

RICHMOND COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

OCTOBER 20, 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.

Warden Johnson indicated that Deputy Warden McNamara had contacted her earlier today indicating that she was unable to attend tonight's meeting.

Items Added to the Agenda

Warden Johnson indicated that the C.A.O. wished to add the Congress Mondiale and Councillor Sampson wished to add Halloween Curfew.

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

Review of Minutes: September 8, 2003

Councillor MacPhee indicated that on Page two, second last paragraph, "fetal" should read "fecal".

Moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Boudreau that the Minutes of September 8, 2003 be adopted as amended. Motion carried.

Nominations/Appointment – Deputy Warden (1 Year Term)

Warden Johnson opened the floor for nominations for the position of Deputy Warden.

Councillor Goyetche nominated Councillor Bourque.

Moved by Councillor MacPhee, seconded by Councillor Boudreau that nominations cease. Motion carried.

Councillor Bourque thus becomes Deputy Warden.

Warden Johnson congratulated Councillor Bourque on his appointment, noting that she was looking forward to working with him over the next year.

Deputy Warden Bourque thanked his fellow Councillors for the opportunity to work on behalf of the residents of Richmond County.

Petitions and/or Delegations:

- (a) Canadian Medical Association re: Presentation of Award of Excellence in Health Promotion.

Dr. Laurie MacNeil indicated that, on behalf of the Canadian Medical Association, he was proud to present the Municipality of Richmond with an award of excellence for placing a 100% ban on smoking in public places by adopting a Non-Smoking By-Law, noting that Richmond was one of the leading municipal governments in Canada and he hopes that this serves as an example for others.

Dr. MacNeil presented the Award of Excellence to Warden Johnson.

Warden Johnson thanked Dr. MacNeil for his presentation.

- (b) Strait Regional School Board re: Overview of Activities/Future Challenges

Warden Johnson welcomed Mr. George Kehoe (Board Chair), Mr. Ken Meech (C.F.O.) and Mr. Phonse Gillis (Director of Education) to the meeting.

Mr. Kehoe indicated that the Strait Regional School Board had met approximately one year ago, and decided that they had to improve communication with the public and particularly municipal units, noting that they are currently making presentations to municipal units in their district explaining the School Boards current situation.

Mr. Kehoe indicated that a key responsibility of the Board is to negotiate, on behalf of the students, with the provincial government and that they are approaching various municipal units to garnish their support in order to make stronger representation when approaching the province for funding.

Mr. Gillis indicated that two of the major issues or challenges faced by the School Board are the ongoing declining enrolment, which had decreased by 377 students this year, as well as the provision of adequate programs and services to a large, sparsely populated rural region.

Mr. Gillis indicated that there were 12,430 students enrolled in schools in 1996 under the Strait Regional School Board and at present there are 9,120 students.

Mr. Gillis indicated that the Strait Regional School Board employed 1,086 people in 2002/03, including 636 FTEs teaching staff, noting that for every decrease in enrolment of 26 students, the School Board must decrease their teaching staff by 1.

Mr. Gillis indicated that the School Board is funded on per student enrolment, noting that 70% of funding is based on 1996 enrolment and 30% is based on present enrolment, noting that if they were funded totally on current enrolment it would be devastating.

Mr. Gillis indicated that no other Board in the Province has changed and amalgamated as much as the Strait Regional School Board, noting that there is not much more room for amalgamation.

Mr. Gillis presented statistics on enrolment and student teacher ratios for each school under the Strait Regional School Board, noting that they have the best student teacher ratio in the province other than the CSAP.

Mr. Gillis noted that every Board in the province had declines last year, however the Strait Region saw the largest decline percent wise.

Mr. Gillis indicated that collectively they need to continually ensure to speak with one united voice in order to provide equal or greater quality of education as other districts in the province.

Mr. Meech presented a financial summary, noting that the Board has a net accumulated surplus to March 31, 2003 of \$760,000.00, noting that \$250,000 of this surplus has been used for capital improvement projects and \$200,000 for educational initiatives.

Mr. Meech indicated that since the financial irregularities in the fall of 2001 there were a list of recommendations to ensure that they do not occur again, noting that all recommendations have been implemented including the appointment of Grant Thornton as new external auditors, the establishment of an Audit Committee, regular financial reporting to the Board, the establishment of a Community Board for Strathspey Place, noting that the remainder of the debt was assumed by the province, and the filing of an insurance claim in the amount of \$750,000 to recover losses as a result of the financial irregularity of 2001.

Mr. Meech indicated that the Strait Regional School Board is financially in good health.

Mr. Meech noted that the R.C.M.P. investigation into the 2001 financial irregularities is still ongoing.

Councillor Goyetche indicated that if the provinces funding formula changes that the Municipality would have no choice but to support the School Board, noting that mandatory municipal contributions would probably increase.

In response to a question from Councillor Cotton, Mr. Gillis indicated that decreases in enrolment would result in mandatory reduction in staff however surplus conditions could allow for re-hiring, further noting that the positions would not be able to be sustained in the long term and would result in twice as many reductions in the following years.

In response to a question from Deputy Warden Bourque, Mr. Meech indicated that he did not recall off hand exact statistics indicating the percentages that the province pays towards the funding of the Strait Regional School Board in comparison to that which municipal units contribute, however the projected amounts are 90% from the Province and 10% from municipal government, where in actuality the municipal contribution is probably closer to 20%.

Mr. Meech noted that the recent increases in assessments have increased the Municipality's mandatory contribution.

The C.A.O. indicated that the impact of changes in population and demographics are seen in many areas including education, health care and economic development.

Warden Johnson thanked Mr. Kehoe, Mr. Gillis and Mr. Meech for their presentation.

(c) Development Isle Madame re: Phase IV, Arichat Waterfront Development Project.

Mr. Stanley indicated that he was approaching Richmond Municipal Council with a funding request as well as an update on Phase IV of the Arichat Waterfront Development project.

Mr. Stanley indicated that DIMA is requesting \$22,614 as a community contribution towards the total project costs of \$452,291.

Mr. Stanley indicated that the community contribution for the other phases has always been raised by DIMA, however since the amount is so substantial, this is not realistic and therefore DIMA is requesting that Richmond County Council assist DIMA with this project by providing DIMA with a grant in that amount.

Mr. Stanley reviewed the projects included in Phase IV of the Arichat Waterfront Development Project.

Mr. Stanley indicated that, as of today, ECBC has verbally approved their contributions and that HRDC is waiting for formal approval from ECBC before they approve their funding.

Mr. Stanley noted that the funding from ECBC and HRDC is conditional on DIMA being able to provide the community contribution, noting that this project is very time constrained with a projected start date of three weeks time.

Mr. Stanley noted that there are two activities planned to take place as part of the Congres Mondiale at the Lorenzo Building in 2004 and their goal is to have the building fully finished before this takes place.

In response to a question from Councillor Cotton, Mr. Stanley indicated that ECBC is contributing \$319,000 to Phase IV of the project and the \$22,614 requested from the Municipality is the shortfall of the project.

In response to a question from Councillor Boudreau, the C.A.O. indicated that the only resource for funding from the Municipality would be from next years grant fund allocation.

In response to a question from Councillor Goyetche, Mr. Stanley indicated that he was not employed by DIMA during Phases I and II and apologises if anyone was under the impression that the project should have been self-sustainable before it's completion.

Mr. Stanley noted that there were only two activities held at the site this past summer, one that they made a profit of \$5,000 and another in which they lost money because of the weather.

Mr. Stanley indicated that there would be two offices located in the Lorenzo Building, one for non-profit organizations to use, where donations would be accepted for it's use but no set charges and the other office they hoped would be for a new D.I.M.A. employee that would be responsible for promoting the building and renting it out for community activities, weddings, flea markets etc...to facilitate an income from the property.

Councillor Sampson indicated that when assessing grant requests one of the aspects considered is community contributions, noting that there are no community contributions for this phase of the project.

In response to a question from Deputy Warden Bourque, Mr. Stanley indicated that there are no financial projections of income from the Congress Mondial Acadien, however two major activities are scheduled to be held at the waterfront.

Councillor Boudreau indicated that the waterfront has seen tremendous development and growth and he has been seeing many visitors and new activities occur at the waterfront, noting that the fish shanty's have been rented by local businesses and are a source of income.

Moved by Councillor Boudreau, seconded by Councillor Goyetche that the funding request from DIMA for Phase IV of the Arichat Waterfront Project (\$22,614) be referred to the next meeting of the Committee of the Whole, with the Committee being authorized to approve the funding request for the project. Motion carried.

Committee Reports:

(a) Committee of the Whole Report

Deputy Warden Bourque presented the Committee of the Whole Report for the month of October 2003.

Moved by Deputy Warden Bourque, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that the C.A.O. be authorized to enter into agreements with the community groups responsible for LeNoir Forge and the Nicholas Denys Museum, conditional on receipt of their written acceptance of the offer, wherein the Municipality will provide them with the estimated cost of repairs of the facilities and in turn they would agree that this concludes the Municipality's requirement to repair these facilities. Motion carried.

Moved by Deputy Warden Bourque, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that a Steering Committee be established for Evanston, to consist of community representation and the Councillor for that District; and further moved that Council proceed with the pre-design work contingent on receiving the necessary funding from the Province. Motion carried.

Moved by Deputy Warden Bourque, seconded by Councillor Boudreau that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that the Municipality establish a policy of funding 75% of the net capital costs for pre-design studies relating to wastewater management districts, and that this funding level be approved immediately for the Grantville community. Motion carried.

Deputy Warden Bourque gave notice that he will introduce a motion at the next regular Council Meeting to adopt a By-Law Adoption Policy as a policy of the Municipality.

Deputy Warden Bourque gave notice that he will introduce a motion at the next regular Council Meeting to amend the Medical Benefits Policy to include a provision to incorporate the provision of medical benefits to retiring employees, other than long-term disability, to age 65.

Moved by Deputy Warden Bourque, seconded by Councillor Cotton that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that a Petroleum Office Management Committee be established and that the members consist of the Warden, CAO, a Municipal Councillor to be appointed by the Warden; Mr. Alan MacDonald, Executive Director of the Oil & Gas Office (Advisor); a Representative of the Department of Energy; a Representative of Nova Scotia Business Inc.; a Representative of Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation (Ex-Officio); and a Representative of the Private Sector. Motion carried.

Moved by Deputy Warden Bourque, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that Committee of the Whole Report for the month of October 2003 be adopted as presented. Motion carried.

Correspondence:

- (a) Department of Environment and Labour re: Amendments to the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations

Moved by Councillor Goyetche, seconded by Councillor Sampson that correspondence from the Department of the Environment and Labour regarding amendments to the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations be forwarded to the District Planning Commission, for their information, and if necessary, response. Motion carried.

- (b) Bras D'Or Designation Coordinator re: Bras D'Or lake Non-Discharge Designation for Boating Sewage

- (c) Richmond Academy re: Bursary/Scholarship Program

- (d) Rural Cape Breton District Planning Commission re: Naming of Owens Road

Moved by Councillor MacPhee, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that approval be given to the road name "Owens Road (P), as the name of a private access road in a subdivision located in the St. Peter's area off Oban Road (District #8), if it meets policy approval and receives the approval from the Department of Transportation and the District Planning Commission. Motion carried.

- (e) Nova Scotia Society of Occupational Therapists re: National Occupational Therapy Week

Moved by Councillor Goyetche, seconded by Deputy Warden Bourque that Richmond Municipal Council proclaim the week of October 19-25, 2003 as National Occupational Therapy Week. Motion carried.

- (f) Canadian Public Health Association re: Canadian HIV/Aids Awareness Week and World Aids Day

Moved by Councillor MacPhee, seconded by Councillor Bourque that Richmond Municipal Council proclaim the week of November 24-December 1, 2003 as Canadian HIV/AIDS Awareness Week. Motion carried.

Items Added to the Agenda

- (1) C.A.O. re: Congres Mondiale

The CAO indicated that there were rumors at the recent U.N.S.M. Conference, that some areas of the province may be receiving operational funding for activities and programs relating to the Congres Mondial.

Several Councillors addressed the issue, noting the demands that had been already presented to the Municipality, such as funding for marketing and coordination by the Richmond County Regional Committee for the Congres Mondial, and the \$22,000 grant being sought by DIMA for the waterfront project that is related to the Congres Mondial.

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that Council instruct staff to approach the appropriate federal officials to determine what funds have already been made available for the Congres Mondial, the source of funds, and the allocation; and further moved that information also be requested regarding any new “operational funds” that may be available from federal agencies or departments. Motion carried.

(2) Councillor Sampson re: Halloween “Trick or Treating”

Councillor Sampson noted that there should be a time limit established for trick or treating to end in our county.

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Goyetche that Richmond Municipal Council establish a deadline of 9:00 p.m. on October 31st, for all trick or treating to end in our county; and also that advertisements be placed regarding same in the local media. Motion carried.

Fifteen Minute Question Period

In response to a question from Mr. Lorenzo Boudreau, the C.A.O. indicated that the Province, not the Municipality, owns the parcel of land in Bear Head that the proposed LNG terminal will be situated, that is why the Municipality did not get money for the land, noting that once the LNG terminal is constructed the Municipality will have significant revenue from property taxes, further noting that the area will also benefit from construction jobs as well as the potential employment from spin-off industries.

The C.A.O. indicated that the UNSM recently changes the way that it operates, breaking the structure into caucuses, noting that at the recent UNSM Annual Conference held in Yarmouth, Councillor Cotton became the first Chair for the Rural Caucus.

All Councillors congratulated Councillor Cotton.

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

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.