

Municipality of the County of Inverness
Committee of the Whole Meeting
Thursday, June 22nd, 2023
9:30 am
Council Chambers

MINUTES

Council: Warden Bonny MacIsaac
 Deputy Warden Catherine Gillis
 Councillor John MacLennan
 Councillor Claude Poirier
 Councillor Lynn Chisholm
 Councillor Blair Phillips

Staff: Keith MacDonald, CAO
 Chestley Carr, Director of Public Works
 Brian Luciano, Director of Finance
 Maura Beaton, Special Projects Facilitator
 Erin Gillis, Manager of Operations and Occupational Health and Safety
 Debbie Nicholson, Administrative Assistant to Council/ CAO
 Jason Calder, Acting Manager of Recreation
 Joe Carew, Communications and Community Engagement Lead
 Jenna Beaton, Chief of Staff
 Rebecca Dunphy, Special Projects Coordinator
 Brett Walkins, Public Works Project Manager

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.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: *That the agenda be approved as presented.*
MOVED BY: Councillor Poirier
SECONDED BY: Councillor Phillips
MOTION CARRIED

3. STAFF REPORTS

(a) Chestley Carr, Director of Public Works

Public Works staff responded to a major water leak in the community of Mabou on the early morning of June 2nd, 2023. The leak resulted in a 22 foot drop in the water level in the tower. Staff were quick to mobilize, traffic control was in place, and the repairs were completed. A boil order was issued as a result which was lifted on June 5th, 2023.

Ongoing maintenance is continuing at the Recreation and Community Wellness Office (air handling unit) as well as the Port Hood Municipal Building (heat pump servicing). Staff are participating in various training opportunities including confined space rescue, pump training, and First Aid. Staff assisted other departments with water and wastewater sample delivery to Sydney, water utility connects and disconnects, and traffic control. Speed radar signs installed at 2 separate Margaree locations continue to track speeds. Maintenance has been performed at the Whycomomagh wastewater treatment plant, the Port Hastings booster station, and the Inverness wastewater treatment plant.

Sampling to ensure the Municipality meets its approvals to operate have been completed with no exceedances to report.

Multiple projects are in various stages of completion including Chéticamp Lift Station Control Panel service replacements, filter additions at the Inverness Water Treatment Plant and the Whycomomagh wastewater treatment plant digester project.

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

The Spring 2023 heavy garbage pickup has concluded. There was a slight decrease in material collected from the 2022 pickup; 174 tonnes vs. 196 tonnes. Solid waste education sessions were part of recent Age Well gatherings as well as the Mabou Farmer's Market. A standing table created by L'Arche Cape Breton from recycled wood pallets has arrived at the Municipal Building. Solutions are being sought for the equipment failures at the Strathlorne Recycling Facility due to age and continuous use. Staff are preparing for seasonal increases in waste volumes at the Kenloch Waste Management Facility and the Strathlorne Recycling Facility. A formal site security assessment for the Municipality is complete. Staff are awaiting results and recommendations for improvements.

Multiple projects are at various stages of completion including the C&D cell development, storage building construction in Kenloch and Strathlorne and a community bin placement process. An historical waste chemical cleanup for the Strathlorne location is underway. The Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee continues to meet monthly. Meetings are held with regional and provincial waste educators to discuss solid waste management initiatives.

(c) Jason Calder, Recreation

Numerous special events were highlighted in the month of May including the Age Well Academy kick off in Cheticamp, Nova Scotia Walk Day events, the First of the Seniors Council

meetings, selection of the Summer Students staff, a new Ball Hockey Program and Project Management Training attendance by Jason Calder.

Multiple initiatives are underway in Recreation and Community Wellness including the Physical Activity Recreation Master Plan, Book Kings Management, Seniors Safety programming, Age Well Academy and Nova Scotia Walk Days. The Wellness and Accessibility Committees continue to meet regularly. The Student Calendar of activities for the summer of 2023 is under development, and planning is underway for the new season of the Inverness County Running Circuit.

Multiple in person and remote meetings were held with various groups and partners including the Inverness Courts Facility, the Dalbrae Track Facility, Reaching Strides Equestrian and Cribbage Tournament planning. Internal staff meetings were held to discuss communications, long term planning as well as joint initiatives with the Special Projects Department.

(d) Brian Luciano, Director of Finance

The Director of Finance continues to transition into the role and integrate into the Municipality's leadership team. A tour of the Municipality's facilities was taken to introduce the director to various employees and to get a better sense of the Municipality's operations. One-on-one meetings between the Finance Director and individual finance staff members were held for personal introductions and to gather information for long term priorities of the staff.

Tax billings have been calculated and balanced for all districts. Bills are expected to be distributed soon. The General Capital Budget and the Water Budgets are being prepared and the 2022-2023 audit is in its final stages. The Water Rate Study hearing was held on May 24th; a Utility and Review Board decision is expected by late June or early July. Procurement is ongoing with numerous requests for proposals at various stages. Finance staff are working with volunteer fire departments toward obtaining joint fire department insurance. Many meetings both internal, and with external partners continue.

4. PRESENTATION: Ball Hockey Pilot; Jason Calder

The Ball Hockey Pilot project provided an opportunity for youth not currently involved in traditional hockey programming to engage in another form of hockey. Balanced teams of mixed gender and skill level came together with the main goal being skill development and fair play for all participants. The project attracted 86 players playing in Port Hood and Inverness over the course of six weeks.

5. PRESENTATION: Tax Bill Information Insert; Brian Luciano

An information page will accompany property tax bills that will be distributed to property owners of the municipality this year. The document will outline how the municipality's annual budget will be spent for the current fiscal year (April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024). Property tax is the largest revenue source for the municipality, comprising 86 % of revenue. General Operating Expenditures are categorized into 8 departments: General Government Services, Protective Services, Transportation Services, Environmental Health Services, Environmental Development Services, Recreation and Cultural Services, Mandatory Contributions and Extraordinary Items.

6. HUMAN RESOURCES AND PERSONNEL POLICY UPDATE

On July 1, 2023, the Nova Scotia legislature passed Bill 256 – Patient Access to Care Act to reduce administrative barriers to the provision of health care and improve patient access to care. This Act will impact when management is able to request an employee provide a doctor’s note for illness.

Recommendation that an addendum be circulated requesting that the current section of the Human Resources and Personnel Policy Manual be stricken through and a comment included to refer to the new addendum based on the new Act.

The Human Resources and Personnel Policy Manual Article 11.11 (g) – Sick Leave currently states the following:

A Doctor's statement may be required after a sick leave of more than three (3) days. In such cases, the doctor's statement must outline the general nature of the employee's illness, when the employee may be able to return to work and what restrictions or limitation requiring accommodation the employee may have.

The new addendum based on Bill 256 – Patient Access to Care Act:

5 (1) An employer may not require a certificate with respect to an employee's absence from work due to the employee's sickness or injury unless

(a) the absence continues for more than five consecutive working days; or

(b) the employee has had at least two non-consecutive absences of five or fewer working days due to sickness or injury in the preceding 12 months.

(2) A certificate permitted to be required under subsection (1) may be issued by a qualified health professional who is providing a diagnosis, treatment or care to the employee

(a) with respect to the sickness or injury that is causing the employee's absence from work;

(b) that falls within the scope of practice of the profession of the qualified health professional; and

(c) that falls within the individual scope of practice of the qualified health professional.

7. FIRST READING: AMENDMENTS TO MARKETING LEVY BY-LAW

Recommendation that First Reading be given to the amended version of the Marketing Levy By-law as included in the Council package and Second Reading and a Public Hearing date be set for July 20th at 9:30 am.

8. RESOLUTION: THE COUNTY OF INVERNESS MUNICIPAL HOUSING CORPORATION

MOTION: **WHEREAS** *The County of Inverness Municipal Housing Corporation (the “Corporation”) proposes to enter into a mortgage of its property at Cheticamp with Housing Nova Scotia (“HNS”) for the purpose of financing the renovations to the Foyer Pere Fiset at Cheticamp, in the amount of **Two***

Million Nine Hundred Twenty Four Thousand Three Hundred Forty Nine Dollars (\$2,924,349.00)

AND WHEREAS pursuant to the Section 12 (c) of the Municipal Housing Corporation Act, R.S.N.S. 1989, Chapter 304, the approval of the Municipality is required.

RESOLVED that the Municipality of the County of Inverness does hereby approve the mortgaging by the Corporation of the Foyer Pere Fiset property at Cheticamp to Housing Nova Scotia (HNS) for the purpose of building a new long term care facility and, as well, the granting of any and all other security required by HNS for this purpose.

MOVED BY: Deputy Warden Gillis

SECONDED BY: Councillor Phillips

MOTION CARRIED

9. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION

a) Conseil Economique de Chéticamp – Move and Live in Chéticamp website project

The Request of Council is \$5,000.00

Recommendation to decline this request and not fund this initiative.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

- Eastern District Planning Commission - Building Statistics for May 2023 were included in the Council package.
- Inverness County Homes Support Society (ICHSS) – ICHSS is requesting the appointment of a new board member to replace Warden Laurie Cranton. Staff will reach out to the ICHSS director to determine if the new member could be a Municipal staff person, or a community member.
- Strait Superport Corporation Limited – Correspondence was received from the Strait Superport Corporation Limited asking that the Municipality nominate a new representative to serve on the Strait Superport Corporation Board of Directors. Mr. Frank MacInnis is the current representative for the Municipality and he is completing his current term. Direction to staff to advertise for a nominee for this position.

11. NEXT MEETING DATE

July 6th, 2023; 3:00 pm; Regular Council

12. IN CAMERA

MOTION: *That Council move to “In Camera” at 10:37 am to discuss matters related to land.*

MOVED BY: Deputy Warden Gillis

SECONDED BY: Councillor Phillips
MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: *That Council move out of "In Camera" at 11:52 am*
MOVED BY: Councillor Chisholm
SECONDED BY: Councillor MacLennan
MOTION CARRIED

13. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: *That Council adjourn at 11:52 am*
MOVED BY: Councillor Poirier
MOTION CARRIED