

**Municipality of the County of Inverness
Committee of the Whole Meeting
Thursday, September 15th, 2022
9:30 am
Council Chambers**

MINUTES

Council: Warden Bonny MacIsaac
Deputy Warden Catherine Gillis (via Zoom)
Councillor John MacLennan
Councillor Claude Poirier
Councillor Blair Phillips
Absent: Councillor Lynn Chisholm

Staff: Keith MacDonald, CAO
Tanya Tibbo, Director of Finance (via telephone)
Debbie Nicholson, Administrative Assistant to Council/ CAO
Charlotte MacDonald, Manager of Recreation
Ellen Murphy, Manager of Infrastructure
Melanie Beaton, Special Projects Facilitator

1. CALL TO ORDER

Warden MacIsaac called the meeting to order at 9:30 am and welcomed all in attendance. Roll call was taken. Warden MacIsaac acknowledged that the land on which we gather is located in the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people and extended condolences on the recent passing of Queen Elizabeth II and Margaret (Ma'git) Poulette.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: *That the agenda be approved as amended; that the following recommendation from today's Nominating Committee meeting be put forward as a motion as agenda item number 12: Recommendation to Council that Councillor Phillips participate in the following committees of Council; Audit, Accessibility Advisory, and Municipal Housing Corporation.*

MOVED BY: Councillor MacLennan

SECONDED BY: Councillor Phillips

MOTION CARRIED

3. APPEAL OF OUTSTANDING BALANCE; WATER ACCOUNT NUMBER 210633.00

Deputy Warden Gillis recused herself from the discussion of this item due to a conflict of interest.

Charlie MacDonald, on behalf of the Dr. John Waters Medical Centre, is disputing the September 30th, 2020 Water Utility Bill where the customer was retroactively billed for consumption. The customer feels that the bill should be reversed because the Utility did not read the meter. The Utility's Schedule of Rules and Regulations Governing the Supply of Water and Water Services states: "Should it be necessary for the Utility to make a billing adjustment as a result of a customer being under billed for any reason, such adjustment shall be retroactive for a maximum of four billing periods or one year, whichever is longest." The meter was read in September of 2020 for the second quarter billing. The Utility prorated the consumption between the previous read entered and the current read at the time of billing. The length of time between reads was 941 days. The meter was replaced on October 23rd, 2021 and the reading on the old meter was still 19,885. The meter had stopped working. The Utility does not know when the meter actually stopped working. The customer was not billed for any consumption while the meter was inoperable.

Recommendation that Council support the Rules and Regulations Governing the Supply of Water and Water Services as approved by the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board and reiterate to Dr. John Waters Medical Centre that the bill is appropriate.

4. AAN 04874757 CHARITABLE TAX EXEMPTION

The West Mabou Development Association Leases AAN 04874757 from Derrick Cameron. The site has been a property providing recreational opportunities to the surrounding communities for over 40 years.

Recommendation to Council to approve a charitable tax exemption of \$1,442.05 for assessment account number 04874757 for the 2023 fiscal year. In addition, it is recommended that staff add this property for future consideration to the list of properties provided to council annually under Bylaw 35, Tax Exemption By-Law for Charitable Properties.

5. CAPITAL COST OF WATER METERS – FISCAL 2022

Recommendation to fund the capital cost of \$22,346.72 for water meters for fiscal year 2022 from the Gas Tax Reserve.

6. STAFF REPORTS

(a) Tanya Tibbo, Department of Finance

Activities within the Department of Finance during July and August included tax collections, water utility collections, water meter installs and inspections, bank reconciliations, land issues, journal entries, processing of invoices, HST rebate and return processing, tax certificate preparation, marketing levy reconciliation, and preparation for the November Tax Sale. Multiple inquiries have been received from residents, and correspondence was prepared for external partners. Multiple

Requests for Proposals (RFPs) are under evaluation. Various employees are enrolled in training opportunities. Staff meetings occur on a regular basis.

(b) Chestley Carr, Public Works

Multiple projects are in various stages of completion within the Public Works Department including Convent St. WTP upgrades, Lift Station Control Panel Replacements in Cheticamp and Whycomagh, Lift Station # 6 replacement in Cheticamp, the Inverness WTP Control Panel Replacement, the Broad Cove Banks Road Booster station project, water, sewer and asphalt repairs, water line replacements, manhole locates, streetlight servicing, as well as water and sewer servicing work. Lawn maintenance and community garbage collection continue as needed. Air circulation installation will be taking place during the week of September 12th by Valley Refrigeration for the Strathlorne building. Repairs to the 2 dry hydrants for the West Bay Road Volunteer Fire Department have been completed. Weekly updates and reports are prepared for and submitted to Nova Scotia Environment. Operator training packages are being prepared. Multiple internal team meetings and project meetings occur regularly. The water utility sub-department continues with weekly and quarterly sampling to ensure the Municipality is in compliance with drinking water standards.

(c) Erin Gillis, Operations and Occupational Health and Safety

The Hazardous Household Waste collection event is scheduled for Saturday September 17th at the Strathlorne Recycling Facility. The Scrap Metal Request for Proposal has been submitted for removal and recycling of scrap metal at the Kenloch Waste Management Facility. The Kenloch site has seen an increase in residential and commercial traffic over the summer, as well as the volume of construction and demolition materials received at the site. The Strathlorne Recycling site has seen a seasonal increase in the volume of blue bags. Equipment failures and staffing challenges continue in recycling. Multiple projects continue in Operations and meetings within the department and with external partners continue.

(d) Charlotte MacDonald, Recreation and Wellness and the Department of Tourism

The Summer Student Programming has wrapped up for the season. The Seniors safety survey has been developed and launched within seniors clubs and among residents throughout the Municipality. The Accessibility Plan has been developed and will soon be presented to Council. The youth running series has finished for the season. Recreation staff continue to maintain funding application processing and summer event promotion initiatives including the summer brochure and radio advertisements. Multiple meetings within the department and with external funding partners and organizations continue, including Sport Nova Scotia, VIBE, ACOA, and the Department of Seniors and Long Term Care.

(e) Melanie Beaton, Special Projects

A large amount of work continues to be advanced by the Special Projects Team. The Sanitary Sewer and Water Main Replacement Project in Inverness/Strathlorne has seen multiple manholes and sewer service laterals installed over the summer months. A 75% design of the linear infrastructure on Central Avenue has been submitted to Municipal staff for review. Many internal complex infrastructure projects continue within the Municipality. Tender preparation is underway for equipment, vehicles and machinery approved in the capital budget. Municipal facility upgrade projects continue to advance in Strathlorne and Port Hood. Community projects are ongoing with the assistance of department staff. Meetings continue with consultants and stakeholders.

7. PRESENTATION: Terry Smith; Chief Executive Officer, Destination Cape Breton

The Cape Breton Island Marketing Levy was implemented by the Municipality of the County of Inverness in 2011. Since then a 2% charge on fixed roof accommodation is levied at properties with 10 or more rooms. These funds are used to promote Cape Breton Island as a tourism destination. Levy revenues are down recently due to an increase in Airbnb and Vrbo rentals and a decrease in ACOA funding. Recent consultations recommend an increase in the levy rate to 3%, and/or applying the levy to all fixed roof operators. Further discussion is required by Council on this issue prior to any changes being implemented.

8. PRESENTATION: Kristen Overmyer; Wind Turbines, Behind the Green Curtain

Kristin Overmyer is a mechanical engineer and an advocate for renewable energy. As the Municipality reviews its wind energy bylaw he feels that the flora and fauna of this County should not be compromised or the health and well being of its residents, friends and neighbours in order to accommodate wind turbine projects out of a misconception that the Municipality must do so to save the planet from climate change. There is consensus of Council to have Mr. Overmyer return at a later date to discuss this issue further.

9. J CLASS ROAD SUBMISSIONS 2022-2023

Council was provided with a listing of J Class Roads within the Municipality and reminded to put forth their priorities for improvements within their districts by the end of the month. These priorities will be compiled into a submission to the Provincial Department of Public Works.

10. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS; Melanie Beaton, Special Projects Facilitator

- **Lake Ainslie Craft & Weavers Guild Efficiency Upgrades**

The current request of the Municipality is \$7,538.00

Recommendation to Council to fund this request in full with funds coming from the following sources:

- 50 % (or \$3,769.00) from District 3 CDC funds
- 50 % (or \$3,769.00) from District 4 CDC funds

- **Cranton Cross Road Community Centre (efficiency improvements)**

The current request of the Municipality is not specified.

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

- \$10,000.00 from District 2 CDC funds
- \$10,000.00 from the Scotian Wind Fund

11. CORRESPONDENCE

- **Eastern District Planning Commission** – July 2022 Building Permit Statistics were included in the Council package
- **Eastern District Planning Commission** – August 2022 Building Permit Statistics were included in the Council package
- **Province of Nova Scotia – September 19th, 2022 Provincial Holiday Designation**

MOTION: *That September 19th, 2022 be declared a holiday for Municipal staff in honour of the funeral service for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.*

MOVED BY: Councillor Poirier

SECONDED BY: Councillor Phillips

MOTION CARRIED

12. NOMINATING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

MOTION: *That Councillor Phillips participate in the following committees of Council; Audit, Accessibility Advisory, and the County of Inverness Municipal Housing Corporation.*

MOVED BY: Councillor MacLennan

SECONDED BY: Councillor Poirier

MOTION CARRIED

13. NEXT MEETING DATE

September 29th, 2022

10:00 am – Audit Committee Meeting

12:00 pm – Special Meeting of Council

1:00 pm – Planning and Advisory Committee

14. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: *That Council adjourn at 11:22 am*

MOVED BY: Councillor MacLennan

MOTION CARRIED