

Minutes of a Town of Pictou Committee of Council meeting convened 6:30 pm in Council Chambers on the above date. Mayor Joseph Hawes presiding.

PRESENT: Deputy Mayor Cam Beaton, Councillors Lynn Vigneault, Bob Naylor and Alta Munroe

ALSO PRESENT: Scott Conrod – CAO
Kyle Slaunwhite – Chief Operator
Paul Janes – Fire Chief
Eldon MacDonald – Town Accountant
Michelle Young – Recreation Coordinator
Jo-Anne McNamara – Meeting Recorder

1. **PRIVATE SESSION (6:00 pm)**

Council convened in private session to discuss a contract matter.

2. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Hawes called the public meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

3. **RECONVENE - APPROVAL OF PUBLIC AGENDA**

MOVED: B. Naylor
SECONDED: A. Munroe

COC-03-03-14-1237

MOTION: To approve the agenda as circulated with one addition:
6 (g) Municipal Alcohol Project
MOTION CARRIED

4. **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

a. **R.C.M.P. Pictou Detachment**

The monthly report was included in the Council package. There were no questions.

b. **CAO Report**

The CAO gave a verbal report highlighting the following:

- **Financial**
 - work continues on Internal Control policies being developed in concert with the Pictou County Shared Services Authority. The final draft should be completed by March 7th.
 - outstanding tax arrears letters have been issued and the CAO has met with several residents
 - year-end accounting will commence shortly
- **Operation**
 - issued a 7 day notice today with respect to an unsightly property on Coleraine Street

- The former Planning Office of the Pictou Shared Services Authority in Stellarton has been sold.

- By-laws

-drafts of Regional Planning Documents are nearing completion.

- Capital Projects

-design Request for Proposals (RFPs) were issued on the Provincial procurement site. The Town is fielding questions from potential bidders re: roundabout and the West River / Haliburton Road intersection design project. March 13th is the deadline for submissions.
-work continues on project management – water meters

c. Fire Department

The monthly report for the Fire Department was included in the Council package. It was noted that the Department is planning a St. Patrick's Day Dance on March 15. The Department is planning a Lobster Supper on March 22nd and has presold a number of tickets to date. It was also noted that the heating bill is very high for the station; membership is investigating the installation of heat pumps.

d. Public Works

The Public Works monthly report was reviewed along with a summary from Blake MacDonald on the remaining water meter installations.

e. Recreation & Parks

Michelle Young, Recreation Coordinator, highlighted a number of items in her report:

- Pool usage statistics
- Free swims – turnout has been great
- March Break programs – Zero to Hero Course to cover 8 intense days of training for 16 years and over
- Swim lessons (after March Break there will be students from Grade 3 to Junior High age groups)
- Cruise Development – continue to work on cruise development: developed promotional package for the Port of Pictou for use at the Cruise Miami tradeshow taking place the 2nd week of March
- Grant approval – received grant approval through Dept of Health and Wellness for a project to make the pool more accessible (\$4,562), and an Age Friendly Grant in the amount of \$5,000 for updating of Veterans Drive and Pine Street playgrounds
- Planning for upcoming summer programs – Mobile Sailing School and Learn to Kayak Programs
- Winter Carnival events took place February 14-16th, with increased attendance this year
- Attended a Turf and Field Course offered through the Recreation Facilities Association of Nova Scotia
- Recreation and Parks Survey has been distributed by newsletter, mail, email, web and facebook. Will gather data until March 31st

f. Variance Report – The Town Accountant informed Council that at present he is projecting a \$102,000 deficit. Some of the over expenditure included roads \$36,000, salaries \$9,000, and

an unbudgeted \$25,000 loss on a tax sale. On a more positive note the snow clearing budget is just slightly over budget.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

a. Update on ongoing Water Projects

Water Pilot (filtration) Projects are ongoing and about to start. The intent of these pilots is to test filtration systems for improving the quality of drinking water. Testing was just finished on a green sand system, which has been shown to remove up to 90% of manganese from the water supply. A high level of manganese is believed to be directly related to water discolouration. In conjunction with Dalhousie University, the Town is about to start a new pilot project to test the effectiveness of biological filtration. The system will test three different mediums. This type of filtration is a newer technology relative to other systems in operation within Nova Scotia. If successful it could mean less chemical additions and backwashing of filters. The pilot system will be run in concert with Dalhousie University and engineers from CBCL Ltd and is expected to last eight months to a year.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Federal Funding 144 CEF

Information point – the Flight had a 25% Federal Budget cut last year and there may be further cuts coming. Representatives of the Community Advisory Board will be attending the next meeting of the PCSSA to ask the municipal units of Pictou County to urge the federal government not to proceed with further budget reductions.

b. Ward II Community Meeting

Deputy Mayor Beaton and Councillor Munroe had a Ward II Community Meeting at the Oddfellows on February 26th. The purpose was to continue a line of communications with residents. The meeting was considered to very productive.

c. Infrastructure Funding:

Building Canada Fund – Gas Tax

A copy of an important announcement from UNSM was included in Council's package. Under the new Building Canada Fund program, the federal government will contribute 1/3 of the cost towards municipal infrastructure. It does appear municipal units will not be able to use gas tax funds in addition to the 1/3 federal funds, except for public transit projects which the federal government will provide up to 50% funding.

UNSM Gas Tax Funding Formula

The UNSM Board was asked to consider changes in the formula allocating gas tax funds to the municipalities. The UNSM has decided not to ask the Province for a change.

Committee agreed for the CAO and Mayor to work on both items and pass along the Town's thoughts and ideas on the changes.

d. Partial Tax Exemption –Destruction by Fire Policy: 69 Elm St.

MOVED: C. Beaton
SECONDED: L. Vigneault

COC-03-03-14-1238

MOTION: To recommend that Town Council at their next regular meeting approve a partial tax exemption for 69 Elm Street due to a house fire in December.
MOTION CARRIED.

e. First Impressions Grant/Business Improvement District Tax

Discussion was held in regards to a recommendation report related to a Provincial First Impressions Grant. The grant program related to landscaping and signage for the entrance of the business improvement district (BID). It was recommended to use reserved BID tax and the unspent portion of the 2013-14 BID levy as the local portion of project funding. Only project expenses incurred before March 31, 2014 would be eligible for cost sharing with the Province.

In consultation with the Chairman of the Pictou Business and Marketing Society, the Committee concurred to recommend that Council not use BID funds towards the First Impressions program. The Committee was aware that this would mean Provincial funding committed to the project would go unused.

f. Recommendations from Private Session – Noneg. Municipal Alcohol Project

Municipal and First Nation leaders, health professionals, and community organizers have spent the past several months learning about the culture of alcohol in Pictou County. Councillor Munroe tabled a copy of a report prepared by this group.

7. CORRESPONDENCEa. Pictou County Volunteer Search and Rescue

A letter was received from Pictou County Volunteer Search and Rescue requesting financial assistance. A grant application will be mailed to the group and financial statements will also be requested. The request was tabled for budget deliberations.

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS - none**9. ADJOURNMENT**

MOVED: L. Vigneault
SECONDED: B. Naylor

COC-03-03-14-1239

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting.
MOTION CARRIED

APPROVED

Joseph F. Hawes
Mayor

Scott W. Conrod
CAO