

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES

A Committee of the Whole Meeting was held Tuesday, January 17th, 2017 at 5:30pm in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Administrative Centre, 285 Beech Hill Road, Antigonish NS.

Present were: Deputy Warden Owen McCarron, Chair
Councillor Mary MacLellan
Councillor Donnie MacDonald
Councillor Hughie Stewart
Councillor Vaughan Chisholm
Councillor Rémi Deveau
Councillor John Dunbar
Councillor Gary Mattie
Councillor Bill MacFarlane
Glenn Horne, Municipal Clerk/Treasurer
Denise Fougere, Administrative Assistant
Adam Rodger, Solicitor- Boudrot Rodgers Law Firm

Regrets: Warden Russell Boucher

Gallery: Karen Armstrong, Antigonish Town & County Crime Prevention
Shannon Thornhill, Antigonish Town & County Crime Prevention
Diane Beaton, PVSC
Lloyd MacLeod, PVSC

The meeting of the Committee of the Whole was called to order by the Chair, Deputy Warden McCarron, at 5:31pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The presentation by PVSC was added to the Committee of the Whole agenda, to take place immediately following the business arising from the minutes.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Councillor MacLellan and seconded by Councillor Chisholm that the Committee of the Whole minutes of December 20, 2016 be approved as presented. Motion carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Mr. Horne provided an update regarding the status of the cleanup order for the Dangerous and Unightly complaint in West River, noting that the exterminator had advised that, due to the treatment applied to the property, no one should be entering the building for a while. A suggestion was made to amend the Dangerous and Unightly Premises notice to extend the deadline for remediation to March 31, 2017.

PROPERTY VALUATION SERVICES CORPORATION (PVSC) PRESENTATION

Ms. Diane Beaton and Mr. Lloyd MacLeod provided a brief presentation to the Committee regarding PVSC, including a background overview of PVSC and their mandate, key dates, the valuation process, and a brief overview of the municipal profile of Antigonish County. Information about the assessment cap, change-in-use tax, and other services provided by PVSC were also provided for the Committee's information. Members of the Committee were then provided with an opportunity to ask questions.

Councillor MacDonald enquired about how comparisons of value are done if there haven't been any homes in an area for sale. Ms. Beaton noted that PVSC has divided Antigonish County into 35 neighbourhoods that are grouped for comparison in such circumstances. A question was then asked about when in the sale process homes are assessed. The PVSC representatives noted that the assessments take place after a property is sold and they are notified of the sale.

Further discussion took place regarding specific examples where property owners had concerns due to the assessment cap and/or a change-of-use. Discussion followed providing further information about the eligibility of properties for the assessment cap, and the statement of use process to evaluate whether a property's status to taxable has changed.

Ms. Beaton and Mr. MacLeod encouraged members of the Committee to have any property owners with further questions contact PVSC via the phone numbers provided on their assessment forms, and noted that the deadline for filing appeals of this year's assessments was February 13, 2017. Ms. Beaton and Mr. MacLeod were thanked for their presentation.

ANTIGONISH TOWN & COUNTY CRIME PREVENTION

Ms. Karen Armstrong, Senior Safety Coordinator with Antigonish Town & County Crime Prevention introduced herself and her maternity leave replacement, Shannon Thornhill. She then proposed an idea for the area that had been brought to her attention by a concerned senior in the Town; creating a registry of seniors and vulnerable residents who may benefit from being included on a registry for check-ins following major or extended weather events or power outages. The County of Guysborough has spent several years creating a similar registry, which would be used for reference.

A handout was provided for the Committee's reference, and Ms. Armstrong noted that the first step in the process of creating this kind of registry would be to hold community meetings to gauge interest and identify "community ambassadors" who would assist with the project. Privacy considerations would be researched in greater detail as well. Brief discussion followed, and Ms. Armstrong and Ms. Thornhill were thanked for their presentation.

CONSIDERATION OF SUPPORT FOR THE ANNUAL CRIME PREVENTION BONSPIEL

The Antigonish Town & County Crime Prevention and Senior Safety Program hold an annual bonspiel that serves as a fundraiser for the organization. The event will be taking place this year on February 25th at the St. Andrew's Curling Club. The Municipality has been asked to sponsor a team this year, as it has done so for the past several years. The cost of sponsoring a team is \$125.

Moved by Councillor Deveau and seconded by Councillor Chisholm that the Committee recommend that Municipal Council approve a sponsorship for the Crime Prevention Bonspiel in the amount of \$125.00 . Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF A SPECIAL EVENTS PERMIT

Mr. Horne introduced an application for a Special Events Permit under the Special Events By-law from John and Judy MacDonald, for the Black River Music Festival, which is proposed to take place on August 4, 5 and 6, 2017, at 1648 Meadow Green Road. The event is proposed to feature country music, live bands, and DJs. Approximately 1,500 paying guests are anticipated at the event.

The Special Events By-law, as written, does not permit advertising or the sale of tickets for an event until a permit is obtained. The proponents would like to obtain a conditional permit that would allow them to conduct pre-sales of tickets to gauge interest in the event as they work on the other requirements of the by-law, such as insurance, security details and a full operational plan. Staff has drafted a conditional permit, similar to what has been used in the past, providing deadlines for the outstanding items required in advance of the event.

John and Judy MacDonald were present to answer questions posed by the Committee. A question was asked about whether alcohol was anticipated at the event, as well as the target audience. The MacDonalds noted that they were planning on the event being a family event, and any licensed areas would be appropriately cordoned off.

Moved by Councillor Dunbar and seconded by Councillor MacFarlane that the Committee recommends that Municipal Council approve the conditional special event permit for the Black River Music Festival. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF A REPLACEMENT ½ TONNE TRUCK

A ½ tonne truck in the Public Works fleet, which was scheduled for replacement early in the 2017/2018 fiscal year, recently failed an inspection due to wear in the rocker panels. Staff has identified funds available in the current budget that would permit the immediate replacement of this vehicle, and has contacted three local dealerships requesting quotes. Staff is recommending proceeding with the quote from MacDonald Chrysler for the purchase of a 2017 Ram 1500 SXT Quad Cab 4x4 at the net cost of \$20,377.00.

Moved by Councillor MacFarlane and seconded by Councillor Deveau that the Committee recommends that Municipal Council approve the purchase of a truck from MacDonald Chrysler at a cost of \$20,377.00. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Mr. Horne noted that, as written, the Terms of Reference for each of the Municipality's Advisory Committees allows each Advisory Committee to select its own Chair and Vice-Chair. If neither of these positions were filled by a Municipal Councillor, there could be a challenge when it came to report to, and dialogue with, Municipal Council. The Committee was asked whether the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committees should be amended to state the positions of Chair and/or Vice-Chair are to be filled by Councillors or to continue with the terms as currently proposed.

Discussion followed. Members of the Committee felt that the Chair and Vice-Chair positions should be filled by Councillors. Staff will amend the Terms of Reference for each Advisory Committee, and Mr. Horne will contact the Councillors on each committee to determine who is interested in filling the Chair/Vice-Chair seats.

CONSIDERATION OF EXTERNAL BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Following the passing of Policy 33 (External Boards) in the fall, letters were sent to several local organizations giving the criteria in the policy. Responses have been received to date from three of these organizations wishing to have Council representation on their boards. ACALA, the Antigonish Affordable Housing Society, and the Antigonish Community Transit Society (ACTS) have submitted the information necessary to satisfy the criteria set out in the policy. The Committee was asked to consider appointing members of Council to each of these organizations.

Mr. Horne identified which Councillors had previously sat on these boards; Councillor MacLellan was still interested in sitting on the ACALA board, and Councillor MacDonald indicated that he was interested in continuing with the Affordable Housing board. Councillor Mattie asked to be the Council representative on the Community Transit board. Mr. Horne asked any other members of the Committee who were interested in sitting on any of these boards to contact him by email in the next week.

UPDATE FROM THE ST. MARTHA'S FOUNDATION ENDOWMENT FUND CAMPAIGN

Councillor Stewart provided a brief review of the status of the endowment fund campaign for the St. Martha's foundation currently underway. He noted that a meeting was held last week, and that fundraising was suspended for a few weeks but was going to start back up. Over 7 million has been pledged to date.

STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Horne reviewed the staff reports contained within the memo that accompanied the meeting agenda. Particular mention was made to the information provided regarding the community solar program, and an update regarding the ownership status of road D-38 (at Beech Hill Road) was provided. Deputy Warden McCarron also noted the information in the memo regarding the Community Grants deadline.

PUBLIC SAFETY, PERSONNEL MATTERS, CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS (IN-CAMERA)

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

Moved by MacLellan and seconded by Councillor Stewart that the Committee of the Whole Meeting be adjourned to an In-Camera Session to discuss public safety, personnel matters, and contract negotiations at 7:20pm. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Stewart and seconded by Councillor Deveau that the Committee recommends that Municipal Council appoint Kent Simpson to the Planning Advisory Committee. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Deveau and seconded by Councillor MacDonald that the In-Camera session be adjourned at 7:44pm. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Stewart and seconded by Councillor Deveau that the Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned at 7:44pm. Motion carried.


Warden Russell Boucher


Glenn Horne, Municipal Clerk/Treasurer

