

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES

A Committee of the Whole Meeting was held Tuesday, July 25th, 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
 Deputy Warden Hughie Stewart
 Councillor Mary MacLellan
 Councillor Donnie MacDonald
 Councillor Vaughan Chisholm
 Councillor Rémi Deveau
 Councillor John Dunbar
 Councillor Gary Mattie
 Councillor Bill MacFarlane

Glenn Horne, Municipal Clerk/Treasurer
Beth Schumacher, Deputy Municipal Clerk

Regrets: None

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

Items were added to the agenda by Councillor Mattie, Councillor MacDonald, Councillor MacFarlane, and Warden McCarron. Deputy Warden Stewart 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 June 20th 2017 Committee of the Whole minutes.

Moved by Councillor Deveau and seconded by Deputy Warden Stewart that the Committee of the Whole minutes of June 20th be approved as presented. Motion carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There was no business arising from the minutes.

IN-CAMERA: CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS (UPDATE ON NEXT STEPS ON CELLULAR CONNECTIVITY); ACQUISITION, SALE, LEASE, AND SECURITY OF MUNICIPAL PROPERTY (DISCUSSION OF AN ANTIGONISH COUNTY BUSINESS PARK); PUBLIC SECURITY (MEDICINAL MARIJUANA FACILITY)

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 MacLellan and seconded by Councillor MacDonald that the Committee of the Whole Meeting be adjourned to an In-Camera Session at 5:39 pm to discuss: Contract Negotiations; Acquisition, Sale, Lease, and Security of Municipal Property; Public Security. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Deveau and seconded by Councillor Mattie that the In-Camera session be adjourned at 6:24pm. Motion carried.

ASSET MANAGEMENT: UPDATE AND PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

Mr. Horne provided the Committee with an overview of the staff memo and draft policy, and showed the Committee a brief video produced by FCM regarding Asset Management. Mr. Horne outlined the next steps for producing an asset management plan, which included approval of a policy, the creation of a committee, and potential funding and support programs offered by various levels of government.

A question was asked of Mr. Horne regarding how far back the Municipality would have to go for information gathering; Mr. Horne noted that the Municipality would have to go as far back as necessary in order to capture all existing assets and their condition, to create a complete catalogue. Discussion then followed regarding funding opportunities for undertaking an asset management plan. A question was asked regarding what documentation we have of assets now. Mr. Horne responded that our information is pretty up-to-date, but there is some variation across the county depending on age of infrastructure, and the condition of assets is fairly unknown.

A question was asked about what assets would be included in an asset management plan. Mr. Horne responded that all assets would eventually be captured in such a plan, but to start, linear assets such as roads, sidewalks, and pipes would be the easiest to document and evaluate the condition of. Discussion then following regarding the provincial program to support municipalities as they build asset management plans, as well as what impact this program may have on any decision by the municipality to proceed now or wait.

Moved by Deputy Warden Stewart and seconded by Councillor MacDonald that the Committee recommend that Municipal Council approve the Asset Management Policy and Municipal Staff begin preparations to develop an Asset Management Plan. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF AN ANTIGONISH BID FOR THE 2019 NOVA SCOTIA 55+ GAMES

Mr. Horne reviewed the information regarding the project that was included in the Committee Memo. He stressed that, while the bid amount is relatively low, the staffing/HR commitments would be significant, particularly just before and during the event taking place.

Moved by Councillor Deveau and seconded by Councillor MacFarlane that the Committee recommends that Municipal Council submits a joint bid with the Town of Antigonish for the Nova Scotia 55+ Games. Motion carried.

REQUEST TO WRITE-OFF ARREARS TAXES (AAN 05229669)

Mr. Horne reviewed the summary provided of the circumstances of this particular request, as noted in the Committee memo. Mr. Horne noted that the position taken by PVSC is to adjust assessments in the current year or going forward, but not to adjust assessments for previous years. The Municipality has received similar requests under similar circumstances in the past and has not granted a retro-active tax adjustment. At the request of the property owner, this particular case has been brought before the Committee for consideration.

Discussion then followed regarding whether the Municipality should add clauses to its policy to state its position regarding retro-active tax adjustment requests. Concern was raised that by doing so, residents may feel that they do not still have the option to request consideration of their circumstances by the Committee/Council, and situations like the request to follow in the agenda could be missed. Staff was asked to explore such a policy option further.

REQUEST TO WRITE-OFF ARREARS TAXES (AAN 10661765 & 10661749)

Mr. Horne reviewed the summary provided of the circumstances of this particular request, as noted in the Committee memo, and staff's recommendation to provide the property owner with a write-off for the 2016/2017 balances on the accounts known as AAN 10661765 and AAN 10661749.

Moved by Deputy Warden Stewart and seconded by Councillor Deveau that the Committee recommends that Municipal Council write-off the Fiscal 2016/2017 outstanding tax balances on account 10661765 and 10661749 in the combined amount of \$411.87. Motion carried.

NOT-FOR-PROFIT TAX EXEMPTION REQUEST (POLICY 35 AMENDMENT)

Councillor Mattie has brought forward a request on behalf of the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corp, to have three properties under their ownership in Tracadie added to the list of properties that are provided with a tax exemption, under Policy 35 (Tax Exemption for Non-Profit Organizations).

Moved by Councillor Mattie and seconded by Councillor Deveau that the Committee recommend that Municipal Council amend Part 1 of Policy 35 (Tax Exemption for Non-Profit Organizations) by adding AAN#10270626, AAN#10270618, and AAN#01415379, which are all owned by the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corp to the list of exempted properties in District 8. Motion carried.

REQUEST TO WRITE-OFF ARREARS TAXES (AAN#10270626, AAN#10270618, AND AAN#01415379)

Further to the request to be added to list of tax-exempted properties, the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corp has requested that outstanding taxes for F16/17 and F17/18 be written-off.

Moved by Councillor Mattie and seconded by Councillor Dunbar that the Committee recommend that Municipal Council write off the F16/17 and F17/18 taxes for AAN#10270626, AAN#10270618, and AAN#01415379, which are all owned by the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corp, in the combined amount of \$3,673.96. Motion carried.

PROCUREMENT

Municipal Office Roof Re-Shingling

Mr. Horne noted that staff has prepared a tender to solicit bids to re-shingle the roof at the Municipal Administration Office.

Moved by Councillor Chisholm and seconded by Councillor MacFarlane that the Committee of the Whole recommends that Municipal Council permit a tender soliciting bids to re-shingle the roof at the Municipal Administration Office. Motion carried.

Antigonish County Court House

Mrs. Schumacher briefly reviewed the staff memo that had been provided, summarizing the results of the tender and providing a staff recommendation to reject all of the bids received. Mrs. Schumacher explained some of the challenges experienced with the project, stemming from a hesitation of contractors bidding on the project because of the requirements of the Standards and Guidelines for Heritage Places, and the unknown extent of the condition of the building. Adherence to the Standards and Guidelines was a requirement of accessing the cost-sharing funds conditionally granted to the Municipality from Parks Canada.

As a next step, staff is recommending that the Municipality look at commissioning a Conservation Plan, or similar study, to more thoroughly evaluate the condition of the building and identify a prioritized list of repairs, with an updated budget to assist staff with budget and work planning. Funding for such a study could be applied for under the same federal program that the Municipality is participating in now. Discussion followed, regarding the condition of the building and the potential for unforeseen expenses as any work takes place. Staff was requested to find someone to do a report on the condition of the building as soon as possible, before further improvements were made to the building.

Moved by Councillor MacFarlane and seconded by Councillor MacLellan that the Committee recommends that Municipal Council reject all bids for the Antigonish County Court House – Tender 2017. Motion carried

The Committee of the Whole Meeting was adjourned at 7:34pm.

Warden McCarron called the Committee of the Whole meeting back to order at 8:40pm.

PROVINCIAL ROAD MAINTENANCE

Councillor Mattie brought forward to the Committee a concern that one of three TIR Supervisor positions that had been in the County had not been filled when vacated, leaving the remaining two supervisors in the area to split the workload. With the concerns raised by Council with TIR in early June, and the volume of calls and complaints that Councillors have been receiving in the last year, Councillor Mattie requested that a letter be written to the appropriate provincial representatives requesting that this position be filled. Discussion followed.

Moved by Councillor Mattie and seconded by Councillor Dunbar that the Committee recommends that Municipal Council send a letter to local MLAs and the Department of Transportation expressing concern with the ongoing vacancy of one of the three local roads supervisor positions. Motion carried.

NORTH GRANT WATER

Councillor MacDonald noted that he had been contacted by residents in the lower end of North Grant, who wish to have access to municipal water. A recently survey of residents in the North Grant area soliciting interest in a Local Improvements project to bring water to the area had not received the required percentage of support; however, it may be that the residents in the upper end of North Grant turned down the proposal, while those in the lower end were (and still are) interested. Councillor MacDonald had residents of at least ten of the 13-14 homes in the lower end of North Grant who had been in contact with him to express their interest. Staff was requested to do estimates of the expense

of 1.5km of water line in North Grant, from the Town line to Lower North Grant Road, and bring that information back to Council at a future meeting.

SPECIAL DISTRICT GRANT EXPENDITURE

As per the requirements of Policy 34 (Councillor Special District Grants Policy), Councillor MacDonald brought forward a request to provide a \$2500 contribution from his Special District Grant Fund to the Antigonish Golf Course, to provide assistance with maintenance. Consensus was given by the Committee for this expenditure.

WEST RIVER EROSION

Councillor MacFarlane again raised the ongoing issue of bank erosion along the West River. The last time that the concern had been raised, a letter was sent to the local MLA and a follow-up conversation was held. Councillor MacFarlane noted that restoration work had been done in this area by past MLAs. Warden McCarron provided Councillor MacFarlane with the contact information for an individual with previous experience with fisheries, who was doing consultations for restoration work.

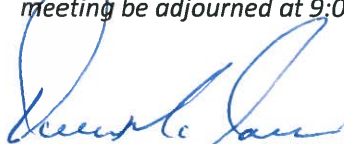
SPONSORSHIP OF JOSIE CHISHOLM

Warden McCarron brought forward a request for sponsorship that had been received from local athlete Josie Chisholm, of St. Andrew's in District 6. In the upcoming hockey season, Miss Chisholm has been recruited to play with the Nepean Junior Wildcats, in the Provincial Women's Hockey League (PWHL), just outside of Ottawa, ON. Miss Chisholm is requesting that the Municipality consider purchasing advertising in the Nepean Junior Wildcats Player Guide, 2017-2018.

Moved by Councillor MacFarlane and seconded by Councillor MacLellan that the Committee recommends that Municipal Council purchase a ¼ page advertisement in the Nepean Junior Wildcats Player Guide, 2017-2018, at a cost of \$350. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Mattie and seconded by Councillor Dunbar that the Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned at 9:02 pm. Motion carried.



Warden Owen McCarron



Glenn Horne, Municipal Clerk/Treasurer