

**RICHMOND COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**NOVEMBER 10, 2003**

Location: Lower River Community Centre

Warden Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., and asked Councillor McNamara to say a few words.

Councillor McNamara welcomed everyone present at the meeting and thanked Municipal Council for giving the community an opportunity to present their issues of concerns in their own community.

Warden Johnson asked everyone to stand for a minute of silence in observance of Remembrance Day and for the Veterans who helped keep Canada a free country.

Warden Johnson asked everyone to remain standing for the singing of O'Canada.

The Clerk took roll call of Councillors.

Warden Johnson indicated Councillor Goyetche was unable to attend the meeting due to illness and Councillor Sampson would be a bit late.

Items Added to the Agenda

Warden Johnson indicated the CAO wished to add Broadband services and Councillor McNamara wished to make a statement on behalf of Richmond County Literacy Network.

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

Review of Minutes: October 20, 2003

Moved by Councillor Beaton, seconded by Councillor Boudreau that the minutes of October 20, 2003 be adopted as presented. Motion carried.

Petitions and/or Delegations:

(a) Lower River Concerned Citizens re: River Inhabitants Environment

Councillor McNamara presented on behalf of the concerned citizens of Lower River/ Evanston area (copy attached).

Councillor McNamara indicated the residents of Lower River Inhabitants are requesting the support of Municipal Council to conduct an evaluation on River Inhabitants and its waterway which is experiencing considerable pollution in order to determine the best manner to help in diminishing or dealing with the river's pollution. She indicated that the community also wished to have municipal staff outline the status and time lines for the replacement of the aging Evanston sewage treatment plant, which is located at the mouth of River Inhabitants, and which may be attributing to some of the pollution in the river; and look into the extension of the collector system for the Evanston sewage system to accommodate substantial growth and potential growth in near proximity to the existing system.

Councillor McNamara presented a signed document from the residents of Evanston, who are requesting the Municipality to examine the possibility of extending the sewer system to their homes, and also to allow for new growth.

Councillor McNamara indicated she is requesting that Public Works staff look into these issues and report back to the community on what the next steps would be.

The CAO indicated that the situation surrounding the river is a very complex situation that involves not only the Municipality, but also other government departments. He noted the sewage treatment plant and extension of sewer services is a direct municipal responsibility and noted that work had been done approximately 7 or 8 years ago with regards to the possibility of replacing the sewage treatment plant and staff had held public meetings with the community, but the cost per home was substantial at that time, and was an extreme concern for residents, and therefore the work did not proceed. He noted the way the municipal system works is that property owners who receive the service pay for the service. He noted grants can be obtained from other levels of government, but whatever amount is left over is the net cost that is borne by the users.

The CAO indicated that the Municipality reviews the list of capital priorities each year and he noted that Municipal Council is getting ready to review this again, therefore the comments and representation is timely.

The CAO noted that a motion had been adopted at the last Council Meeting regarding the Evanston sewage treatment plant, to the effect that funding would be pursued for an engineering study, that would provide solutions and costs; and also that some immediate remedial work would be carried out in the sewage treatment plant. The CAO noted that there could be other factors contributing to the decline in River Inhabitants such as on-site sewage disposals of leaching into the River, and resource based industries that impact

on the River. The CAO noted that the motion had also included that a community committee be established.

The CAO indicated that the new subdivision and trailer park may help with the cost of the sewage treatment plant, in that 50 lots will be sold (25 lots from each), which will hopefully increase substantially the number of properties that could share in those costs.

Moved by Councillor McNamara, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that Municipal Council accept the report on behalf of the community and refer the issues to the Public Works Department for discussion and evaluation. Motion carried.

Notice of Motion - Deputy Warden Bourque: 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 (attached as Appendix "A")

Moved by Deputy Warden Bourque, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that the Medical Benefits Policy be amended to include a provision to incorporate the provision of medical benefits to retiring employees, other than long-term disability, to age 65 (attached as Appendix "A"). Motion carried.

#### Committee Reports

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

Moved by Deputy Warden Bourque, seconded by Councillor Boudreau that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that the Municipality approach the Department of Municipal Affairs requesting approval of a temporary borrowing resolution in the amount of \$2,500,000 for the financing of our new municipal building. Motion carried.

Moved by Deputy Warden Bourque, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and the recommendation of the Vested Property Clerk and that the property be declared surplus and that it be offered to Mr. Don Micheau at the appraised value, conditional on Mr. Micheau agreeing to pay the appraisal costs. 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 request from the Arichat Post Office be approved, with their request being to have a canceling stamp prepared for the Arichat Post Office, which incorporates the municipal logo and indicates Arichat is the Shiretown of Richmond County. Motion carried.

Moved by Deputy Warden Bourque, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that an Adhoc Committee be established, in conjunction with the Department of Tourism, to include Councillors

and volunteer community individuals, to prepare a terms of reference and proposal for the establishment of a heritage project that would gather information on the history of the Municipality during the past 125 years; and further moved that the Director of Tourism be authorized to plan a New Year's Levee and a 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorative calendar, as celebration projects. Motion carried.

Deputy Warden Bourque reported that the Committee reviewed the funding request from DIMA for Phase IV of their Arichat Waterfront Project, which was referred to the Committee with authority to make a decision; and further reported that the Committee of the Whole decided that the Municipality would provide a grant of 75% of the requested \$22,614 for Phase IV of the Arichat Waterfront Project, with the remainder to be raised by DIMA, and that Council will later determine where the grant will be allocated from the municipal budget.

Moved by Deputy Warden Bourque, seconded by Councillor Cotton that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and write a letter of support to Industry Canada, with a copy to Atlantic Learning Innovations Network, expressing the support and authority of Richmond Municipal Council for the ALIN proposal to extend broadband services to the communities on Route 4, east of Chapel Island to the Cape Breton County Line. Motion carried.

Moved by Deputy Warden Bourque, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that a letter be written to Susan Lidden, Regional Director for CBC Radio, encouraging improvements in the CBC FM signal from Sydney for Richmond residents. Motion carried.

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

Correspondence:

- (a) Dr. Kingston Memorial Clinic re: Thank you
- (b) Le Conseil de developpement economique de la Nouvelle Ecosse re: Congres Mondial

The CAO indicated this correspondence from the Coordinator of Regional Operations of CDENE was written to the Vice-President of E.C.B.C. clarifying a conversation held with a Municipal Councillor.

The CAO indicated that Municipal Council had requested several weeks ago that correspondence be sent to federal authorities and also the Regional Committee for Nova Scotia requesting information on the amount of funding that is available to assist with this event, and noted responses have not been received yet.

Councillor Sampson clarified his position to Council with regards to the letter written by Mr. Samson.

Councillor Sampson indicated that this meeting had been held on September 30<sup>th</sup> and his conversation with Mr. Samson took place on October 6<sup>th</sup> and the Committee met on October 16<sup>th</sup> and this information was not exchanged at this meeting.

Councillor Sampson requested that Warden Johnson contact Mr. Beaton from E.C.B.C. requesting information on the criteria for allocating funds for the Congres Mondial 2004.

Warden Johnson indicated she would contact Mr. Beaton and obtain the information requested.

Councillor MacPhee expressed concern with Sections 41 and 42 of the Official Languages Act and noted that Mr. Samson indicated the meeting involved exclusively French speaking Acadian individuals and groups; and read those Sections for Council's information.

Councillor MacPhee noted that Mr. Samson's letter indicated that 75% of the events were to take place on Isle Madame, but indicated that the list of events show that events are taking place in every district of the county and not 75% on Isle Madame and indicated he feels Mr. Samson needs to look at this very seriously. He indicated it is important for Municipal Council to recognize that with something as important as Le Congres Mondiale, we are dealing with Acadian people and stressed that Acadian people are not all French, but rather French, Scottish, Mic Mac, etc., and indicated he will respond to this letter to Mr. Beaton indicating government funds need to be distributed evenly across this county and needs to represent more than just exclusively French.

The CAO noted that the Richmond County Regional Congres Mondial Committee has approached Municipal Council for funding for a full time Coordinator position, which Council has approved at a cost of approximately \$50,000, because Council was advised that there was no additional money available. The CAO also noted the request from DIMA, for their Waterfront Project, who stressed the necessity of Richmond Council funds to ensure the project was ready for the Congres Mondial.

Councillor Cotton indicated he was surprised that \$500,000 was available and noted the question had been posed to Mr. Samson when he made a presentation to Council, and he had indicated that other Acadian communities were receiving funding but it did not appear that Richmond County would be receiving any. Councillor Cotton noted that Richmond County funded a staff position for an 18 month period, and it was the understanding that activities were not being held solely in Petit De Grat and Isle Madame and applications were being accepted for projects from other areas as well, if some were submitted. He indicated he has no problem with a project being judged under merit, but noted if groups are told there is no money available, then it is difficult for these groups to submit applications, and noted this is what he has an objection to.

Deputy Warden Bourque indicated he was not aware of any meeting taking place on Isle Madame until he received a copy of the letter in his package and indicated he would discuss this matter personally with Mr. Samson. He indicated this group should deal through the Richmond County group, and not with individual Councillors.

Councillor Boudreau indicated that he also was not aware of this meeting until Councillor Sampson brought it to his attention.

Several Councillors noted that Council had directed a letter from the previous meeting, requesting information on whether any funds were available for the Congres Mondial. The correspondence from Mr. Samson to Mr. Beaton, indicates that there is \$500,000 available.

The consensus of Council was that a follow-up letter be written to Mr. Beaton, requesting information on this allocation (criteria for applications, time frames, etc.).

(c) Minister of Agriculture & Fisheries re: Beef Industry

(d) Mr. Rodger Cuzner, MP re: E.C.B.C. Board Members

The CAO indicated the correspondence from Mr. Cuzner to Mr. Beaton is in response to a Council request for information regarding ECBC Board Members.

(e) Cape Breton District Health Authority/Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority re: Congratulations

The CAO indicated this correspondence congratulated the Municipality on receiving the Canadian Medical Association Award for Excellence in Health Promotion for passing and implementing the non-smoking by-law.

(f) Minister of Tourism & Culture re: Insurance for Heritage Properties

The CAO indicated this correspondence clarifies the issue of insurance for heritage properties within Nova Scotia that recently received media attention in that the municipal heritage designation only applies to the exterior appearance of a building and the deregistration of a municipal heritage designation may be requested by the owner or by a Municipal Council motion, should the building be damaged or destroyed by any cause.

#### Items Added to the Agenda

(1) CAO re: Broadband Services

The CAO reported that the Municipality had been selected as one of 33 projects in the Country to receive funding for broadband services for Richmond County and he was requesting that a letter of thanks be sent to the Hon. Alan Rock, with a copy to our MP, Mr. Rodger Cuzner thanking them for their support.

The CAO also indicated that memorandums of understanding had been signed with the two cable companies, based on an open RFP process prescribed by the federal government department. The Municipality must now negotiate contracts with the service providers and Industry Canada, and he requested that Municipal Council provide the Committee of the Whole with the authority to authorize those contracts, if they are successfully negotiated.

Moved by Councillor MacPhee, seconded by Councillor MacNeil that Municipal Council authorize staff to negotiate contracts with Industry Canada and with Seaside Communications and RuSh Communications, for the purposes of implementing the Broadband Infrastructure Program and further moved that the Committee of the Whole be given authority to approve these contracts; and further moved that a letter of thanks be sent to the Hon. Alan Rock, to our MP, Rodger Cuzner, and to the Hon. Robert Thibeault, thanking them for their support and approval of the Richmond County Broadband Project initiative. Motion carried.

(2) Councillor McNamara re: Request to Make Statement on Behalf of Richmond County Literacy Network

Councillor Beaton declared a conflict of interest indicating he is presently employed by the Richmond County Literacy Network and he left his seat during discussion and voting of this item.

Councillor McNamara indicated Councillor Beaton recently became an employee of the Richmond County Literacy Network and indicated his position on the Board was now vacant. She indicated this is not a Standing Committee of Council but indicated the Board is presently only being represented by one Council Member and asked if anyone on Council would be interested in serving on the Literacy Board.

Councillor MacPhee indicated he would be interested in serving on the Board.

Moved by Councillor McNamara, seconded by Councillor Boudreau that Municipal Council appoint Councillor MacPhee to serve on the Board of Directors of the Richmond County Literacy Network. Motion carried.

#### Fifteen Minute Question Period

Councillor MacPhee requested some leniency in the question period to have it extended to one half hour if necessary, in order to allow sufficient time for questions from the residents.

Mr. Billy Proctor, Lower River, requested information on who was responsible for the pollution in the River Inhabitants.

The CAO indicated there are other issues surrounding the River Inhabitants (i.e. farms situated along the River, as well as households with on-site sewage disposal systems), therefore it was difficult to pin-point exactly where all the pollution is coming from, and indicated this was not a sole responsibility of the Municipality and involved other government departments as well. He also indicated the Municipality is presently looking at replacing the Evanston sewage treatment plant.

The CAO indicated that at our last meeting, a Steering Committee had been established to comprise of Council members and members from the Evanston/Lower River community to look at conducting an engineering study in order to determine if the plant will be repaired or replaced. He also indicated that the Municipality will work with the community in order to achieve this.

Councillor Cotton indicated the cost of building a new sewage treatment plant in Louisdale was still a significant cost even with the funding and cost-sharing that had been obtained, but it was the community's decision whether they wished the plant repaired or replaced.

Mrs. Muriel Presant, Whiteside, asked if the Strait Richmond Hospital were being considered to bear a substantial portion of the cost of the new sewage treatment plant, because they are by far the largest user. Mrs. Presant also requested that announcements be made on CBC Radio, when the Public Works Department is flushing lines, and she also requested information on peat moss systems.

The CAO noted that the Health Department budgets are under considerable stress, so he felt that the Strait Richmond Hospital would be difficult to invoice for a substantial portion of the Evanston sewage treatment plant replacement project.

Councillor McNamara provided information on peat moss systems.

Mr. Richard Burt, Louisdale, asked if consulting engineers will be hired to look at the Evanston Sewage Treatment Plant. The CAO indicated that a Committee has been established consisting of Council members and community members, and he indicated that consulting engineers will be hired to conduct an evaluation of the plant to determine if the plant should be repaired or replaced. He indicated the process would be similar to what had been done in Louisdale when the sewage treatment plant had been replaced, whereby public meetings would be held in order to provide the residents with the associated costs of the repairs or replacement.

Mr. Joey McNamara asked why the Municipality would be considering adding 50 houses to the existing system if they were not going ahead with replacement of the plant. The CAO indicated that the reason this did not go ahead several years ago was because the community felt the cost per household was too substantial, and the Municipality feels that if more homes can be added to the system, then this would reduce the cost. The CAO noted that the population is decreasing quickly, and it is getting increasingly difficult for

new construction and he is hopeful that by providing capacity for new growth will help our community grow.

Mr. Richard Burt asked if a survey had been done regarding the amount of waste and sewage input prior to the Antigonish Company signing the contract with the Municipality. The CAO indicated a study has been done on how much water to be used and also the amount of waste going into the sewage treatment plant.

In response to a question from Mr. Burt requesting where the outflow of waste is going, Councillor Boudreau indicated it would only make sense that the outflow of waste would be going to the Evanston sewage treatment plant, and also indicated to Mr. Burt that he was asking questions pertaining to his personal situation, which did not relate to the Evanston sewage treatment plant being discussed.

Mr. Tyson McNamara, Evanston, requested information on the actual costs of the study to be conducted. The CAO indicated that the cost of the study is not known presently, but will be incorporated in the costs that will be presented to the community and noted that the costs will be borne by users. He indicated the Evanston sewage treatment plant will be highest on the capital priorities list and the Municipality will be applying for government funding to help with the capital costs.

Mr. McNamara indicated the River should also be a priority because the eelgrass that cleans the water is almost completely gone and the recreational fishing is almost non-existent.

Warden Johnson thanked the residents present for attending the meeting and indicated that Municipal Council is committed to working with the community in arriving at a solution regarding their issues and concerns.

Councillor McNamara thanked Municipal Council for the opportunity to hold the meeting in their community and invited everyone to stay for a lunch.

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

There being no further business, Warden Johnson adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.