

RICHMOND COUNTY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

MAY 9, 2005

Location: Council Chambers, Municipal Office

Deputy Warden Sampson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., and the meeting observed the singing of O'Canada.

The CAO took roll call of Councillors.

Items Added to the Agenda

Deputy Warden Sampson indicated that three items had been added to the agenda, being Councillor McNamara (Drive for Literacy Golf Tournament); Councillor MacPhee (petitions and letters re: tourism levy) and CAO (information re: UARB Hearing).

Moved by Councillor MacPhee, seconded by Councillor J. Boudreau that the agenda be approved, with the items added. Motion carried.

Review of Minutes: (a) April 11, 2005 (Regular Meeting)
(b) April 11, 2005 (Public Hearing)

Moved by Councillor McNamara, seconded by Councillor Martell that the minutes of April 11, 2005 (Regular Council Meeting) and April 11, 2005 (Public Hearing) be adopted as presented. Motion carried.

Presentations and/or Delegations:

(a) Destination Cape Breton Association (Sandra MacDonald) re: Marketing Levy Initiative

Deputy Warden Sampson welcomed the Executive Director of Destination Cape Breton, Sandy MacDonald, and her staff.

Ms. MacDonald provided background information on the activities of Destination Cape Breton, and the history of the tourism levy in Nova Scotia (currently Halifax Regional Municipality). Ms. MacDonald indicated that the Association was seeking the approval

of the five municipal units in Cape Breton for provincial legislation to authorize a tourism tax levy of a maximum of 2%. The funds would be matched by Enterprise Cape Breton and the Provincial Tourism Department, and utilized for a marketing campaign to replace the marketing that ceased approximately five years ago (there has been an 8% decline in tourism in that time on Cape Breton, although the Mainland of Nova Scotia has seen an increase in tourism).

During a question and answer session, Ms. MacDonald reported that five operators in Richmond County were in favor of the tax levy, and the number of rooms reported reflected their facilities. She indicated that the concept of one vote per room versus one vote per operator had originated with the study carried out for Enterprise Cape Breton. In Richmond County, there are only 225 hotel rooms, as compared to a total of 4,000 for the Island.

Several Councillors indicated that they had received extensive objections to the manner in which the voting had been carried out (one vote per hotel room as opposed to one vote per property owner). Also, many small operators are objecting to having to collect the tax.

In response to an inquiry, Ms. MacDonald indicated that Destination Cape Breton has previously approached CBRM, who have unanimously given their endorsement; and the Town of Port Hawkesbury, which has also endorsed the proposal but with one nay vote.

Moved by Councillor J. Boudreau, seconded by Councillor Rankin that the presentation from Destination Cape Breton be tabled and referred to staff for background information and a report to Committee of the Whole. Motion carried.

Deputy Warden Sampson thanked Ms. MacDonald and her staff for their presentation.

(b) Richmond County Early Childhood Education Association re: Grant Request

Deputy Warden Sampson welcomed Lee Ann Marchand to the meeting.

Ms. Marchand summarized the financial position of the Association, indicating that they provide child care and day care services to approximately 25 to 35 children per site (two sites). Ms. Marchand indicated that provincial and federal restraints have resulted in her Association requesting a grant in the amount of \$15,000 from Richmond Council, for each of the next three years.

A question and answer period followed.

In response to an inquiry, Ms. Marchand acknowledged that it appeared substantial additional federal funding was coming to Nova Scotia. She indicated she was on a Provincial Committee, and it appeared that approximately 22 million additional federal

dollars would be provided in the first year of an agreement, which would grow to \$38 million per year by Year 5.

Ms. Marchand also responded that the Child Care Association had experienced a decline in numbers, which she estimated at 10 to 15%.

Ms. Marchand also indicated that she felt the support previously received from Richmond Municipal Council was unique from a municipal government for child/daycare in Nova Scotia, and she was not aware of municipal financial support in any other municipal unit.

Several Councillors noted the substantial contributions being provided by the Early Childhood Education Association to residents of Richmond County, and the many and varied endeavors that have resulted from other organizations that are “head quartered” in the Association’s building in D’Escousse.

The CAO noted the reference by Ms. Marchand to activities in her building from the Richmond County Capsite Association, and also the Richmond County Literacy Association; and he noted the significant downloading which is occurring from projects initiated by senior levels of government, with the three mentioned Associations requesting a total of \$60,000 in grants from Richmond County for the current year.

Moved by Councillor MacPhee, seconded by Councillor McNamara that the request for a grant from the Early Childhood Education Association be referred to budget deliberations. Motion carried.

Deputy Warden Sampson thanked Ms. Marchand for her presentation.

Notice of Motion – Deputy Warden Sampson: to adopt a policy on “Tax Reduction Due to Fire” as a policy of the Municipality, attached as Appendix “A”

Deputy Warden Sampson vacated chairmanship of the meeting, and requested that Warden Cotton chair the meeting during this motion.

Moved by Deputy Warden Sampson, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that Richmond Municipal Council give formal approval and adopt the policy on “Tax Reduction Due to Fire” as a policy of the Municipality, in the form attached as Appendix “A”. Motion carried.

Deputy Warden Sampson resumed chairmanship of the meeting.

Second Reading Approval: to amend By-Law #13, Dog By-Law, to incorporate the ability to issue summary offence tickets, attached as Appendix “B”

Moved by Warden Cotton, seconded by Councillor J. Boudreau that Richmond Municipal Council give Second Reading approval to amend By-Law #13, Dog By-Law

to incorporate the amendments and amended By-Law as attached as Appendix “B”.
Motion carried.

Committee Reports

(a) Committee of the Whole

Councillor Martell gave the report of the Committee of the Whole (copy attached).

Moved by Councillor Martell, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that the solid waste management facility upgrades (copy attached) be identified as the top priority capital project for the current fiscal year; establish a capital budget of \$1,087,000, for upgrades to the solid waste facility, as outlined by the Director; and that staff be required to obtain authority for the paving component, that will be conditional on the total budget cost being adhered to. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Martell, seconded by Councillor Rankin that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that the plan for a solid waste education campaign, as submitted by the Director (copy attached), be accepted. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Martell, seconded by Councillor Johnson that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that staff attempt to identify resources that may be available internally, to move forward with some of the issues identified by Mr. Bowen, and that staff be requested to report on this to Council or Committee of the Whole. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Martell, seconded by Councillor McNamara that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and approve the revised intermunicipal services agreement in principle, and request that the Rural Cape Breton District Planning Commission provide us with a copy of the proper document, after it has received legal review. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Martell, seconded by Warden Cotton that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that the Municipality accept the settlement offer of \$110,000 proposed by the insurer, regarding the L’Ardoise school insurance claim. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Martell, seconded by Councillor McNamara that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that a letter be written to the Hon. Ronald Russell, Minister of Transportation and Public Works expressing Council’s support for the petition from the residents of West Bay for the upgrading, improvements and repaving in the Village of West Bay. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Martell, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that Council accept the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole and that the Municipality enter into a lease agreement with the Arichat Community Development Committee, with similar conditions and requirements placed in the original lease arrangement with the Island Association for Community Awareness; and further moved that the new description to the property be incorporated into the lease agreement. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Martell, seconded by Councillor J. Boudreau that Richmond Municipal Council accept the report of the Committee of the Whole. Motion carried.

(b) Planning Advisory Committee

Councillor McNamara presented the monthly report of the Planning Advisory Committee (copy attached).

Moved by Councillor McNamara, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that Council accept the recommendation of the Planning Advisory Committee and that the St. Peter's Plan be the first plan to be reviewed; with the Sporting Mountain Plan being the second plan to be reviewed and the Isle Madame Plan being the third plan to be reviewed. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor McNamara, seconded by Councillor Martell that the monthly report of the Planning Advisory Committee be adopted. Motion carried.

Correspondence:

(a) Hon. Ernest Fage re: Municipal Emergency Preparedness Evaluation

The CAO noted the excellent work carried out by Cecil Frost, Terrence Terrio and Stewart MacDonald; who were able to renew and amend the Emergency Measures Response Plan, and obtain an excellent evaluation, as compared to the evaluation received two years ago.

(b) Hon. Ronald Russell re: Highway Signage for Newfoundland Ferry

Moved by Councillor Rankin, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that WHEREAS the Minister of Transportation and Public Works has indicated that the rationale for the signage to the Newfoundland Ferry via 105 is based on a Department practice to direct traffic on the shortest route to a destination;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Richmond Municipal Council direct correspondence to the Hon. Ronald Russell, requesting that the signs in the vicinity of the Canso Causeway that direct tourists to Sydney on Route 105 be removed, because Highway 104 and 4 are the most direct route to Sydney. Motion carried.

(c) Government of Canada re: 2005 Federal Budget

For Information Purposes.

- (d) Public Works & Government Services Canada re: Proposed Sale of the Arichat Government of Canada Building (2)

For Information Purposes.

- (e) Municipality of the District of Yarmouth re: Victoria Order of Nurses

For information purposes.

- (f) Mr. Michel Samson, MLA re: Low Income Housing, District #5

Moved by Councillor McNamara, seconded by Councillor Martell that WHEREAS Public Housing is a provincial responsibility;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the correspondence from the MLA be referred to the Housing Division of the Provincial Department of Community Services and also to the Cape Breton Regional Housing Authority which is responsible for public housing in Richmond County, with a request for a definition of affordable housing and also with a request for information on the amount of federal and provincial funding available for public housing. Motion carried.

- (g) Town of Port Hawkesbury re: Black Headed Budworm

- (h) Rockdale Residents re: Road Name Change

Moved by Councillor MacPhee, seconded by Councillor Johnson that the petition from the residents of L'Ardoise (Riley's Road) be referred for a road name change to the District Planning Commission and the Department of Transportation and Public Works. Motion carried.

- (i) Richmond Arena Association re: Thank You

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

Moved by Councillor McNamara, seconded by Warden Cotton that the correspondence from the West Bay Road & District Volunteer Fire Department be referred and recommended to budget and tax rate deliberations. Motion carried.

- (k) St. Peter's United Church re: Request for Tax Exemption

Moved by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that this request for tax exemption from the St. Peter's United Church be referred to budget deliberations. Motion carried.

Items Added to the Agenda

(1) Councillor McNamara re: Drive Fore Literacy Golf Tournament

Moved by Councillor McNamara, seconded by Councillor Martell that Richmond Municipal Council support the “Drive Fore Literacy Golf Tournament” by entering a team, providing a “Hole in One” insurance, and hole sponsorship, similar to prior years. Motion carried.

(2) Councillor MacPhee re: Petitions and Letters re: Destination Tourism Cape Breton Levy

Councillor MacPhee provided letters from several owners from tourism properties in Richmond County, and also a petition signed by 17 businesses, and requested that the CAO provide this information to staff, to be included in their report for Committee of the Whole.

(3) CAO re: Nova Scotia Utility & Review Board/Public Hearing Notice

The CAO noted the notice from the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board, of a public hearing, regarding a liquor license in District #4, which was presented for information purposes.

Fifteen Minute Question Period

Mrs. Rosemary Burns of Dundee, expressed objections to the tourism tax room levy, and the manner that the voting was held. She noted questions regarding operators who are not collecting HST, difficulty in obtaining information on the Richmond County members of Destination Tourism Cape Breton, and suggested that facilities with less than 25 rooms be exempted.

Mrs. Sharon Chilvers of River Bourgeois, also objected to the tourism tax room levy proposal from Destination Tourism Cape Breton, noting that she had been a member of that organization, and did not receive many benefits.

Moved by Councillor McNamara, seconded by Councillor MacPhee that the meeting adjourn. Motion carried.

There being no further business, Deputy Warden Sampson adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.