

Minutes of a Town of Pictou Committee of Council meeting convened 6:30 pm at the CN Station – Council Chambers on the above date. Mayor James Ryan presiding.

PRESENT: Deputy Mayor Nadine LeBlanc; Councillors Dan Currie, Melinda MacKenzie and Shawn McNamara

ALSO PRESENT: Nicole MacDonald, Acting CAO
Jonathan Daye, Accountant
Kyle Slaunwhite, Public Works
Paul Janes, Fire Chief
Heather Beaton, CAO Assistant
Michelle Young, Recreation Manager/Minute Recorder

ABSENT WITH REGRETS: Addie MacCallum, RCMP

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ryan called the meeting to order.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: To approve the agenda with one addition:
9c. Wastewater Pumping and Treatment Emergency Costs

CARRIED *COC-03-01-21-2528*

3. PRESENTATIONS

Wes Surett, Ralph Heighton, Laurie MacDonald and Darlene MacDonald made a presentation on behalf of the Hector Quay Society who provided an overview of the Ship Restoration and Interpretive Renewal Project. Highlights included:

- Charting a new course for the 250th Anniversary on September 15, 2023; business and renewal plan, a road map to sustainability
- Project cost estimates and fundraising campaign
- Partnership with First Nations
- Requesting municipal support of \$100,000 over three years

- Question on whether the vessel will ever sail and if estimate costs included the engine – an electric engine is included in the project
- Comment on the importance of steps to build relationships with First Nations in the project
- Council commended the group and thanked them for their work on the project

4. PROCLAMATIONS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

5. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

a. Fire Department

A written report was circulated in the agenda packages.

- Question on age of equipment; electrical work quotes; mutual aid practices; response when aid is needed when EHS is out of Town

b. **RCMP**

A written report was circulated with agenda packages. Staff Sergeant MacCallum was unable to attend.

- Question on speeding and mobile speed signs

c. **Administration**

A written report was circulated with agenda packages.

- Question on services related to building inspections, planning and dangerous and unsightly properties provide by Town of New Glasgow
- Question on Active Pictou County Rainbow Community activities

d. **Public Works**

A written report was circulated with agenda packages.

- Initial communication has taken place with business owners in the downtown on the Water Street Project
- Currently there are four Standing Offers being updated and four open tenders
- Questions on personnel matter, geotech work at the marina, cross walk signs, timing on capital paving project and wells
- Comments on informing businesses about Water Street project and appreciation of cold patching work

e. **Recreation and Parks**

A written report was circulated with agenda packages.

- Pool operations are at a positive level; rentals are up; courses have increased this year; working on March Break activities
- Cruise – upcoming visits for 2022/23/24; strategic planning
- Winter Carnival – great community feedback this year; will build on successes next year
- Comment on new trail signage

f. **Variance**

A written report was circulated with agenda packages. Town Accountant Daye reported there is a \$321,800 Year-to-date surplus and a \$394,800 forecasted Year-end surplus.

- Water bills have been issued
- Cost savings of \$4,500 on updates to payroll and printer contracts
- Questions on reserves and financial indicators

Council also had some discussion around the surplus funds for fiscal year 2020-21. It was suggested that \$293,000 be set aside for upcoming projects and planned commitments, with the remainder to be placed into general reserves.

6. APPOINTMENT COMMITTEES

a. **Northumberland Fisheries Museum – DM LeBlanc**

- Opening date to be determined

- b. Winnifred Grant Opportunity Shop – DM LeBlanc
 - Open by appointment only
- c. Pictou Antigonish Regional Library (PARL) – D Currie
 - Fundraising planning
- d. Regional Enterprise Network (REN) Liaison Oversight Committee (LOC) – D Currie
 - Reviewed 2020 business plan; financial targets achieved
- e. Pictou Lobster Carnival – S McNamara
 - Still moving forward with planning this year’s event
 - Very successful fundraiser on February 22
- f. McCulloch House Museum and Genealogy Centre
 - Service available for those who need to research or verify land registration at a nominal fee
- g. deCoste Entertainment Centre – M MacKenzie
 - First show coming up – Pop Classics
 - Sound of Music will take place at the Pictou County Wellness Centre
 - Fundraising with the Library Project; letter writing campaign underway
 - Re-vamping the website

7. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

a. Safe Restart Funding

This funding can only be used for certain criteria related to Covid. Any remaining funds will be placed in a reserve for the upcoming year and will be used to pay for associated costs.

b. Marina Operations

A briefing note on marina operations for the 2021 season was circulated which included options to provide services at a reduced capacity until a new breakwater is installed. Considerations included keeping westside seasonal berths open, staffing scenarios, visiting berths for daytime only and creative partnerships.

There were questions related to public washrooms, launch ramp services and a communication plan with existing boaters.

8. NEW BUSINESS

a. Heritage Advisory Committee Proposal

Discussion on the Heritage Advisory Committee Proposal included:

- Recommendation on designation of a Heritage District on Front Street to be considered
- This would include a process and identification with plaques and banners
- Question on what this means for property owners
- Once a district is established, all properties within that area become designated provincial heritage properties, per the Heritage Property Act

- Discussion on whether to pursue a recognition rather than a designation – to be discussed with the Committee
- Council commended the Committee on their work thus far

b. **Wastewater Pumping and Treatment Emergency Costs**

Superintendent Slaunwhite presented a list of equipment (pumps, rails and drives at Sinclair Lift Station and WWTP blower and screen) that has failed and needs replacement. This equipment is required to ensure compliance with Environmental Approvals.

The total cost of the work is \$126,000; however, some of this work would be cost-shared with the Municipality of Pictou County.

MOTION: For Council at their next regular meeting to approve the expenditure of \$100,800 in fiscal year ending March 31, 2021 for emergency repair work to Sinclair Lift Station and the WWTP.

CARRIED

COC-03-01-21-2529

c. **Operating Budget 2021-22**

Accountant Daye presented the proposed Operational Budget for 2021-22. The presentation included:

- Starting points – the 2021 Tax roll was used to determine revenues to collect; this amount was adjusted to reflect the commercial phase-in; 2020-21 budget was used as a template and adjusted for actual expenses in consult with department heads
- Some new initiatives – electric car charging station, Pictou Exploratory funding, Heritage Advisory Committee funding and street signage
- A projected deficit of \$38,487 was presented – Council directed staff to balance the proposed budget using general reserves

MOTION: For Council at their next regular meeting to approve the draft Town operating budget for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2022 with expenditures totaling \$6,144,339 (\$5,081,479, plus \$562,860 in financing and transfers and \$500,000 in education) be approved with tax rates being set at \$1.64/100 of residential and resource assessments, \$4.34/100 of Commercial Assessments; and \$0.32/100 of Commercial Assessments contained within the Business Improvement District of the Town; and, that the Town Treasurer be authorized to release sewer capital charges at a flat rate of \$103.43 and sewer operating charges at a rate of \$152.84 based on the methodology described by by-law; and, that the rate of \$156.36 be charged per dwelling unit for Curbside Collection; and 15.2 cents per \$100 of assessment for Fire Protection (Hydrant Rental) and that tax bills be due and payable 60 days from date of issuance; and that amounts past due be charged interest at the rate of 18% per annum.

CARRIED

COC-03-01-21-2530

9. CORRESPONDENCE

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

- Question on heritage property designation, deficiencies in work conducted by the Housing Authority and tax collections with changes at the shipyard

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 pm.

APPROVED

James J. Ryan
Mayor

Nicole MacDonald
Acting CAO