

RICHMOND COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

FEBRUARY 18, 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 took roll call of Councillors.

Warden Cotton indicated that Councillor Bourque and Councillor MacPhee were unable to attend due to illness.

Items Added to the Agenda

Warden Cotton indicated that the Clerk wished to add correspondence received from the Department of Transportation regarding Winter Service Standards and Winter Maintenance Standards, and also the Eastern Counties Regional Library Proclamation of March as "Library Card Month".

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

Review of Minutes: January 14, 2002

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Goyetche that the minutes of January 14, 2002 be accepted as presented. Motion carried.

Petitions and/or Delegations:

- (a) R.C.M.P. re: Proposed Amalgamation

Warden Cotton indicated that representatives from the R.C.M.P. were not able to attend tonight's meeting, noting that they were originally scheduled for the February 11, 2002 Council meeting that was cancelled due to weather conditions.

The Clerk indicated that the draft proposal for integration of Arichat and St. Peter's Detachments has been reviewed and recommended by the Police Service Advisory Committee.

Moved by Councillor Beaton, seconded by Councillor Goyetche that this item be tabled until the next Council Meeting, when representation can be made by the R.C.M.P. to address Council's concerns. Motion carried.

(b) Strait Area Chamber of Commerce re: The Strait of Canso Regional Partnership

Mr. Bob Morgan, S.A.C.C, and Mr. Alan MacDonald, Economic Development Officer, with the assistance of Ms. Lynn Rafuse, presented on behalf of the Strait Area Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Morgan thanked Richmond Municipal Council for the opportunity to make tonight's presentation.

Mr. Morgan indicated that the Strait Area Oil and Gas Committee has been established since September 2000, noting that there is quad county representation on the Committee from both the private and public sectors and that membership is now open, not fixed as it has been in the past.

Mr. Morgan indicated that the Strait Area Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit business organization, and currently has 150 members.

Mr. Morgan noted that there are four priorities of the Chamber including advocacy, marketing and promoting Strait Area development, education through members, general public and government organizations and communication with members.

Mr. Morgan noted that there must be a regional vision with regional interest and cooperation and that everyone must speak with one voice to take full advantage of this unprecedented opportunity for exploration, transportation, storage, processing and supply service of the oil and gas industry.

Mr. MacDonald noted that there are four regional issues that will be considered by businesses wishing to locate among the partnership municipalities including:

- (i) The Strait of Canso Port Master Plan (addresses land inventory, land utilization, inter-jurisdiction cooperation and re-development strategies);
- (ii) In-Shore/On-Shore Issue (co-existence of resource development, consistent regulatory regime, allocation of benefits, support of local public services and business groups);
- (iii) On-Shore vs. Off-Shore Processing (on-shore processing policy a primary consideration, balance proponents ROI vs. Nova Scotia economic benefit);
- (iv) Convergence of Supply (create energy clusters or corridors, establishment of an energy hub, thresholds, maximize Nova Scotia benefits, maximize environmental impact).

Mr. MacDonald noted that they are requesting Council's endorsement of the presentation of the Strait Area Oil and Gas Committee, previewed tonight, to facilitate having businesses locate within the partnership municipalities.

In response to a question from Councillor Goyetche, Mr. Morgan indicated that the training required for the positions that will be created in the oil and gas industry is currently available in Cape Breton at the Marconi Campus in Sydney and noted that training will be provided locally as the petro-chemical industry progresses.

In response to a question from Deputy Warden Johnson, Mr. Morgan indicated that the Province ultimately decides where the petrochemicals will be processed, noting that the purpose of tonight's presentation is to have all municipal units involved make representation and lobby the province to have processing on-shore.

In response to a question from Warden Cotton, Mr. Morgan indicated that there is indeed too much emphasis on the processing of the liquids and that extracting and processing the ethanes should be the focus.

The Clerk noted that perhaps this presentation should be made at the next meeting of the Mayors and Wardens.

Mr. Morgan noted that they are in the process of making this same presentation to all municipal units individually, noting that this may be redundant.

Councillor Goyetche noted that it is important to follow up after presentations are made to all municipal units.

Warden Cotton thanked Mr. Morgan, Mr. MacDonald and Ms. Rafuse for their presentation.

Second Reading Approval: to amend the Building By-Law, By-Law #27, with the amendment being attached as Attachment #1, as recommended by the District Planning Commission

The Clerk indicated that amending a planning by-law requires a Public Hearing, noting that because the public hearing that was scheduled for February 11, 2002 had been cancelled due to the weather conditions, the motion must be tabled until a Public Hearing is held.

Moved by Councillor Goyetche, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that this item be referred to our March 11, 2002 Council Meeting; and further moved that Council establish a Public Hearing date of 6:00 p.m., March 11, 2002 at the Arichat Court House, for this amendment. Motion carried.

Committee Reports

(a) Committee of the Whole

Deputy Warden Johnson presented the monthly report of the Committee of the Whole (copy attached).

Moved by Deputy Warden Johnson, seconded by Councillor Sampson that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that three initial public meetings be held in Arichat, Lower River and L'Ardoise, further noting that advertising should reflect the fact that additional meetings will be scheduled if there is a demand. Motion carried.

Moved by Deputy Warden Johnson, seconded by Councillor McNamara that the monthly report of the Committee of the Whole be accepted as presented. Motion carried.

Councillor Boudreau indicated that it must be noted that the choice of locations for the three public hearing does not mean that subdivision/trailer park development is restricted to these areas.

The Clerk noted that Councillors in these three areas should suggest venues and dates for the public hearings.

(b) Planning Advisory Committee

Councillor McNamara presented the monthly report of the Planning Advisory Committee (copy attached).

Moved by Councillor McNamara, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that Council accept the recommendation of the Planning Advisory Committee and give First Reading Approval to the Shannon Lake Wellhead Protection Area Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-Law, as attached; and further moved that Council establish a Public Hearing date of 6:30 p.m., March 11, 2002 at the Arichat Court House. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor McNamara, seconded by Councillor Boudreau that the monthly report of the Planning Advisory Committee be accepted as presented. Motion carried.

Correspondence:

(a) Rural Cape Breton District Planning Commission re: Operating Estimates 2002/03

Moved by Councillor McNamara, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that this item be tabled until budget deliberations. Motion carried.

(b) U.N.S.M. re:

(i) Fiscal Exchange Program

The Clerk indicated that the correspondence from Jerry Blumenthal, UNSM President, outlines the chronology of events leading to the withdrawal of the Municipal/Provincial Fiscal Exchange.

Warden Cotton noted that Minister MacIsaac had indicated at a recent meeting of Mayors and Wardens, that the Province is working on another proposal, which had originally been scheduled to be released in January 2002.

(ii) Infrastructure Projects

The Clerk indicated that Mr. Blumenthal had sent correspondence to Minister MacIsaac apologizing for recent comments regarding the selection of six infrastructure projects in Halifax, Bridgewater, Wolfville, Aldershot, Amherst and West Hants.

(c) NDP Caucus re: Municipal Equalization

The Clerk indicated that the NDP Caucus, the official opposition in support of municipal equalization, has offered to meet with Council to discuss the issue of equalization.

Moved by Councillor Goyetche, seconded by Councillor McNamara that Council accept the offer of the NDP Caucus and extend an invitation to them to meet with Richmond Municipal Council in order to participate in a discussion regarding municipal issues. Motion carried.

(d) Town of Lockeport re: Municipal Equalization

For information purposes.

(e) Town of Bridgewater re: Town's Caucus

The Clerk indicated that Mr. Ernie Bolivar, Mayor of Bridgewater, is expressing reservations regarding the Town's Caucus noting that it could be the demise of the UNSM.

(f) Service Nova Scotia & Municipal Relations re: Uniform Assessment

The Clerk noted that he has had staff review the Uniform Assessment for 2002/03, who confirm the accuracy of the provincial calculations.

(g) Nova Scotia Petroleum Directorate re: Proposed Amendments to the Gas Distribution Act and Regulations

For information purposes.

(h) Department of Transportation and Public Works re:

(i) Roadside Advertising Program

The Clerk indicated that detailed information regarding the Roadside Advertising Program is available at the Port Hawkesbury area office of the Department of Transportation.

(ii) Contracting Out

The Clerk indicated that the Department of Transportation has provided a list of tendered equipment for the Eastern District.

Councillor Sampson noted that the item added concerning the Department of Transportation's Winter Service Standards and Winter Maintenance Standard should be addressed at this time.

The Clerk indicated that Mr. Robert Carroll, Department of Transportation, has provided information that was requested concerning Winter Service and Winter Maintenance Standards.

The Clerk indicated that Mr. Carroll provided a detailed explanation of the service and maintenance standards, however the question is whether or not these standards are being achieved.

Councillor Sampson expressed frustration with the conditions of roads this winter, noting that he has never received as many complaints as he has this year.

Councillor Sampson noted that he has spoken with the Manager of the Department of Transportation several times regarding these complaints, who was quite surprised indicating that he has had very few complaints regarding road conditions this winter.

Councillor Sampson noted that the area dispatcher has spent 75% of his time on the phone addressing residents' complaints, which are much worse this year. Councillor Sampson provided several examples of poor service, such as a road which took three or four days to be plowed after a storm, a six hour delay in snow removal while awaiting a piece of equipment from Baddeck, and safety issues such as February 8, when all four Strait Regional School Board bus drivers named as having difficulty with transporting students in the L'Ardoise area.

Warden Cotton suggested that a letter be written to the UNSM requesting that this issue be discussed at their next meeting, indicating if the problems are not resolved this year, next year will be worse.

Councillor McNamara indicated that she has received a number of complaints in her district, noting that people were unable to get to work because roads were not passable, even up to 24 hours after a storm. She also noted that equipment that requires repair is now sent to the Antigonish Department of Transportation Garage, which may be a factor in the delays of snow removal.

Councillor MacNeil noted that he received a significant number of complaints, especially regarding Route 4. Councillor MacNeil also noted that his own street often takes up to 48 hours to receive snow removal service, and the main road through Sampsonville to St. Peter's is usually only one lane after a snow storm.

Moved by Councillor McNamara, seconded by Councillor Beaton that a letter be written to the U.N.S.M. requesting that this issue be discussed at the Executive Committee level, and that the U.N.S.M. make representation to the Department of Transportation, requesting that they improve their service in Richmond County. Motion carried.

(i) Hon. Robert Thibault/Council Recorder re: ECBC Board of Directors

The Clerk indicated that Hon Thibault noted that there is currently no mechanism in place to provide information regarding vacancies on the Board of Directors of ECBC, however he provides a web site address for the Government of Canada's Privacy Council where relevant information may be obtained.

(j) Emergency Health Services re: Acknowledgement

For information purposes.

(k) Hon. Jamie Muir re: Base Stations – St. Peter's and Arichat

Councillor McNamara noted that the letter from Hon. Muir indicates that both base stations will not be closed however there is rumor that one Arichat ambulance will be removed and replaced by transferring a half-time ambulance from Port Hawkesbury.

Warden Cotton indicated that it is imperative that a meeting be set up with EMC to determine their intentions.

Councillor MacNeil noted that the ambulance that was formerly located at the overpass in Louisdale is now located at the Louisdale Fire Hall in Grand Anse, further noting that ambulance staff are permitted to wait in the building which adds to a delay in response time of approximately five minutes.

Councillor Sampson noted that EMC is putting greater responsibility on local fire departments to act as first responders, suggesting that a meeting take place between representatives from EMC, local fire departments and Council.

Warden Cotton noted that if EMC will not meet with Council in a timely manner, then representatives from Council will have to go to them.

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Beaton that Emergency Medical Care officials be requested to attend a meeting with Richmond Municipal Councillors, or a delegation from Council, as soon as possible, to discuss ambulance services in Richmond County. Motion carried.

Warden Cotton indicated that a five-minute delay, caused by the area ambulance being stationed at the Louisdale Fire Department as opposed to the Louisdale overpass, is quite critical and that he will meet with Ian MacKinnon, Mutual Aid, to discuss this issue.

(l) Oceanview Wildlife Museum Society re: (i) Tax Exemption
(ii) Grant Request

Moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Sampson that these items be tabled until budget deliberations. Motion carried.

(m) Petit De Grat Village Square Committee re: Grant Request

Moved by Councillor Goyetche, seconded by Councillor Johnson that this item be referred to the Solicitor to determine if the Municipality has the ability to charge an area rate for the services requested and if an area rate can be imposed for a whole council district; and further moved that a decision on this request be tabled until budget deliberations. Motion carried.

Warden Cotton noted that his community wished information on the authority of the Municipality to levy area rates to recover capital and operating costs of sidewalks.

(n) Cape Breton Island Resorts re: Peter Gzowski Drive for Literacy Golf Tournament

The Clerk noted that the Municipality has been requested to sponsor the box lunches for the Peter Gzowski Drive for Literacy golf tournament, however any contribution would be appreciated.

Councillor McNamara indicated that this event brings approximately \$1,500 in funding for literacy programs in Richmond.

Moved by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that the Municipality provide a contribution to the Peter Gzowski Golf Tournament, to a maximum of \$2,000, but that staff determine a better manner of promotion than the "box lunch" concept proposed. Motion carried.

(o) Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation re: Grant Request

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Goyetche that this item be tabled until budget deliberations. Motion carried.

Items Added to the Agenda

(1) Clerk re:

- (i) Department of Transportation re: Winter Service Standards and Winter Maintenance Standards

Previously addressed.

- (ii) Eastern Counties Regional Library re: Proclamation of March as “Library Card Month”

Moved by Councillor Beaton, seconded by Councillor McNamara that Richmond Municipal Council proclaim March as “Library Card Month”. Motion carried.

Fifteen Minute Question Period

There were no questions.

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

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.