

RICHMOND COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

JANUARY 14, 2002

Location: Court House, Arichat

Warden Cotton called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and asked everyone to stand for the singing of O'Canada.

The Clerk then took roll call of Councillors.

Warden Cotton indicated that Councillor MacNeil was unable to attend the meeting due to a back injury and Deputy Warden Johnson was unable to attend due to personal reasons and she has requested that Councillor Sampson present the Committee of the Whole Report.

Items Added to the Agenda

Warden Cotton indicated Councillor MacPhee wished to add the Department of Transportation winter maintenance standards; Councillor Sampson wished to add the rising insurance costs and a letter from Mr. Jack Ouellette regarding ambulance service had been referred from the Committee of the Whole Meeting.

Moved by Councillor MacPhee, seconded by Councillor Sampson that the items added be accepted as presented. Motion carried.

Review of Minutes: December 10, 2001

Warden Cotton indicated that on page 11, the reference of 79% identified as individuals on a waiting list for housing repairs, should be 79 rather than 79%.

Moved by Councillor Beaton, seconded by Councillor Bourque that the minutes of December 10, 2001 be adopted as amended. Motion carried.

Presentations and/or Delegations

- (a) Societe Acadie Nouvelle Ecosse (Vaughne Madden) re: Congres Mondial Acadien 2004

Warden Cotton welcomed Vaughne Madden and Lisa Berthier to the meeting.

Ms. Madden and Ms. Berthier presented a slide presentation of the activities to take place during the Congres Mondial Acadien 2004 (copy attached) and indicated activities will be spread out throughout the Province of Nova Scotia. She noted she would like to see all communities work together on a larger scale and plan activities.

Ms. Madden indicated they were not requesting funding from the Municipality but perhaps the Municipality may want to sponsor family reunions, infrastructure, etc., or build an outside stage that would in the community afterwards. She indicated housing/security/transportation/telephone access are all things that will be affected by the influx of people and will all be items left behind after the Congres 2004 is finished. She also suggested the Municipality may look at building an outside staging that would stay in the community afterward.

Ms. Madden noted that Pubnico would be celebrating their 350th Anniversary of the founding of Pubnico in 2003; the 400th anniversary commemorating the arrival of the French in Nova Scotia will be celebrated in 2004 and the anniversary of the expulsion of the Acadians and the first permanent European settlement in Canada will be held in 2005.

Ms. Madden noted previous celebrations took place in southeastern New Brunswick in 1994 for a ten day period; Acadianna, Louisiana held celebrations in 1999 for 10 days; and Nova Scotia will hold celebrations for a 16 day period in 2004 from July 31 to August 15.

Ms. Madden indicated the vision of the Congres was to be the number one rated international cultural festival in North America in 2004 as measured by attendance, media coverage and financial success and also to create ties between Acadians from all over the world. She indicated the goals included the development of the Acadian community; renewal of Acadian pride; promotion of traditional and modern Acadie; international recognition and sustainable economic development of the Acadian community.

Ms. Madden noted some of the activities proposed will include Acadian family reunions of approximately 80 families; an official opening on July 31 in Clare; an Acadian Arts Showcase in Cheticamp on August 7-8; closing ceremonies which will include mass at Grand Pre on August 15 and international show in Halifax on August 15; and more than 1,200 public and community activities planned.

Ms. Madden noted the criteria for success included 100,000 visitors; 250,000 participants, french language services and information and communication technology. She indicated the benefits would be \$100,000 (gross sales); new infrastructure, renewal of Acadian pride and international ties. She noted a budget of \$7.5 million (4 years) and 50/50 public-private funding.

Ms. Madden noted some of the achievements were:

- Board of Directors (12 members)
- 8 full time employees
- permanent office in Halifax
- community meetings: 18 presentations/600 participants
- announcement of cornerstone events
- family reunion manual
- communications and marketing strategy
- web site (www.cma2004.com)

She also noted some of the things to come would be:

- sponsorship strategy
- logo and branding launch in Halifax, Quebec and France
- three regional coordinators

She noted the target markets as follows:

- Atlantic Canada
- Quebec
- Canada - other provinces
- New England States
- Louisiana and other states
- France and Europe

Ms. Madden indicated the funding partners were as follows:

- Government of Nova Scotia
 - Department of Tourism and Culture
 - Acadian Affairs Office
- Government of Canada
 - Canada-Communities Agreement
 - Canada-Nova Scotia Agreement
 - Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

Ms. Madden noted that the end of December, 2004 would be the end of the project and their doors will be closed. She indicated that the government will withhold final payment until a statement is received and she noted the goal is to not have any money remaining at the end of the activities.

A question and answer period followed.

Warden Cotton thanked Ms. Madden and Ms. Berthier for their presentation and suggested they keep Council updated on their project.

(b) Development Isle Madame (Silver Donald Cameron) re: Request for a Resolution of Support

Warden Cotton welcomed Silver Donald Cameron to the meeting.

Mr. Cameron thanked Council for their resolution of support regarding funding for DIMA and indicated this was greatly appreciated and noting that DIMA will move forward quite strongly.

Mr. Cameron indicated he was seeking a resolution of support from Council for an Isle Madame and District Heritage and Development Foundation noting its purpose is to enhance the quality of life in our community for the benefit of residents, visitors and newcomers, and will accomplish these objectives by undertaking appropriate and sustainable development projects by preserving the area's rich cultural and natural heritage and by inviting new wealth to our community. He indicated the Foundation will be a community-controlled charitable foundation, governed by a volunteer Board, similar to the 91 community foundations which already exist in Canada (the only one in Nova Scotia is Halifax). He noted donations to the Foundation will be tax deductible and could be in the form of cash, securities, real estate, works of art or other assets. He indicated the Foundation will invest those donations in various community assets, some of which will produce a financial return to support the further work of the Foundation.

Mr. Cameron indicated the Foundation would provide the following:

- Buy and restore heritage buildings, and turn them to economically viable uses;
- Buy properties of environmental importance – undeveloped shorelines, for instance, and will hold them permanently as nature preserves;
- Invest in new developments which are sustainable, and which enhance community life. Such developments might include theatres, galleries and recreational facilities;
- Seek to establish a semi-residential Centre for Natural History, associated with one or more universities, for year-round teaching, research and field work.
- Make grants, provide scholarships and sponsor educational initiatives which serve its mandate of cultural and economic development;
- Build relationships with provincial and national organizations with similar purposes;
- Seek to secure heritage region status for the Island;
- Publicize its activities through an active program of communication to all residents.

Mr. Cameron indicated he was requesting a resolution of support from Council in order to approach Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation for funding to set up the Foundation.

Moved by Councillor Goyetche, seconded by Councillor Beaton that be it resolved that Richmond Municipal Council commends the initiative of Development Isle Madame (DIMA) in seeking to establish a community foundation for Isle Madame and district, and fully supports its application to Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation for assistance in designing and establishing such a foundation. Motion carried.

A question and answer period followed.

Councillor Goyetche noted that the Municipality had advertised for individuals to serve as “Members at Large” on our Heritage Advisory Committee, and received no interest from individuals.

Warden Cotton thanked Mr. Cameron for his presentation.

Notice of Motion – Deputy Warden Johnson: that Section 4 of the Tax Refund Interest Rate Policy be amended as attached in Schedule “A” (copy attached)

Warden Cotton indicated Deputy Warden Johnson was not present and requested that the motion be made by another Councillor.

Moved by Councillor Bourque, seconded by Councillor Boudreau that Section 4 of the Tax Refund Interest Rate Policy be amended as follows:

“The Municipality shall pay interest on tax refunds under “2” above at the lessor of:

(i) rate of 3% per annum (.25% per month), calculated on a monthly basis;

or

(ii) actual interest rate earned on municipal cash deposits, calculated on a monthly basis.”

Motion carried.

Committee Reports:

(a) Committee of the Whole

Councillor Sampson presented the monthly report of the Committee of the Whole (copy attached).

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Beaton that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that the Municipality approve funding for DIMA in the amount of \$4,500; and further moved that a letter be written to Mr. Chris Bryant, Department of Economic Development, indicating municipal approval, and requesting the additional \$4,500 in funding that the Province has agreed to provide to DIMA. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Bourque that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and give First Reading Approval to an amendment to our Building By-Law, By-Law #27, with the amendment being attached as Attachment #1, recommended by the District Planning Commission; and further moved that the amendment be enacted and advertised following confirmation that neighboring municipal units have adopted same; and further moved that Council establish a Public

Hearing date of 6:30 p.m.; February 11, 2002 at the Arichat Court House. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Bourque that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that the application for registration of the Port Hawkesbury Volunteer Fire Department be accepted, conditional on the clarification of issues regarding insurance, incorporation, and high angle rescue. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Goyetche that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that the Municipality advise the Strait Regional School Board that Council will not accept ownership of the former L'Ardoise School, due to elapsed time since closure, and deteriorated condition and damage to the school, and further moved that the Strait Regional School Board be advised that the Municipality will participate and support in any approach by the Board to the Province, for assistance with having the building demolished and removed. Motion carried.

Councillor Boudreau declared a conflict of interest because he is an employee of the Strait Regional School Board and he left his seat during voting and discussion of this item.

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that a presentation be made to the hearings on gas exploration, indicating that the Municipality of Richmond is in favor of these projects proceeding. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Boudreau that the monthly report of the Committee of the Whole be accepted as presented. Motion carried.

Correspondence:

- (a) Nova Scotia Housing Services re: Additional Information Requested
- (b) Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities re: Update of Roles and Responsibilities Proposal (2)

The Clerk summarized the note received from the President of the U.N.S.M. outlining the proposal the U.N.S.M. accepted and the correspondence from Minister MacIsaac withdrawing from the fiscal exchange program and also notes from the President of the U.N.S.M. expressing disappointment regarding the process.

Warden Cotton reported there was an Executive Meeting scheduled for Friday and the Minister will be present. He also indicated this meeting will probably determine if the U.N.S.M. should continue to exist or not.

Councillor Sampson indicated that Richmond Council has certainly been a partner throughout the process and requested that Warden Cotton convey this message to the Minister.

Warden Cotton indicated that Minister MacIsaac realizes Richmond's cooperation and noted that he will bring the matter of the overall principle of deed transfer tax back to the table.

(c) Town of Wolfville re: Roles and Responsibilities

The Clerk noted the correspondence represents the views of the Town regarding the fiscal exchange program, with a copy of correspondence sent to the Minister and President of the U.N.S.M. expressing their disappointment and also correspondence sent to the Halifax Herald.

(d) Town of Stewiacke re: Roles and Responsibilities

The Clerk noted that Town of Stewiacke forwarded a copy of the letter sent to the President of the U.N.S.M. expressing their Council's disappointment in the unilateral action taken by the U.N.S.M. which will affect all municipal units.

(e) Service Nova Scotia & Municipal Relations re: Pipeline Assessment

Warden Cotton reported he was pleased to see that the negotiations have now been concluded and the industry is somewhat satisfied with the results, and will be proceeding with more oil and gas work rather than fighting over assessments. The fractionation plant assessment will now be reviewed by municipal/provincial staff, and the plant owners.

The Clerk noted the revenue of \$3.5 million for Richmond is over a 20 year period.

(f) Nova Scotia Highway Workers Union Local 1867 re: Nova Scotia Highway Workers And CUPE Local 1867 and Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Public Works – "Contracting Out"

Councillor MacPhee expressed concern regarding the number of major storms that hit the area over the Christmas holiday and noting the inadequate service provided in his district. He noted he had spoken to Mr. Carroll from the Department of Transportation and he had told him the service that was being contracted out had not changed. He indicated he has witnessed that the level of service has been less, particularly on roads in the River Bourgeois area. He indicated he very much appreciates that the main trunks of highway are kept clean, but stressed the importance of secondary roads being kept clean also.

Councillor Sampson expressed concern regarding the manner in which the contracting out is being done, whereby Inverness and Richmond are put together, and this does not allow for smaller contractors in Richmond to bid on contracts.

Moved by Councillor MacPhee, seconded by Councillor Sampson that Richmond Municipal Council support the CUPE Highway Workers with regard to opposing the contracting out of highway maintenance services and further moved that a copy of the correspondence be sent to the Minister of Transportation and to Mr. Michel Samson, MLA. Motion carried.

(g) Rural Cape Breton District Planning Commission re: Response from Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations re: E-911 Project

(h) Environment Canada Maritimes Weather Centre re: A Restructuring of the Nova Scotia Weather Forecast Areas

Moved by Councillor Boudreau, seconded by Councillor Bourque that a letter be written to Environment Canada expressing Council's support to their proposal to change the forecast areas in Nova Scotia as indicated in their correspondence. Motion carried.

Items Added to the Agenda

(1) Councillor MacPhee re: Department of Transportation Winter Maintenance Standards (copy attached)

Councillor MacPhee expressed grave concerns regarding the level of service being received regarding winter maintenance, noting the roads are not being maintained properly. He indicated that with regards to the storm that struck on the evening of December 21, Highway #4 going through the River Bourgeois community had been plowed early, but other areas in River Bourgeois had only been plowed at 3:30 p.m. on December 22, some at 5:30 p.m. and some other roads as late as 11:30 p.m., and this was totally unacceptable and better service is required from the Department of Transportation. He noted 56% of the community is unable to get to Highway #4 or Highway 104 because of unopened roads. He indicated this has been ongoing since the beginning of the winter season and residents are not getting the same level of service as in past years.

Moved by Councillor MacPhee, seconded by Councillor Beaton that a letter be written to the Minister of Transportation, with copies to senior staff, indicating that levels of service for snow removal are not acceptable, and creating safety problems because of inaccessibility of emergency vehicles, etc.; and further moved that the Department be requested to provide information on their snow removal efforts on roads in Richmond County. Motion carried.

(2) Councillor Sampson re: Rising Insurance Costs

Councillor Sampson expressed concern regarding the increases in home, auto and commercial insurance, and requested Council's support for measures being taken by the provincial government to review the rising insurance costs.

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that a letter be written to the Hon. David Morse, Minister Responsible for Insurance Regulations, with a copy to our MLA, Mr. Michel Samson, in support of the government's position and request that the Minister meet with his counterparts and insurance companies to review the rising costs of insurance premiums. Motion carried.

(3) Referred from Committee of the Whole: Correspondence from Mr. Jack Ouellette re: Ambulance Service (copy attached)

Warden Cotton indicated he would bring this correspondence to the U.N.S.M. and stressed the importance of Council to take a strong stand regarding this issue.

Councillors expressed disappointment and grave concern regarding the reduction in ambulance service and the potential loss of ambulance base stations in both St. Peter's and Arichat, with the creation of one central base.

Moved by Councillor Boudreau, seconded by Councillor Sampson that a letter be written to the Hon. Jamie Muir, Minister of Health, with copies to Mr. Arnold Rovers, Chief Executive Officer and Mr. Mike McKeage, Director of Operations for Emergency Medical Care Inc. requesting clarification on their commitment to maintaining the existing base stations in both St. Peter's and Arichat. Motion carried.

Fifteen Minute Question Period

There were no questions.

Moved by Councillor MacPhee, seconded by Councillor Goyetche that the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.

There being no further business, Warden Cotton adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.