

Municipality of the County of Inverness
Regular Council Meeting
Thursday, May 7th, 2020 1:30 pm
Video Conference

Council: Warden Betty Ann MacQuarrie
 Deputy Warden Alfred Poirier
 Councillor John MacLennan
 Councillor Laurie Cranton
 Councillor Jim Mustard
 Councillor John Dowling

Staff: Keith MacDonald, CAO
 Tanya Tibbo, Director of Finance
 Donna MacDonald, Director of Tourism and Culture
 Charlotte MacDonald, Recreation Manager
 Debbie Nicholson, Administrative Assistant to Council
 Melanie Beaton, Special Projects Facilitator
 Karolyn Aucoin, Communications and Community Engagement Specialist
 Erin Gillis, Manager, Operations & Occupational Health and Safety
 Jenna Beernink, Human Resources Specialist

Guest: Alicia Lake, Manager, Pan Cape Breton Food Hub Cooperative

Warden MacQuarrie called the meeting to order at 1:35 pm and welcomed all in attendance. A moment of silence was observed in honour of those lives lost to the April 18th shooting tragedy in Nova Scotia, in the April 29th Canadian Forces helicopter crash in Europe, and during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED: Deputy Warden Poirier
SECONDED: Councillor Dowling
MOTION: That the agenda be approved as presented.
MOTION CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED: Councillor Cranton
SECONDED: Councillor Mustard
MOTION: That the regular Council minutes of April 9th, 2020 be approved.
MOTION CARRIED

MOVED: Councillor Dowling
SECONDED: Deputy Warden Poirier
MOTION: That the Committee of the Whole minutes of April 16th, 2020 be approved.

MOTION CARRIED

BUSINESS ARISING

A letter was recently issued to the Cape Breton Island Housing Authority regarding the future of the Orangedale Seniors Apartments. To date no response has been received.

A letter was also issued to Canada Post regarding the need for exterior improvements for the Port Hastings Post Office. Councillor Dowling received a phone call indicating that an announcement will be made in the next few weeks regarding this issue. The West Bay Post Office is expected to remain in operation and the Grand Etang Post Office is anticipated to be repaired as the result of damages due to high winds.

PROCLAMATION: NATIONAL DENIM DAY

The following proclamation was read by Warden MacQuarrie:

WHEREAS breast cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer in Canadian women – it can be completely cured if caught in time.

AND WHEREAS 27,000 Canadian women were diagnosed with breast cancer in 2019; this represents 25% of all new cancer cases. 230 were men.

AND WHEREAS 5,000 women died of this disease in 2019; 13% of all cancer deaths

AND WHEREAS women younger than 35 tend to be diagnosed with more aggressive, higher grade tumors; they are often more advanced at diagnosis

AND WHEREAS 1 in 8 Canadian women will develop breast cancer in her lifetime, and 1 in 31 will die from it!

AND WHEREAS by proclaiming Tuesday, May 12th, 2020, **National Denim Day**, the County of Inverness assists the CURE Foundation for breast cancer in raising awareness about the seriousness of this women’s disease.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT I, Betty Ann MacQuarrie, Warden of the County of Inverness, do hereby proclaim that Tuesday, May 12th, 2020, to be:

“NATIONAL DENIM DAY”

PAN CAPE BRETON FOOD HUB COOPERATIVE, Alicia Lake

Ms. Lake presented an update to Council. Highlights included the current food hub producers, the number of households and businesses participating from the Municipality and the positive impacts on the environment, health, poverty reduction, community, tourism, and the economy. Since the COVID-19 Pandemic began, food shortages were experienced by local businesses. This created a new awareness for the availability of local food options, and what resources can be made available through the Food Hub. Home deliveries of food products have increased and this trend is expected to increase through the summer.

FIRST READING: REQUEST FOR REZONING

MOVED: Councillor Mustard

SECONDED: Councillor Dowling

MOTION: That the Request for Rezoning from C-2 to O-1 for lands identified as PID # 50205632, 50329853 and 50319656 be given First Reading and proceed to a public hearing.

MOTION CARRIED

GFL ROUTE CHANGE REQUEST, Erin Gillis

Green For Life (GFL) is proposing the following garbage pickup route changes for increased efficiencies: West Mabou, Colindale, Rocky Ridge, and Hunter's Road have shifted to Friday. Pleasant Bay will become a Monday pickup and Route 19 from 252 intersection to Strathlorne-Scotsville Road intersection will be a Friday pickup. GFL has also requested a move towards community boxes in areas that are on dirt roads or areas of low population. A complete inventory of roads and impacted areas have been requested from GFL for review. Staff are working on a request and approval process for the placement and upkeep of community boxes, but the decision to allow community boxes within the Municipality will rest with Council. Letters will be sent to households affected by the route changes.

MUNICIPAL PANDEMIC RESPONSE UPDATE, Charlotte MacDonald and Donna MacDonald

Recent funding applications from the Municipality to address the COVID-19 Pandemic have resulted the approval of \$55,000.00 in funds. Sources include the Canadian Good Food Resource Fund, the Atlantic Compassion Fund, the Breakfast Club of Canada, Communities Culture and Heritage, Seniors Safety Emergency Funding, and the New Horizons Fund.

On Wednesday April 29, 2020, Municipal staff in partnership with SchoolsPlus and Strait Area Transit organized the second delivery of Emergency Food hampers to students throughout the County. Approximately 130 food hampers containing dried good and non-perishable items were delivered. The Pandemic Response Team continues to partner, communicate and work with Fire Halls , Food Bank staff and Meals on Wheels programs. The Hamper Program is scheduled to occur every two weeks as long as funding allows.

The Municipal Helpline (1-888-258-5550) continues to be monitored by Municipal staff. Fourteen Community Facebook pages have been created to assist County residents to connect with one another and access resources or information.

During the Council Round Table discussion, a huge thanks was extended to Municipal staff involved in the Pandemic Response Team. Consideration was given to perhaps extending the work of the team into the summer. The networking communities are being used to help develop the vulnerable persons list. Residents have been encouraged to self identify through the Municipal Helpline.

PROPERTY TAX FINANCING PROGRAM OVERVIEW, Tanya Tibbo

The province has announced a property tax financing program overview. The program does not provide tax forgiveness, but rather a low interest loan to Municipalities that can be passed onto their residents. Criteria will hope to address financial hardship through loss of revenue related to the State of Emergency. Tax accounts must be in good standing to participate. Only Nova Scotia residents would qualify. The Policy would have to go through normal Council process to approve a policy. Further discussion and a full overview of the program will be provided by staff once the details are finalized.

MARGAREE BRAND & SIGNAGE PLAN, TENDER AWARD, Melanie Beaton

The Municipality of the County of Inverness, in partnership with the Margaree Area Development Association, Margaree Lake Ainslie Canadian Heritage River Society, Margaree Salmon Association and Margaree Salmon Museum sought the services of a qualified consultant or consultant team to provide collaborative planning, design consultation and artwork for a proposed Brand and Signage Plan for the villages of Margaree.

The primary objectives of the study are:

1. To realize a community branding and signage concept for the villages of Margaree that reflects the Margaree advantage and attracts new businesses, new shoppers, new tourists and new residents.
2. To provide illustrated concepts and liaise with fabricators to provide budget estimates.
3. To liaise with Nova Scotia Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

The Request for Proposals (RFP) *"MCI-RFP-2020-003– Margaree Brand & Signage Plan"* posted on January 31st, 2020 and closed on Thursday February 20th, 2020 at 2pm. The recommendation of the review committee was proceeded with reference checks for Revolve Branding + Marketing. Following proposal review and satisfactory reference checks, the Municipality of the County of Inverness has awarded the tender – MCI-RFP-2020-003 – Margaree Brand & Signage Plan to Revolve Branding + Marketing for a maximum amount of \$19,492.50 including HST. The project timeline is expected to be 3 months from the project start date, which is to be determined. The budget GL for this work is the Tourism Strategy and the funding will come from the Brand & Signature Spaces Project.

CHETICAMP WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT OUTFALL PIPE, Melanie Beaton

The Chéticamp outfall is where the treated effluent from the Chéticamp Wastewater Treatment Plant goes to the receiving waters of the Atlantic Ocean. The outfall pipe is buried in armour stone along the shore and generally extends out into the waters close to the ocean floor to ensure circulation and dilution. The treated effluent meets Municipal Environmental Discharge Objectives (EDOs) as per Nova Scotia Environment's (NSE) criteria. However, during Hurricane Dorian storm surge and high winds rolled the rocks off the outfall pipe and punctured the pipe.

NSE is aware of this damage. The damage is not in compliance with NSE regulation and is also an issue for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO).

Municipal staff have collected estimates to repair the outfall. The scope of work will include replacing the affected section of punctured pipe, encasing the pipe for protection from future damage thus increasing resiliency of the outfall, as well as replacing armour stone for added protection.

This work is expected to be covered, at least in part, through the Hurricane Dorian Disaster Assistance Fund however the amount is yet to be confirmed. Currently, this repair work is a Municipal priority for compliance with NSE and DFO.

The work is expected to take two (2) weeks and the estimates collected for the work to be accomplished total \$178,140.75 (including HST).

WHYCOCOMAGH SIDEWALK UPDATE, Melanie Beaton

During the February 20th, 2020 Council Committee of the Whole meeting, Lisa Nearing and Heather Austin Coulombe presented a petition to Council highlighting the desire for the construction of a sidewalk connecting the communities of Whycomomagh and We'koqma'q First Nation. With the proposed rotary being constructed in Whycomomagh, citizens encouraged the Municipality to work with NS Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (NSTIR) to pursue the creation of this sidewalk. Council directed staff to investigate costs of potential sidewalks.

The new Whycomomagh rotary will require the Municipality to advance a linear infrastructure upgrade and Municipal staff have engaged Strum Engineering to provide design and costing for this work in coordination with NSTIR for permitting and tendering purposes. An update on this work will be forthcoming to council shortly.

In the meantime, the Whycomomagh Planning & Streetscape Committee have engaged Strum engineering (\$39,950.00 +HST) to survey, design and cost the construction of sidewalks throughout the village of Whycomomagh including connecting We'koqma'q First Nation and the village of Whycomomagh (see the attached design and costing). To comply with NSTIR criteria and ensure pedestrian safety the addition of retaining walls could be necessary. Municipal staff are currently supporting the project by engaging with potential funding partners to help offset the implementation cost of this work.

Alignment of Existing Work

1. The Municipal Active Transportation Plan completed in 2018 engaged residents of District 4 through an open house and an online engagement survey.

The issues were as follows:

- Safe crossing of the highway
- Improved gravel shoulder
- Need lighting, dangerous to walk at night
- Need sidewalks
- Safe pedestrian access to Skye River Trail
- Safe pedestrian access to Provincial Park
- Improvements to walkability of Main Street.

Highway 105 traffic volume from Port Hastings to Whycomomagh ranges from 3,300 to 4,500 vehicles per day.

The Municipal Active Transportation Plan recommendations are to provide a safe east-west walking connection through Whycomomagh. Of the service centres within the Municipality with major highways traversing through them, Whycomomagh is the only one, to date, that has not benefitted from any sidewalk or streetscaping projects. Vehicles travel through the community at high speeds and there are few visual indicators that drivers are entering the core of a community. Providing a curbed sidewalk and pedestrian scaled lighting along Highway 105 would not only enable safe walking but also ties together the heart of Whycomomagh and makes it less of a 'drive through' community. A walking connection would also connect We'koqma'q First Nation. In detail the Municipal Active Transportation Plan made the following recommendations:

1. A curbed sidewalk and pedestrian lighting along Highway 105 from Reservation Road to Farmer's Daughter.
2. A paved shoulder and pedestrian lighting along Main Street.
3. A curbed sidewalk and pedestrian lighting along Highway 105 from Main Street to the Whycomomagh Provincial Park.

2. J Class Road Main Street has been submitted as a J-Class Road for repaving to NSTIR. At this time, a paved shoulder or curbed sidewalk option can be explored.

3. The Whycomomagh Brand, Signage & Streetscape Plan is underway. This plan is focused on improving the community's attraction capability, slowing traffic down, encouraging the feel of a community vs. a drive through, improving pedestrian safety, supporting local businesses, and enhancing civic pride. Once the plan is completed, implementation will begin.

It is expected by the May Council Committee of the Whole meeting a more thorough budget will be presented, and funding partners identified. If a portion of this work will be recoverable through an area rate for eligible property owners within the fire protection catchment area, public support will need to be demonstrated and budget presented to the community.

MOTIONS

COVID-19 FOOD SECURITY

MOVED: Councillor Mustard

SECONDED: Councillor Dowling

MOTION: That that the document “Community Food Security through Enhanced and Broadened Sustainable Community Based Food Production” be approved.

MOTION CARRIED

SPRING 2020 HEAVY GARBAGE PICK-UP

MOVED: Councillor Mustard

SECONDED: Councillor Cranton

MOTION: That heavy garbage pick-up to be delayed until the State of Emergency has ceased.

MOTION CARRIED

CORRESPONDENCE

Councillor Cranton brought forward two resident concerns:

- An unsightly premises complaint was made against a property last year. As per Municipal Policy, the Eastern District Planning Commission was made aware of the complaint and issued corrective action. Neighboring properties are not pleased with the efforts made to rectify the situation by the property owner. They will be advised to contact the Eastern District Planning Commission once again to issue another complaint.
- A resident has complained of water damage on his property due to a logging company operating near him. The resident will be advised to reach out to the Department of Environment and the Department of Natural Resources.

Warden MacQuarrie noted that she has received many concerns from residents highlighting the need for adequate connectivity, and cell service, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Warden suggested any concerned citizens should band together and lobby directly with service providers on the need for adequate connectivity for residents, especially those trying to work from home and conduct home schooling during this time.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

Committee of the Whole: May 21st, 2020

Regular Monthly Council: June 4th, 2020

Recess: 4:00 pm – 4:18 pm

MOVED: Councillor Dowling
SECONDED: Councillor Mustard
MOTION: That Council move to “in camera” at 4:18 pm
MOTION CARRIED

MOVED: Deputy Warden Poirier
SECONDED: Councillor Dowling
MOTION: That Council move out of “in camera” at 5:37 pm
MOTION CARRIED

MOVED: Councillor Dowling
SECONDED: Councillor Cranton
MOTION: That Council accept the proposed salary summary as presented by CAO
Keith MacDonald
MOTION CARRIED

MOVED: Councillor Cranton
SECONDED: Councillor Dowling
MOTION: That Council adjourn at 5:37 pm
MOTION CARRIED