

**Municipality of the County of Inverness
Committee of the Whole Meeting
Thursday, February 22nd, 2024
2:30 pm
Council Chambers**

MINUTES

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

Excused: Councillor Lynn Chisholm

Staff: Keith MacDonald, CAO
Brian Luciano, CFO
Melanie Beaton, Deputy CAO
Chestley Carr, Director of Public Works
Debbie Nicholson, Administrative Assistant to Council/ CAO
Jason Calder, Acting Manager of Recreation and Community Wellness
Erin Gillis, COO

1. CALL TO ORDER

Warden MacIsaac called the meeting to order at 2:30 pm 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) Erin Gillis, Operations Department

Current initiatives underway in solid waste management include the review of the onsite collections at the Kenloch site to ensure safe access for residents and haulers. A training session was held recently with the Department of Environment and Climate Change regarding the changes

to construction and demolition landfilling, transport and stockpiling regulations. A review of the Solid Waste bylaw is ongoing. Solid waste education initiatives continue with school visits, Agewell sessions and through a partnership with the local trails association. The application process is underway for the creation of a special constable for bylaw enforcement.

The Occupational Health and Safety Team is making great progress in creating a safer workplace. Items of focus are winter working conditions, workplace closures, and industrial hygiene assessment programs. The Workwear committee has met and selected various outdoor workwear options. The team will trial workwear to ensure the most appropriate clothing is purchased.

Department staff assisted county residents during recent winter storms who needed help with snow removal. A 1-866 toll-free number was established to facilitate this process.

Multiple projects are at various stages of completion including the C&D cell development, storage building construction in Kenloch, and review and assessment of the Extended Producer Responsibilities (EPR). Meetings continue with JOHSC and provincial waste educators.

(b) Jason Calder, Recreation

January marks the beginning of a new programming session. Recreation staff worked with Community Groups and instructors to secure permits for gym time throughout Strait Regional Centre for Education schools within the municipality. Activities have been numerous to start the season and gym time is becoming harder to find as the coordination of events will be closing soon. Winter Active applications have been finalized and processed with most events being held in February. Recreation staff will also host snowshoe events in February.

The Recreation Program Coordinator became the regional KidSports representative for Inverness/Richmond. The Accessibility Coordinator started online Accessibility Foundations training through SeaChange. The Senior Safety Coordinator began the planning process for developing an Active Aging Strategy with the Seniors' Council members to highlight the needs of older adults within Inverness County and the achievable goals of the committee.

Multiple projects are underway in Recreation and Community Wellness including skatehelpers, the NHL Street Hockey Program, U11 development, and girls at bat – blue jays.

Multiple in person and remote meetings were held with various groups and partners including Kid Sport, Heartworks Studio, Community of Practice, the Wellness Committee, Seniors Council, Communities and Aging, and L'Arche Cape Breton.

(c) 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 complex infrastructure projects throughout the municipality. The linear sanitary and watermain replacement detailed design in Central Avenue Inverness is 90% complete. Other linear infrastructure projects include the Port Hastings Rotary water and sanitary sewer re-alignment, planning for Veteran's Memorial Court street planning and Mabou Harbour Road sanitary sewer piping repair. Upgrades and

improvements to municipal facilities, buildings and roads are ongoing. Complex infrastructure projects at various stages of completion are ongoing in Whycomagh, Cheticamp, Inverness, Judique and Port Hood.

Community projects and initiatives include the Mi-Carême Centre upgrades, electric vehicle charging stations, Meat Cove and Pleasant Bay branding and signage, the Port Hood Food Bank roof replacement, Destination 252, healthcare welcome package, and the food assistance study. The planning and design of the Inverness Outdoor Multi-Court Recreation Facility continues. The Jajikteq Seawall Trail Steering Committee and reps from various stakeholder organizations participated in a cross-cultural sharing workshop facilitated by Robert Bernard in We'koqma'q. The Water Utility Committee continues to meet regularly.

Department staff members continue to participate in a Construction Law Program through the Construction Association of Nova Scotia (CANS). Multiple compliance initiatives are underway including Water Utility Corrective Action Plans, Source Water Protection, and decommissioning requirements.

(d) Brian Luciano, Director of Finance

Final copies of the signed and approved financial statements have been returned to the auditor at Grant Thornton. These will be forwarded to the province and The Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board once the compiled documents are completed.

The CFO, CAO and other department heads are in the beginning stages of the budget for the fiscal 2024-25 year. Staff are evaluating HR needs and working on the projected tax revenues as a first step. A list of Grants to Organizations and tax exemptions will be provided to council for review and approval.

Multiple projects are at various stages of completion including provincial reporting, joint fire department insurance, bamboo human resource software implementation, network infrastructure upgrades, grant claim support, local improvement charges, large meter installs, water meter updates, and a payment method for the Kenloch facility.

Multiple meetings continue regularly such as the finance department team, employee benefits, land committee, bylaw committee and the water utility committee. Multiple requests for proposals, requests for quotations and tenders are either open, awarded, or currently under review. Department staff are currently working on loading the new property tax roll into Diamond for the next year.

4. MARGAREE AIRSTRIP

The Margaree Airstrip is a Municipally owned entity. A fund has been established with assistance from the province of Nova Scotia to support maintenance of this asset. Security/access to the facility, well, septic, and ancillary buildings will need to be assessed to determine their current condition.

Recommendation that staff are directed to review and assess the current condition of the following 4 items of the Margaree Airstrip: security/access, well, septic and ancillary buildings.

5. EASTERN DISTRICT PLANNING COMMISSION – 2024 APPOINTMENTS

Recommendation that the following appointments are made replacing all previous appointments of District Planning staff effective April 1, 2024:

Building Inspection:

Building Inspector: Luke Ross, André Samson and Sean Donovan

Alternates: David MacKenzie, Harry Martell and Jonathan Martin

Development Officer: Wanda Ryan

Alternates: John Bain; Andrew Jones; Kristen Knudskov and Mikayla Tait.

Assistant Development Officers: Luke Ross, David MacKenzie and André Samson

Fire Inspectors: André Samson and Sean Donovan

Alternates: David MacKenzie; Harry Martell; Jonathan Martin and Luke Ross.

Dangerous and Unightly Premises:

Administrator: Sean Donovan and John Bain

Alternate: Luke Ross, David MacKenzie and André Samson

Special Constables: Building/Fire Codes, Dangerous or Unightly Premises, Land Use By-laws

Sean Donovan and Jonathan Martin

6. MUNICIPAL SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE POLICY

The Municipal Sidewalk Maintenance Policy was updated in 2021. With recent winter storms in early February there was a significant amount of snow to address. The definition of a “major” snow event could be further clarified.

Recommendation that staff review the current Municipal Sidewalk Maintenance Policy and bring potential amendments back to a future meeting of Council for further consideration.

7. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS

a) Glendale and Area Community Cooperative – heat pump installation

The Request of Council is \$11,556.14

Recommendation to propose additional funding avenues to the organization including the Clean Energy Financing Program and the Federal New Horizon’s for Seniors Grant and the Provincial Community Facilities Improvement Grant.

b) Dr. Bernie MacLean Cultural and Recreation Centre – dressing room upgrades

The Request of Council is \$30,000.00

Recommendation to fund this request in whole from the Recreation Facility Grant. If adequate funds are unavailable in the Recreation Facility Grant, the remaining committed funding from Council will be transferred from the operating reserve to the Recreation Facility Grant.

8. STORM RESPONSE UPDATE

The Nova Scotia Office of Emergency Management (EMO) provided a weather briefing on Friday February 2nd in anticipation of the heavy snow event that occurred in the following days. The municipality was prepared for the expected snowfall and identified staff that could respond and clear snow over the weekend. Public Works staff worked throughout Saturday February 3rd until the road conditions deteriorated to the point where it was unsafe for them to be out. The weather on Sunday proved to be worse, and staff remained at home and off roads/highways as per recommendation by RCMP. On Monday staff were directed to water main leaks in the community of Inverness. Any available staff were focused on clearing snow to and from municipal water and sewer facilities. In the coming days staff continued to address snow clearing as planned despite additional snow accumulation. Some power outages were escalated to the provincial EMO office and were addressed promptly. Snow removal contractors were utilized to assist with the continued clean up as required.

9. CORRESPONDENCE:

Province of Nova Scotia: Correspondence was received regarding the MedsHousing.com initiative. This is a service that connects landlords with potential healthcare tenants.

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

March 7th, 2024 3:00 pm, Regular Council

11. IN CAMERA

MOTION: *That Council move to "In Camera" at 3:48 pm to discuss two issues related to municipal property.*

MOVED BY: Councillor Phillips

SECONDED BY: Councillor Poirier

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: *That Council move out of "In Camera" at 4:08 pm*

MOVED BY: Councillor Poirier

SECONDED BY: Councillor MacLennan

MOTION CARRIED

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: *That Council adjourn at 4:08 pm*

MOVED BY: Councillor Poirier

MOTION CARRIED