

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

FEBRUARY 22, 2010

Location: Council Chambers, Municipal Office

Deputy Warden MacNeil called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Items Added to the Agenda

Deputy Warden MacNeil indicated that there was one item that was added prior to the deadline, regarding an Office Closure Policy to be discussed “In-Camera”.

The CAO indicated that he had two other issues that he would like to address “In-Camera”.

Moved by Councillor David, **seconded by** Councillor Boucher that the items added be accepted as presented. **Motion carried.**

Review of Minutes: February 1, 2010

Moved by Councillor McNamara, **seconded by** Councillor Johnson that the minutes of February 1, 2010 be adopted as presented. **Motion carried.**

Presentation:

(a) Property Valuation Services Corporation (Debi Karrel) re: Update

Deputy Warden MacNeil welcomed Ms. Debi Karrel and Mr. Sandy McNabb to the meeting.

A Power Point Presentation followed (copy attached).

The following points were brought forth during discussions:

- Legislation indicates that banks and financial institutions are still included under Business Occupancy.

- The CAP is automatic and property owners do not have to apply for the CAP.
- The only reason for an increase in CAP value is because a correction in the property value was required; because an inspection revealed that something was not previously included in the assessment.
- When property is sold to a relative the CAP remains, but if the transaction is at arm's length the property goes out of CAP to market value.
- Approximately 6,000 income evaluations were sent out in Nova Scotia for income generating properties, noting that income and expense information was requested.
- PVSC aims to represent the market, noting that as the markets increase, assessment may increase.
- Properties that see significant increases most often were previously assessed too low.
- One sale does not make the market, it is evaluated over time.
- If residents feel that assessments do not reflect the market, please contact PVSC.
- Through the Provincial Assessment Inspection Program staff are sent out to assess each property in a given area.
- It was suggested that on the front of the PVSC notices the notation that "Tax bills are issued by your Municipality" should be removed because it seems to direct the responsibility for the assessment to the Municipality.
- It was noted that the cost based model for improvements are local to an area and are based on costs and market factors, however Ms. Karrel will look into providing additional information on the areas considered in the formation of the cost based model for Richmond.
- It was noted that in regards to farm properties, buildings that are no longer useable will be re-evaluated using "functional obsolescence".
- The purpose of the CAP is to protect residents from the market forces, noting that assessments may increase but residents only pay taxes based on CAP values.
- In some regions market values do decrease and in Richmond there are properties whose assessments has decreased.
- The issue of waterfront property erosion is taken into consideration is assessments and if residents feel that this has not be taken into consideration then they may appeal.
- Residents have a right to appeal in the year in which they were assessed, noting that the market is also considered in addition to the purchase price of a property.
- Ms. Karrel indicated that PVSC welcomes the opportunity to provide further information in other forums, if Council so wishes.

Deputy Warden MacNeil thanked Ms. Karrel and Mr. McNabb for their presentation.

Reports:

(a) CAO re: Review of Policies:

- Municipal District Infrastructure Fund

- Municipal District Activity Fund
- Grants to Charitable and Not for Profit Organizations Fund

Moved by Councillor David, **seconded by** Councillor McNamara that the Committee recommend to Council that Whereas the names of current district funds are confusing And Whereas modifications in the application forms will help simplify the grant administration process Be it resolved that the name of the Municipal District Fund-\$20,000 be changed to “**MUNICIPAL DISTRICT INFRASTRUCTURE FUND** “. Be it further resolved that the name of the Municipal District Activity Fund-\$5,000 be changed to “**MUNICIPAL DISTRICT ACTIVITY FUND**” And be it resolved that Council approve the modifications to the application forms to both funds as attached.
Motion carried.

(b) Director of Tourism, Culture & Recreation re: 2010/11 Budget

Deputy Warden MacNeil welcomed Mr. Stewart MacDonald and Mr. Clifford Boudreau to the meeting.

Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Boudreau reviewed the budget for the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation.

The following points were brought forth during discussions:

- The salary for the position of Secretary is fully funded from the Tourism, Culture and Recreation budget, however she does carry out work for other departments.
- The merits proposed are for budget purposes only and will only be formally approved by Council in June.
- Councillors were urged to submit their questions regarding the budget to the Warden or CAO to be addressed further.
- The additional \$10,000 in the budget for Canada Day is comprised of \$5,000 that Council wished to have budgeted for fireworks and an additional \$5,000 from the Canada Day Committee. It is up to Council to decide if they still agree on \$1,500 per district and \$5,000 for each location for fireworks.
- Mr. Boudreau indicated that he will provide Council with an updated list of all organization that received grant funds from his department.
- If Council wishes to pursue lifeguard services for Point Michaud and Pondville a decision would have to made within the next month because there are several organizations to work with in order get these programs put in place before the summer months.
- If Council wishes to proceed, then staff will include costs of the lifeguard services in the budget, noting that the Province has only agreed to provide \$10,000.
- The Province has not provided any guarantee of their commitment for future years.
- It was noted that there is also a well attended beach in Dundee.

- The motion of Council regarding lifeguard services only indicates Point Michaud and Pondville.
- Costs to establish the lifeguard service will be more in the first year because of infrastructure that has to be put in place.
- The lifeguard service is proposed to operate for seven days a week, from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- It was noted that over-expenditures of budget items should have to be approved by the CAO or CFO and perhaps a formal protocol for this process be adopted for the whole organization.
- The additional costs associated with the Arena are due to costs of financial reporting and legal expenses.
- Mr. Boudreau indicated that he will provide further information on funding of youth programs (breakdown of grants approved).
- Requests for funds from the youth grant budget are evaluated at the committee level (Youth Advisory Committee), noting that there are no set criteria and most reasonable requests are approved.
- Community groups that are proposing projects for youth are also considered.
- The \$116,000 budgeted for Tourism Marketing was not fully expended, noting that if staff deems that the full amount is not required then perhaps a reduction in this budget item can be examined.
- The two major projects completed under the tourism budget, the website and the signage project, have assisted local operators in increasing their business.
- Perhaps the Tourism Advisory Board be contacted regarding the budget.
- It was noted that there should be a new “Welcome to Richmond County” sign installed at the county border in Irish Cove, noting that there is only a small provincial sign.
- It was noted that two similar signs have been installed in East Bay and Aulds Cove.
- There is a Tourism Advisory Board meeting scheduled for tomorrow night to discuss possible projects and budget.
- It was agreed that a copy of the motion of Council regarding lifeguard services be forwarded to Council for information and that Mr. Boudreau review the motion and provide further information as requested.
- It is likely that the province will only provide a commitment on a yearly basis to the lifeguard services.
- In addition to youth groups from schools, other youth organizations such as minor hockey, figure skating and baseball have accessed youth grant funds.
- Costs for the boat show include travel, accommodations, meals and booth rental.
- Grants to Community Organizations are not intended for infrastructure projects; however the youth grants have no restrictions.
- Capabilities for the department are based on policies and programs as approved by Council, noting that Council has the power to make changes if they so wish, however money for new programs will have to come from elsewhere in the budget.

Deputy Warden MacNeil thanked Mr. Boudreau and Mr. MacDonald for their report.

Referred from Council:

(a) Les Jeux de L'Acadie Request for Financial Assistance

The following points were brought forth during discussions:

- The organization is anxiously awaiting a decision of Council.
- The budget information that they have submitted in their request was inaccurate.
- This is a very worthwhile event.
- Previous commitments from the Municipality for Les Jeux de L'Acadie from the Municipality were \$3,000 and \$5,000, noting that the \$20,000 request is a significant increase.
- The event will only take place in the next fiscal year so there can be an inclusion in the budget if Council wishes to do so.
- It was suggested that the Municipality match the commitment that they made the last time the games were hosted in Richmond.
- It was noted that further funding could be considered only if they provide evidence of a deficit.

Moved by Warden Boudreau, **seconded by** Councillor McNamara that the Committee recommend to Council that a grant of \$5000 be provided to Les Jeux de L'Acadie and that Council will consider another \$5000 based on need and full financial disclosure and that these amount be included in the 2010-11 budget. **Motion carried.**

Correspondence:

(a) Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office re: Amendments to the Emergency Management Act

For information.

(b) Nova Scotians for Equalization Fairness re: Lack of Fairness and Tax Equalization

For information.

(c) Applications re: Municipal Appointment to the Board of Directors of the St. Peter's, Samsonville and Area Water Utility (applications close on February 18th, and additional applications received will be provided at the meeting):

(i) Reid Carter

Moved by Councillor Sampson, seconded by Councillor Johnson that the Committee recommend to Council to appoint Reid Carter to the Board of Directors of the St. Peter's, Samsonville and Area Water Utility. **Motion carried.**

(d) Mrs. Tracy Randall re: Grant Request:

- Telile, Municipal District \$20,000 Fund for Districts #1, #2, #3, #4 and #10 (\$2,000);
- DIMA, Municipal District \$20,000 Fund for Districts #1, #2, #3 and #4 (\$2,000);
- DIMA, Municipal District \$20,000 Fund for Districts #1, #2, #3 and #4 (\$6,892);
- St. Hyacinth's CWL, Municipal District Activity - \$5,000 Fund, District #3 (\$200);
- Royal Canadian Legion Branch 150, Municipal District \$20,000 Fund, District #4 (\$1,500);
- Basin and River Inhabitants Historical Society, Municipal District Activity - \$5,000 Fund, District #5 (\$4,389).

It was noted that last year the grant request from DIMA for the Eco Trail Maintenance was referred to the Recreation Department for consideration under their Trails Budget.

Moved by Councillor David, seconded by Councillor Martell that the grant request from DIMA in the amount of \$2,000 for maintenance to the Eco Trail be referred to the Director of Tourism, Culture and Recreation for consideration under the Trails Budget. **Motion carried.**

DIMA also submitted an application for assistance in the amount of \$6,892, however they did not approach individual councillors to secure a commitment before the application was submitted.

Moved by Councillor Martell, seconded by Councillor Boucher that the grant request submitted by DIMA in the amount of \$6,892 for the LeNoir Landing Come to Life Project be returned to them and that they be requested to secure the appropriate commitments from Councillors before re-submitting the request. **Motion carried.**

Moved by Councillor Martell, seconded by Councillor Beaton that the Committee recommend to Council that the following grant requests be approved:

- \$2,000 to Telile from the Municipal District \$20,000 Fund for Districts #1, #2, #3, #4 and #10 (breakdown of contributions provided).
- \$200 to St. Hyacinth's CWL from the Municipal District Activity - \$5,000 Fund, District #3.
- \$1,500 to the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 150 from the Municipal District \$20,000 Fund, District #4.

- \$4,389 to the Basin and River Inhabitants Historical Society from the Municipal District Activity - \$5,000 Fund, District #5.

Motion carried.

List of Cheques Issued: January 2010

Councillor David declared a conflict of interest with regards to the List of Cheques Issued for January 2010, indicating that his business is listed as receiving a cheque.

Moved by Councillor Boucher, **seconded by** Councillor Johnson that the List of Cheques for January 2010 in the amount of \$1,256,393.79 be approved as presented. **Motion carried.**

Items Added to the Agenda

To be addressed “In-Camera”.

Fifteen Minute Question Period

There were no questions.

Moved by Councillor Johnson, **seconded by** Councillor Boucher that the meeting proceed “In-Camera”. **Motion carried.**

Deputy Warden MacNeil re-convened the Regular Session at 10:03 p.m.

Moved by Councillor Marchand, **seconded by** Warden Boudreau that the Committee recommend to Council to accept the recommendation of the Chief Financial Officer and that funding for the Louisdale Water Main Project be funded as follows:

Water Utility and Capital Reserves	\$17,395
Gas Tax Fund	<u>\$32,605</u>
Total:	\$50,000

Motion carried.

It was the consensus of the Committee to accept the protocol to begin the process of hiring for the position of Communications and Economic Activities Coordinator, as recommended by the CAO.

Adjournment

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

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

