

**Municipality of the County of Inverness  
Committee of the Whole Meeting  
Thursday, May 16th, 2024  
9:30 am  
Council Chambers**

**MINUTES**

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

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

**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 with the following amendment; this item shall be added to the agenda (item # 8 Capital Vehicle Purchases)*

**MOVED BY:** Deputy Warden Gillis

**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Phillips

**MOTION CARRIED**

**3. PROCLAMATION: LYME DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH**

The following proclamation was read by Warden MacIsaac:

*WHEREAS Lyme is a serious illness caused by the bite of a blacklegged tick infected with the bacterium Borrelia burgdorferi; and*

*WHEREAS blacklegged ticks carrying a variety of diseases or illnesses can now be found in all parts of Nova Scotia; and*

*WHEREAS awareness, education and practicing preventative measures, such as daily tick checks and proper tick removal, can help reduce your chances of contracting tick-borne diseases;*

*THEREFORE, be it resolved that I, Warden Bonny MacIsaac, on behalf of the Municipality of the County of Inverness, do hereby proclaim May 2024 as “Lyme Disease Awareness Month”.*

**4. PROCLAMATION: ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK: MAY 26<sup>TH</sup> – JUNE 1<sup>ST</sup>, 2024**

*The following proclamation was read by Warden MacIsaac:*

*WHEREAS, the week of May 26 – June 1, 2024 is recognized as Access Awareness Week; and*

*Access Awareness Week aims to celebrate achievements made both by and for persons with disabilities in the areas of accessibility, transportation, housing, employment, recreation, education and communication; and*

*This is the 38th year that this public awareness initiative has taken place in Nova Scotia; and*

*The theme for 2024 Access Awareness Week is Communities for All: Taking Action on Access Awareness; and*

*Accessibility barriers are many and interconnected, removing and preventing them is challenging and complex; and*

*The foundation of Nova Scotia’s Accessibility Act is to provide, support, and protect the rights of persons with disabilities to full inclusion and accessibility by the identification, prevention and removal of accessibility barriers; and Access Awareness Week promotes the inclusion of all Nova Scotians with disabilities as full citizens within our communities; and*

*Through public awareness, community partnerships and education, this campaign aims to foster an environment of equal participation for persons with disabilities within Inverness County.*

*THEREFORE, be it resolved that I, Warden Bonny MacIsaac, do hereby proclaim May 26th – June 1st, 2024 as “Access Awareness Week” in the Municipality of the County of Inverness.*

**5. PRESENTATION: STRAIT OF CANSO OFFSHORE WIND TASK FORCE; Amanda Mombourquette; Warden, Richmond County**

The Strait of Canso Offshore Wind Task Force was created to ready the region and its stakeholders for an emerging offshore wind industry developed in a responsible, sustainable, and inclusive way. The Task Force has represented the socioeconomic interests of the Strait region, by facilitating early engagement and promoting the Strait of Canso's profile and competitive advantages at a regional, national, and international level. They advocated for, and participated in, the development of regulations for the offshore wind industry in Nova Scotia alongside the provincial and federal governments. Together, the membership continues to support responsible and inclusive development of the offshore wind industry in the Strait Area.

## **6. STAFF REPORTS**

### **(a) Chestley Carr, Public Works**

During the month of May water leaks were detected in the communities of Mabou, near the Dunmore Water Treatment Plant, and on Broad Cove Banks Road Inverness. Repairs to the systems were performed immediately to ensure that water capacity was not impacted any further. In addition to any such emergency repairs the Public Works team is preparing to install new services, to complete infrastructure inspections and prepare for upcoming construction projects scheduled for the warmer months. The department has received over a dozen responses to standpipe damage on properties throughout the municipality and staff are currently working through the list of locations and completing the necessary repairs and/or replacements.

Speed data collected at the East Margaree and Margaree Forks radar signs was provided. Municipal street light repairs are being done by a contractor as the weather allows. Staff continue to assist other departments with the following: water utility service connects/disconnects, and with identifying water shut off locations, constructing access roads to designated well exploration sites, review of water/wastewater service requests, and completing reports required by NSECC.

Multiple maintenance initiatives are ongoing at various municipal properties including hydrants, water and wastewater treatment plants, and Port Hood lift station #3. Sampling activities aimed at ensuring the Municipality adheres to its operational approvals have been successfully carried out, and no instances of exceedances have been detected.

Multiple projects are at various stages of completion including Inverness filter installations and Port Hastings lift station control panel replacement. In the coming weeks, various Municipal staff will be completing the following training: Scaffolding, Excavation and Trenching, Asbestos Abatement, Asbestos Awareness, WHIMIS, and Transportation of Dangerous Goods.

### **(b) Erin Gillis, Operations Department**

Multiple initiatives are underway in solid waste management including an expansion of the electronics recycling program, a change management program in anticipation of the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), summer festival waste management, Household Hazardous Waste and E-waste collections, and many community clean up events. Bulky garbage collection in the municipality is scheduled for the week of May 13-17. Amendments to the transfer station Approval

to Operate to allow for the collection and transfer of leaf and yard waste was submitted to the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Climate Change (NSECC).

Premade litter kits containing bags, gloves, litter clean-up information, bag labels and Great NS Pick Me Up data cards have been created and distributed to all Eastern County Regional Libraries and at the Municipal Building in Port Hood. Solid waste education sessions are held in local schools. Topics covered include waste reduction, how to start a vermicompost, why people litter, and a sort-it-out interactive presentation.

There is regular contact with provincial bodies; RCMP, DNRR, & SPCA to gain a better understanding of what services provincial organizations and enforcement agencies can offer residents and with EDPC on dangerous and unsightly properties and illegal dumping.

Preparation is underway for a spring provincial EMO exercise. This will allow the team to review the emergency plan, identify gaps, practice provincial forms and request for assistance procedures. The Emergency Plan update is underway. There was a review of the area with the Red Cross to identify locations appropriate for emergency shelters.

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.

### **(c) Jason Calder, Recreation**

The NHL Street hockey program recently began in Port Hood and Cheticamp and will soon begin in Inverness. There are 170 children aged 6-12 registered to participate from communities across the county. NHL Street brings new style, energy, and gameplay to the sport of hockey. It is an affordable, neighborhood-based model that gives kids everywhere an opportunity to learn and play. Community Playbox coordination has begun seeking 4 communities in the county to host the boxes to increase unstructured play opportunities.

The Association of Municipal Administrators in Nova Scotia (AMANS) launched the Accessibility Audit tool and trained accessibility leads to be able to assess municipally owned infrastructure. This year's Nova Scotia Access Awareness Week is May 26 to June 1, 2024. The theme is "Communities for All: Taking Action on Access Awareness". Department Staff met with operations, administration and communications staff to discuss accessible wayfinding signage for the Recycling facility. Staff also met with a member of the Lemoine Playground committee to discuss accessibility needs for playground development.

The application to extend Girl's at Bat was accepted by the Jays Care program. This will allow the program to proceed in other communities with the summer programming.

The Senior Safety Coordinator is developing schedules for a pop-up Senior Cafe for communities with limited activities for seniors. Inverness hosted the first of these cafes at the Inverness Firehall.

Multiple projects are underway in Recreation and Community Wellness including Age Friendly Action Plan, Girls Spring Sports, and the Summer Equipment Loan Program.

The Wellness Committee continues to meet regularly as well as the Accessibility Advisory Committee. Co-op students are assisting department staff with inventory and training tasks. The Inverness County Crib Tournament was held on April 27 with 29 teams attending.

#### **(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.

The primary linear infrastructure projects underway include the Sanitary Sewer and Watermain Replacement Detailed Design Central Avenue Inverness, Veteran's Memorial Court Planning, Port Hastings Rotary Water & Sanitary Sewer Re-Alignment and the Port Hood Water & Wastewater Replacement Planning. Complex infrastructure projects include the Whycomomagh Wastewater Treatment Plant and Collection System, Whycomomagh Effluent Pipe & Outfall, Chéticamp Wastewater Treatment Plant Digester Walkway Replacement, Inverness Wastewater Treatment Plant & Outfall, Judique Wastewater Treatment Plant & Outfall, and various well exploration and well cleaning projects.

Funding had been received through the Enabling Accessibility Fund to improve accessibility of the Municipal Building at 375 Main Street. The project encompasses: site grading, asphalt parking with designated accessible parking spaces, the installation of precast concrete stops and parking signage, replacing of the existing concrete walkway, ramp and steps with rail, handrail, concrete sidewalk, topsoil, hydraulic seeding, and electrical connections.

Compliance issues continue to be addressed such as water utility corrective action plans, collection system CCTV inspections, source water protection, water treatment raw water summaries and annual reports, Dunmore water treatment plant backwash pond decommissioning, and the Cheticamp PW1 decommissioning. Capacity reviews were undertaken for various wastewater lift stations as required to confirm capacity to accommodate proposed developments in various communities.

Training was provided to Special Projects and Public Works staff on the AWWA Water Audit software. Water audits allow staff to estimate and review the quantity of water supplied, the amount of revenue and non-revenue water, as well as the real water losses in the system.

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

The CFO and finance team's primary focus in the coming months will be on assembling the 2024-25 budget and year-end review in preparation for the audit. Finance staff will be doing cross training in roles to ensure continuity of service with upcoming summer vacations. A draft Municipal Investment Policy has been reviewed and recommended by the Audit committee for Council approval. 125 pre-tax sale notices have been issued to tax account holders. These will be compiled for legal review.

Various projects are at various stages of completion including the 2023-2024 audit, joint fire department insurance, network infrastructure upgrades, water meter updates, a review of proposed changes to the intermunicipal agreement, municipal election preparation, accounts collection and write-offs, sprinkler and hydrant billing, and implementation of a payment method for the Kenloch facility.

Multiple meetings continue regularly such as the finance department team, employee benefits, land committee, bylaw committee, the Strait IT board, Municipal Homes board, Questica

Implementation, community grant review, and the water utility committee. Staff recently met with the new Occupational Health and Safety lead to review the timeline for the safety program.

Multiple requests for proposals, requests for quotations and tenders are either open, awarded, or currently being evaluated.

**(f) Morgan Murray, Department of Culture and Community Wellness**

The Culture & Community Development team has been focused on onboarding the new director and building up its portfolio of projects. Looking ahead to the next month, the team will be involved in applying for funding in support of expanded daycares in the county and applying for funds to move the Destination 252 project towards the implementation phase, as well as continuing to make progress on various other projects.

Food Security in the Municipality of Inverness County Roundtable event was held at Beinn Mhabu on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. It featured presentations from eight organizations and was attended by over 40 municipal food security stakeholders.

The Volunteer Program has wrapped up for the season. Volunteer profiles will be featured on social media and in the Participaper throughout the year. A draft Volunteer Engagement Strategy has been developed. It features Volunteer Recognition Fund: to support celebratory events to recognize county volunteers. The summer activity guide content collection is underway as well as planning for the Sunset Side Guide (*Oran* insert) publication.

Staff attended recent events such as the Destination Cape Breton Community Engagement session, Healthcare Recruitment Conference, and Nova Scotia Daycare funding announcement. Regular meetings continue with funding partners, project staff and community groups.

**7. MUNICIPAL INVESTMENT POLICY**

A draft Municipal Investment Policy was developed and presented to Council by CFO Brian Luciano.

*Recommendation to proceed with moving the draft Municipal Investment Policy forward.*

**8. CAPITAL VEHICLE PURCHASES – Fleet Additions**

- a) Personnel Van for the Recreation Department – 2024 Honda Odyssey from Colonial Honda \$76, 885.37.

*Recommendation to fund this request in full with funds coming from the Capital Reserve.*

- b) Vehicle for the Capital Planning and Projects Team - ½ Ton Truck from Canso Ford \$62,634.75.

*Recommendation to fund this request in full with funds coming from the Capital Reserve.*

## 9. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS

### a) La Société Saint-Pierre – Les Trois Pignons Renovations

The Request of Council is \$5,000.00

*Recommendation to fund this request in full with funds coming from District # 1 CDC Funds.*

### b) Whycomomagh Lakeview Childcare Society – Technology Upgrades

The Request of Council is \$2,371.46

*Recommendation to fund this request in full with funds coming from District # 4 CDC Funds.*

## 10. CORRESPONDENCE

- **Eastern District Planning Commission** – building permit statistics for the month of April 2024 were included in the Council package.
- **Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM)** – correspondence was circulated to Council regarding an upcoming webinar focusing on the logistics of elections across urban and rural regions in Nova Scotia.

## 11. NEXT MEETING DATE

May 30th, 2024 3:00 pm, Regular Council

## 12. “IN CAMERA”

**MOTION:** *That Council move to “In Camera” at 11:10 am to discuss two land items.*

**MOVED BY:** Councillor Chisholm

**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Poirier

**MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION:** *That Council move out of “In Camera” at 11:28 am*

**MOVED BY:** Councillor MacLennan

**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Poirier

**MOTION CARRIED**

## 13. ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION:** *That Council adjourn at 11:28 am*

**MOVED BY:** Councillor Poirier

**MOTION CARRIED**