

**Municipality of the County of Inverness  
Committee of the Whole Meeting  
Thursday, September 21st, 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  
Brian Luciano, Director of Finance  
Erin Gillis, Manager of Operations and Occupational Health and Safety  
Debbie Nicholson, Administrative Assistant to Council/ CAO  
Melanie Beaton, Special Projects Facilitator  
Jenna Beaton, Chief of Staff  
Jason Calder, Acting Manager of Recreation and Community Wellness  
Krista MacInnis, Acting MPAL  
Chestley Carr, Director of Public Works

**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 Chisholm

**SECONDED BY:** Councillor MacLennan

**MOTION CARRIED**

**3. STAFF REPORTS**

**(a) Chestley Carr, Director of Public Works**

The Municipality conducted a leak detection program over the summer which found several small leaks within the Inverness water distribution system. These were quickly repaired to reduce

the amount of water loss from the supply. Even with this reduction in water demand the decision was made to haul bulk water from the Whycomomagh water supply via tankers to ensure demand was met.

Public works staff continue to address repair and maintenance issues as they arise including moving equipment at the Recreation and Community Wellness office, assisting with basement restoration at the Port Hood Municipal building, and temporary sewer and water main installation in Mabou. Some staff received flagging certification renewal in July. Speed radar reports were provided for both Margaree locations for the June 1<sup>st</sup> 2023 to September 15<sup>th</sup> time period.

Department staff assisted other municipal departments with the delivery of water and wastewater sample delivery to Sydney, water utility service connects and disconnects, leak detection and the collection of system flow meter monitoring.

Repairs were made to the aerators at the Whycomomagh WWTP, in addition new bar screens were installed to help reduce the number of flushable wipes into the treatment process. Installation of 4 new filters for the Inverness WTP plant is nearing completion. Staff Assisted Hilltop Electric with repairs to the lift station below the Municipal building. Maintenance was completed on lift stations 1, 2 and 6 in Chéticamp.

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, Booster Station replacement in Port Hastings, and Lift Station Control Panel replacements in Port Hastings and Port Hood. Road issues are being addressed in conjunction with the Land Committee.

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

The Request for proposals (RFP) for scrap metal at the Kenloch Waste Management Facility was awarded. The entrance area at the site was cleared to allow for easier access. Planning is underway for a new storage building at the site. The Strathlorne recycling facility has seen an increase in materials this summer due to seasonal residents and community events. The by-law enforcement officer continues to respond to inquiries regarding dogs, illegal dumping, and littering concerns. Solid waste education continues with promotional activities including a presence at the Mabou Farmers Market, trailhead signage, a residential sort guide printed in three languages, participation in the Age Well Academy, and school visits. The Emergency Measures Operation coordinator continues to update the EMO plan.

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**

The Summer of 2023 was a big success for the Recreation and Community Wellness Department. Age Well sessions continued to be held throughout July and August. Upon the

successful hire of 8 summer students, the department planned and executed an extensive summer offering which was well attended and saw very few weather interruptions. The Municipality was named as the winners of the Participaction challenge for 2023. A celebration to mark the occasion was held during the County's summer track and field meet.

Multiple projects are underway or completed in Recreation and Community Wellness including the Physical Activity Recreation Master Plan, Book Kings Management, Seniors Safety programming, Age Well Education Sessions, winter guided hikes promotion, Walk NS safe signage, the ball hockey program, the summer activity calendar and Nova Scotia Walk Days. The Wellness and Accessibility Committees continue to meet regularly.

Multiple in person and remote meetings were held with various groups and partners including the Inverness Courts Facility, New Horizons, Canada Revenue Agency, the Municipal Special Projects team and neighboring recreation departments. The season was capped off with an End of Summer Taylor Swift dance party that hosted 147 students at Bayview Education Centre.

#### **(d) Melanie Beaton, Special Projects**

This past month continues to see a significant amount of work advance. The focus continues to be the advancement of the work of cross functional, internal teams, in partnership with various consultant teams, community and business stakeholders and regulatory bodies, specific to each project.

Internal linear infrastructure projects are underway as well as many internal complex infrastructure projects throughout the Municipality. Upgrades and improvements to municipal facilities, buildings and roads are ongoing. Active Transportation Planning in Whycocomagh & We'koqma'q seeks to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility. Recreation facility development projects include the Inverness Outdoor Multi-Court Recreation Facility and the Jajikteq Seawall Trail.

Community projects and initiatives include the Mi-Carême Centre upgrades, Mabou Marina improvements, Healthcare attraction and retention career fairs, Gypsum Mine Trail parking lot upgrades, multiple branding and signage projects, electric vehicle charging stations, and Port Hood community plan and stage.

Water System Assessment Reports are required to be submitted to the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Climate Change (NSECC) every 10 years. All seven water system reports were completed by EXP and submitted to NSECC. Meetings continue with consultants, stakeholders, external partners and community groups.

#### **(e) Brian Luciano, Director of Finance**

The Director of Finance continues to transition into the role and integrate into the Municipality's leadership team. Ongoing items and projects are continuing to transition to the Director of Finance. The Director has spent more time working with other departments on joint projects and cross functional processes.

The biggest focus for the finance department has been on processing property tax payments. A significant volume of payments was received through July and August. Close to \$10 million was collected in July and August in taxation payments.

Multiple projects are at various stages of completion including the 2022-2023 Audit, procurement, joint fire department insurance, provincial reporting, IT priority setting, tax sale preparation, grants-in-lieu, Bamboo HR software, IT Tier 1 Support, and the development of method of payment for the Kenloch Transfer Station.

Multiple meetings continue regularly such as the finance department team, employee benefits, land committee, RFP updates, Municipal Housing Board of Directors, Strait IT Board of Directors, Legal Counsel, department heads and audit discussions with Grant Thornton. Multiple Requests for proposals are either open, awarded, or currently under review.

#### **(f) Lynne MacLennan, Cape Breton Partnership**

The Cape Breton Partnership provides economic development support to the Municipality of the County of Inverness under the Regional Enterprise Network (REN) model in partnership with the Province of Nova Scotia. Lynne MacLennan is the Economic Development Officer for Inverness County. Highlights and events from April 1 – August 31, 2023 include the Unama'ki – Cape Breton Job Fair Series, Let's Talk Tourism - Business and Breakfast, Unama'ki – Cape Breton Business Dinner, Cape Breton Trivia Night, and Elevate Magazine. Project updates were provided on the Strait of Canso Gateway Strategy, Cape Breton Tourism Economic Impact Study, Developer Packages for potential investors, and the 2023 Investor Summit.

Ms. MacLennan began providing business advisory services to 14 entrepreneurs and business clients in Inverness County during this reporting period, bringing the total number of open files to 56. Clients are from all sectors, including retail, construction, recreation, food & beverage, accommodations, manufacturing, and the creative sector.

Activities continue throughout the county to encourage the attraction and retention of newcomers and recent graduates. The Connector Program matches community and business leaders with local and international graduates, and newcomers to help facilitate the growth of their career in Cape Breton. Meanwhile the Welcome Network is a constellation of local, volunteer-led welcome groups eager to share information with newcomers about local activities and hidden gems in their communities. Currently there are Welcome Network Groups in the communities of Mabou and Judique.

#### **4. PRESENTATION: Stan Johnson and Ron Newcombe, CEPI**

In recent years all the 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: one eye on past history and teachings, and one eye on modern science (Two Eyed Seeing). All agencies and peoples work together, bringing their statutes, expertise, and interests to the group. Information and ideas are shared.

The Bras d'Or Lakes CEPI, with funding and the in-kind support from its partners, is currently conducting three research projects in the watershed. 1) An inventory and assessment of barachois ponds started in 2013 continues, with nearly 150 ponds having been visited so far. 2) Water quality

and sediment quality samples are being analyzed from each of the six oyster sanctuaries in the Bras d'Or, to examine what land practices might be affecting the oysters. 3)The CEPI also supports UINR's Joint Enforcement Patrol program which educates pleasure craft operators on public safety and environmental stewardship of the Lakes (e.g. proper sewage disposal).

#### **5. PRESENTATION: Kassia Regnier, Food Cycle Science Corporation**

Food Cycle Science Corporation is a Canadian-owned corporation and holds several international patents for its technology including the one-of-a-kind Vortech™ grinding system. The FoodCycler™ is an easy alternative to composting. The FoodCycler™ reduces food waste volume by up to 90%, creating a disinfected, odorless and nutrient-rich soil amendment that can be used as a fertilizer for your plants or garden. It has the power to break down nearly every type of food waste - even bones and shells - into a fine, dry powder. It requires less energy per litre of capacity due to its bucket design, air flow system and Vortech™ grinding process. This means that the FoodCycler™ can process food waste using less than 1.5 kWh per cycle.

#### **6. PRESENTATION: Jason Calder and Krista MacInnis; Summer 2023 Recreation Activities**

The summer of 2023 was a very successful one for the Summer Series of programs offered by the Recreation and Community Wellness Department. With promotion mainly via social media, department staff were able to offer a balance of structured and unstructured offerings in a wide range of communities. Key activities included Multi Sport, Kinder Club, Track and Field and Beach Volleyball. Highlights of events include the Tennis Clinic, Lizzi's Loop Scavenger Hunt, Taylor Swift Dance Party, Piping Plover Walk, Tye Dye event, and teen spike ball tournament. A total of 74 events were hosted with hundreds of participants taking part.

#### **7. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS**

##### **a) We'koqma'q First Nation – We'koqma'q L'nue'kati Mawiomi 2023**

The Request of Council is \$10,000.00

*Recommendation to fund this initiative in full with funds coming from Regional Funds.*

##### **b) North Mountain Cultural & Recreational Centre - Mobile Generator**

The Request of Council is \$1,458.00

*Recommendation to fund this initiative in full with funds coming from Emergency Measures Funding.*

#### **8. CAPE BRETON FOOD HUB FINANCIAL REQUEST**

The Pan Cape Breton Food Hub presented to Municipal Council in July of 2023. \$5,000.00 is allocated to the Food Hub in the current budget.

#### **9. ROAD NAMING REQUESTS**

- George's Lane – District 6

Recommendation that an unnamed private lane in Militia Pt., Inverness County be named George's Lane

- Chemin Ficheres Lane – District 1

Recommendation that an unnamed private lane in Point Cross, Inverness County be named Chemin Ficheres Lane

#### **10. J CLASS ROADS; 2024-25 COUNCIL SUBMISSION**

Councillors in Districts 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 will be submitting their 2 requests for J Class Roads improvements for the 2024-25 construction season. The 10 requested roads will be forwarded to the Provincial Department of Public Works in the coming weeks as part of the annual 50/50 cost share program.

#### **11. CORRESPONDENCE**

Correspondence was received from paramedic David Clarke requesting support of an MFR (Medical First Responder) unit in Inverness.

#### **12. NEXT MEETING DATE**

October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023; 3:00 pm; Regular Council

#### **13. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** *That Council adjourn at 11:55 am*

**MOVED BY:** Councillor Poirier

**MOTION CARRIED**