

**Municipality of the County of Inverness**  
**Committee of the Whole Meeting**  
**Thursday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020**  
**9:30 am**  
**Council Chambers**

Council:     Warden Betty Ann MacQuarrie  
              Deputy Warden Alfred Poirier  
              Councillor John MacLennan  
              Councillor Laurie Cranton (via teleconference)  
              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 Coordinator  
              Karolyn Aucoin, Communications and Community Engagement Specialist  
              Ellen Murphy, Manager of Infrastructure

Warden MacQuarrie called the meeting to order at 9:30 am and welcomed all in attendance. Roll call was taken.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOVED:**               Councillor Mustard  
**SECONDED:**         Councillor Dowling  
**MOTION:**             That the agenda be approved as presented.  
**MOTION CARRIED**

**ST JOSEPH DU MOINE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT LOAN GUARANTEE**

The St. Joseph Du Moine Volunteer Fire Department issued a letter to Council requesting financial assistance due to repairs needed for a fire truck. The amount requested is \$29,600.00.

Recommendation to Council made by Deputy Warden Poirier that a loan guarantee be granted to the St. Joseph du Moine Volunteer Fire Department in the amount of \$29,600.00.

## **GAELIC COMMUNITY SIGNS**

The Lake Ainslie Development Association issued a letter to Council requesting that several community signs be erected, and be in both English and Gaelic throughout districts 2, 3 and 4. Consensus to advance this request on to the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

### **UPDATE: Municipal Charitable Tax Exemption**

The Mabou Hall Committee submitted a letter to the Municipality requesting that they be granted a full exemption of taxes in respect to “Tax Exemption By-Law for Charitable properties”. There are two church halls in the Municipality that are not classified as commercial exempt, St. Patrick’s Fellowship Hall and the Episcopal Corp of Antigonish (Mabou Hall). The St. Patrick’s Community Hall is provided a charitable tax exemption under the Municipality’s Bylaw, however, the Mabou Hall is not. Section 5(b) of the Nova Scotia Assessment Act states that in order to be classified as exempt, there must be no revenue in excess of \$100 per annum collected. St. Patrick’s Community Hall appears to be assessed incorrectly as Commercial Taxable. There is no revenue generated other than approved community events. This is why it is granted a charitable tax exemption from the Municipality. The Mabou Hall is assessed as commercial because of the nature of the operations. The Department of Agriculture is leasing space, and the kitchen is used for commercial purposes. Because the revenue generated would be in excess of \$100, no exemption is granted.

Staff contacted Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC) to discuss the exempt classification and values applied to the church halls. PVSC agreed to have a commercial assessor review both the Mabou Community Hall and the East Margaree Hall and to amend the assessments if appropriate.

### **UPDATE: Hurricane Readiness – Generator Update**

Melanie Beaton updated Council on the generator project. To date, there are three permanent locations at Cheticamp, Inverness and Mabou Water Treatment Plants. Portable locations include the Whycocomagh, Port Hood and Judique Water Treatment Plants and the Port Hastings Booster Station. Staff training, and surge protection will follow, along with a permanent generator at the Broad Cove Banks Booster Station.

### **UPDATE: Whycocomagh Design Façade Contract**

Melanie Beaton provided an update to Council. A Request for Proposals was posted on June 9<sup>th</sup>, and closed on July 2<sup>nd</sup>. Three responses were received. The successful proponent was a partnership between Conrad Taves Consulting and Vibe Creative Group for a maximum amount of \$34,931.25. The project timeline is expected to be five months. The funding source is the Brand and Signature Spaces as part of the Tourism Strategy.

### **UPDATE: Judique Water Exploration**

Melanie Beaton provided an update to Council. Judique is the only community not on a ground water system; the water source is Rory Brook. Weather events can significantly affect the quality of the water. Three exploratory wells have been drilled by Island Well Drillers Ltd. (IWD) to investigate the potential for developing a potable groundwater supply for the community of Judique. The Municipality in partnership with various consultants have achieved enough yield to provide a ground water source to the current service population of the community of Judique at one drill location (PW2) however, there is limited room for community growth. While establishing PW2 is the cheapest short term option, deepening PW2 in an attempt to achieve an increased operational yield could allow for community growth. Due to the increased costs and a limited ownership footprint the construction of a new production well is not recommended at this time because of possible pumping interferences in the wellfield due to the proximity of production wells.

Recommendation to Council to fund \$38,800.00 plus HST from Gas Tax Funds to deepen PW2 in Judique in hopes of achieving increased yield.

### **UPDATE: Inverness Water Exploration**

Melanie Beaton provided an update to Council. The goal of the Inverness Wellfield Program is to find additional water supply to meet the growing demands of the community of Inverness. Four monitoring wells have been successfully drilled at the Inverness PW2 Well Field. EXP Services Inc.'s (EXP) recommended a new production well (PW8) should be positioned. Following a successful drilling program and the installation of PW8, the full Multi-Well Pump Test was undertaken as required by Nova Scotia Environment to determine the safe yield and chemistry of the entire Well Field when in full production. Due to commercial and residential community growth a Wellfield Development and Enhancement Program will continue in the community of Inverness as staff and engineering consultants work to ensure the Municipality has the capacity to serve the current and future service population of the community of Inverness. This work will be well informed by the Water Modelling Study, Inverness Growth Management Strategy and the Land Suitability Analysis, all of which are projects currently underway. Municipal staff will work with consultants to put together a robust project plan to bring PW8 online and identify funding avenues to offset the expected costs and will come back to Municipal Council with an updated presentation at that time.

### **UPDATE: Veteran's Memorial Court Infrastructure Services**

Council was updated on a number of projects that are currently underway in the community of Inverness. These projects include the Inverness Growth Management Strategy, the Inverness Waste Water Treatment Plant and Collection System – System Assessment Report and Pre-Design Study, J Class Roads, the Recapitulation of Central Avenue, Possible Service Extensions, Water Modeling Study, the Inverness Wellfield Development and Improvement Program, the Generators

Project, the Biosolids Management Plan, Outfall Inspection, Flushing and CCTV Program Priority Streets In Inverness, and the Geothermal Prefeasibility Study.

A breakdown of costs associated specific to Veteran's Memorial Court (surface works, water system, storm sewer, waste water system, and J Class Road Repaving Municipal Cost Share, including contingencies) is estimated to cost \$3,860,947.30.

In addition to the existing Scope of Services for the Inverness Growth Management Strategy the Municipality has engaged Turner Drake and Upland Planning & Design to perform a Return on Investment (ROI) analysis of a possible extension of 'Veterans Memorial Court' including its subterranean services from its current official end point in the vicinity of Civic # 52 to the edge of Property PID # 50131887.

The main objective of the additional services is to establish the financial viability of this infrastructure project, including a break-even point or a fair cost contribution for abutting property owners.

Turner Drake & Partners will add revenue calculations, derived from analysis of property assessments in Inverness (and other communities if required), to estimate assessed values of potential development, as well as trends in assessment over time following construction. This will be combined into a *Discounted Cash Flow Analysis* in order to analyze the fiscal impact on the municipality, having regard for the timing of costs and revenues. These models will identify break-even points and/or necessary contributions from abutting property owners.

#### **UPDATE: Cheticamp Water Treatment Plant Roof**

The estimate to replace the roof of the Cheticamp Water Treatment Plant is over budget by \$10,218.94. This is a flat metal roof.

Recommendation to Council to approve this expense with funds coming from the Capital Reserve.

Consensus to invite MLA Allan MacMaster to the October 1<sup>st</sup> Regular Meeting of Council.

#### **STAFF REPORTS**

##### **Department of Finance, Tanya Tibbo**

The main focus in the Finance Department has been to process and balance the property tax payments and to develop a plan to reopen the Finance Department to the public. Multiple projects, tasks and meetings are ongoing. Since the previous report dated August 20, 2020, the Finance Department has processed 6506 property tax receipts totaling \$5,222,051.27. This brings the total collected property taxes to \$11,599,564.02, which represents 93.45% of previous years' collection efforts.

### **Department of Tourism and Culture, Donna MacDonald**

Monthly highlights within the Department of Tourism and Culture include the Welcoming Newcomers Network, the Firefly Productions film crew TV filming, the Staycation marketing and Music Mondays social media campaigns , the Municipal World features article on Inverness County – Canada’s Musical Coast, and the Brand launch for Whycomagh Façade and Streetscape. Multiple projects, and initiatives are ongoing, and multiple meetings within the department and with external partners continue.

### **Department of Recreation, Charlotte MacDonald**

Monthly highlights within the Department of Recreation include multiple funding applications, calling for community participation for the Voices of the Community Telephone line, crafting messaging, and informing instructors regarding the decision to continue the suspension of school-based programs for the fall, and moving forward with the hiring of the Municipal Physical Activities Leader for Inverness County. New initiatives and multiple projects remain, and multiple meetings within the department and with external partners continue.

### **Special Projects, Melanie Beaton**

This month Special Projects has continued to facilitate numerous meetings with various consultant teams and project stakeholders, resulting in shared knowledge transfer, advancing projects and mobilization towards accomplishing project objectives. Some of the projects include the Whycomagh Streetscape Plan, Gypsum Mine Trail, the Inverness Growth Management Strategy, the Inverness WWTP System Assessment Report (SAR) & Pre-Design Study, the Former Port Hood Public Wharf, the Port Hood Island Wharf, the Margaree Brand & Signage Plan, the Water Modelling Study, and the Generator Project. Multiple meetings within the department and with external partners continue.

### **Water and Wastewater Operations, Chestley Carr**

All Lift stations in Cheticamp, Inverness and Whycomagh have been professional cleaned. Several lift stations were full of fats, oils and grease from not being cleaned in years. There also was a large buildup of debris which had the potential to cause severe damage to equipment. A regular maintenance program will help reduce mechanical failures and overall extend the life of each station. Additional projects include well cleaning and repairs, leak detection, generator installations, and water and wastewater sampling. Multiple meetings within the department and with external partners continue.

### **Infrastructure Unit, Ellen Murphy**

Recent highlights include on-going sewer and water servicing, asphalt cut repairs, J Roads, scheduling of service installation, addressing leaks, hydrant moving, the Inverness Wellfield Cleanup, replacing the water line at the Mabou bus garage, curb stop repairs, and establishing a security plan for Municipal properties. Multiple meetings within the department and with external partners continue.

### **Operations and Occupational Health and Safety, Erin Gillis**

The Kenloch Transfer station no longer requires appointments for waste drop off. The new truck and trailer are registered and on the road. The department is working with procurement to have heavy garbage pickup collection scheduled for October 2020. Recycling is struggling with the volume of material on site and the quality of material. Staff shortages and vacation are compounding the problem. A community household hazardous waste drop off event is planned, in partnership with Victoria County and the Town of Port Hawkesbury. Kenloch cell design continues with support from Nova Scotia Environment and external engineering firms. Cell phone coverage continues to be an issue at the Transfer Station and has impacted the work being performed at the facility, leading to delays in information and guidance. Multiple meetings within the department and with external partners continue.

### **Environmental Compliance, Trudy Gillis**

Weekly, and monthly reports for Nova Scotia Environment are ongoing and on schedule. An asset management program for the water and wastewater infrastructure is in progress. Staff are participating in training, webinars, and online courses. Ms. Gillis assists the Manager of Operations and Maintenance and the Manager of Infrastructure to ensure work is being completed in a way that meets department approvals. Sampling, inspections, and testing are ongoing and frequent. Multiple meetings within the department and with external partners continue.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

The August 2020 building permit statistics from the Eastern District Planning Commission were presented to Council.

The letter from the St. Joseph du Moine Volunteer Fire Department outlining the estimated cost of repairs to a fire truck was presented to Council.

A letter was received by Council from residents of Marble Hill Road, Port Hood, asking the County to consider extending Municipal water and sewer services to that area.

Recommendation to Council for Municipal staff to do an assessment of the Port Hood water and sewer services, and determine the current capacity, and the availability for expansion.

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL – Over Estimate Memo

Correspondence was received from the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (TIR) regarding agreement 2020-21 J-Class Subdivision Street Paving. The Birch Street repaving project had an original estimate of \$148,000.00. The tender amount is \$171,000.00, resulting in a cost overrun of 15.5%.

Recommendation to Council to proceed with accepting the cost overrun of 15.5% for the Birch Street repaving project.

### NEXT MEETING DATE:

Regular Monthly Council: October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020  
Committee of the Whole: October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
Audit Meeting: September 25<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 am

### RECESS: 11:50 am – 12:05 pm

**MOVED:** Councillor Dowling  
**SECONDED:** Deputy Warden Poirier  
**MOTION:** That Council move to “in camera” at 12:05 pm.  
**MOTION CARRIED**

**MOVED:** Councillor Mustard  
**SECONDED:** Councillor Dowling  
**MOTION:** That Council move back to Regular Council at 12:30pm.  
**MOTION CARRIED**

### RECOMMENDATIONS FROM “IN CAMERA”

Recommendation to Council to finalize an easement for Municipal water and sewer across Cabot Cliffs property.

**MOVED:** Deputy Warden Poirier  
**SECONDED:** Councillor Dowling  
**MOTION:** That Council adjourn at 12:32 pm  
**MOTION CARRIED**