

**RICHMOND COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**APRIL 14, 2003**

Location: Court House, Arichat

Warden Johnson 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.

The Clerk indicated Deputy Warden McNamara, Councillor Goyetche and Councillor Bourque were unable to attend due to medical reasons.

Items Added to the Agenda

Warden Johnson indicated the CAO wished to add a staff report and correspondence from the Hepatitis Outreach Society; Councillor Sampson wished to add acknowledgement of Queen's Jubilee Medals and she wished to add a road name change.

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

Review of Minutes: March 10, 2003

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Cotton that the minutes of March 10, 2003 be adopted as presented. Motion carried.

Petitions and/or Delegations

(a) Nova Scotia Power (Paul Miller) re: Service Delivery

Warden Johnson welcomed Mr. Paul Miller, Operations Manager and Mr. Russ Richard, Field Superintendent to the meeting.

Mr. Miller indicated Sandy McIsaac, Customer Service Manager, Mr. Richard and himself represented the Northeastern Region Customer Operations, which is responsible for the reliable delivery of electricity to 103,000 customers and businesses. He noted the

customer service centre has a toll free number (1-800-428-6230) whereby individuals can call in 7 days per week.

Mr. Miller indicated a high volume call answering system was in place whereby a dedicated, toll free 24 hour power outage telephone #1-877-428-6004 had the capacity to handle approximately 50,000 customer calls per hour and had the capacity to provide customers with timely and accurate power outage information, specific to their calling area.

Mr. Miller indicated a significant technological improvement had been made in April, 2002 with the implementation of an outage management system, which had the ability to identify the root cause of a power outage and contribute to improved restoration times. He noted this system also had the ability to provide accurate and timely outage information to customers on the cause and restoration times.

Mr. Miller also indicated Nova Scotia Power had an ongoing standard feeder and transmission inspection process whereby they were able to identify potential tree hazards; identify equipment problems and process to prioritize findings, plan and schedule required maintenance.

Mr. Miller indicated that Nova Scotia Power has made continuous improvements in customer reliability over the last ten years and since 1997, NSPI's outage frequency and duration numbers have been lower than the Canadian and Atlantic Canadian utility average; and he reviewed graphs outlining this.

Mr. Miller indicated that street light repairs are completed within five business days, and noted that if unable to complete within five business days, then a follow-up takes place with the customer to advise of the estimated timeline to complete. He noted the street light installation requests are individually analyzed and scheduled and the time line is determined based on inventory availability; other required work prior to installation (pole/determine location); and a follow-up with the customer to advise of the estimated timeline to complete. He also indicated that residential connections are completed within five business days after all internal and external requirements are met (permits, inspections, pole work, tree trimming, etc.), service connection completed within five business days after final inspection.

A question and answer period followed.

Several Councillors noted that street light issues seem to be what Council deal with the most and noted that the repair never takes place within seven days, but rather weeks or months, and were told that street lights were not a priority. It was also noted that Councillors often get a better response than the customer themselves when calls are placed.

Mr. Miller indicated that shift line workers are now living on Isle Madame and River Bourgeois, which make it easier because they live much closer to where the work is.

Councillor Cotton expressed concern with the number of lights being billed to the Municipality, whether they are working or not, and indicated he felt it was the responsibility of NSPI to identify these lights, because they are the service provider.

Mr. Miller indicated NSPI will follow-up on the number of street lights in each district and get a number of the lights that are not working. He noted that hopefully each poll will eventually be referenced in a database under the geographic information system.

The CAO requested statistics on the number of lights from each county in the province in order to compare with Richmond, on a per capita basis, and Mr. Miller indicated he would provide this information.

In response to a question from the CAO, Mr. Miller indicated the primary contact person for NSPI is Sandy McIsaac.

Warden Johnson thanked Mr. Miller and Mr. Richard for their presentation.

(b) Richmond County Tourism Cooperative re: Financial Request

Warden Johnson welcomed Mr. Jeff Stanley and Mr. Rene Kempf to the meeting.

Mr. Stanley indicated that the Richmond County Tourism Cooperative had been formed on March 6<sup>th</sup> and that an interim executive had been selected. He noted the interim Board consisted of Mary Collier, Chapel Island; Claire Doyle, Isle Madame; Rene Kempf, Roberta; Mac MacIsaac, St. Peter's; Jackie Marchand, Louisdale; Frank Sutherland, St. Peter's and himself.

Mr. Stanley indicated the Richmond County Tourism Cooperative's objectives were as follows:

- To promote, coordinate and develop tourism in Richmond County;
- To be the unified voice for the tourism industry in Richmond County;
- To partner with the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation in order to provide its membership consistent and maximum exposure throughout the tourism market place;
- To provide direction and leadership to the county who will in return provide direction and leadership on our behalf to the Province of Nova Scotia. This direction can be provided for marketing efforts, product development and training and needed infrastructure;
- To help provide clear, consistent and unified messages to the public about tourism opportunities in Richmond County.

Mr. Stanley indicated the role of the Municipality is as follows:

- To be a marketing partner with the cooperative;
- To be a funding partner with the cooperative;

- To be instrumental in positioning and marketing Richmond County to our target markets;
- Training and product development

Mr. Stanley indicated the Nova Scotia Cooperative Council is working on providing Cooperative training; Cooperative incorporation; business planning and connection to the Cooperative Network and Resources and noted the Richmond County Tourism Cooperative will have more resources such as industry input and industry driven; membership; industry dollars and product development.

Mr. Stanley reviewed a proposed table of potential membership.

Mr. Stanley indicated the following are items that the Richmond County Tourism Cooperative are requesting from Council for Year 1:

- To provide funding for Year 1 start-up phase;
- To provide first year dues for qualified members who buy a share within the first 12 months, which will alleviate the need and burden of collecting money for both shares and dues during the first year (this is only available to Richmond County members). This will also serve as a nice incentive for year one memberships;
- To provide funding for a staff person to be agreed upon by the County and the Cooperative executive;
- A commitment to provide tourism related training and education for the tourism Co-op members;
- To provide funding for the first year operating deficit which would include the funding for a staff person and to make a long term financial commitment;
- A Municipal Council delegate to sit on the RCTC Board;
- A memorandum of understanding between the Municipality and the Cooperative

A question and answer period followed.

In response to a question from the CAO, Mr. Stanley indicated that the Richmond County Tourism Cooperative is requesting \$61,700 from Municipal Council to cover Year 1 expenses.

Moved by Councillor Cotton, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that a letter be sent to H.R.D.C. expressing Municipal Council's support for the Richmond County Tourism Cooperative's application for funding. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Cotton, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that the request of the Richmond County Tourism Co-Operative be tabled and referred to the Committee on grant requests, to be dealt with in conjunction with our overall Tourism Department budget. Motion carried.

(c) L'Ardoise Economic Association for Development re: Community Partner Funding

Warden Johnson indicated this group had requested to change their presentation to the May Council Meeting.

Notice of Motion - Councillor Sampson: to amend our Policy on Grants, Section 1, by deleting “a Livestock Health Services Board established pursuant to the Livestock Health Services Act” and substituting “any charitable, nursing, medical, athletic, educational, environmental, cultural or social organization within the Province” (attached as Appendix “A”)

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Cotton that our Policy on Grants, Section 1, be amended by deleting “a Livestock Health Services Board established pursuant to the Livestock Health Services Act” and substituting “any charitable, nursing, medical, athletic, educational, environment, cultural or social organization within the Province”, as attached in Appendix “A”. Motion carried

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 MacNeil that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that an Adhoc Committee be appointed consisting of senior members of staff and Council to review the Municipality’s purchasing policy and that this information be presented to the Committee of the Whole for further review and consideration. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Boudreau that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and recommendation of staff to write off deleted accounts, in the amount of \$35,023.86, because the Assessment Department has indicated that these accounts were wrongfully assessed. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Cotton that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that Municipal Council accept the Maritimes and Northeast pipeline valuation for the assessment year 2000, which is under appeal in Richmond; being the settlement recommended by the Provincial Assessment Department. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Beaton that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and the Vested Property Clerk and offer the property in question (adjacent to his D’Escousse property) to Mr. Greg Silver at the appraised value, conditional on Mr. Silver agreeing to pay for the appraisal costs. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Cotton that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that this property in Louisdale (formerly convenience store) be offered for public tender. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that pending receipt of the petition, that approval be given to the road name change from “Northside Loch Lomond” to “Passage Road” in District #10, if it meets policy approval and receives the approval from the Department of Transportation and the District Planning Commission. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that approval be given to the road name change from “Road 5077(P) to “Fishermans Road” in District #8, if it meets policy approval and receives the approval from the Department of Transportation and the District Planning Commission. 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.

(b) Staff Report

The CAO reviewed the staff report, indicating there were several issues he wished to bring forward for Council’s consideration.

(1) Infrastructure Project:

Moved by Councillor Cotton, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that Municipal Council award the tender for the replacement of the Louisdale water storage tank, the installation of water main to this tank, and the re-coating of the interior of the Arichat water storage tank to Greatario Industrial Storage Systems Ltd. at their low tender bid of \$635,123.75. Motion carried.

(2) Solid Waste By-Law

The CAO indicated that the last contentious issue was the transparent garbage bags and recommended that notice be given to adopt the Solid Waste By-Law, as attached in Appendix “B”, and followed by a public hearing.

Councillor Cotton gave notice that he would introduce a motion at the next regular Council Meeting to give First Reading to adopt the Solid Waste By-Law, as attached in Appendix “B”.

(3) Oil and Gas Office

Moved by Councillor Cotton, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that Richmond Municipal Council support the establishment of an oil and gas office, as outlined and described in the letter of offer provided by Enterprise Cape Breton; and further moved that Municipal Council also signify their commitment to finance the ongoing operation of the office beyond the three year term outlined in this agreement. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Beaton, seconded by Councillor Sampson that a letter be written to our MP, Mr. Rodger Cuzner, thanking him for his work and support in securing the SCIF funding from Enterprise Cape Breton for the establishment of an oil and gas office. Motion carried.

#### (4) RDA Appointments

The CAO indicated that ads had been placed in the local newspaper on April 4 and April 8, 2003 inviting applications for one community and one business appointment to serve on the Board of the Strait-Highlands Regional Development Agency, and indicated that no applications were received as of the deadline of 12:00 noon today.

The CAO also indicated that our agreement with the RDA also requires an appointment of a Councillor from Municipal Council.

Moved by Councillor Boudreau, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that Council authorize Committee of the Whole to review the issue further and make three appointments to the Strait-Highlands Regional Development Agency. Motion carried.

#### Correspondence

- (a) Service Nova Scotia & Municipal Relations re: Assessment Services Year End Report

The CAO indicated this report summarizes the activity and assessments for last year.

- (b) Department of Environment & Labour re: Fire Safety Act/Regulations (2)

The CAO reported that the Fire Safety Act Bill 101, and the Fire Safety Regulations came into force on February 28, 2003, which will impose significant new responsibilities and costs on our municipal government.

- (c) Rural Cape Breton District Planning Commission re: Fire Inspector Appointment

The CAO reported that the Board has responded to the requirement by appointing Leon LeBlanc as the Building/Fire Inspector, and they are requesting that Municipal Council appoint Mr. LeBlanc as a Fire Inspector for the Municipality of Richmond, effective May 1, 2003, if the Municipality wishes the Commission to provide this service.

Moved by Councillor Boudreau, seconded by Councillor Sampson that Richmond Municipal Council appoint Mr. Leon LeBlanc as Fire Inspector for the Municipality of Richmond, effective May 1, 2003. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Cotton that Richmond Municipal Council appoint Wanda Ryan as Development Officer, and appoint John Bain as Alternate Development Officer for the Municipality of Richmond, effective May 1, 2003. Motion carried.

(d) Fisheries and Oceans Canadian Coast Guard re: Consultation in Advance of a Proposed Province-Wide Shoreline Speed Restriction

The CAO indicated he would post the notice in the office and staff would forward the notice to the Boat Clubs in the County.

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

(i) Provincial Budget

The CAO reviewed the major impacts on municipalities, noting significant financial impacts to municipalities.

(ii) Priorities Document

Moved by Councillor Cotton, seconded by Councillor Boudreau that a letter and representation be made to Service Nova Scotia and the Assessment Department, with a copy to the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities, requesting explanation for the significant amendment to the assessment of the Nova Scotia power plant in Point Tupper in the past few years (explanation to include summary of assessment values for plant); and further moved that the Assessment Department/Service Nova Scotia outline the status of similar reviews of other Nova Scotia power generating stations; and further moved that Service Nova Scotia/Assessment Department Division be requested to provide a breakdown and calculation of the property tax distribution of Nova Scotia Power, with emphasis on the impact of the major change in the assessment of the Point Tupper Generating Station. Motion carried.

(f) Hon. Cecil Clarke re: BRAND Program

The CAO indicated that the Hon. Cecil Clarke had presented the Municipality with a cheque for \$10,000 on March 14, 2003 to assist with the business plan.

(g) NDP Caucus Office re: NDP Task Force on Lower Auto Insurance Premiums

(h) Canadian Oil Heat Association re: Nova Scotia Market Development Fund

(i) Aliant re: Change in Monthly Rental Rate

(j) Richmond Regional Branch RTA re: Old Whiteside School Property

Moved by Councillor MacPhee, seconded by Councillor Cotton that a letter be written to the President of the Richmond Regional Branch RTA requesting that the group attend the next Council Meeting, in order to answer questions regarding their request. Motion carried.

(k) Village on the Canal Association re:

(i) Canada Day

The CAO indicated that he would advise Mrs. Landry that a decision had been made that the Recreation Department would not assist individual districts, and the majority of districts on the Mainland had decided to continue with their own Canada Day festivities.

(ii) Letter of Support

Moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Sampson that a letter be written to Nova Scotia Power Inc. indicating that Richmond Municipal Council supports the request of the Wallace MacAskill Yacht Club to have the power lines over Beaver Narrows raised to a height that will allow passage of tall ships, such as the Bluenose. Motion carried.

(l) West Bay Road & District Volunteer Fire Department re: Fire Protection Rate

(m) St. Peter's & District Volunteer Fire Department re: Fire Protection Rate

Moved by Councillor Boudreau, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that Municipal Council accept the request from the West Bay Road & District Volunteer Fire Department to maintain their fire protection rate at .10¢ per \$100 of assessment for the upcoming fiscal year; and further moved that the request from the St. Peter's & District Volunteer Fire Department to remain the same as last year at .14¢ per \$100 of assessment also be accepted. Motion carried.

In response to a question from Councillor MacPhee, the CAO indicated the would provide specific numbers for St. Peter's.

(n) MacAskill House Museum Society re: Grant Request

(o) East Richmond ATV Rider's Society re: Grant Request

Moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that the grant requests from the MacAskill House Museum Society and the East Richmond ATV Rider's Society be referred to the Committee on grant requests. Motion carried.

## Items Added to the Agenda

(1) CAO re:

(i) Staff Report

Previously dealt with.

(ii) Correspondence from Hepatitis Outreach Society re: “Hepatitis C Awareness Day

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that Richmond Municipal Council proclaim May 1, 2003 as “Hepatitis C Awareness Day” in Richmond County. Motion carried.

(2) Councillor Sampson re: Acknowledgement of Queen’s Jubilee Medals

Councillor Sampson noted that Lieutenant Governor Myra Freeman had presented Queen’s Jubilee medals on Saturday to Mr. Peter McManus, Captain of the Silver Dart Sea Cadet Squadron for the past 8 years; and Mr. Terry Clements, Captain and Commanding Officer of the Army Cadet Corps for the past 29 years, making him the longest consecutive serving Officer of a Land, Air and Sea Cadet Corps in Atlantic Canada.

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that congratulatory letters be sent to Mr. Peter McManus and Mr. Terry Clements congratulated them on their receiving Queen’s Jubilee Medals for their many years of involvement with the Cadet movement. Motion carried.

(3) Warden Johnson re: Road Name Change

Warden Johnson indicated she wished Council approval for a road name in her district, noting the sign was already there, but required Council approval in order to have it listed in the 911 database.

Moved by Councillor MacPhee, seconded by Councillor Cotton that Municipal Council give approval to the road name “Lakeshore Drive West” in District #10. Motion carried.

## Fifteen Minute Question Period

There were no questions.

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

There being no further business, Warden Johnson adjourned the meeting at 9:20 p.m.