

**Municipality of the County of Inverness  
Committee of the Whole Meeting  
Thursday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
9:30 am  
Council Chambers**

Council: Warden Laurie Cranton  
Deputy Warden Bonny MacIsaac  
Councillor Alfred Poirier  
Councillor John MacLennan  
Councillor Lynn Chisholm  
Councillor Catherine Gillis

Staff: Keith MacDonald, CAO  
Christine Murray, Manager of Legal and Governance  
Tanya Tibbo, Director of Finance  
Donna MacDonald, Director of Tourism and Culture  
Debbie Nicholson, Administrative Assistant to Council  
Melanie Beaton, Special Projects Coordinator  
Karolyn Aucoin, Communications and Community Engagement Specialist

Warden Cranton called the meeting to order at 9:30 am and welcomed all in attendance. Roll call was taken. The Warden acknowledged that we are in the ancestral and territorial land of the Mi'kmaq people.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOVED:** Deputy Warden MacIsaac  
**SECONDED:** Councillor MacLennan  
**MOTION:** That the agenda be approved as presented.  
**MOTION CARRIED**

**STAFF REPORTS**

**Water and Wastewater Operations, Chestley Carr**

Highlights include the installation of hot water heaters and sinks in water/wastewater facilities; a necessity for instrument and tool cleaning. The pressure instrument has been installed at the Inverness Banks Road booster station. This will alert staff in the event of a decrease in pressure. Ongoing projects include Cheticamp lift station # 6 replacement, Whycocomagh lift station control panel # 4 replacement, and generator fencing. Multiple meetings within the department and with external partners continue.

## **Infrastructure Unit, Ellen Murphy**

Recent tasks include the snow removal, sanding and salting of municipal sidewalks and properties. Ongoing tasks include addressing water leaks, fire hydrant maintenance, servicing prep work, curb stop repairs, the Inverness wellfield cleanup, budget preparation, and facility maintenance, upkeep and repair. Multiple meetings within the department and with external partners continue.

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

Communication is ongoing with Green For Life (GFL) to address collection issues, scheduling, and route changes. The first meeting of the Joint Occupational Health and Safety sub-committee incident management review was held. This review will help staff complete quality review investigations. The household hazardous waste collection was held on February 27, 2021 at Kenloch and was very well attended. Multiple meetings within the department and with external partners continue.

## **Environmental Compliance, Trudy Gillis**

Monthly highlights include federal and provincial reporting, annual reports, information gathering for contractors, and monthly webinars. Current projects include solids management plan, manhole flow monitoring, wellfield project, cross connection control program, and budget preparation. Multiple meetings within the department and with external partners continue.

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

Highlights of the past month include bank reconciliation, capital project reconciliation, 2021-2022 budget preparation. Ongoing projects include tax sale preparation, processing tax and water payments, customer service, various tender applications, processing of invoices, meter installations, water consumption tracking, water connections/disconnections, administration of water accounts, bank deposits, daily mail, payroll administration, municipal land issues, budget preparation and year end preparation. Multiple meetings within the department and with external partners continue.

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

Monthly highlights within Tourism and Culture include the Back to Work Program in Inverness, Site Plan meetings for Judique and Waycobah, and the Margaree Video. Ongoing projects include the Winter Marketing Campaign, Whycomomagh and Margaree Brand and Signage projects, the Volunteer Recognition Program, the Welcome Network, and website updates. Multiple meetings within the department and with external partners continue.

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

Recent highlights include the Recreation Facility Review RFP, March Break Programming, International Women's Day Walk, the Hidden Hearts Challenge, and equipment rentals. Ongoing projects include Winter workshops, field leader training, funding applications, programming and community projects, insurance review, and preparation for student hiring. Multiple meetings within the department and with external partners continue.

## **Special Projects, Melanie Beaton**

Ongoing projects within Special Projects include Wellfield Programs, Inverness Flow Monitoring, Whycocomagh WWTP, Biosolids Management Plan, outfall repair, among many others. RFP preparation, reporting, infrastructure financial management training continue, and multiple Community Projects and Community Grant Applications are ongoing. Multiple meetings within the department and with external partners continue.

### **PRESENTATION: Mill Road Social Enterprises; *Jim Mustard and Cindy O'Neil***

Phase II of the Mill Road Social Enterprises Community Leadership Centre would see a 15,000 ft<sup>2</sup> addition to their current facility. Through the Business Development Phase funding has been secured to host consultation sessions with the community. Sessions were held with over 75 community members representing youth, seniors, We'koqma'q First Nations, business owners, educators, community development and cultural groups, individuals with disabilities, the Municipality, elected officials, and health and wellness service providers. Feedback from these sessions highlighted the need for a more integrated and responsive compassionate model of services for all citizens.

### **PRESENTATION: Cape Breton University Centre for Discovery and Innovation; *David Dingwall (via Zoom)***

The Centre for Discovery and Innovation at Cape Breton University will sustain CBU for future generations and drive population growth and the economic health of the entire Island. This new facility will further attract domestic and international students to study in expanded science, engineering and technology programs, train future nursing and public health practitioners, ready to address post-covid and future world pandemic challenges, and honour the life and legacy of Donald Marshall Jr. through the Marshall Institute.

Consensus to discuss providing a letter of support for the Centre for Discovery and Innovation initiative at a future meeting of Council.

### **PRESENTATION: Bras D'Or Lakes Collaborative Environmental Planning Initiative; *Stan Johnson***

In recent years Mi'kmaq communities, municipal, provincial, and federal agencies and citizens with an interest or responsibility in the Bras d'Or watershed have banded together to work on a

management plan for the Lakes. A unique declaration, the Bras d'Or Charter, was signed by all these groups, which committed them to the Bras d'Or Lakes Collaborative Environmental Planning Initiative (CEPI). The spirit of the Charter is the collaboration of past history and teachings, and modern science. All agencies and peoples work together, bringing their statutes, expertise, and interests to the group where information and ideas are shared.

**PRESENTATION: Cape Breton Food Hub; *Alicia Lake***

The Pan Cape Breton Food Hub Co-op Ltd. provides a distribution linkage between local food producers and consumers, creating a more sustainable food system by increasing the viability of local producers while improving access to high quality local food. Consumers receive home delivery or pick up their items from one of the centrally located hubs, depending on where they live. The hub also engages in educational and social activities to build a more resilient and connected community around food.

**PRESENTATION: The Gaelic College; *Rodney MacDonald and Kenneth MacKenzie***

The Gaelic College was established in 1938 as a continuing education and cultural non-profit organization. The former Mabou Convent was purchased by the Gaelic College in 2018. Future offerings at the Mabou campus, named Beinn Mhàbu, will include a unique Foundation Year program, accredited by Cape Breton University and focusing on Gaelic culture, history and the arts, North America's first Gaelic immersion school, an Internet based radio station and office, meeting and conference rentals. Capital improvements for **Beinn Mhàbu** are expected to be completed by late 2021.

**PRESENTATION: Pitu'paq; *Paul Schwartz (via Zoom)***

Pitu'paq was formed in 2001 through the Bras d'Or Lakes Coordinator position, Nova Scotia Department of Environment. Composed of the five Mi'kmaq communities and five municipal communities in Cape Breton/Unama'ki, Pitu'paq meets once a month to discuss issues of mutual environmental concern. The partnership participates in results-oriented projects, lends support to each partner's efforts, respects differences in perspective, all to ensure a healthy environment for generations to come. Pitu'paq also includes attendance by Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources, Union of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq, and Bras'dOr Lakes Collaborative Environmental Planning Initiative. The partnership is facilitated through the Nova Scotia Department of Environment.

**LOAN GUARANTEE: Valley Mills Volunteer Fire Department**

The Valley Mills Volunteer Fire Department is requesting a loan guarantee from the Municipality in the amount of \$200,000.00.

Recommendation to Council to approve the loan guarantee for the Valley Mills Volunteer Fire Department in the amount of \$200,000.00 for the purchase of a pumper truck.



## **STATUS: Proposed Vending By-Law**

A status update on the Proposed Vending By-Law was provided by Staff. On February 6, 2020, Council approved First Reading of the "Vending By-law", which is intended to repeal and replace By-law 15: Auctioneers, Peddlers, Hawkers and Traders of Goods. Council held a public hearing for the proposed adoption of the Vending By-Law on March 5, 2020. At that public hearing, residents made oral submissions on the proposed Vending By-Law and written submissions were also received. At the conclusion of the public hearing, Council recommended that the issue be tabled, for further discussion at a later date. The proposed Vending By-law has not been discussed by Council since the public hearing held March 5, 2020.

Staff is recommending a review of the proposed Vending By-law, to provide more clarity.

With respect to suggestions for proposed revisions, Deputy Warden MacIsaac noted that established restaurants pay property taxes, and the permit fees should reflect that vendors are not paying property taxes. Council noted issues in the past with vendors attending festivals/events, uninvited, and taking business from the festivals/events. Council noted that the process for obtaining a vending permit should not be complicated, and asked if consideration could be given to allowing applications online. Council like the fact that in the proposed Vending By-law, non-profit organizations are exempt from the vending permit requirement when fundraising. Council also noted that in the past, there have been issues with complaints against other vendors, and the importance of drafting a by-law that is fair to both restaurant owners and vendors.

Council directed that a revised Vending By-Law be drafted and Council will work through it as soon as possible.

## **GENERATOR FENCING**

Estimates were received to secure generators at two Municipal sites (Broad Cove Banks Road and 15488 Route 19). Eastern Fencing provided an estimate for chain link fencing of \$6267.50 for the Broad Cove Banks Road location and \$6095.00 for the 15488 Route 19 location.

Recommendation to Council to approve both these generator fencing expenditures.

## **GEOTECHNICAL INVESTIGATION IN INVERNESS**

The Municipality issued a Request for Quotations for a drilling program off Highway 19, Central Ave, Inverness for the re-capitalization of linear infrastructure on Highway 19 and Central Avenue. Quotations were received from Q-Drilling for clearances, drilling and traffic control for \$38,824.00, and from EXP for Geotechnical and Hydrogeology Services for \$56,936.27

Recommendation to Council to proceed with the Geotechnical Investigation in Inverness with a budget of \$105,336.30 with funds coming from the Gas Tax.

## **SPRING HEAVY GARBAGE COLLECTION**

Council discussed the benefits and costs associated with conducting 1 vs. 2 Annual Heavy Garbage pickups.

Recommendation to Council to proceed with a Spring 2021 Heavy Garbage Pickup. Erin Gillis will provide a report to Council at the April 1, 2021 Regular Meeting of Council on Community Clean ups and the Spring Heavy Garbage pick-up.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR COVID-19 SYMPTOMS AND POSSIBLE EXPOSURES**

Council was provided with a Personnel Policy: Attendance Policy for COVID-19 Symptoms and Possible Exposures in their Council package. Council discussed the requirement in the proposed Policy for self-isolation while awaiting an asymptomatic test result, which the Province does not require. Council was concerned this could discourage staff and visitors from getting an asymptomatic COVID-19 test, which the Province is encouraging. Staff confirmed that the Policy could be amended to reflect the Province's guidance that self-isolation is not required for someone who is awaiting the results of an asymptomatic COVID-19 test.

Recommendation to Council to adopt the Personnel Policy: Attendance for COVID-19 Symptoms and possible exposures with an amendment re: self-isolation not required for asymptomatic testing.

## **OFFICE AND WORKSITE CLOSURE POLICY**

Council was provided with a Personnel Policy: Office and Worksite Closure Policy in their Council package.

Recommendation to Council to adopt the Personnel Policy: Office and Worksite Closure.

## **AMENDED SIDEWALK POLICY**

Council was provided with an amended Sidewalk Policy in their Council package. Council is seeking clarification on the following issues:

- A plan to maintain the identified sidewalk from Lower Railway Street, Inverness to Mill Road, as well as the stairs located in that area leading to Central Avenue;
- The resources required to meet a 24 hour requirement for sidewalk maintenance (including equipment and personnel);

Council also directed that the amended Sidewalk Maintenance Policy be revised to prioritize infrastructure emergencies over sidewalk maintenance, in order to provide direction for Staff in such an event.

Recommendation to Council to table the approval of the amended Sidewalk Policy.

An amended Sidewalk Maintenance Policy will be introduced to Council at the April 1, 2021 Regular Meeting of Council that will include emergency infrastructure issues such as water leaks being a priority over sidewalk maintenance.

## **ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Recommendation to Council to accept the nine recommended skills/assets and/or qualifications for the four Accessibility Advisory Committee vacancies as presented in the Council package:

1. Four (4) members of the public must be appointed to the Accessibility Advisory Committee;
2. At least three (3) members must be persons with Disabilities or representatives from organizations that represent persons with Disabilities. "Disability" includes a physical, mental, intellectual, learning or sensory impairment, including an episodic disability, that, in interaction with a Barrier, hinders an individual's full and effective participation in society. "Barrier" means anything that hinders or challenges the full and effective participation in society of persons with Disabilities including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice;
3. Two (2) members will be appointed for a term of two (2) years;
4. Two (2) members will be appointed for a term of three (3) years;
5. All members must be at least 18 years of age;
6. All members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee shall serve without pay;
7. All members must be a resident of the Municipality of the County of Inverness for at least the last six (6) months before making an application and must continue to be a resident of the Municipality throughout the term of the appointment;
8. Members must not be ineligible for an appointment pursuant to the Municipality's Public Appointment Policy; and
9. The Accessibility Advisory Committee must meet at least six (6) times per year, or otherwise as needed to fulfill its duties.

Once this recommendation is adopted at the April 1, 2021 Regular Meeting of Council, these vacancies can then be advertised.

## **PUBLIC APPOINTMENT POLICY**

Recommendation to Council to adopt the amended version of the Public Appointment Policy as follows:

1. By removing "but cannot be appointed to more than one Committee or External Board or Agency at any one time (pursuant to section 6(4) of this Policy)." from Section 7(10); and
2. By adding "to" to Section 7(18).

## UPDATE: DOG CONTROL BY-LAW

The Municipality has submitted a schedule of dog control offences to the Department of Municipal Affairs, for the purpose of registering the offences in the Dog Control By-Law for enforcement pursuant to the *Summary Proceedings Act*. They have in turn submitted it to the Department of Justice for review. The Municipality expects to hear back from the Department of Justice should they have questions or concerns.

## COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS

### **Highland Trail Groomers:** *Groomer for Trail Maintenance*

At the February 4th, 2021 Regular Council Meeting, Council approved funding to the Highland Trail Groomers for \$10,000.00 out of the 2020-2021 Recreation Budget contingent upon confirmation of Provincial and Federal funding. Since speaking with the Trails Federation, it is in the Highland Trail Groomers' best interest to rescind the previous motion and instead defer the funding request to the Inverness County Trails Federation where, through annual Municipal funding to the Trails Federation, the request would be eligible for approximately \$37,000.00 in funding.

Recommendation to Council to rescind the original funding request granted to the Highland Trail Groomers on February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021 in the amount of \$10,000.00

### **North Inverness Recreation Centre Association (NIRCA):** *Facility Upgrades*

The current request of the Municipality is \$27,932.71.

Recommendation to Council to fund this request in full in the following manner:

District # 1 CDC - \$9250.00

District # 1 Discretionary - \$3500.00

Recreation Facility - \$15,182.71

### **Mabou Community Hall:** *Generator Project*

The current request of the Municipality is \$5000.00

Recommendation to Council to defer this request to the 2021 – 2022 Fiscal Budget.

### **Inverness County Centre for the Arts:** *Heating Replacement*

The current request of the Municipality is \$10,000.00.

Recommendation to Council to fund this request in full with funds coming from the Regional CDG Funds.

### **Dr. Bernie MacLean Recreation and Cultural Centre:** *Emergency Door Upgrade*

The current request of the Municipality is \$13,975.00. Ask is above 50% of total project cost. 50% of total project cost is \$9,487.50

Recommendation to Council to defer this request to the 2021 – 2022 Fiscal Budget.

**Cape Breton Highlands Education Centre and Academy:** *Playground*

The current request of the Municipality is \$5,000.00.

Recommendation to Council to fund this request in full with funds coming from the Scotia Wind Fund.

**Margaree and Area Development Association (MADA):** *Site Improvements*

The current request of the Municipality is \$19,369.45 (100% of total project cost)

Recommendation to Council to fund this request in full in the following manner:

District # 2 CDC - \$2500.00

District # 2 Discretionary - \$3500.00

Scotia Wind FUnD- \$3,684.73

**Whycocomagh Child Development Centre:** *Playground Repairs*

The current request of the Municipality is \$6,175.50 (100% of total project cost).

Recommendation to Council to fund 50 % of this request (\$3,087.75) with funds coming from District # 4 CDG Funds.

**Orangedale Station Association:** *Enhanced Accessibility*

The current request of the Municipality is \$19,210.75 (100% of total project cost).

Recommendation to Council to fund 50 % of this request (\$9,605.38) with funds coming from District # 4 CDG Funds.

**Judique Playground:** *Washroom Renovation*

The current request of the Municipality is \$5,000.00.

Recommendation to Council to fund this request in full with funds coming from District # 6 CDG Funds contingent on payment of the Municipal Water Utility balance of \$ 1326.79.

## CORRESPONDENCE

- River Valley Equestrian Centre - *Warden Cranton declared a conflict of interest at the introduction of this agenda item as the letter was written by his wife, Mary-Ann Cranton, and he excused himself from Council Chambers. Deputy Warden MacIsaac chaired the meeting during discussion on this item. Recommendation to Council to provide a letter of support for the River Valley Equestrian Centre to host Cowboy Mounted Shooting Clinics at their Margaree facility. Warden Cranton returned to Council Chambers after this discussion and recommendation.*

- Eastern District Planning Commission statistics for February 2021 were presented to Council.
- Eastern Counties Regional Library (ECRL) – An update was provided by ECRL regarding the funding for Library services in the Municipality.
- Mary Anderson; COVID-19 – The distance required for travel for Municipal residents to obtain a COVID-19 vaccine was highlighted. Recommendation to Council to write a letter to the Minister of Municipal Affairs regarding the availability of the COVID-19 vaccine in the Municipality.

*Councillor Poirier left the Council meeting at 3:35 pm.*

- Nova Scotia Firefighter’s Benevolent Fund – Recommendation to Council to defer this item to 2021-2022 Budget Deliberations.
- Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC) - There is an option for a member of Municipal Council to sit on the Board of PVSC. Recommendation to Council to write a letter to PVSC requesting a response in writing to the M. Morris issue of overpayment resulting from a duplicate account.

Warden Cranton advised that he received a phone call from Bell Aliant regarding the letter sent by the Warden, on behalf of Council, to the President of Bell Canada regarding recent land line telephone outages during power outages. The representative wanted account numbers for affected customers. Council will seek names of Municipal residents affected during this power outage to be forwarded on to Bell Aliant.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

Regular Monthly Council: April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021 3:00 pm  
 Budget Meeting: March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021 3:00 pm

**“IN CAMERA”**

The purpose for this “in camera” session was to discuss matters relating to legal advice eligible for Solicitor-client privilege.

**MOVED:** Deputy Warden Maclsaac  
**SECONDED:** Councillor Poirier  
**MOTION:** That Council move to “in camera” at 3:55 pm

**MOVED:** Deputy Warden Maclsaac  
**SECONDED:** Councillor Chisholm  
**MOTION:** That Council move out of “in camera” at 4:00 pm

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOVED:** Councillor Poirier  
**MOTION:** That Council adjourn at 4:00 pm  
**MOTION CARRIED**