
MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 5, 2022, 6:30 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 John Dunbar
Councillor Gary Mattie
Councillor Bill MacFarlane
Councillor Harris McNamara
Councillor Shawn Brophy

Regrets: Councillor Remi Deveau

Staff Present: Glenn Horne, CAO (by Zoom)
Beth Schumacher, Deputy Clerk

Also Present: Dr. David Garbary
Dolna Garbary
Ernie Porter
Ted Porter
Rachel Odgers

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 6:40pm.

Approval of Agenda

Warden McCarron called for any additions or deletions to the agenda. One addition was made:

- Petition for the Ohio Road East and West Repairs

Moved and Seconded

That the agenda be approved as amended.

Motion Carried

Approval of March 22, 2022 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 22, 2022 be approved as presented

Motion Carried

Business Arising from the Minutes

Clarification was provided that the discussion ended with an agreement that the approach to large grants would be considered for the 2022/2023 fiscal year.

Delegations

Warden McCarron welcomed the delegates to the meeting.

Ernie Porter - Town Point Consulting

Mr. Ernie Porter introduced two products that their company has been developing, called BOBR and the Oyster-Matic. A piece of current oyster farming equipment was brought along to provide a visual comparison as well. The benefits of the newly developed technology, in terms of ease of handling, cleaning, tumbling and oyster access to food were reviewed, with video demonstrations of the assembly of a unit and the visual profile of the units when installed in a water body. Tourism, jobs and a tax base were all benefits to the community that were outlined. Questions were held until after Dr. Garbary's presentation.

Dr. David Garbary

Dr. Garbary provided members of the Committee with an overview of a research project that was conducted to look at the BOBR technology to evaluate its impact on the growth rate and shape of oysters. The methods of evaluation were outlined, with the results of the study identified that daily growth rate in the BOBR unit exceeded that of traditional cages in terms of volume, area and depth, which are factors used in evaluating how quickly a premium-shaped product can be produced. An overview was also provided of the environmental considerations of the proposed oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour. Further research plans were shared as well.

The floor was then opened for questions from the Committee for both of the delegates. A question was asked about whether there had been any trials on the impact on the taste of the oysters. An explanation was provided regarding merroir (the marine version of terroir), and how the characteristics of the estuary could have more of an impact than the speed of their growth or size. Feedback from partner farmers have provided positive feedback on the condition and taste of the oysters produced so far.

A question was asked about production and use of the BOBR product. Examples of some early adopters were shared, and science work is still being done to evaluate the product before it is marketed. A question was asked about the comparison of the rate of production, between the BOBR and other current equipment. A statement about the low visual profile of the BOBR units was provided, noting that it is an improvement over the current technology used. A question was asked about how the area is protected if the units are low-profile; an explanation was provided of how the perimeter of the lease area is marked by buoys as per Transport Canada requirements. Questions were also asked about speculations on pricing, and timelines for the growth of oysters from seed to plate-ready. Mr. Porter and Dr. Garbary were thanked for their presentations.

Continuing Business

Discussion of COVID-19 Vaccination Policy

Mr. Horne spoke to the Municipality's vaccine policy, which was passed in the fall of 2021 following the Province establishing protocol for proof of vaccination. Now that the Province has removed the requirement for Proof of Vaccination except in specific circumstances, three options for the municipal policy were provided the Committee's consideration; the option to repeal, the option to amend, and the option to leave as-is. Councillor McNamara noted that the EDC has repealed their policy. A roundtable was held, and councillors identified a preference for amending the policy. Staff was asked for an update regarding the Provincial government's requirements, which Mr. Horne provided.

A question was asked about the impact on vaccine status for new hires if the policy was repealed, amended, or left as-is, which Mr. Horne answered by outlining whether he could ask about vaccine status of candidates based on the status of the policy. Further discussion took place regarding how the policy could change if it needed to be reinstated in the future. Based on the feedback received from the Committee, staff will draft an amendment to the policy for further consideration by the Committee.

New Business

There was no new business.

Community Events

- Councillor McNamara shared that the Havre Boucher Community Centre replaced a retaining wall that looks really good now.
- Councillor Dunbar shared that on Saturday May 14th starting at noon, the 100th Anniversary of 4H will be celebrated at the Heatherton Community Centre.

Staff Reports

Warden McCarron noted that the building permit report was attached for the agenda for information.

Additions to the Agenda

Ohio Road Petition

Deputy Warden Stewart brought forward a petition from residents in Ohio who are hoping to have a letter supporting their petition prepared by residents provided to:

- Minister Michelle Thompson, MLA for Antigonish
- Minister of Nova Scotia Public Works Kim Masland

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council writes a letter to support a petition regarding roads in Ohio to send to Minister Michelle Thompson, MLA for Antigonish and Minister of Nova Scotia Public Works Kim Masland.

Motion Carried

In Camera Items

There were no in-camera items.

Adjournment

Moved

That the Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned at 7:48pm.

Motion Carried



Warden Owen McCarron



Glenn Horne, CAO