

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 28, 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 Remi Deveau
Councillor John Dunbar
Councillor Harris McNamara
Councillor Shawn Brophy

Regrets: Councillor Gary Mattie
Councillor Bill MacFarlane

Staff Present: Glenn Horne, CAO
Beth Schumacher, Deputy Clerk

Also Present: David MacLeod

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 6:36pm.

Approval of Agenda

Warden McCarron called for any additions or deletions to the agenda.

Moved and Seconded

That the agenda be approved as presented.

Motion Carried

Approval of June 14, 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 June 14, 2022 be approved as presented

Motion Carried

Business Arising from the Minutes

Councillor Dunbar asked to speak about consolidation after Mr. MacLeod's presentation

Councillor McNamara noted that he had made an error when sharing the milestone reached by resident Beatrice Bennet. She is 103 instead of 102.

Councillor McNamara noted that the representative from Bell Aliant had said that they would be in contact with Councillors that had asked for follow-up, but Councillors have not heard from her yet. Staff was asked to reach out to the representative to follow-up on the information that was requested. Mr. Horne also noted that it might be a good idea to have representatives from Bell speak with Council throughout the duration of the Develop Nova Scotia project, to provide updates on the projects and any delays.

Councillor McNamara asked for an update about transitional funding regarding consolidation. Mr. Horne noted that the discussion has begun but details aren't available yet.

Councillor MacLellan highlighted the last sentence in the discussion about consolidation in the minutes, requesting that the Councils have an opportunity to review and discuss the report before it is released to the public. An update on timelines being communicated to the public was also discussed.

Mr. Horne noted that all of the other members of the EDPC have approved the Building Permit Policy Amendments.

Delegations

David MacLeod - Comments Regarding Proposed Consolidation

Mr. MacLeod was introduced and provided a presentation to the Committee regarding the topic of the consideration of consolidation with the Town. He noted that he had been in attendance for Anne Marie Long's presentation earlier in the spring, and raised his concerns particularly regarding democratic decline, due to the residents of the communities not being given the chance to vote on the matter. Mr. MacLeod feels that

a plebiscite would be an investment in supporting democracy and making a decision on consolidation is beyond the mandate of the current Council.

The floor was opened for questions. Mr. MacLeod was thanked for his presentation. Councillor Dunbar asked for Mr. MacLeod what he would consider a threshold for participation in a plebiscite to make it representative of the community. Mr. MacLeod noted 60% participation would be appropriate and noted the importance of advertising to bring attention to the issue. Discussion about advertisement methods followed.

Mr. MacLeod was thanked for his presentation, and Warden McCarron thanked him for his military service as well.

Councillor Dunbar asked for an update regarding the RCMP costs. Mr. Horne noted that there has not been an update provided yet. Discussion followed about term financial offsets that were provided to Windsor West Hants to cover the increase in the RCMP contract formula change. Councillor Dunbar asked whether a response is being prepared to the questions asked by Mr. Lynch at his presentation earlier in the month. Staff noted that the questions raised are being incorporated into the assessment of the questions and feedback raised in the community consultation process. Councillor Dunbar's final question was regarding the role of the consultants following the presentation of the *What We Heard* report. Mr. Horne noted the consultants' role in preparing final reports as per their contract. Councillor MacLellan recounted how she is hearing from some of her constituents who are looking for more information before they can determine whether they are in favour of consolidation.

Continuing Business

Update Regarding Volunteer Fire Department Long-Service Awards

Mrs. Schumacher provided an update on the work done since the winter to determine the number of medals required to begin a municipal recognition program for recognizing the long service of volunteer fire department members. The Committee gave consensus given to proceed with ordering the medals. Staff will follow-up with Council and the area Fire Chiefs to determine the best way to distribute the medals once they have arrived.

The Committee of the Whole meeting was suspended at 7:27 for the Municipal Council meeting.

Moved and Seconded

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

Motion Carried

The Committee of the Whole meeting resumed at 8:07pm.

New Business

Request for Property Tax Reduction - Business Impacted by Natural Disaster

Mr. Horne spoke to the request received from the owner of the former Ultramar on Highway 7, for a write-off or write-down of taxes on the property following a natural disaster that impacted the underground gas tank on the property following the heavy rains in late November 2021. Staff noted that Council is not able to do this for a commercial business but has reached out to PVSC to ask them to determine if there is any opportunity for a reduction on the property's assessment due to the loss in a manner similar to what is done for properties impacted by fire. Mr. Horne noted that any change to assessment would be for next year, as the property owner did not appeal their assessment earlier in the year. Staff has also reached out to the local MLAs office for any assistance for the property owner as well.

Tax Write Off Due to Fire

Mr. Horne reviewed a request to write-off taxes for a property that was the subject of a PVSC fire letter.

Moved and Seconded

THAT the Committee recommend that Municipal Council write-off the taxes for AAN 04730194, which was destroyed by fire, in the amount of \$432.51.

Motion Carried

Consideration of Contributing Towards Bleacher Repairs at the Sandlot Accessible Ballfield

Councillor Brophy shared that he had heard of damage at the Sandlot Ball Field on the radio. Photographs of some of the damage to the bleachers were included in the agenda package, and Councillor Brophy noted that the representatives from Challenger Baseball have been fundraising to cover the expenses associated with the repair. He suggested a contribution of \$500 to assist with the repairs to the bleachers.

Moved and Seconded

That the County contribute \$500 towards repairs to the bleachers at the Sandlot Ball Field.

Motion Carried

Reports from Inter-Municipal Boards, Committees and Commissions

Antigonish Heritage Museum Board

The board's next meeting is scheduled for Monday July 4th.

Antigonish Arena Association

The Arena Association's next meeting will be on June 29th. The RCMP Musical Ride is coming to the arena on July 27th and 28th.

Antigonish Crime Prevention

The group held their last AGM and dissolved the association. Any remaining funds that the association had are being held in trust in case a Senior Safety program is started in the future.

Eastern District Planning Commission

Councillor MacFarlane is now Vice Chair of the Board. The increase in Building Permits was approved by all of the Commission members.

Eastern Regional Solid Waste Management Committee

The next Committee meeting will be on June 30th.

Pictou Antigonish Regional Library

Nothing to report.

RK MacDonald Nursing Home

The Board's AGM is scheduled for June 29th.

County Paqtnkek Joint Steering Committee

Mr. Horne noted that plans are being made to look to set up a Joint Council meeting in the early fall (late September).

Consolidation Steering Committee

Nothing to report.

Community Navigation & Physician Retention Services Association

The Association's AGM was held June 23rd. Members shared that Sarah O'Toole provided her report and did an excellent job.

Community Events

Mr. Horne noted that Canada Day celebrations are planned for Friday, July 1st, and provided an overview of the event schedule for that day.

Additions to the Agenda

There were no additions to the agenda.

In Camera Items

There were no in-camera items.

Adjournment

Moved

That the Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned at 8:27pm.

Motion Carried



Warden Owen McCarron



Glenn Horne, CAO