

RICHMOND COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

APRIL 8, 2002

Location: Court House, Arichat

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

The Clerk took roll call of Councillors.

Warden Cotton indicated that Councillor McNamara was unable to attend due to sickness and Councillor Boudreau had a school meeting.

Items Added to the Agenda

Warden Cotton indicated Councillor Bourque wished to add the Department of Transportation and Public Works re: Mechanics for Strait Area.

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

Review of Minutes: (a) March 11, 2002 (Public Hearing re: Building By-Law)
(b) March 11, 2002 (Public Hearing re: Shannon Lake Wellhead Protection Plan)
(c) March 11, 2002 (Regular Meeting)

Moved by Councillor Beaton, seconded by Deputy Warden Johnson that the minutes of March 11, 2002 (Public Hearing re: Building By-Law); March 11, 2002 (Public Hearing re: Shannon Lake Wellhead Protection Plan) and March 11, 2002 (Regular Meeting) be adopted as presented. Motion carried.

Presentations and/or Delegations:

(a) Emergency Medical Care Inc. (Arnold Rovers) re: Ambulance Service

Warden Cotton welcomed Mr. Arnold Rovers, Chief Executive Officer of Emergency Medical Care Inc. to the meeting.

Mr. Rovers introduced Mr. Tom MacLean, Supervisor for the St. Peter's, Arichat and Port Hawkesbury areas and Mr. John Ferguson who works out of the Bedford Office.

Mr. Rovers gave a brief overview and the history surrounding the change in the ambulance service as a result of Dr. Michael Murphy's report.

Mr. Rovers confirmed that EMC has no plans to change or diminish ambulance service in Richmond County and also has no plans to close ambulance bases in St. Peter's, Arichat or Port Hawkesbury.

Mr. Rovers indicated that all ambulances in Nova Scotia are dispatched from the central communication system, and vehicles and equipment are state of the art; all paramedic calls are evaluated by physicians; medical counseling is provided from the Centre until an ambulance arrives on the scene, with access to physicians 24 hours per day; and ambulances are dispatched from the closest location.

Mr. Rovers indicated there are currently 18-25 paramedics in Richmond County and they are clinically audited and reviewed for performances.

Mr. Rovers indicated they would like to change all bases to include an indoor facility for both paramedics and vehicles, noting that the Arichat base is good for paramedics but cannot store vehicles and they are looking at providing self-contained buildings for all ambulances.

Mr. Rovers provided figures on call volumes to Council.

A question and answer period followed.

Councillor Bourque expressed grave concerns regarding the two swing bridges in Richmond County and the threat they pose if they should be open or malfunctioning.

Mr. Rovers indicated they have communication with the operators at both the Lennox Passage Bridge and the St. Peter's Canal Bridge and they try to position the ambulance around this. He noted one instance last year when the St. Peter's Bridge was being serviced and EMC had not been notified.

Mr. Rovers indicated he will place Isle Madame on the priority list and will communicate with the Operators at both these bridges to ensure they notify EMC when the bridges will be opened or serviced.

Councillor Goyetche indicated he was very pleased to see Isle Madame being placed on a priority list, because being connected by a bridge places a huge risk to these residents. He also noted that he is extremely pleased that the ambulance will continue to be housed in Arichat, which is very detrimental to our residents.

In response to a question from Councillor Sampson regarding response time, Mr. Rovers indicated that very few calls are received when they're down to one ambulance. He also indicated that approximately 30-35 calls are received per week in Richmond, with the ambulance not being used approximately 93% of the time.

Councillor Sampson expressed concern in the reduction of ambulances over the past several years from 4-5 down to 2; and the concern this poses on the emergency first responders and also for Council.

Mr. Rovers indicated that the number of paramedics has increased by 35% and he noted that ambulance vehicles normally respond within 10 seconds of receiving the call.

Mr. Rovers indicated he was very proud of how the communication centre in Bedford operates and extended an invitation to Council members to visit it when they have an opportunity to do so.

Warden Cotton thanked Mr. Rovers, Mr. MacLean and Mr. Ferguson for attending the meeting.

(b) Richmond Arena Association (Bobby Samson) re: Update/Request for Financial Assistance

Warden Cotton welcomed Mr. Bobby Samson to the meeting.

Mr. Samson highlighted his report (copy attached) that had previously been circulated to Council members.

Mr. Samson briefed Council on highlights over the past several years and also the short term projects and related costs.

Mr. Samson indicated the Richmond Arena Association was requesting from Council an annual "investment" of \$7,000 into a contingency fund that again would be matched by the Association and requested that their portion of the \$7,000 annually could be used over the next five years to diminish their mortgage commitment and/or to use the monies for other related improvements to their expanded areas if needed.

A question and answer period followed.

Councillor Goyetche also noted that the Arena would qualify for SCIF funding and Council could send a letter of support on their behalf to ECBC. Mr. Samson indicated an application for SCIF funding has been submitted to E.C.B.C., and he would appreciate a letter of support from Council regarding this application.

Councillor Sampson indicated he was very proud to be associated with Mr. Samson and other Board members who have given so many years of dedicated service to the Richmond Arena. He also noted the Director of Recreation has also been very supportive and helps with many Arena functions.

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that the presentation from the Richmond Arena Association be accepted as presented and further moved that their request for financial assistance be referred to the Committee on budget deliberations. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Goyetche, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that a letter be written to Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation expressing Council's support for the Richmond Arena Association's application for SCIF funding. Motion carried.

Notice of Motions:

- (a) Deputy Warden Johnson: to establish a policy regarding tax collections: that the Municipality is only required to take tax sale action on properties that are at least three years in arrears, with arrears outstanding of at least \$1,000 per account; and further that Council acknowledge that tax collection may take place, at the discretion of the Municipality, on properties with less than three years arrears and a \$1,000 arrears balance; and further that the policy be effective with the date of acceptance by Council (attached as Appendix "A")

Moved by Deputy Warden Johnson, seconded by Councillor Bourque that Municipal Council establish a policy regarding tax collections: that the Municipality is only required to take tax sale action on properties that are at least three years in arrears, with arrears outstanding of at least \$1,000 per account; and further that Council acknowledge that tax collection may take place, at the discretion of the Municipality, on properties with less than three years arrears and a \$1,000 arrears balance; and further that the policy be effective with the date of acceptance by Council (attached as Appendix "A"). Motion carried.

- (b) Deputy Warden Johnson: that the policy and regulations of the Richmond County Water Utility be amended to provide that the water utility will charge interest on water account arrears at the same rate of interest as calculated on our property tax arrears, to be effective April 1, 2002 (attached as Appendix "B")

Moved by Deputy Warden Johnson, seconded by Councillor Sampson that the policy and regulations of the Richmond County Water Utility be amended to provide that the water utility will charge interest on water account arrears at the same rate of interest as calculated on our property tax arrears, to be effective April 1, 2002 (attached as Appendix "B"). 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 MacNeil that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that tipping fees in the amounts of \$35/tonne for clean organics and \$70/tonne for contaminated organics be instituted for the Richmond ICI organics processing facility. Motion carried.

Moved by Deputy Warden Johnson, seconded by Councillor Sampson that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that the Municipality accept the recommendation of the Vested Property Clerk and agree to sell this parcel of land to Mr. Lionel Peters at the appraised value. Motion carried.

Moved by Deputy Warden Johnson, seconded by Councillor Goyetche that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that a letter be written to Canso Realties indicating that the Municipality is not interested in purchasing the parcel of land they have offered for sale at Shannon Lake. Motion carried.

Moved by Deputy Warden Johnson, seconded by Councillor Goyetche that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that an area rate be established for Petit De Grat in order to maintain sidewalks, carry out community improvements, etc. Motion carried.

Moved by Deputy Warden Johnson, seconded by Councillor Beaton that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that the Municipality support the “Drive Fore Literacy” and participate in the annual golf tournament. Motion carried.

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

Correspondence:

(a) Department of Justice re: 2002/03 Allocation – Provincial Policing Services Agreement

(b) U.N.S.M. re: Assessment Services (2)

Councillor Bourque declared a conflict of interest because he is an employee of the Assessment Department and he left his seat during discussion of this item.

Warden Cotton noted this item had been tabled at the U.N.S.M. Executive Meeting and indicated he had not supported this, but noted it looks like the Province is moving forward with the legislation to form a new agency. He noted that each employee would have to re-apply for their jobs under the Human Resource Section.

(c) Town of Parrsboro/Town of Trenton re: Towns' Caucus

The Clerk indicated this is an issue of great concern and the Executive has scheduled a session for early May, which will highlight the existence of the U.N.S.M.

Warden Cotton indicated he was unable to attend this session to be held on May 9 & 10 at Digby Pines because he would be attending the oil and gas conference in Houston, and he indicated he would like three or four Councillors to attend, if possible.

The Clerk noted that Towns were upset when the equalization funding was announced because they felt rural tax rates should go up to meet Towns' tax rates.

(d) U.N.S.M. re: Province-Wide Legislated Ban on Smoking in Public Places

Moved by Councillor Goyetche, seconded by Councillor Bourque that Richmond Municipal Council fully supports the U.N.S.M. Executive and request that the Province take action in the upcoming sitting of the Legislature to introduce legislation which would ban smoking in public places. Motion carried.

(e) Isle Madame New Horizon's Club re: Smoking Ban in Public Places

(f) Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority re: Tobacco Advisory Committee

Warden Cotton noted they were looking for a municipal representative to sit on their Committee and he asked if any Councillors had the time or interest to sit on the Tobacco Advisory Committee to let him know.

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Deputy Warden Johnson that Warden Cotton be authorized to appoint a municipal representative to the Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Board; and further moved that he appoint a staff member, if there is no interest from Council. Motion carried.

(g) F.C.M. re: Ratification of the Kyoto Protocol

Moved by Deputy Warden Johnson, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that Richmond Municipal Council endorse the Model Resolution as submitted by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities regarding ratification of the Kyoto Protocol (copy attached). Motion carried.

(h) Louisdale Lions Club re: Support re: Infrastructure Programs

(i) Pickup and MacDowell re: Petit De Grat Village Square – Area Rate

(j) Stora Enso Hockey Tournament re: Grant Request

- (k) Regional Occupational Centre re: Grant Request
- (l) Centre La Picasso (Congres Mondial 2004) re: Grant Request
- (m) Dr. W.B. Kingston Memorial Clinic re: Grant Request
- (n) Alzheimer Society re: Grant Request
- (o) The Lung Association of Nova Scotia re: Grant Request

Moved by Councillor MacPhee, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that the grant requests from Stora Enso Hockey Tournament; Regional Occupational Centre; Centre La Picasso (Congres Mondial 2004); Dr. W.B. Kingston Memorial Clinic; Alzheimer Society and The Lung Association of Nova Scotia be referred to the Committee on grant requests. Motion carried.

Items Added to the Agenda

Councillor Bourque indicated that the highway garage in Port Hawkesbury will be closed after May 31, 2002, with only one mobile mechanic to look after Richmond County, with no home base. He indicated that equipment from Richmond and Guysborough needing repairs would be put on a float and sent to Antigonish, and equipment from Baddeck would be sent to Sydney, which is totally unacceptable, considering all the complaints that were received during this past winter season.

Councillors expressed grave concerns noting this further adds to the existing problems and also noted that lives are being put at risk in rural Nova Scotia and this should not be tolerated and they felt the need for Council to go to the Minister of Transportation with these issues.

Warden Cotton indicated he would bring this matter to a future Mayors and Wardens Committee.

Moved by Councillor Bourque, seconded by Councillor Goyetche that letters be written to Mr. Bruce Fitzner and Mr. Robert Carroll from the Department of Transportation inviting them to attend the next Council Meeting, in order to advise Council what arrangements will be made after May 31, 2002 with regards to the closure of the Port Hawkesbury Highway garage, the mechanics presently working at this site, and also the repair work to be carried out on equipment. Motion carried.

Councillor Bourque requested and received unanimous consent for a request to send condolences to the family of the late Michael Murphy from Argyle.

Moved by Councillor Bourque, seconded by Councillor Goyetche that Richmond Municipal Council extend condolences to the family of Michael Murphy, who has recently passed away and who was a Councillor for over 25 years in Argyle and that

condolences also be sent to his twin brother, Patrick J. Murphy who was the former Warden and also a Councillor in Argyle. Motion carried.

Fifteen Minute Question Period

Mr. Harold Mury indicated the Minister of Transportation had indicated no mechanics would loose their jobs, when in fact the Deputy Minister has already notified them that they will be laid off and were told they can apply for a job in Sydney if they so wished. He indicated the employees at the Martinique garage could also get a lay-off, with no advance notice. He requested that Council notify him when the Department of Transportation officials will appear before Council, and he will have workers attend the meeting.

Moved by Councillor Bourque, seconded by Deputy Warden Johnson that the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.

There being no further business, Warden Cotton adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.