

Minutes of a Town of Pictou Committee of Council meeting convened at the CN Station – Council Chambers on the above date. Mayor James Ryan presiding.

Present: Deputy Mayor Robert Fry; Councillors Terry Dunbrack, Krista Fulton and Nadine LeBlanc

Also Present: Kyle Slaunwhite, CAO
Shayne Pottie, RCMP
Michelle Young, Community Development
Iain MacIsaac, Public Works
Sally O'Neill, Recreation
David Nicholson, Finance
Nicole MacDonald, Deputy Clerk/Minute Recorder

Regrets: Wayne Robinson, Fire Department

1. Public Session – Audit Committee (5:30 pm)

2. Public Session – Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:40 pm.

It was acknowledged that Town Council was meeting in the unceded territory of Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded land of the Mi'kmaq people.

3. Changes/Approval of Agenda

Motion: To approve the agenda with one addition:
10d. YMCA Correspondence
Moved, Seconded and Carried

COC-09-08-26-001

4. Proclamations and Acknowledgement

a. National Fire Fighters Memorial Day

On behalf of the Town, the Chair recognized September 13 as National Fire Fighters Memorial Day. The Chair thanked all fire personnel, but especially the members of the Pictou Fire Department for their contribution to keeping our community safe.

5. Presentations

6. Departmental Reports

a. Fire Department

- Report was included in Council package

b. RCMP

- Report was included in Council package

- Can an e-bike and e-scooter blitz be thought about?
- Can age restrictions realistically be enforced when the Motor Vehicle Act is updated in the fall?

c. Community Development

- Report was included in Council package
- Question about overnight parking

d. Public Works

- Report was included in Council package
- Is new recreation building insulated?
- Does the splash pad run continuously?
- Why were some boardwalk boards taken up last week?
- Council acknowledged the good work completed on lawn mowing and commended staff for stopping to pick up garbage rather than mowing over it
- Will there be traffic disruption when the retaining wall work is being completed?
- Question about retaining wall project and Jitney Trail access?
- Will be graveling a section next to the deCoste parking lot that will add at least 30 overflow spots
- Question about Grange Street paving
- Why is there a pylon on Ross/Welsford Street?
- What is the Market Wharf current completion percentage?

e. Parks & Recreation

- Report was included in Council package
- Good job on the town-wide yard sale
- Thriving Forests Program has planted 75,000 trees in the fitness trails
- Can we have a go Clean Get Green fall edition?
- Comment on aging play structures at parks
- Comment on volunteer ball program success

f. Variance

- Report was included in Council package
- The Town received notice in July that its annual provincial RCMP charge will be reduced by 25%, resulting in an estimated savings of approximately \$30,000; the Province has requested that the savings be directed toward community safety initiatives
- The Town's Pictou County Solid Waste costs are projected to be approximately \$60,000 under budget due to the Circular Materials program and the Extended Producer Responsibility initiative

7. Appointment Committees

a. Pictou Business – Councillor Fulton

- 9 submissions to building façade program

- b. Ship Hector – Deputy Mayor Fry
 - Exploring diesel motors on boat
 - September 26 – event to install masks on ship

8. Recommendations

- a. Accessibility Committee Member – Appointment

Motion: For Council at their next Regular Meeting to appoint Craig Aucoin to the Accessibility Committee.

Moved, Seconded and Carried

COC-09-08-26-002

9. Discussions

- a. Marina Re-Naming and Branding

The Community Development Officer presented a concept for renaming and branding the marina, including the creation of a “Harbour District.” Council’s feedback will be brought back to the designers and included the following:

- support for the district concept
- concern that the proposed name “Jitney Marina” does not fully represent the uniqueness of the community, with Council requesting additional naming options; the potential for naming rights was also discussed
- a desire for the branding to better reflect Pictou’s fishing and boatbuilding history, as well as community assets

It was agreed that public input on the marina renaming will also be sought through a Facebook post.

- b. Naming of Connector Trail and Street in front of Crown Prosecutor’s Office

Council discussed public engagement opportunities for naming the Connector Trail and the street in front of the Crown Prosecutor’s Office.

Council liked the idea of asking students to submit name ideas for the Connector Trail. For the street, Council would like to seek suggestions from the general public, including the rationale for proposed names.

- c. Caladh Avenue Bollards and Lights

The CAO provided an update on a request from the Ship Hector Foundation to take possession of the bollards and lights that were removed from Caladh Avenue during recent construction. The Foundation has requested all 12 lights and 12 bollards. They propose installing nine lights on their property and retaining three as spare units. Of the bollards, five would be installed on the Foundation's property, with the remaining seven installed on Town property.

Questions/Comments:

- Can all 12 lights be given away per excess property policy? Each light is worth roughly \$1000; if the value is more than \$10,000, there must be a public process

- Concern expressed that if all lights were provided to a single organization, none would remain available for other community groups; it was noted that the Fisheries Museum has several damaged lights and may be interested in acquiring replacement units

Council consensus was to provide the eight lights and five bollards to the Ship Hector Foundation. They must remain on the Foundation's property and are not to be installed on Town property, as the Town has adopted a new style of lighting and wishes to maintain consistency on their properties.

A Council representative will contact the Fisheries Museum to see if they are interested in receiving the remaining four lights.

d. Minimum Standards By-Law

Council discussed the possibility of creating a Minimum Standards By-Law. It was suggested that stricter standards be developed for commercial properties to help maintain the appearance of businesses throughout the Town. A separate set of standards for residential properties was also discussed, with a more flexible, case-by-case approach. Staff will look for examples of similar bylaws from other municipalities for Council's review.

e. Minimum Tax Rate/Tiered Tax Rate

The CAO introduced the concept of a minimum tax and a tiered tax system to obtain Council's feedback. It was noted that a minimum tax could help ensure all property owners contribute a baseline amount toward municipal infrastructure and services, regardless of property assessment value. Other potential benefits discussed included discouraging vacant properties and land banking, and helping address disparities created by assessment caps. It was also noted that a minimum tax could place a greater burden on properties with lower assessments.

Council directed staff to investigate minimum tax practices used by other municipalities for both residential and commercial properties and to provide recommendations for Council's consideration. Council was not supportive of implementing a tiered tax system.

10. Correspondence

a. Weeks Crushers – Treaty Day

The Weeks Crushers Jr. A Hockey Club is hosting a Treaty Day game being held in partnership with Pictou Landing First Nation on October 1. The event is intended to celebrate Mi'kmaq culture, community, and reconciliation.

The club is seeking financial support from surrounding municipalities to help cover the event's \$5,000 budget. The funding request includes costs associated with Indigenous-designed jerseys, entertainment, and complimentary tickets. Following the game, the jerseys will be auctioned, with proceeds being donated to a charity selected by the Pictou Landing First Nation community.

Questions:

- Is it just the money auctioned from the shirts that is going to be donated?
- What is the \$5,000 covering?

- Are the Crushers donating or contributing anything?
- Are they making money off this event?

Staff will follow up with organizers to get further information and will share with Council once it is received.

b. New Commons Development (Hospital Hill)

Council reviewed a funding request from New Commons Development related to additional fire protection measures required because of the building's design and fire flow requirements. The additional measures are estimated to cost approximately \$556,000, and the developer has requested a \$25,000 contribution from the Town.

Council noted that the Town has already supported the project by waiving permit fees and fast-tracking the installation of a new sidewalk along Beeches Road to improve connectivity to the downtown core. Council also noted that the current year's budget has already been approved and does not include funding for this request.

Council consensus was that the Town would not provide the requested \$25,000 contribution.

c. Roseview Estates

The CAO provided an update on the development agreement with Roseview Estates. Under the agreement, the developer was eligible to receive a \$10,000 reimbursement for each occupancy permit issued, provided that a looped waterline was installed and the street was completed to municipal standards. The waterline has been completed; however, upgrades are still required to bring the street into compliance with the Subdivision Bylaw.

Although the agreement expired two years ago, the three existing dwellings were completed prior to its expiration. The property owner has requested clarification on the remaining work required and the timeline for reimbursement.

Council directed the CAO to respond to the property owner outlining the outstanding requirements and confirming that the Town will honour the \$10,000 reimbursement for each of the three existing dwellings, for a total of \$30,000, once the street is upgraded to meet the requirements of the Subdivision Bylaw.

d. YMCA Correspondence

Another request has been received from the YMCA regarding a request for further reduction in property taxes. Council previously passed a policy to reduce their taxes by \$2000, similar to the tax relief provided by the Town of New Glasgow for their New Glasgow location. When they conducted a budget forecast, they did not take the change in assessment into account. This is causing a deficit.

Council was in agreement that they have no desire to re-visit the policy.

11. Public Comments/Questions

12. Adjournment

There being no further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:35 pm.

Approved

James J. Ryan
Mayor

Kyle Slaunwhite
CAO