across Beech Hill Road, in order to facilitate the development of lands on the east side of the road. The estimated cost of this connection to the existing lift station in front of 124 Beech Hill Road is \$26,000, due to the requirement of using directional drilling since DTIR will not permit trenching on the road.

Warden McCarron noted that both he and Deputy Warden Stewart had calls from Mr. MacDonald to discuss the servicing concern. Mr. MacDonald has one development already approved through Development Agreement, and other properties that could be developed as well in the area, representing economic development opportunities for the community. Warden McCarron suggested that an arrangement, similar to what is done in areas subject to a local improvement by-law, be considered. General consensus with the group was that having the developer pay 25% of the expense of services installed by the Municipality would be a reasonable arrangement.

*Moved by Councillor MacFarlane and seconded by Councillor MacLellan that the Committee recommends that Municipal Council approve a financial contribution for a service connection at Beech Hill Road up to \$26,000, contingent on a developer contribution of 25%*

**CONSIDERATION OF A MARKET ASSESSMENT**

Mr. Horne reviewed the memo that was included in the agenda package, which provided an overview of the provision of industrial and business parks in the province, and the considerations to have in mind if the Municipality were to look to develop, or have some degree of involvement in developing, a new park in the County. Undertaking a market analysis would provide more information issues such as occupancy availability, leakage, demographics, trends, and projections.

Mr. Horne noted that such a study may cost between \$40,000 and \$60,000, but partnerships may be possible with other units in the region, including Paqtnkek, who have already indicated an interest, but also the Town, who have yet to be approached. The local Regional Economic Network has also indicated that they would be interested in helping with coordination. Discussion then followed. Overall, the group was not opposed to gathering information that could be useful to the community.

*Moved by Councillor Deveau and seconded by Councillor Dunbar that the Committee recommends that Municipal Council authorize the issuance of an RFP for a Market Assessment. Motion carried.*

**REDUCTION OF PROPERTY TAXES DUE TO FIRE DAMAGE**

Mr. Horne noted that Finance staff was notified by PVSC that two properties in the County have had their values for tax purposes reduced due to fire damage/destruction. The Municipal Government Act (MGA) provides Municipal Council with the ability to reduce or reimburse taxes payable in cases of property destroyed or damaged by fire. Finance staff has calculated the reduction in taxes for the year that would be applicable given this reduction in assessed value. Mr. Horne read out the two affected addresses, 385 Heatherton Village Road and 146 Grovenor Road. The tax reductions based on the PVSC revisions would be \$615.11 and \$203.84, respectively.

*Moved by Councillor Mattie and seconded by Councillor MacFarlane that the Committee recommend that Municipal Council approve the reduction of property taxes for properties damaged by fire, as identified by PVSC. Motion carried.*

**IN-CAMERA: CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS (SISTERS OF ST. MARTHA); ACQUISITION, SALE, LEASE, AND SECURITY OF MUNICIPAL PROPERTY (TOWN TRAIL PROPOSAL)**

These subject matters fall within Section 22(2) of the Municipal Government Act as matters that a committee may discuss in a closed session. It is recommended a motion be made to initiate an in-camera session.

*Moved by Councillor Dunbar and seconded by Councillor MacLellan that the Committee of the Whole Meeting be adjourned to an In-Camera Session at 7:10 pm to discuss: Contract Negotiations; and Acquisition, Sale, Lease, and Security of Municipal Property. Motion carried.*

*Moved by Councillor MacDonald and seconded by Councillor Mattie that the In-Camera session be adjourned at 7:26pm. Motion carried.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

*Moved by Councillor Chisholm and seconded by Councillor MacLellan that the Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned at 7:27pm. Motion carried.*



Warden Owen McCarron



Glenn Horne, Municipal Clerk/Treasurer