



Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

Committee of The Whole (COTW) Meeting

Wednesday, January 3rd, 2024

We acknowledge that we are gathering in Mi'kma'ki the traditional unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

1. Meeting, Date & Time:

Warden Wier called the COTW Meeting of the St. Mary's Municipal Council to order on Wednesday, January 3rd, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Sherbrooke, N.S.

2. Attending:

Warden Greg Wier

Deputy Warden James Fuller

Councillor Everett Baker

Councillor Courtney Mailman

Councillor Beulah Malloy

Councillor Charlene Zinck

Absent with Regrets:

Councillor James Harpell

Also Attending:

Doug Patterson, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

Marian Fraser, Director of Finance (DOF)

Jadzia Graham, Interim Municipal Clerk

Denise Dunn, Economic Development Officer (EDO)

Tyler MacLaughlin, Interim Director of Community Development and Recreation

3. Additions to the Agenda:

- Addition to Correspondence 7 d. Thank You Card from St. Marys Food Bank
- Removal of 9. In-Camera: Contract Negotiations
- Addition to Other Matters of Business 8 i. C&D Waste Disposal

4. Approval of the Agenda:

On the motion of Deputy Warden Fuller, and seconded by Councillor Malloy, Council approved the agenda with the additions.

Motion approved.

5. Approval of Minutes:

On the motion of Councillor Malloy, and seconded by Councillor Zinck, Council approved the minutes of the COTW Meeting held December 6th, 2023.

Motion approved.

6. Business Arising from the Minutes:

- There was no business arising from the minutes.

7. Correspondence:

- a. 2024 Communities in Bloom Atlantic Edition Invitation
- Councillor Mailman is part of the Garden Club and thought it would be great for them to look into Communities in Bloom.

b. Exemption of Volunteer Emergency Services from New Fuel Charges

- Councillor Malloy thought that staff should write a letter to follow up on the exemption of Volunteer Emergency Services from New Fuel Charges.

On recommendation of Councillor Malloy, and seconded by Councillor Baker, Council agree to write a letter to follow up on the carbon tax exemption for volunteer emergency providers.

Recommendation adopted.

c. Ministerial Letter from Communities, Culture, Tourism, and Heritage

- Tyler MacLaughlin, Interim Director of Community Development and Recreation, informed the Council of the Letter received from the Minister of Communities Culture Tourism, and Heritage, Allan Macmaster approving funding for the Active Communities Fund program.

d. Thank You Card from St. Mary's Foodbank.

- Warden Greg Wier, informed Council of the Thank You card received by the St. Marys Foodbank.

8. Other Matters of Business:

a. Volunteer Awards:

- See the attached report.
- The Volunteer Awards are an annual event to showcase all the volunteering that occurs in St. Mary's. This event also highlights the Volunteer of the Year for the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's.
- For 47 years, ever since he moved to Nova Scotia, Michael Porter has been spreading joy throughout the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's with his music. In 2019, Michael would bring his guitar and equipment to play at the grassroots community market in Sherbrooke. As he played, he collected donations for the St. Mary's Food Bank. Michael consistently volunteers his time and equipment, ensuring live music at the Sherbrooke Saturday Market, which has grown and relocated to the Heritage Park at the Historic Sherbrooke Village. Furthermore, he volunteers his musical talents for local benefit concerts, supporting those in need. Michael's gift of music has brought joy to the community and raised funds for worthy causes.
- The St. Mary's District Lion's Club is a central location in the Municipality, can hold a large event, and offers catering services. A program will be put together for the event, and the Warden will have the opportunity to speak to thank people for attending and provide some information about each of the nominees. Invites to the event would include all nominees, council, MLA Greg Morrow, our volunteer firefighters, Rae Gunn and Eric Lumsden from Community, Culture, Tourism and Heritage, as well as a general invite to the public. The Municipality will create and print certificates for all nominees. Due to the timing of the event, there will be a winter theme and slogan.
- The date for the Volunteer Awards is yet to be set. Once a date has been approved, It will go to Council so that Councillors may attend. Invitations have to be made and sent out to volunteers, volunteer firefighters, Communities Culture Tourism, and Heritage, as well as a slogan and theme for the event.

b. Canada Summer Jobs Grant:

- See the attached report.

- The Canada Summer Jobs grant provides funding for the Community Development and Recreation Department (CDRD) to hire summer staff for our 2024 summer day camps. With this grant, the department is looking to hire three summer day camp leaders.
- The Canada Summer Jobs grant is a 50% funded grant. The department is applying to fund three-day camp leaders for nine weeks at 34 hours per week, at an hourly wage of \$15.25 (minimum wage after April 1st, 2024). This equates to a total ask of \$7,004.34.
- The Municipality will be responsible for the equivalent amount, as well as Mandatory Employment Related Costs (MERCs), such as Employment Insurance, Canada Pension Plan and Vacation Pay.

On recommendation of Deputy Warden Fuller, and seconded by Councillor Mailman, Council agree to direct staff to proceed with the application for the 2024 Canada Summer Jobs grant, as outlined in this report.

Recommendation adopted.

c. Community Infrastructure and access-Ability Grant Sessions:

- See the attached report.
- The Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism, and Heritage (CCTH) has opened its Community Infrastructure and Access-ability grants for the fiscal year 2024-25. This is a fantastic opportunity for local organizations and entities to enhance and improve community facilities, helping to support a more accessible and vibrant future for everyone. The Municipality of the District of St. Mary's will be hosting an information session for eligible applicants on January 15, 2024, in which a representative from the Department of CCTH will attend in person (weather dependent).
- Eligible applicants include Registered non-profit societies, Mi'kmaw Band Councils, Municipalities & villages, and schools & post-secondary institutions with facilities available for community recreation use. Applications opened on December 11th, 2023, and the deadline is February 14th, 2024.
- Available Grant Programs:
 1. Community ACCESS-Ability Program: Supports renovations and improvements to make community buildings more accessible.
 2. Community Facility Improvement Program: Aids in repairs and upgrades to community facilities open for public use, such as community halls.
 3. Legion Capital Assistance Program: Assists Royal Canadian Legions with capital upgrades.
 4. Recreation Facility Development / Rink Revitalization Fund: Supports repairs and upgrades to community recreation facilities and rinks.
- Doug Patterson, Chief Administration Officer (CAO) informed Council that it is a great opportunity to help the non-profit organizations, and urges legions, lion's halls and non-profits to apply to help with renovations, activities, and events.

On recommendation of Councillor Baker, and seconded by Councillor Zinck, Council agree to direct municipal staff to submit an application to the Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage for the 2024-25 Recreation Facility Development/Rink Revitalization Fund for Phase 2 of the outside structural repairs and siding replacement to the St. Mary's Recplex and furthermore directs staff if possible, to apply for grant funding to complete a facility needs assessment for the St. Mary's Recplex.

Recommendation adopted.

On recommendation of Councillor Malloy, and seconded by Councillor Mailman, Council approves mileage expenses for any councillor who attends the January 15 Community Grant presentation in support of their constituents.

Recommendation adopted.

Marian Fraser, Director of Finance left the meeting at 4:22 p.m.

Marian Fraser, Director of Finance joined the meeting at 4:24 p.m.

d. Provincial Economic Development:

- See the attached report.
- St. Mary's Chief Administration Officer (CAO) Doug Patterson and Economic Development Officer (EDO) Denise Dunn met with the newly appointed Director of Community Economic Development from the Nova Scotia Department of Economic Development on the request of the EDO to follow up on outcomes from the Tool Review and ensure St. Mary's' alignment with and discuss collaboration opportunities with respect to provincial goals.
- The NS Department of Economic Development has a mandate to review investment and attraction mechanisms and structures to ensure they support our communities and deliver the most efficient and accountable format for economic development.
- The 3 key focus areas for the Director, Community Economic Development are:
 1. Full Coverage across the province to support businesses
 2. Consistency of product, delivery of service
 3. Ease of navigation (i.e. municipal EDO, Invest NS, REN, or ACOA, who approach first and what each can provide.)
- Considerations discussed as outlined in the report include: Digital nomads and opportunities for St. Mary's to attract, NIMBYism, Connector Programs, REN's and Regional Economic Networks.

e. Flood Mapping:

- See the attached report.
- Flood Mapping is in Phase 2, We have been sharing and posting on social media asking the public for their feedback on areas where flooding exists, areas of existing/ past damage, and areas of concern for the future around the municipality.
- Stakeholders and the public are invited to join the interactive mapping tool to identify risk areas throughout St. Mary's on any road, property, stream, river, lake, etc. The mapping tool is hosted on an online platform (Social PinPoint), including a questionnaire and mapping. The link can be found on The Municipal Website under the "Community engagement" tab.
- Residences and the public are urged to contact their local Councillor if assistance is required for hard copy photographs.

f. Housing – Municipal Affairs & Housing:

- See the attached report.
- Denise Dunn, Economic Development Officer (EDO), Doug Patterson, Chief Administration Officer (CAO), Marian Fraser, Director of Finance (DOF), Jadzia Graham, Interim Municipal Clerk, and Deputy Warden James Fuller informed the Council of their meeting with Municipal Affairs and Housing on December 19th 2023.

- There are several options in moving forward with the development of the property currently reserved for housing in Sherbrooke. Partnerships will be essential to ensure appropriate funding is in place, skill sets acquired, sustainability, and equity goals are achieved.
- Discussion with the province determined ways in which they can assist including:
 - a. Proceeds of sale requirements and options under the MGA.
 - b. Provincial programs are stackable with federal and CMHC programs.
 - c. Ability to partner with the province for joint land development of Municipal and Provincial properties.
 - d. Funding is available to Non-Profit housing organizations in this area.
 - e. New programming from Efficiency One is coming in 2024 that will be geared towards new construction.
 - f. The province can assist the Municipality with developer agreements and processes. This includes conditional land commitments for the purpose of ensuring the original intent of housing is maintained.
 - g. Forgivable loans for housing developers who are willing to build affordable units.
- Councillor Mailman highlighted concerns from residents that childcare is a barrier to economic development and making St. Mary's a permanent home. Also noted was the childcare need for long-term care facilities and hospital staff. This presents an opportunity to lobby the provincial government, concerning new health care developments, to include childcare as an essential component of such projects. Councillor Mailman stated there is an abundance of studies highlighting the positive outcomes of intergenerational care.

On recommendation of Councillor Mailman, and seconded by Councillor Malloy, Council agree to request staff to investigate and bring back to Council the best business practice options for the creation of a neighbourhood concept based on wellness, that could include a long-term care facility and a hospital along with other things and facilities.

Recommendation adopted.

g. Draft Letter for Cellular Service:

- See the attached report.
- The province is investing \$47.3 million to start the new Cellular for Nova Scotia Program to expand telecommunications infrastructure and communications networks throughout the province. Cellular Service is low to none at all (dead zones) in most districts of the Municipality, and it is a very big safety concern.
- A draft letter for cellular service was completed by staff to send to our local MLA, Premier Houston, and Minister Fraser.
- Council reviewed and approved the draft letter and staff is going to do a final copy to send to the local MLA, with all of the Councillors to sign in support.
- Municipal staff are going to share and post on social media as well as the Newsletter.

On recommendation of Deputy Warden Fuller, and seconded by Councillor Baker, Council approves and fully supports the Municipality's written letter to the honourable Sean Fraser, MLA and to the honourable Tim Houston, Premier in support of the municipality's request for provincial support of improved local

cellular phone services and that council sincerely hopes and requests the help of the province to improve local phone cellular service. The letter is to be signed by (choice of Warden or all members of Council).

Recommendation adopted.

h. Library Boxes

- See the attached staff report.
- Tyler MacLaughlin, Interim Director of Community Development and Recreation, informed the Council of the Library Boxes that will be installed in the districts of the municipality. They are "take-a-book, leave-a-book" style boxes available to the public. The Library Boxes will be installed in the late winter or early spring in various communities within St. Mary's.

i. C&D Waste Disposal

- Teddy Stevens, Director of Public Works, and Doug Patterson, Chief Administration Officer (CAO) informed the Council of the Construction and Demolition (C&D) pile at the Municipal Transfer Station.
 - 1.) *Staff to work actively in follow up on the municipality's written request for provincial assistance with the office of the minister and with appropriate provincial staff.*
 - 2.) *Staff to study other options for C&D disposal including engaging other services and other storage locations for the C&D disposal and storage service.*
 - 3.) *Staff to study C&D dumping fees review fee options with total fees in line with other local municipalities.*
 - 4.) *Delay tender to building new transfer station for the time being until we know that specifications meet future needs.*
 - 5.) *To suspend acceptance of C&D material until a new service plan is available (effective January 9, 2024.) with notice on municipal web and Facebook and to notify existing construction and demolition (C&D) permit holders.*
 - 6.) *To maintain all residential trash services including curbside pick up, bi-weekly bulky item collection, and residential trash drop off at the transfer station.*

On motion of Councillor Zinck, and seconded by Councillor Mailman, Council direct staff to work on investigation and planning of the following initiatives in order to find solutions that can effectively update our construction and demolition waste disposal services. Further that staff provide regular and frequent updates to council on progress.

Recommendation adopted.

Letter to Province (Solid Waste)

- The province is coming out with a new program for Solid Waste disposal, this new program will affect our C&D cells for the Municipal Transfer Station.
- The Municipality is dedicated to the environment and economic development. St. Mary's supports the province's goals to grow the population and solve the current housing shortage. An effective C&D service allows for increased housing and enables growth. Our local C&D service provides a vital means of supporting residential renewal via the demolition of old housing that no longer meets needs while enabling new residential building opportunities.

- The Municipality has endeavoured to provide an easy-to-access C&D service to benefit businesses, housing, and overall growth. The open approach is the best way to reduce dangerous and unsightly dwelling challenges and prevent illegal dumping.

On recommendation of Councillor Baker, and seconded by Councillor Malloy, Council approves and fully supports the Municipality's written letter to the honourable Timothy Halman, Minister for the Department of Environment and Climate Change in support of the municipality's request for provincial support to help us adapt to the newly established Solid Waste Management Facility Guidelines and that council sincerely hopes and requests the assistance of the province in order for the municipality to maintain a quality, development friendly construction and disposal waste service. The letter is to be signed by (choice or Warden or all members of Council).

Recommendation adopted.

Adjournment

On motion of Councillor Malloy, and seconded by Councillor Baker, there being no further matters of business, Council adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Motion approved.

Recorded By
Jadzia Graham, Interim Municipal Clerk


Approved By
Warden Wier

