

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

APRIL 8, 2013

Location: Council Chambers, Municipal Office

Present: Warden S. Sampson, Councillor V. David,
Councillor R. Samson, Deputy Warden A. Martell,
Councillor S. McNamara, Councillor B. Marchand,
Councillor G. Boucher, Councillor S. MacNeil,
Councillor G. Johnson

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

Items Added to the Agenda

Warden Sampson indicated that the CAO wished to add the W.B. Kingston Memorial Clinic to be discussed "In-Camera".

Warden Sampson requested and received unanimous consent to add correspondence from Lian Sampson and a grant request from Holy Guardian Angels Parish.

Councillor David requested and received unanimous consent to add an item to the agenda regarding legal and accounting services.

Moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Boucher that the agenda be approved with the items added. Motion carried.

Review of Minutes: March 4, 2013

Moved by Councillor McNamara, seconded by Councillor David that the minutes of March 4, 2013 be adopted as presented. Motion carried.

Presentations:

- a) Port Hawkesbury Paper re: Sustainable Forest Management

Warden Sampson welcomed Ms. Andrea Coombs, Mr. Denny Boulet and Mr. Phonsie Farrell to the meeting.

Ms. Coombs, Mr. Boulet and Mr. Farrell made a PowerPoint presentation on Port Hawkesbury Paper regarding Sustainable Forest Management (Copy attached).

The following points were noted during the presentation:

- The wood quality has supported efficient mill operations and quality paper products;
- Mill operations have gone well and paper quality is excellent;
- The Port Hawkesbury Paper Mill continues an excellent environmental start-up after being shut down for over a year;
- Safety is not a “project” but a culture that the mill has integrated in their planning and operations;
- There has been zero lost time accidents during the FIF and ramp up;
- The 400 forestry people employed have been maintained;
- The Forestry Strategy has been supported with FEC and non-clear cut objectives;
- The company has objectives to harvest and sell forest products to other local mills;
- They have a 20 year Forest Utilization License Agreement (FULA), which is renewable every 10 years;
- There are 522,000 ha of Crown Land in 7 Eastern Counties;
- The forest has changed significantly in the last 400 years;
- The mill practices sustainable forest management through ecosystem-based and Acadian forest restoration;
- Annual tree planting is 3,000,000 with 150,000,000 planted to date;
- The mill is the only large forestry operation that is Forest Stewardship Council Certified in Atlantic Canada;
- Approximately 85% of the mill land was identified as High Conservation Value Forests;
- No herbicides have been used since 1997.

The following points were brought forth during discussion:

- Insect protection is handled by the Province since it is Crown Land;
- To date 255,000 metric tons are on order and the new mill has only been in operation for the past six months;
- The work environment at the new operation is different, in a positive way, and a great place to work;
- The new agreement makes planting more flexible because it is volume based.

Warden Sampson thanked Ms. Coombs, Mr. Boulet and Mr. Farrell for their presentation.

b) Josette Marchand re: Departmental Update

Warden Sampson indicated that the departmental update by Josette Marchand was postponed due to staff illness.

c) Rodger Cuzner MP re: Employment Insurance Changes

Warden Sampson welcomed Mr. Rodger Cuzner, Member of Parliament, to the meeting.

Mr. Cuzner briefed Council on the Changes to Employment Insurance.

Mr. Cuzner noted the following:

- Rural Canada is driven by seasonal industry;
- With recent increases the Employment Insurance (EI) rate has risen above 18%;
- The government changed approximately 80 pieces of legislation which makes it difficult to dig into individual issues;
- Questions asked regarding the changes to EI have gone unanswered;
- A study has not been completed on the impact of the EI changes;
- Some of the impacts of working while on a claim include:
 - The main change is the calculation of how much one can earn while on a claim;
 - The percentage permitted for the claimant to keep while working on a claim is now 50% with no minimum dollar amount set.
- These changes make it not worth working while on a claim, when taking into consideration expenses, unless it is for several days a week at a good wage;
- The changes implemented are certainly a disincentive to those seeking additional employment while on a claim;
- Some of the impacts on the development of claimant categories, specifically the frequent claimants, are:
 - Business owners are having difficulty keeping employees because employees are fearful of losing their benefits;
 - Short seasoned industries are also having issues calling employees off season to work, while on a claim, because the disincentive is there;
 - There is fear that the business owners are going to have a more difficult time recruiting and retaining employees to work.
- A study is currently being conducted to try and match available employment with those receiving EI benefits;
- Cape Breton does not have the highest EI rate; Montreal and Alberta actually have higher EI rates than Cape Breton;
- Currently there is no economic support;
- There have been many jobs removed from the Labour Relations Department of Service Canada which makes it difficult to obtain assistance for EI benefits;
- Prior to the changes in structure, 80% of EI cheques were sent out within 21 days; now it is within 28 days and this target is only met 30% of the time;
- These changes place hardship on citizens and families which has caused great concern for his team in Ottawa in addition to his local constituent office.

The following points were brought forth during discussion:

- Such changes have caused fishermen to go out to sea, in less than ideal conditions during the winter months, to be able to sustain their businesses and support their families;
- If it wasn't for seasonal employment, Canada wouldn't exist;
- Our country has benefited from a highly skilled, motivated, mobile work force in the Atlantic region;
- Not everyone is making the decision to go West for employment; therefore elected officials need to stand behind those who choose to stay local;
- As difficult as it is to obtain regular EI benefits, it is even more difficult to obtain sick benefits;
- The lack of Service Canada employees contributes to further delays;
- The more voices heard regarding the impact of these changes will result in a positive difference.

Warden Sampson thanked Mr. Cuzner for his presentation.

Moved by Deputy Warden Martell, seconded by Councillor McNamara that the Committee recommend to Council that a letter of support be sent to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development citing the concerns of Richmond Municipal Council regarding the impact that changes to Employment Insurance benefits has had on all claimants. Motion carried.

Presentation to Warden Sampson re: Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal

Mr. Rodger Cuzner MP presented Warden Steve Sampson with the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal.

Solicitors/Eastern District Planning Commission re: Proposed Demolition:

- Property of Isabelle Brousseau, 4 Samsons Cove Road, Sampsons Cove, Richmond County (PID #75011700 and AAN #04127358);
 - (i) Mr. John Bain re: Update on Property
 - (ii) Opportunity for Above Property Owner to Address the Committee

Warden Sampson welcomed Mr. Sean Donovan to the meeting.

Mr. Donovan presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Proposed Demolition of the property of Isabelle Brousseau, 4 Samsons Cove Road, Sampsons Cove, Richmond County (PID #75011700 and AAN #04127358) (Copy attached).

Mr. Donovan noted the following:

- The Proposed Demolition Order was posted on March 13, 2013;
- A registered letter was sent to the property owner in Halifax and was returned marked “Moved”. The same mailing address was displayed on file with the Tax Collector;
- The shed shows serious signs of wood rot in the exterior walls and also on the roof;
- The front door is open and one door is missing, allowing entrance for anyone who may attempt to enter;
- There is strong indication that the roof may collapse;
- The shed is in a ruinous and dilapidated condition;
- The shed is in such a state of non-repair and is no longer suitable for human habitation or business purposes;
- The shed is unsightly in relation to neighbouring properties as a result of the exterior finish of the building not being maintained;
- The Building Inspector’s report noted the following:
 - Strong visual indication that both exterior siding and framing members require replacement;
 - All doors are beyond repair and would require replacement;
 - The roof of this building is beyond repair. The entire roof system, both framing members and roof shingles, would have to be replaced;
 - Recommendation is that the building be removed from the property and disposed of in the appropriate manner.
- The Administrator’s recommendation is as follows:
 - The shed appears to be abandoned;
 - The shed meets the *Municipal Government Act* definition as “dangerous and unsightly”;
 - It is the recommendation of the Eastern District Planning Commission that an “Order to Remedy Condition” be issued and that the Order be a Demolition Order issued from Council to the owners. The Order should state to the owners that the building is to be demolished and all debris be removed and disposed of in the appropriate manner within thirty (30) days. If the property owner fails to comply, the Municipality will complete the same and recover the costs.

Moved by Councillor Samson, seconded by Councillor Boucher that the Committee recommend to Council that an “Order to Remedy Condition” be issued and that the Order be a Demolition Order issued from Council to Isabelle Brousseau of 4 Samsons Cove Road, Sampsons Cove, Richmond County (PID #75011700 and AAN #04127358) and that the Order indicate to the owners that the shed be demolished and all debris be removed and disposed of in the appropriate manner within thirty (30) days; and if the property owner fails to comply the Municipality will complete the same and recover the costs. Motion carried.

CAO re:

- a) Protected Lands Proposal – Provincial Government:
 - (i) Clarence Landry
 - (ii) Amanda Mombourquette

The CAO noted the following:

- A link was sent regarding the Protected Lands Proposal of 12%;
- This move by the Province comes with risks and downfalls that could affect Richmond County;
- Correspondence has been circulated by Mr. Clarence Landry and Mrs. Amanda Mombourquette indicating the impact on the ATV groups and their trails;
- With this change, part of Cape Auget would be designated Provincial Park Land;
- The Province needs to hear from Council opposing the protection of land which would have a negative impact on the Tourism Strategy of Richmond County;
- Such protection of land could impact non-profit groups as well;
- Both ATV clubs have requested letters of support from Council indicating that there would be no adverse effects on their groups as a result of land protection.

Moved by Deputy Warden Martell, seconded by Councillor Boucher that the Committee recommend to Council that staff work with both Richmond County ATV groups to determine the impact protected lands would have on their groups and further moved that a letter of support be sent to the Provincial Government indicating such impacts. Motion carried.

b) Landfill Hours

The CAO noted the following:

- The Waste Management Facility hours of operation are currently 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM which is a half hour more than all other staff;
- In order to assist with administrative/human resource requirements for the department, recommendation is that the Waste Management Facility hours be changed to 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM Monday through Saturday;
- The change in operating hours would become effective May 1, 2013.

The following points were brought forth during discussion:

- It was noted that stats regarding the usage of the Waste Management Facility will be provided to Council.

It was the consensus of the Committee that the operating hours of the Richmond County Waste Management Facility be changed to 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM, Monday to Saturday, effective May 1, 2013.

Review of Core Community Organization Funding Policy

The CAO noted the following:

- A letter from the Solicitor, in reference to the draft policy, was circulated for review;
- A copy of the draft Core Community Organization Funding Policy will be circulated and sent out via email to Council;
- A list of groups and monies awarded was circulated;
- There are changes required to be completed to the draft policy;
- Changes will be made and emailed for review, submission and approval to the next Regular Council Meeting.

Correspondence:

- (a) Nova Scotia Environment (Office of the Deputy Minister) re: “Code of Practice for Residential Wood Burning Appliances”;

The CAO noted the following:

- On October 11, 2012 the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) approved a new “Code of Practice for Residential Wood Burning Appliances;
- The code of practice document contains background information on the health and environmental impacts of wood smoke, the types of wood burning appliances and current standards, initiative and regulations;
- The document identifies management options and gives guidance in designing policies and programs to reduce wood smoke emissions.

For information purposes.

- (b) Eastern Counties Regional Library re: Eastern Counties Regional Library (ECRL) Annual Report for 2011-2012;

For information purposes.

- (c) Eastern Counties Regional Library re: Increase in Current Contributions;

The CAO noted the following:

- An increase of 10% to the current Municipal Library contribution has been requested to be spread over a two year period resulting in 5% each year;

- The increased funding would assist in dealing with the unrelenting cost pressures of the Eastern Counties Regional Library.

Moved by Councillor McNamara, seconded by Councillor Johnson that the request for a 10% increase in current contributions, spread over a two year period resulting in 5% per year, put forth the by Eastern Counties Regional Library be moved to budget deliberations. Motion carried.

(d) Port Hawkesbury Food Bank Society re: Thank You

For information purposes.

(e) Cathy's Place Cancer Resource Fund (Heather Brander) re: Thank You

For information purposes.

(f) Canadian Cancer Society (Daffodil Place Capital Campaign) re: Request for Support;

The CAO noted the following:

- The Canadian Cancer Society (Daffodil Place Capital Campaign) is entering the final critical phase of the campaign and is in need of support now more than ever;
- Funding would assist in allowing the Canadian Cancer Society to support the whole patient journey from diagnosis to survivorship.

It was the consensus of the Committee that the request submitted by the Canadian Cancer Society (Daffodil Place Capital Campaign) be moved to budget deliberations.

(g) Richmond Academy re: Graduation Bursary/Scholarship Fund Contribution

The CAO noted the following:

- Richmond Academy has requested funding for the 2012-13 Graduation Bursary/Scholarship program for the upcoming graduation ceremonies;
- Details for the announcement of information to be made during graduation ceremonies must be submitted by May 2013 or earlier to allow the Award Committee to include in the event.

It was the consensus of the Committee that the funding request submitted by Richmond Academy regarding Graduation Bursary/Scholarship Fund Contribution be moved to budget deliberations.

(h) Shannon Mury re: Grant Requests

- Bonnie Brae Seniors Club, Municipal District Infrastructure Fund, District #8 (\$2205.93);
- Acadiaville Cemetery Society, Municipal District Infrastructure Fund, District #4 (\$10,000);

The CAO noted that the grant request submitted by Warden Sampson as an item added would be addressed during the motion.

Moved by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Deputy Warden Martell that the Committee recommend to Council to approve the following grants:

- \$2,205.93, Bonnie Brae Seniors Club, Municipal District Infrastructure Fund, District #8;
- \$10,000, Acadiaville Cemetery Society, Municipal District Infrastructure Fund, District #4;
- \$2,000, Holy Guardian Angel Parish, Municipal District Activity Fund, District #9.

Motion carried.

Approval of Cheques Issued: February 2013

Councillor David declared a conflict of interest due to cheques being written to his business and removed himself from discussions.

Moved by Councillor MacNeil, seconded by Councillor Boucher that cheques issued for the month of February 2013 in the amount of \$11,283.27 be accepted as presented. Motion carried.

Review of Cheques Issued: March 2013

For information purposes.

Items Added to the Agenda

1. CAO re: W.B. Kingston Memorial Clinic (to be discussed “In-Camera”)

This item will be discussed “In-Camera”.

2. Warden Sampson re:

(i) Correspondence from Lian Sampson re: Support for West Richmond Education Centre (attached)

Warden Sampson noted that correspondence had been received from Lian Sampson indicating that the Minister of Education has made an announcement regarding the school review process and requested that School Boards across the province suspend the school review process for this year and delay any closures of schools identified last year.

West Richmond Education Centre (WREC) was identified in 2010-11 and a vote to close WREC took place in 2012. The communities with intended school closures want the opportunity to implement the NS Small School Initiative's proposed Community Hub model, which the Minister has spoken fondly of.

Ms. Sampson is requesting Council's support in using WREC as a hub model school.

It was noted that this was a reasonable request.

Moved by Deputy Warden Martell, seconded by Councillor Boucher that the Committee recommend to Council that a letter of support be sent to the Minister of Education, with a carbon copy sent to the Strait Regional School Board indicating Council's support of the West Richmond Education Centre becoming a Community Hub as per the NS Small School Initiative. Motion carried.

(ii) Grant Request from Holy Guardian Angels Parish, Municipal District Activity Fund, District #9 (\$2,000)

Warden Sampson indicated that this item was previously dealt with.

3. Councillor David re: Tendering Municipal Legal and Accounting Services

Councillor David indicated that legal and accounting services provided to the County are typically tendered according to past practice. The Municipal Legal and Accounting services have not been tendered for quite some time.

The following points were brought forth during discussion:

- The auditor is appointed each year by the auditing committee and recommended to Council for approval;
- With the Provincial procurement process being rolled out, such items will be addressed;
- The legal services required by the Municipality entail a tremendous amount of knowledge and background to ensure proper legal guidance is provided and a new firm being awarded a tender could present a learning curve that the Municipality would have to address;

- Although the tendering process is required for most Municipal outsourced services, it does not always apply to every circumstance;
- Tendering these services has no bearing on the level of service provided by the current businesses.

Moved by Councillor David, seconded by Councillor Marchand that the Committee recommend to Council that Municipal Legal and Accounting Services be tendered for a four year period. (Aye: 1 Councillor David, Nay: 7). Motion defeated.

Fifteen Minute Question Period

Mr. Lorenzo Boudrot addressed the Committee regarding an item on the agenda.

In-Camera

Moved by Councillor Johnson that the meeting proceed to “In-Camera” session at 9:15 pm. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor David that the meeting reconvene to regular session at 9:52 pm. Motion carried.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Warden Sampson adjourned the meeting 9:52 p.m.

MINUTES RECORDED BY:

MUNICIPAL CLERK:

CHAIRPERSON

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER