

Municipality of the County of Inverness
Committee of the Whole Meeting
Thursday, October 19th, 2023
9:30 am
Council Chambers

MINUTES

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

Staff: Keith MacDonald, CAO
Brian Luciano, Director of Finance
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
Rebecca Dunphy, Special Projects Coordinator
Michelle MacLean, Special Projects Administrator

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 Phillips

MOTION CARRIED

3. STAFF REPORTS

(a) Chestley Carr, Director of Public Works

This month Public Works have started the winter preparations for the 2023-2024 season. Recently the water levels have been meeting the demand of each community resulting in the water conservation notice for Inverness being lifted last month. 7 respective Water System

Corrective Action Plans for the 2023 Water System Assessment Reports recommendations have been completed and submitted in collaboration with the Special Projects team.

Public works staff continue to address repair and maintenance issues as they arise including asphalt repairs in Mabou, monitoring of the Mabou Harbour Road Sewer Main, and assisting contractors with various necessary repairs at Municipal buildings and lighting fixtures. Courses for staff in flagging and fall protection are scheduled for the coming weeks. Speed radar reports were provided for both Margaree locations for the September 15th to October 13th time frame.

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. Service installations have been completed for this year.

Inspections have begun for all municipal hydrants. Department staff started in Port Hastings inspecting each hydrant and winterizing as they go. There are a few replacements in the planning stages for Port Hood. Multiple maintenance projects are ongoing at various water and waste water treatment facilities throughout the municipality.

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 replacement in Port Hastings. Filter installations at the Inverness water treatment plant will be completed in the fall. Road issues are being addressed in conjunction with the Land Committee.

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

As part of waste reduction week the Municipality is facilitating a swap event for youth sporting goods and toys. This is a chance for residents to bring a broken or damaged item in for repair. The event will be held on the evening of October 18th at the Mabou community hall. Training on new audit process to identify items that arrive on site through residential and commercial haulers is underway at the Kenloch Waste Management Facility. Repairs have been made to the bailer at the Strathlorne Recycling Facility. A preventative maintenance program is being completed to identify defects before large downtime is required.

Department staff are partnering with Cape Breton Regional and Halifax Regional Municipalities for best practices regarding by-law enforcement. Residential dog complaints and notices of illegal dumping have been received. Solid waste education opportunities are continuing within local schools. Staff are reviewing programs and funding avenues for community collections and working on solutions for residents who face travel challenges to properly dispose of items.

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. Emergency management training was held recently at the Port Hawkesbury Civic Centre. Meetings are held with regional and provincial waste educators to discuss solid waste management initiatives.

(c) Jason Calder, Recreation

During the month of September the adult recreation activities hosted in schools such as pickleball, volleyball and soccer resumed. The Age Well Academy sessions continue to be well attended. These sessions are free to attend and are geared toward older residents and feature topics such as safety and security in the home, caring for a loved one, and caring for the environment. A session was held in Scotsville recently with an upcoming session planned for Pleasant Bay next month. Funding has been secured from AMANS to support wellness initiatives and lunch and learns for staff over the next year.

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, Walk NS safe signage, the Ball Hockey program and 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, the Accessibility Directorate, and CORAH (the Centre of Rural Aging and Health). Department staff met with Port Hawkesbury and Richmond County staff and Sport Nova Scotia to discuss the Parasport loan program and the opportunities in our counties to use the equipment. Catherine Sheppard of the Alzheimer's Society of NS hosted a Teams meeting with Senior Safety Coordinators around the province.

(d) Melanie Beaton, Special Projects

The focus of the Special Projects department 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.

Linear infrastructure projects are underway as well as many internal complex infrastructure projects throughout the Municipality. The linear sanitary and watermain replacement detailed design in Central Avenue Inverness is 90% complete. During the fall and winter community engagement sessions will be held to update residents on the progress to date. Upgrades and improvements to municipal facilities, buildings and roads are ongoing. Funding had been received through the Enabling Accessibility Fund to improve accessibility of the Municipal Building at 375 Main Street. The detailed design has been completed and the tender is now publicly posted on the provincial procurement site.

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 the Destination 252 project.

Department staff are attending training and professional development opportunities such as the Atlantic Infrastructure Management Network Conference, the Construction Law Program, the Two Eyed Seeing Conference and the EZ Connecting the Dots Conference.

(e) Brian Luciano, Director of Finance

A tax sale was held in Council Chambers on September 26th, 2023. Nine properties that were in arrears of payment were sold during that sale. Second quarter water billings have been completed with the newly approved water utility rates. Staff continue with collections efforts on utility and tax accounts. A new written agreement for payment arrangements has been implemented. An information package has been sent to the volunteer fire departments within the municipality requesting information required for the release of fire levy funding.

The 2022-23 Audit is nearing completion; the J Class Road Funding and Asset Retirement Obligations (ARO) are not yet final.

Multiple projects are at various stages of completion including provincial reporting, department head reporting, grants-in-lieu, Bamboo human resource software, development of a method of payment for the Kenloch Transfer Station, and grant claim support.

Multiple meetings continue regularly such as the finance department team, employee benefits, land committee, Municipal Housing Board of Directors, Strait IT Board of Directors, legal counsel, department heads and audit discussions with Grant Thornton. Information continues to be gathered from the province of Nova Scotia regarding funding agreements for the Cheticamp Water Utility. Multiple requests for proposals are either open, awarded, or currently under review.

4. PRESENTATION: John Bain, Eastern District Planning Commission (EDPC)

The Eastern District Planning Commission provides planning, subdivision and building inspection services for the Municipality of the County of Inverness.

Key functions of the EDPC include:

- Land Use Planning - Through planning, development of land and resources in a community are coordinated. Mandatory Planning Requirements – Plan Eastern Nova is a strategy to create a Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB) for all areas of the Municipality of Inverness that currently do not have planning documents in place.
- Development Services – Subdivision, Building Inspection
- Dangerous and Unsanitary Premises Investigations
- Inspections – Fire and Building
- Mapping and Civic Addressing.

5. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS

a) Margaree Kinette Club – Margaree Food Security Program

The Request of Council is \$3,000.00

Recommendation to fund this initiative in full with funds coming from District 2 CDC Funds.

b) Margaree Volunteer Fire Department – Meals on Wheels

The Request of Council is \$25,000.00

Recommendation to defer a decision on this request. Staff will speak with the applicant and discuss goals and a broader look at food security across the Municipality.

Recommendation to staff to develop a policy/procedure regarding eligibility guidelines for organizations submitting funding applications to the Municipality.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

Direction to staff to issue a letter to the Provincial Department of Public Works regarding roads that were approved for upgrades in previous J Class Road Funding Agreements namely:

Lovers Lane, Port Hastings

Church St., Port Hastings

Hillcrest Drive, Blues Mills

7. NEXT MEETING DATE

November 2nd, 2023; 3:00 pm; Regular Council

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: *That Council adjourn at 11:26 am*

Moved BY: Councillor MacLennan

MOTION CARRIED