
MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF ANTIGONISH

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 13, 2021, 5:30 pm
Council Chambers
Municipal Administration Building
285 Beech Hill Road
Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

Present were:

- Warden Owen McCarron
- Deputy Warden Hugh Stewart
- Councillor Mary MacLellan
- Councillor Donnie MacDonald
- Councillor Remi Deveau
- Councillor John Dunbar
- Councillor Gary Mattie (by Zoom)
- Councillor Bill MacFarlane
- Councillor Harris McNamara
- Councillor Shawn Brophy

Staff Present:

- Glenn Horne, CAO
- Beth Schumacher, Deputy Clerk
- Shirlyn Donovan, Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
- Tammy Feltmate, Director of Sustainable Communities

Also Present:

- Jamie MacDonald, Old Maryvale Road community group
- Marilyn MacDonald, Old Maryvale Road community group (by Zoom)
- Kate Thompson, Old Maryvale Road community group (by Zoom)

Call to Order – Chairman, Warden Owen McCarron

The meeting of the Committee of the Whole was called to order by the Chair, Warden McCarron, at 5:42pm.

Approval of Agenda

Warden McCarron called for any additions or deletions to the agenda. The following additions were made:

- Antigonish Community Buildings Retrofit Project Update
- Streetlight Request

Moved and Seconded

That the agenda be approved as amended.

Motion Carried

Approval of March 23, 2021 Committee of the Whole Minutes

Warden McCarron called for any errors or omissions in the minutes.

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee of the Whole minutes of March 23, 2021 be approved as presented.

Motion Carried

Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

Delegations

John Somers - Coastal Protection Act Q & A

Warden McCarron introduced Mr. John Somers from the Province, who was on hand to answer some questions that were raised about the Coastal Protection Act. Mr. Somers provided an overview of the Act, which passed in 2019, noting that the regulations were under development and expected shortly. The Province is developing a prescriptive tool to be used by a designated professional to evaluate erosion risk for properties as a requirement of the Act. The intent is to restrict development along shoreline areas that could be vulnerable to erosion or sea level rise.

Mr. Horne asked about whether there was any concern about availability of designated professionals and their qualifications/training in order to be able to complete the evaluation required for the issuance of permits. Mr. Somers noted a mitigation strategy of making sure that the tool is usable by a wide enough range of professionals, training is expected to be required, but certification is not expected to be needed. A similar approach to how site assessments are handled is expected for this particular process.

Councillor MacLellan raised property value concerns, and asked whether there would be compensation for owners if their properties are devalued by this designation, and whether assessments would be updated to reflect any loss in value due to the designation. Mr. Somers noted that there is no plan for compensation for land values falling or rising due to the designation. Assessments could be affected if a portion of the property is made undevelopable due to the designation, but felt that there was a higher risk in property owners building on lands considered unsafe to build on.

Councillor MacLellan raised a question about how the designation would be applied - whether there would be a blanket/standard distance, or whether the application of the designation would

be based on site specific conditions. An explanation was provided by Mr. Somers regarding how the designation is applied to trigger a detailed site assessment by a designated professional to get a better idea of the site specific risk.

Councillor McNamara asked for clarification about the evaluation tool being developed by the Province for building permits. Mr. Somers noted that tool itself takes the form of a spreadsheet, and the designated professional will take a number of measurements of the shoreline, desk research about the amount of open water in front to the property, and a determination of the material that the bluff is composed of. All of that information provides a setback for the property.

Further questions asked included:

- Will there be any help in place for current owners dealing with erosion?
 - No - coastal protection act deals with future problems, but not a funding pool for existing circumstances
- When will the province define that line?
 - Working on it now - it's a big job with 13k+ km of shoreline, and need to determine/get approval on the width of the zone.

Mr. Somers noted that the government has indicated that they will consult on the development of the regulations. He also noted that while not in formal consultation mode at the moment, Mr. Somers is available for any questions about the Act if Council or staff wish to bring the forward.

A question was raised about informing the public about the Act. Mr. Somers advised that the Act has been passed, and it's not a bad thing to inform the public about the requirements of the Act. Further discussion followed about the reasons for the Act in addressing anticipated sea level rise, and what risk can be associated with building in advance of the regulations where construction could be at risk of erosion or flooding.

Councillor Mattie a question of clarification about liability for future land sales and disclosure of the potential impact of the Act. Mr. Somers discussed the consultations that have taken place with the provincial association of realtors.

Councillor MacLellan raised a concern from her district, where those building rock walls in front of their properties are displacing wave energy to adjacent properties. Mr. Somers noted that the Act will speak to "unnecessary interference" to the shorelines, including shoreline armoring, which can cause erosion concerns. Also working with Lands and Forestry to work with guidelines in other acts (e.g. Beaches Act) to address unnecessary shoreline armoring as well.

Warden McCarron thanked Mr. Somers for his overview and for his attendance at the meeting to speak to the questions and concerns raised by Council.

Old Maryvale Road - Resident Presentation of Petition

Mr. MacDonald spoke on behalf of a number of residents along the Old Maryvale Road regarding repair concerns. Photographs that were provided of washout conditions on the road following recent storms were shared with the Committee and those attending online. Councillors were also provided with copied of the petition. The Department of Transportation has done repair work, but drainage concerns persist, leaving ruts in the road and causing culverts to fail, resulting in both the school buses refusing to travel the road but also causing some residents walking the roadway to fall. Increased rates of runoff from the adjacent hillside have been observed in the past several years. The group is looking for direction on the best way to approach the Department of Transportation to get assistance with their drainage concerns.

Councillor MacLellan provided an overview of the community and the road settings, and the need for significant upgrades to the drainage system along the roadway. She noted that the Department of Transportation has been very diligent to conduct repairs when there are washouts and failed culverts, but the fixes that are done are causing further concerns downstream in the roadway. A fully engineered review of the roadway is desired by the residents to fix the drainage concerns, and the area residents would like to meet with the Department of Transportation team to discuss their concerns.

Councillor McNamara raised a concern that there are additional roadways in the County that are still washed out or unpassable following the storm a little over a week ago. Councillor Brophy asked if there was an engineer on the roadway that might be able to contribute to the conversation with the Department of Transportation. Discussion followed. Mr. MacDonald was thanked for sharing the concern on behalf of the Old Maryvale Road residents.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council forward the resident petition requesting road upgrades on the Old Maryvale Road with a letter to the local Department of Transportation office, Minister Delorey, and the Minister of Transportation.

Motion Carried

Continuing Business

Update on Active Transportation ICIP Application

Ms. Melanson provided an overview of the discussions that have been underway with the Department of Transportation and Active Transit regarding the active transportation ICIP application that the Municipality has made and a proposal by the Department to work with the Municipality for the submission of an expanded ICIP application. The funding contribution of the County would remain the same as the original application.

Discussion was held earlier in the day with municipal staff, Warden, Department of Energy & Mines, and Department of Transportation to discuss logistics. If Council supports taking this route, a motion indicating support would be required. Questions raised by the Committee

included clarification on the project timeline, the funding breakdown by contributors in the current and proposed scenarios (told that municipal contribution would not increase and have asked for that to be noted in the signed agreement), and anticipated design/start dates.

Councillor Bill MacFarlane joined the meeting at 6:38 pm.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council support the multi-year funding application to the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program - Green House Gas Reduction Stream for the Antigonish Active Transportation Corridor project with a municipal contribution of \$2,090,729.00.

Motion Carried

Antigonish Community Buildings Retrofit Project Update

Ms. Feltmate provided an update on the Community Solar ICIP application that the County has made, and requested a motion from Council indicating their support, which is a requirement to move the application forward in the process of consideration with the Federal Government. A brief update on the scope of the project was provided for the benefit of the Committee. Discussion followed, and Ms. Feltmate was thanked for her work on the application to meet its tight timelines.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council support the multi-year funding application to the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program - Green House Gas Reduction Stream for the Antigonish Community Buildings Retrofit project with a municipal contribution of \$670,000.00.

Motion Carried

Background on Cellular Tower Siting

Municipal Council discussed cellular tower siting and the concerns raised by a number of Havre Boucher residents about a proposed cell tower to be located at 1439 Havre Boucher Road. Council discussed this situation specifically as well as potential actions such as writing a letter to request the tower be moved and consideration of a Tower Siting Policy. No actions came forward from this discussion. Councillor McNamara made a motion for the Municipality to write a letter to Bell requesting that other locations for the proposed tower be considered; the motion was not seconded.

Update on Safe Restart Agreement Funding

Mr. Horne noted that there is no update. The Municipality is still waiting for the Province to provide the accountability framework before any of the funds can be spent.

Warden McCarron noted that the Committee of the Whole meeting would be adjourned for the Council meeting, and would resume when the Council meeting concluded.

Moved

That the Committee of the Whole meeting adjourn at 7:27pm.

Motion Carried

The Committee of the Whole meeting resumed at 8:58pm.

New Business

Update on Government Bills Affecting Municipalities

Mr. Horne gave a brief overview of the bills before the legislature for general information. Consultation held for Bills were reviewed. Some further staff clarification on Bill 98 was shared for the benefit of the Committee.

Discussion about Resident Concerns Regarding Covid-19 Vaccine Bookings

Councillor McNamara brought forward concerns raised by local seniors who have experienced significant wait times when trying to book their vaccination appointments. He also shared concerns where seniors were finding that they could choose locations and times when booking online, versus those who are trying to book their appointments on the phone. Councillor Mattie shared that he has been in touch with Minister Hines' office about those concerns. General discussion followed.

Community Events

No community events were shared.

Staff Reports

Mr. Horne noted that a staff report is within the agenda package.

Additions to the Agenda

Streetlight Request

Councillor Dunbar brought forward a request for a streetlight to be located at the intersection of Chisholm Road and Donald X Chisholm Road.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council approves a streetlight at the intersection of Chisholm Road and Donald X Chisholm Road.

Motion Carried

In Camera Items

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee of the Whole Meeting be adjourned to an In-Camera Session to discuss the Acquisition, Sale, Lease, and Security of Municipal Property and Personnel Matters at 9:17pm.

Motion Carried

Moved and Seconded

That the In-Camera session adjourn at 9:26pm.

Motion Carried

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council appoints Tiffany MacNeil and James T Williams as the public member of the Accessibility Advisory Committee for a two-year term, effective April 13, 2021, and that the Committee recommends that Municipal Council appoints Amanda Casey and Carleton MacNeil as public members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee for a three-year term, effective April 13, 2021.

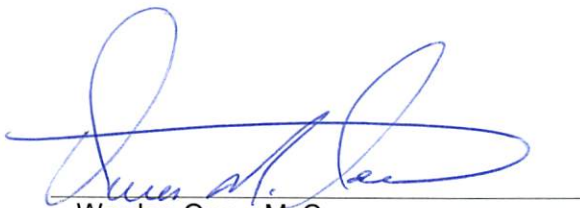
Motion Carried

Adjournment

Moved

That the Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned at 9:28pm.

Motion Carried



Warden Owen McCarron



Glenn Horne, CAO