



NOTICE

MEETING: St Mary's Municipal Council
Committee of the Whole

DATE: Wednesday, February 21st, 2024

TIME: 4:00 pm

PLACE: St. Mary's Municipality
Council Chambers, Sherbrooke, NS

Please advise if unable to attend



Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

Committee of the Whole Meeting Agenda
Wednesday, February 21st, 2024 at 4:00pm

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

1. Call to Order
 2. Roll Call
 3. Additions to the Agenda
 4. Approval of the Agenda
 5. Approval of Minutes: COTW held February 7th, 2024
 6. Business Arising from Minutes
 7. Correspondence
N/A
 8. Other Matters of Business
 - a. Finance Operating Budget Update – Presentation at meeting
 - b. Memorandum of Understanding - ECRL
 - c. Recplex Generator and Emergency Shelter Project
 - d. New Streetlight
 - e. Build NS – Cellular Service
 - f. Municipal Election Planning
 9. In-Camera: Legal
- Adjournment



Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

Committee of The Whole (COTW) Meeting

Wednesday, February 7th, 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, February 7th, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Sherbrooke, N.S.

2. Attending:

Warden Greg Wier

Deputy Warden James Fuller

Councillor James Harpell

Councillor Courtney Mailman

Councillor Beulah Malloy

Councillor Charlene Zinck

Absent with Regrets:

Councillor Everett Baker

Also Attending:

Doug Patterson, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

Marian Fraser, Director of Finance (DOF)

Jadzia Graham, Interim Municipal Clerk

3. Additions to the Agenda:

- Addition to 9. Other Matters of Business G. Vulnerable Person Registry

4. Approval of the Agenda:

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

Motion approved.

5. Approval of Minutes:

On the motion of Councillor Malloy, and seconded by Councillor Mailman, Council approved the minutes of the COTW Meeting held January 17th, 2024.

Motion approved.

6. Business Arising from the Minutes:

- Council asked about the Lift Station, and Chief Administration Officer (CAO), Doug Patterson informed Council that it has been delayed due to the snow and weather conditions and will resume as soon as they can.

7. Correspondence:

- a. Provincial Response to municipal request for assistance to broaden cellular phone service.
- b. Provincial Response for assistance with Construction and Demolition waste disposal.

8. Presentation: Rural Communities Foundation of Nova Scotia – Hugh MacKay

- See the attached presentation.

- Rural Communities Foundation of Nova Scotia did not show due to the weather conditions and will reschedule for a future Committee of the Whole.

9. Other Matters of Business:

a. Canoe Procurement Services

- See the attached staff report.
- Combining the purchasing power of over 5,000 public and not-for-profit organizations throughout the country, Canoe is one of the largest cooperative procurement groups of its kind in Canada. This program gives our members the opportunity to access hundreds of pre-tendered trade programs that leverage the buying power of over 5,000 active members, which in turn saves both time and costs.
- If the municipality becomes a Canoe Procurement member then we have the ongoing choice on when and how to use the service. A best practice would be to consider Canoe Procurement tools and resources as part of all procurement plans.

On motion of Councillor Malloy, and seconded by Deputy Warden Fuller, Council approve the municipality becoming a member of the Canadian Canoe Procurement group.

On motion of Councillor Harpell, and seconded by Councillor Mailman, Council requests an update from staff within 7 months that illustrates degree of savings or quality differences achieved.

Recommendation adopted.

b. Connect 2 Grant Options for Active Transportation

- Verbal Update from CAO, Doug Patterson.
- Communities Culture Tourism and Heritage have given consulting advice and would like to know Council's interests and options for the Connect 2 grant.
- Staff are going to bring this item back to Council on February 21st, 2024 COTW.

c. CMHC Housing Accelerator Fund: Next Steps

- See the attached staff report.
- The Municipality received a letter from the Honourable Sean Fraser regarding our municipal housing Initiatives on January 15, 2024. The letter was a response to the municipality's earlier update to the minister on our activities to support growth in housing including details on our application to the GMHC Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF).

d. 2024 Cost of Living Review: Budget planning

- See the attached staff report.
- Each year during budget deliberations Council reviews the Nova Scotia Consumer Price Index (CPI) rate for all items from December to December to assist with determining the cost-of-living (COL) rate to apply to salaries, hourly wages and honorariums.

e. Rink Fund: Options for 2024 Recplex Work

- See the attached staff report.
- The Recreation Facility Development (RFD) Grant is an annual provincial grant program to assist community groups, municipalities and other not for profit organizations to develop facilities in

order to increase public participation in sport and physical recreation. Projects approved for funding are eligible to receive up to two-thirds of the total capital costs of the project to a maximum of \$150,000.

- The deadline for applications is February 14th, 2024.
- In 2023-2024 the Municipality received an RFD grant to complete phase 1 of outside building repairs/siding for approximately ½ of the building and sprinkler repairs to the St. Mary's Recplex. As part of the Council's capital project planning phase 2 of the outside building repairs and siding was scheduled to occur in 2024-2025 at \$60,000 Municipal contribution.
- The three options below include additional components of either replacing the inside rubber flooring/walking track, purchasing a new to us Zamboni or both along with the siding replacement (including wall repairs and exterior lighting).

- **Option A** – Phase 2 siding replacement, outside wall repairs, exterior lighting, and replace inside rubber flooring. Total municipal capital contribution of \$60,011.

- **Option B** – Phase 2 siding replacement, outside wall repairs, exterior lighting, and used Zamboni. Total municipal capital contribution of \$64,067.

- **Option C** – Phase 2 siding replacement, outside wall repairs, exterior lighting, replace inside rubber flooring and used Zamboni. Total municipal capital contribution of \$99,780.

On motion of Deputy Warden Fuller, and seconded by Councillor Zinck, Council recommends to direct staff to add additional components of Option A to the 2024-2025 Recreation Facilities Development grant application.

Recommendation adopted.

f. Fibromyalgia Awareness Day

- See the attached staff report.
- May 12th, 2024 is the 32nd anniversary of Fibromyalgia Awareness Day as recognized by the World Health Organization (WHO). The Fibromyalgia Association of Canada contacted, to ask if the Municipality would light up our communities' buildings/landmarks in purple, in recognition of the 2-4% of Canadians living with fibromyalgia. That is almost 2 million Canadians who have been diagnosed with fibromyalgia. There are still many more Canadians waiting to be diagnosed or who are not counted in these numbers because they have other primary conditions, such as cancer, cardiac issues, etc. Last year 133 buildings and landmarks across Canada lit up in purple to promote fibromyalgia awareness.

On motion of Councillor Malloy, and seconded by Councillor Harpell, Council supports illuminating the Municipal office and Sherbrooke Library in purple from dusk on May 12th until dawn on May 13th in support of Fibromyalgia Awareness Day.

Recommendation adopted.

Tyler MacLaughlin, Active Living Coordinator left the meeting at 4:45 p.m.

g. Vulnerable Person Registry:

- Councillor Mailman had brought up that some residents were asking about a Vulnerable Person's Registry to let others know that when bad weather happens these (self-proclaimed) vulnerable people may need some help whether that be food, shelter, heat, or plowed out.

- Council determined that staff will look into a Vulnerable Persons Registry.

10. In Camera: Legal

On motion of Councillor Malloy, and seconded by Councillor Zinck, Council agree to move In-Camera for legal at 4:52 p.m.

Motion approved.

On motion of Deputy Warden Fuller, and seconded by Councillor Zinck, Council agree to reconvene to regular session at 5:20 p.m.

Motion approved.

Adjournment

On motion of Councillor Harpell, and seconded by Councillor Mailman, there being no further matters of business, Council adjourned at 5:22 p.m.

Motion approved.

Recorded By
Jadzia Graham, Interim Municipal Clerk

Approved By
Warden Wier

Budget Deliberations

2024-2025

Draft #1



February 21st, 2024

Operating Budget Draft #1 Overview

1. Draft #1 Municipal Operating Budget Summary
2. Highlight main variances within the 2024/2025 Draft #1 from the approved 2023/24 Budget
3. Overview of 2024/2025 draft #1 estimated revenue from all sources
4. Draft #1 Budget expenditure estimates for the total operating budget including the following individual department budgets;
 - a) Municipal Transfer Station
 - b) Sewer Utility
 - c) Economic Development
 - d) Community Development and Recreation
 - e) Municipal Active Living
 - f) St. Mary's Recplex
5. 2024 2025 Municipal Budget Next Steps

General Operating Budget Summary

MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF ST. MARY'S			
Statement of Operations - Operating Fund			
Year ending March 31st, 2024, with Draft #1 budget est. for 2024/25			
Year Ending Estimates for March 31, 2024			
	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25
	Budget	YE EST	Budget
Revenue (Schedule A)			
Taxes	2,334,342	2,463,021	2,549,723
Grants in lieu of taxes	163,765	163,765	165,265
Revenue from own sources	282,752	502,137	310,117
Unconditional transfers from other municipalities	189,364	187,326	187,420
Conditional transfers from other municipalities	26,251	26,227	26,227
Other transfers			
	2,996,474	3,342,476	3,238,752
Expenditures (Schedule B)			
General government services	783,397	782,295	844,313
Protective services	724,192	712,750	768,643
Transportation services	104,500	107,392	107,392
Environmental health services	802,525	777,781	852,757
Environmental development services	124,672	176,683	176,683
Recreation and cultural services	457,188	546,011	488,964
Financing and transfers			
	2,996,473	3,102,911	3,238,752
DEFICIENCY OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURE	0	239,565	(0)



Highlights of Expenditure Increases in Draft #1 Year over Year

Education	65,009
Municipal Election	20,000
Council Expense	13,260
RCMP/Policing	45,336
Public Works Maintenance	5,950
Tr. To Capital/Major Repairs	33,945
Economic Development	50,511
CDR - Facility Plans	20,000

Municipal Operating Budget – Revenue

Taxes

- ▶ Assessments and tax revenue are shown in draft budget as presented at the COTW earlier this year.
- ▶ No tax rate increase is reflected in draft #1. The CAP rate as set by PVSC on residential assessments is 3.2% for 2024/25
- ▶ Draft 1 does not reflect any increase in the Street Light area rate in relation to revenue, this may need to be revised after reviewing the projected expenditures related to the NSP rate increases
- ▶ Fire tax levy rates to be set by departments, some departments have already provided updates for upcoming fiscal
- ▶ Deed transfer tax revenue budgeted at \$120,000 based on sales trends

Grants in Lieu of Taxes

- ▶ All grant in lieu of taxes revenue have been budgeted based on 2023/24 actuals

Other Revenue from Own Sources

- ▶ Licenses/permits remain approximately the same as previous year
- ▶ Fine revenue is projected slightly higher than the 2023/24 budget but just under the projected actuals for 2024/25
- ▶ Interest on investments is projected significantly higher than the 2023/24 budget but lower than the projected actuals

Unconditional & Conditional transfers from other Gov'ts

- ▶ All transfers, including equalization, HST Offset and NSP are budgeted similar as 23/24 actuals

Mandatory Provincial Expenditures out of Revenue

- ▶ Beginning in 2024/2025 Municipalities are no longer for expenses related to Corrections and Housing Authority Deficits.
- ▶ Mandatory Education expense has increased from \$637,966 in 2023/24 to \$702,975 in 2024/25

Total Revenue \$3,238,752 + 706,966 (Education) + 159,538 (Fire) = \$4,101,256

Municipal Operating Budget - Expenditures

General Government Services

- ▶ Legislative Services:
 - Stats-can cost of living for NS December to December is 3.6%. For this draft budget 3.6% has been used and applied as a Cost of Living to all salaries, hourly rates and remunerations
 - Warden and Council Expenses have increased due to increased support of council attendance at conferences and in-person training sessions post election
 - Municipal Elections has been estimated at \$20,000
- ▶ For 2023/24 Administration expense includes salaries, benefits, and training/development
- ▶ Solicitor fees budget to remain at \$30,000
- ▶ Slight increase to insurance fees, final quote for the 2024/2025 year has not yet been received but will be prior to final draft of budget
- ▶ All other general administration expenses have increased slightly in accordance with the cost of living

Protective Services (Law Enforcement)

- ▶ Policing/RCMP expense is budgeted at a \$45,336 increase from the 23/24 budget/actuals. This increase has not been confirmed by the RCMP funding communication channels and could change.
- ▶ Annual grants to volunteer Fire department to remain the same, including training grants and funds to support the Fire Services Committee. Would council like to consider changes to this budget item?
- ▶ EMO budget includes funds for the coordinator, additional generator wiring at Admin Building to support EMO command center, support for comfort centers, ground search and rescue annual grant, training exercises and supplies – total budget \$15,500.
- ▶ Total expense to the Municipality for protective services is \$768,643

Municipal Operating Budget - Expenditures

Transportation Services (Roads & Street Lighting)

- ▶ Street light expenditure will be further analyzed for draft #2 based on any potential rate increases from NS Power
- ▶ Road's expense which covers the maintenance agreement with the Province for J-Class roads has increased slightly to cover cost of living

Environmental Health Services

- ▶ The individual detailed budgets for both Sewer and the Transfer Station will be covered by slides 9 & 10
- ▶ Public works maintenance expense covers the snowplow contract, OHS items for public works and power surge protectors/auto generator switch overs required at public works municipal facilities/buildings
- ▶ Transfer to capital/major repairs is a new line item for the 2024/2025. Item will cover any major repairs not included in the capital project for municipal facilities. If funds are not required to be used, then funding will be transferred to the capital reserve to assist with re-building the reserve for future projects.

Environmental Development Services

- ▶ Planning/Subdivision covers GIS software expenses and expense associated with shared service with the Municipality of Guysborough for subdivision services
- ▶ The individual detailed budget Economic Development will be covered by slide 11

Municipal Operating Budget - Expenditures

Recreation and Cultural Services

- ▶ The detailed individual budget for the Department of Community Development and Recreation, including the Active Living budget will be covered on slide 12 and 13
- ▶ The detailed individual budget for the St. Mary's Recplex will be covered on slide 14
- ▶ Fitness Center – funds have been budgeted for preform preventative maintenance on the equipment, \$1,500
- ▶ General Government Grants will be discussed at the COTW on March 6th. Budget estimate for draft #1 is based on 23/24 budget amount.
- ▶ Community Hall tax exemptions budget remaining similar to 23/24, only non-profit organizations who have submitted their applications will be included in the exemption
- ▶ Port Bickerton Lighthouse yearly maintenance grant of \$4,500
- ▶ Sherbrooke library - \$12,500 budgeted to cover operations including; insurance, janitorial, power, maintenance, etc. throughout the year
- ▶ Eastern Counties Regional Library – mandatory funding has not yet been confirmed therefore an estimate has been used for draft 1 budget purposes which is the same as 2023/24

Total Operating Expenditures \$3,238,752 + \$706,966 (Education) + \$159,538 (Fire) = \$4,101,256

Municipal Transfer Station

Revenue:

- ▶ Solid Waste Area Rate – for draft #1 remains the same at \$110.82
- ▶ Scrap metal and tipping fees budgeted at \$12,500, slight decrease from 2023/24 budget amount due to the amount of material currently at the transfer station

Expenditures:

- ▶ Staffing
- ▶ Universal Solid Waste Collection budgeted at \$352,800, a decrease from 2023/24 due to the new EPRA regulations for recyclables coming into effect January 1 2025
- ▶ C&D for budget purposes has been budgeted the same, this item requires further analysis prior to the final draft of budget
- ▶ HHW disposal fees \$6,000 based on 23/24 actuals
- ▶ Tipping fees for solid waste have increased slightly
- ▶ Tipping fees for blue bag items have reduced slightly due to EPRA regulations
- ▶ OHS and Insurance are new items broken out and added into individual budgets
- ▶ General repairs \$6,000, mainly for maintenance to the backhoe
- ▶ ERSWM fees est. \$7,000
- ▶ Ground water testing \$9,500, slight increase due to additional monitoring well to assess in 2024/25

Total cost to Municipality for Municipal Transfer Station net all revenue \$293,744

Sherbrooke Sewer Utility

- ▶ Revenue - Rates remain the same in budget as 2023/2024, last increase to rates occurred in 2023/24
- ▶ Main Components of Expenditures
 - ▶ Salaries/benefits
 - ▶ Power, slight increase
 - ▶ Supplies and Operating Maintenance remains the same, which includes required DOE testing
- ▶ Total budget \$87,215

Economic Development

- ▶ Salary, benefits and training/development
- ▶ ED/Land Development Projects budgeted at \$23,000 which includes funds to support work with non-profit housing organization and website re-design
- ▶ Main Street Project; flower beds, signage, etc - \$4,000
- ▶ Small business support/training/chamber development and small business week event \$4,000
- ▶ Tourism promotion - \$13,000 Digital Assets & Promotion and \$13,000 to support Tourism Strategy Development
- ▶ Climate Change Action Plan Project - \$20,000 to leverage additional funds (prov/fed) to support projects within the Plan – may include Greenhouse Gas Reduction Projects – staff reports will be brought to council throughout the year on this item

Total cost \$168,183 for 2024/2025

Community Development & Recreation (CDR)

- ▶ Salary, travel allowance, and professional development
- ▶ Volunteer awards, slight increase by \$500
- ▶ Canada Day budget remains the same as 2023/24
- ▶ Guysborough Co. Seniors' games, slight increase by \$500 for event
- ▶ Parks & Trails budgeted at \$7,500 to assist with regular \$3,500 for regular maintenance of green spaces plus \$4,000 funds to assist with park debris cleanup
- ▶ Community development projects; funds allocated to support events in the Municipality; including Old Fashioned Christmas, partnerships with the Garden Club. Additional funds within budget also support building capacity for organizations within the Municipality
- ▶ OHS & Insurance are new items broken out and added into individual budgets
- ▶ Facility Plans – this item is new to the CDR budget; funds will be used to leverage funds through grants to complete facility plans/life cycle related to recreation facilities

***Total cost to Municipality for Community Development & Recreation net of revenue
\$129,415***

Municipal Active Living Budget

- ▶ Budget relies heavily on securing grants and external funding such as; summer student federal grant, active community fund (prov), Prov cost share funding for MPAL position, etc

Expenditures include;

- ▶ Active Living Coordinator position, benefits, travel/development
- ▶ Summer Day Camp staff expense for summer day camps - grants have been applied for to assist with offsetting this expense
- ▶ Active Communities Fund; major grant component, funded 75% by the Province with the Municipality matching 25% in funds – components of the grant will be reported separately throughout the year
- ▶ Programming – Winter Fun Fest Event
- ▶ Senior Social funding increase from \$5,000 to \$6,000
- ▶ Health and Wellness Policy Fund remains the same

St. Mary's Recplex

- ▶ Revenue budgeted based on no increases to rates, advertising and skate sharpening. Total revenue for Recplex of \$33,585
- ▶ Major components of expenditures include power at \$36,500 and salaries at \$32,520
- ▶ General operating expense is budgeted at \$19,150. These funds cover annual start up/shut down CIMCO, sprinkler testing, ice paint, propane, janitorial supplies, OHS, recplex alarm system, general maintenance supplies, etc

Total Cost to Municipality for Recplex \$66,735

2024/25 Municipal Budget Next Steps

- ▶ **Draft #1 Recap** – are there any items Council would like to go back and re-visit?
- ▶ **Additional items** - Are there any items which could impact or change the budget that Council would like to see included or considered that have not already been covered?
- ▶ General Government Grants – **COTW March 6th**
- ▶ **Draft #2 Operating and Capital/Gas Tax Budget – COTW March 6th**
 - ▶ Draft #2 Operating Budget –
 - ▶ Additional consideration for Street Light Area Rates based on Nova Scotia Power rate increases.
 - ▶ Exploring various grant opportunities to increase an FTE resource across all aspects of the Municipality
 - ▶ Presentation of Sherbrooke Water Utility Operating Budget
 - ▶ Multi-year Capital and Gas Tax Budgets
 - ▶ 10 Years Budget review/comparison document

Memorandum of Understanding Between: Eastern Counties Regional Library And the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's.

SUMMARY

Guided by the assistance of the consulting firm Davis Pier, the Municipality and the Eastern Counties Regional Library have worked together to write a proposed memorandum of understanding to facilitate the ongoing coordination and cooperation between the parties for the benefit of the users of the service provided by the Sherbrooke Library.

The purpose of this report is to provide council with an opportunity to review the proposed MOU for questions and comments.

BACKGROUND

The MOU was built with discussion and content from the municipal Warden Greg Weir and the municipal CAO Doug Patterson. The Eastern County Regional library was represented by Laura Emery, Chief Executive Officer and Clair Rankin, Board Chair.

The MOU was first shared with Council at the December 6, 2023, COTW meeting for purposes of introducing the MOU.

The Eastern County Regional Library Board Has ratified the agreement.

The proposed MOU is attached with this report.

CONSIDERATIONS

Key features of the Memorandum:

- 1.) Define Guiding Principles that support responsiveness to the evolving needs of the community.
- 2.) Support and call for effective communication and sharing of information between both parties.
- 3.) Facilitate future joint planning with call for participation of both parties.
- 4.) Defines minimum frequency for ongoing work defined by the MOU.
- 5.) Dispute Resolution criteria.

Staff Report



- 6.) Schedule C: This section defines Additional Service Hours.
- 7.) Defines Insurance coverage responsibilities for each party.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Municipal council adopt the new Memorandum of Understanding Between Eastern Counties Regional Library and the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's.

Memorandum of Understanding

Between:

Eastern Counties Regional Library

- and -

Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets the terms and understanding for communication and working together between the Eastern Counties Regional Library (ECRL) and the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's (MODSM), collectively known as "the parties," as they move forward together on issues in common.

The parties agree that this MOU does not replace and/or nullify any of the obligations the parties may have pursuant to the *Libraries Act*, RS, c. 254, the *Municipal Government Act*, 1998, c. 18, the *Accessibility Act*, 2017, c.2, or any other applicable legislation or regulations. The parties further agree that they shall comply with all applicable law in the performance of their obligations under this MOU.

1.0 PURPOSE

The parties wish to be more intentional and strategic about collaboration and communication to both achieve mutual benefits and ensure the ongoing maintenance of their working relationship. This MOU will provide a general roadmap for ECRL and MODSM to maintain open lines of communication, strengthen their positive and productive working relationship, and encourage joint initiatives and communications for the betterment of the community they both serve.

2.0 DESIGNATED CONTACTS

All contact regarding collaboration and efforts to give effect to the terms of this MOU shall be referred to the Designated Contacts of each party, as identified in Schedule A of this MOU. Any documents intended to be legally binding must be signed by representatives of each party who are authorized to legally bind that party. The Designated Contacts for each party may or may not be authorized representatives of that party for signing purposes.

3.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

ECRL and MODSM have the mutual goal of cooperating to realize high quality library services that are responsive to the evolving needs of the community. This goal will be

Memorandum of Understanding: ECRL and MODSM

achieved by working together and sharing each party's respective expertise, while still respecting the autonomy of each party, the scope of their decision-making authority and any legislation, regulations, rules or other decision-making bodies they may be governed by.

The parties agree that the following principles will guide their relationship and work together:

- (a) Respect - The parties will work together in a mutually respectful manner.
- (b) Transparency and Communication - The parties will work at all times to ensure active communication, transparency, and the timely exchange of information.
- (c) Collaboration - The parties will actively encourage and actively seek to build a shared culture of trust and collaboration.
- (d) Engagement - The parties will involve key partners, and the public, where possible, in the development, planning, and delivery of joint initiatives.
- (e) Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility (EDIA) – The parties will seek to apply an EDIA lens to decision-making, communications and joint initiatives.

4.0 COMMUNICATION

ECRL and MODSM commit to communicating with each other, and about each other, in a professional and courteous manner. Neither party will speak ill of or disparage the other in either internal or external communications.

The parties are committed to open and regular communication that is timely and transparent. Each party will do their best to communicate information and respond to inquiries from the other party promptly. If either party feels that communication is not adhering to this MOU, then that party will raise the issue with the other party as soon as is practicable.

Each party will continue to communicate with the public independently; but on issues affecting both parties, every effort shall be made to jointly communicate with the public. Notice of joint communication opportunities will be provided to the Designated Contacts outlined in this MOU, via the parties preferred contact methods. Each party shall do their best to provide as much notice as possible to the other party when a joint communication opportunity arises.

5.0 RESOURCING

The parties intend to contribute internal resources, as allowed by their respective organizational budgets or resourcing requirements, to complete the tasks set out in this MOU.

The parties acknowledge and agree that any retention of third-party consultants or the launch of any project requiring other resources, and associated cost sharing, shall be agreed to in writing in advance of any expenses being incurred.

6.0 INSURANCE OBLIGATIONS

The parties acknowledge and agree that each party requires liability, contents, and use insurance to meet their respective obligations.

MODSM acknowledges that it: owns the Library building; holds insurance for the replacement value of the Library building and the contents that are owned by the Municipality; and holds general liability insurance for the Library premises.

ECRL acknowledges that it: has use of the Library building; holds insurance for the replacement value of the contents in the Library building owned by ECRL; and holds general liability insurance for the Library premises.

The parties agree to review their respective insurance requirements as part of the Joint Planning Process outlined in Section 6.0.

7.0 JOINT PLANNING

The parties agree to work together on strategic planning, including joint services planning to ensure the highest quality of service delivery for the community. The parties commit to sharing necessary strategic planning and services planning information with each other in a transparent and timely fashion to accomplish this goal.

The parties commit to a minimum of two (2) and no more than four (4) Joint Planning Meetings per year. Joint Planning Meetings shall be either virtual or in person, with at least one (1) Designated Contact from each party in attendance. At least one (1) Joint Planning Meeting shall be held in either January or February of each year and shall include both the Board Chair of ECRL and the Warden of MODSM in addition to at least one (1) Designated Contact for each party. All other Joint Planning Meetings may be scheduled by the mutual agreement of the parties and may include either Designated Contacts or their designees.

These intentional meetings will ensure both parties are adhering to the communication goals of this MOU, allow for joint strategic and service planning, and consistent reporting updates. To that end, the Joint Planning Meetings shall be recorded and a written record of decisions and actions flowing from the Joint Planning Meeting shall be shared with meeting attendees within thirty (30) business days of the meeting, or at the next Joint Planning Meeting, whichever is sooner.

8.0 JOINT PROJECTS

A Party wishing to propose a joint project shall call a Joint Planning Meeting. At that Joint Planning Meeting the Party proposing the joint project shall introduce the project idea, and through discussion/debate with the Designated Representatives present, seek to establish the proposed scope of work required and determine who or how the proposed project work could be undertaken.

At the conclusion of the Joint Planning Meeting the Designated Representatives will vote on whether the proposed Joint Project shall proceed. A Joint Project may only proceed if there is consensus between the Designated Representatives. If consensus is not achieved the Designated Representatives may agree to a second Joint Planning Meeting for further discussion, or the exchange of additional information within a certain timeframe.

9.0 JOINT AGREEMENTS

The parties may from time to time come to agreement on joint initiatives or projects and wish to outline details about those joint initiatives or projects in writing. These will be considered Joint Agreements and shall be appended to this MOU. Any Joint Agreement shall be subject to annual review in accordance with Section 10.

The parties have the following joint initiatives or projects in place:

- Schedule C – Additional Service Hours.

10.0 REPORTING

The parties commit to open lines of communication between themselves, meaning the parties will advise each other of both positive and negative issues of significance as they arise and as action is taken. In addition, each party will provide the other with an update on a quarterly basis about subjects within each party's respective scope of responsibilities. Quarterly update reports shall be made via the Designated Contacts. Reports may be less than formal but shall be in writing and sent at least two (2) weeks in advance of a Joint Planning Meeting.

11.0 REVIEW OF THE MOU

This MOU shall be reviewed twelve (12) months from the date of signing, and within six (6) months of a MODSM Council Election. Each review shall include an evaluation (formal or informal) of the effectiveness of, and adherence to, the terms of this MOU and the accuracy or applicability of any appended Joint Agreements. At least one Designated Contact from each party shall meet, virtually or in person, to conduct the review. Other representatives from each party shall be invited to the review meeting.

Schedule B to this MOU outlines specific questions, issues, and action areas for parties to consider for each review. During the review the parties shall also determine whether amendments to this MOU are required.

12.0 AMENDMENT OF THE MOU

This MOU may be amended, supplemented, or terminated by mutual consent of the parties. Any amendment, supplement, or termination must be in writing and approved by both the ECRL Board of Directors and the MODSM Council to bind the parties.

13.0 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

When a dispute arises, each party's Designated Contact(s) shall discuss the available options to resolve the issue with the other party and identify the preferred solution(s) of each party. Every reasonable effort will be made, within one (1) month, to resolve disagreements directly between the parties via good faith discussion and negotiation. If the parties are unable to resolve a dispute after such efforts, then the parties agree to use the following additional resolution methods, in this order, until the dispute is resolved:

1. Advisory assistance, followed by renewed discussion and negotiation directly between the parties;
2. Involvement and renewed discussion and negotiation directly between the Chief Executive Officer of the ECRL, and the Chief Administrative Officer of the MODSM;
3. A meeting of the ECRL Board of Directors and the MODSM Council;
4. A joint submission from the ECRL Board of Directors and the MODSM Council to the Department of Communities, Culture, and Heritage seeking direction and assistance.

The parties agree that each of the additional resolution methods noted above shall involve assistance from a mutually agreed upon external party. Insofar as the timeframe of each additional resolution method is within the control of the parties, each method will conclude within one (1) month of commencing, unless otherwise agreed by the parties.

Memorandum of Understanding: ECRL and MODSM

The parties further agree that neither party will discuss or otherwise address an ongoing dispute publicly or in any forum that could lead to the dispute becoming public. While each party may continue to have public communications during an ongoing dispute, neither party will make any remark that could appear to be disparaging of the other party. The Designated Contact(s) for each party will remind elected officials, appointed Board Members, their party's employees and library volunteers not to make comments about the dispute to external parties.

14.0 SCHEDULES

This MOU includes Schedules A, B and C, plus any additional schedules that may be added from time to time. Schedules are intended to assist the parties with interpretation, implementation, and review of this MOU.

15.0 EXECUTION

This MOU shall be effective as of the latest date of execution by authorized representatives of the parties.

<Party Rep name>, <Title/Position>
Eastern Counties Regional Libraries

Date

<Party Rep name>, <Title/Position>
Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

Date

SCHEDULE A

Primary Contact for Eastern Counties Regional Libraries:

Laura Emery, Chief Executive Officer
Eastern Counties Regional Library
390 Murray Street, Mulgrave, NS B0E 2G0
902-631-4403 (phone)
lemery@ecrl.ca

Secondary Contact for Eastern Counties Regional Libraries:

Clair Rankin, Board Chair
Eastern Counties Regional Library
902-535-1601 (phone)
crankin@seaside.ns.ca

Primary Contact for the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's:

Doug Patterson, Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the District of Saint Mary's
8296 Highway 7, P.O. 296, Sherbrooke, NS. B0J 3C0
902-522-2432 (phone)
doug.patterson@saint-marys.ca

Secondary Contact for the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's:

Greg Wier, Warden
Municipality of the District of Saint Mary's
8296 Highway 7, P.O. 296, Sherbrooke, NS. B0J 3C0
902-870-7024 (phone)
greg.wier@saint-marys.ca

SCHEDULE B

The following questions and guidelines are intended to assist the parties with implementing, interpreting, and annually reviewing this MOU.

COMMUNICATION

- Are we communicating with each other in a professional, courteous, and effective manner?
- Have we been communicating with the public independently and/or jointly?
 - How is that working?
 - Are we each ensuring that public communication is painting both parties in a favourable light?
- Any changes required to Designated Contacts?
- Are we effectively promoting our services to users?

QUALITY OF SERVICES

- Are we providing high quality services for users? Are we asking for and receiving feedback from users? How are we doing that?
- Do we have adequate staffing to achieve our goals? What have we done to improve staff retention? What can we do? Have we asked for and received feedback from staff?
- What have we done to attract new staff applications?
- What can we do to improve or expand our services without a significant increase in funding? (e.g. adjust hours to match user preferences? Adjust insurance to allow use of facilities outside of regular hours?) Are we being innovative? Are we being strategic in our use of resources?

SERVICE COSTS

- What does the service cost?
- Are there any changes to the service costs?

ANNUAL REVIEWS

- Did we do what we planned to do over the last twelve months? Why or why not? What efforts best contributed to those achievements? What actions (or lack of action) distracted or detracted from our goals?
- What has worked well for each party? What has not worked well? What lessons have we learned?
- Where are we going? What can we achieve together in the next twelve months?

SCHEDULE C – Additional Service Hours

- 1.1. MODSM has agreed to fund, and ECRL has agreed to provide, seven (7) hours of library service (the “Services”) per week in addition to those already funded and provided under the *Libraries Act Funding Regulations*.
- 1.2. The seven (7) additional hours of library service each week will be provided by ECRL as follows:
 - a. Three (3) hours on Tuesday morning from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm.
 - b. Two (2) hours on Tuesday afternoon from 12:30pm to 2:30 pm; and
 - c. Two (2) hours on Saturday afternoon from 12:30pm to 2:30pm.
- 1.3. The cost for the delivery of the Services is expected to be \$1,865.50 per quarter for Fiscal Year 2023/24.
- 1.4. MODSM will pay ECRL for the Services on a quarterly basis, following the provision of an invoice by ECRL at the conclusion of the quarter. The amounts due under the invoice shall be payable within thirty-five (35) days after MODSM's receipt of such invoice.
- 1.5. If MODSM disputes any item in an invoice, they shall provide written notice to ECRL's Primary Contact as outlined in Schedule A of the MOU. The written notice must contain reasonable details of the issues that MODSM contends are in dispute. ECRL shall respond to the notice with either a justification of the invoice, an adjustment to the invoice, or a proposal addressing the issues presented by MODSM in the notice. If the Parties are unable to resolve the issue through these informal means the Dispute Resolution provisions in Section 11 of the MOU shall apply.
- 1.6. If ECRL is unable to deliver the Services for any reason, ECRL shall promptly notify MODSM and shall ensure that any invoice related to the Services accurately represents the Services provided.
- 1.7. ECRL and MODSM agree that the Services will be provided for the duration of Fiscal Year 2023/24, and will terminate on the last day of the Fiscal Year.
- 1.8. If an amendment or departure from the Services is required, ECRL and MOSM will use the Joint Planning Process provisions in Section 6 of the MOU to address the amendment or departure.

RecPlex Emergency Shelter Project

SUMMARY

The Municipality, in partnership Mulgrave and Guysborough applied for Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) funding to create emergency shelter facilities.

The project actions for St Mary's are to provide upgrades to the Municipal RecPlex to enable the facility to house people on a 24 hour basis during a local emergency.

BACKGROUND

The Project and Funding received ACOA approval on January 18, 2024.

Upon receipt of funding approval staff began tenders and quote collection on the project components presented to Council at the November 8, 2023 COTW meeting.

CONSIDERATIONS

1.) Generator:

The Following are the results for the lowest Bid that powers the whole facility except for the ICE Plant.

Features: 60 KW. Full back up for both electric panels. Propane, quote includes generator, installation and pad for fuel tank. 5-year warranty.

Bid By: KV Electrical Ltd. \$89,500 Plus HST.

2.) Remaining Budget after Generator:

A. Funding award to our Municipality is \$110,502.00 vs. \$129,000.00 applied for. A Difference of \$18,498.00.

Staff Report



ACOA EMO Recplex Emerg Center		
	Orginal Budget Est.	Budget As of February 8/24
<i>Revenue</i>		
ACOA EMO	110,502	110,502
Recoverable HST Rebate	11,353	11,353
Total Revenue	121,855	121,855
<i>Expenditures</i>		
Generator	62,692	89,500
Kitchen Upgrades	30,000	12,461
Hot Water On Demand	4,000	4,000
Contingency -10%	9,269	-
HST	15,894	15,894
Total Expenditure	121,855	121,855

3.) Use of remaining Funds:

- Sleeping cots and bedding: The municipality would borrow these from the Municipality of Guysborough when needed vs own our units (original plan called for a dedicated supply of cots funded by St Mary's and stored with Guysborough).
- Washroom: Replace additional showers original plan with on demand hot water only.
- Kitchen: Upgrades to kitchen can be effectively done with retaining the existing stove and then looking to supplement equipment with additional countertop appliances to increase menu capability.

Staff will come back to council for approval of the on-demand water and the countertop kitchen appliances.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation to council to approve the award for the new Back Up Generator for the RecPlex to KV Electrical Ltd. For \$89,500.00 Plus HST.

New Street Light Installation

SUMMARY

It was brought to the Council's attention that a streetlight needed to be erected at the corner of the Old Country Harbour Rd and 316 intersection, due to people pulling into a resident's driveway thinking it was the road, to fix the problem, Council decided to direct staff to contact Nova Scotia Power to get a streetlight installation recommendation and quote.

BACKGROUND

On October 10th, 2023, at a Council meeting, it was motioned by Deputy Warden Fuller, and seconded by Councillor Baker, to add a streetlight to the Old Country Harbour and 316 Intersection. Staff have contacted Nova Scotia Power to get a quote and recommendation of where to place the streetlight and to see if it was a possibility to use an already-in-place pole. Nova Scotia Power recommended that we install a new pole and light to help with the illumination of the intersection, as the nearest old one is located about 15-20 feet away and is covered with trees.



Picture taken from Google Maps of the Old Country Harbour Rd and 316 Intersection.

Cost Breakdown:

Labour – \$162.52

Materials – \$431.38

Contractor Costs – \$624.64

Staff Report

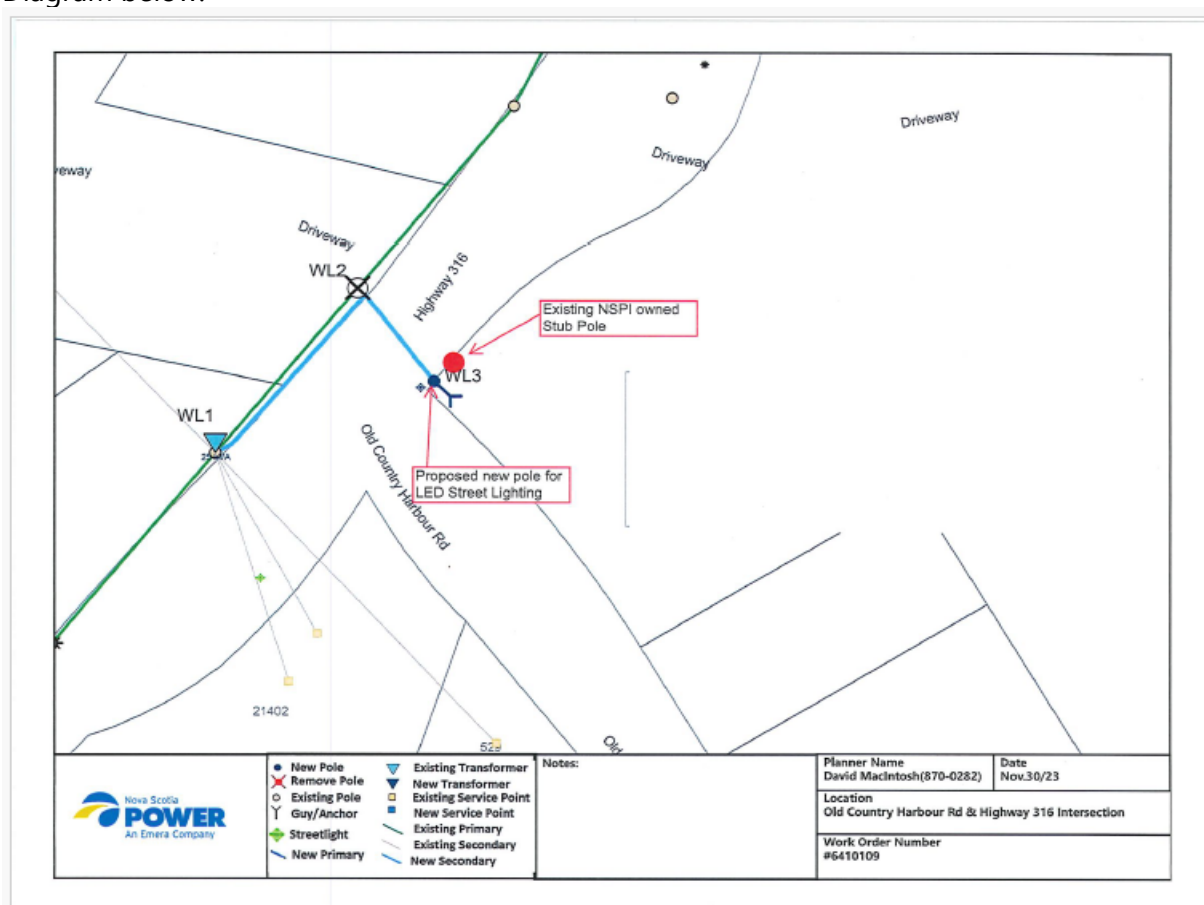


Total- \$1220.54
Total with HST – \$1403.62

CONSIDERATIONS

In January, we received a report from David Macintosh of Nova Scotia Power recommending a new pole be placed on the corner of Old Country Harbour Rd and 316 intersection along with the streetlight installation.

Diagram below:



RECOMMENDATIONS

That Municipal Council approve the \$1403.62 (HST included) to be paid to Nova Scotia Power to install a new pole and streetlight on the corner of Old Country Harbour Rd and 316 intersection.

Cellular Coverage – Build Nova Scotia Meeting

Economic Development

SUMMARY

Warden Greg Wier, CAO, Doug Patterson and EDO, Denise Dunn met with President and CEO of Build Nova Scotia, David Benoit, and Senior Advisor to the CEO, Michael Shoveller to ensure the lack of coverage in St. Mary's is recognized and a key consideration in the Build Nova Scotia Cellular for Nova Scotia Program.

BACKGROUND

Citizen's petitioned concerns in Autumn of 2023 prompted support and letter writing by Council to provincial and federal representatives to amplify and echo the shared concerns. A response on behalf of Premier Tim Houston was received from Kim Masland, Minister of Public Works on January 25, 2024. The letter was shared with Council at the February 7, 2024 COTW meeting. As stated in the letter:

- The province is investing \$47.3 million to start the Cellular for Nova Scotia Program.
- The goal of the project, which is being led by Build Nova Scotia, is to quickly and efficiently create a plan that covers as much of the province as soon as practicable.
- The project is a two phased approach:
 - The first phase, Request for Proposals (RFP), is now closed and under review. The RFP was seeking innovative and cost-effective proposals to install cellular equipment on **existing** provincially owned towers and other existing towers and/or infrastructure identified by proponents to expand cell coverage in underserved areas. The focus is on more immediate innovative solutions.
 - The second phase will include an additional RFP to seek solutions for the remaining gap areas.
- Minister Masland has requested the President and CEO of Build Nova Scotia to connect with St. Mary's to discuss further.

CONSIDERATIONS

Build Nova Scotia provided background on the project and stressed the sense of urgency in which they are running the timelines. All requests for extended RFP deadlines were denied and the short 30-day window remained for phase one. The review process is being operated with the same sense of urgency while not compromising quality or unique solutions. Since there is no current template on how to run such a review appropriately it is difficult to put a timeline on the review process. The service agreements

Staff Report



are for 10 years. That being said the RFP for phase two has already been drafted, reviewed by telecom companies and is just awaiting the gaps that are identified in phase one to be added.

Clarifications included the focus for phase one which is existing equipment, including novel options such as private and public owned infrastructure i.e. church steeples, farm silos, etc. Phase two will focus on new equipment. Satellite programs, VoIP, and new tower infrastructure are all on the table as potential solutions.

Provincial Bill 198 requires cellular towers and infrastructure to have service coverage 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This means power is required on site and there are questions around who owns the power and power infrastructure along with other legal issues that are being considered within the service agreements.

The gap analysis document that was prepared for Build Nova Scotia has helped shape the project but the telecom companies have proposed alternative and improved plans than what is suggested in the gap analysis.

Build Nova Scotia noted that the conversation with St. Mary's is helpful as sharing the lived reality of residents and travelers in this area helps maintain urgency and real world effects of their work. Build Nova Scotia requests patience from St. Mary's as they aim for results to be seen by the end of 2024 and beginning of 2025. With the caveat that building infrastructure and new towers will take longer depending on location, geography, and access.

RECOMMENDATIONS

None at this time. Report is for information sharing.

Initial Steps for the 2024 Municipal Election: Appoint Returning Officer and Assistant Returning Officer

SUMMARY

The 2024 Municipal Election will be held in October for all Nova Scotia Municipalities. Voting will be completed and winners announced on the third Saturday in October 2024. This will be October 19, 2024.

BACKGROUND

Primary Authority:

1. *Nova Scotia Municipal Elections Act*
2. *Nova Scotia Municipal Government Act*
3. Municipal Alternative Voting By-Law (enabled by 146A of *The Municipal Elections Act*)

CONSIDERATIONS

Part One: Selection of Returning Officer and Assistant Returning Officers

The first step in the 2024 election will be the council selection of Returning Officer and the assistant returning officers.

Municipal Elections Act: Returning officer and assistant returning officer.

4 (1) The council shall appoint a returning officer, who may be the clerk, another municipal employee or another person who is not a municipal employee, to conduct all regular and special elections required under this Act.

(1A) The council may appoint one or more assistant returning officers who shall assist the returning officer in carrying out the returning officer's duties and who shall act in the place and in the stead of the returning officer when the returning officer is absent or at the request of the returning officer.

(1B) The council shall appoint the returning officer for a regular election on or before the fifteenth day of March of the regular election year.

(1C) The council may delegate its powers of appointment pursuant to this Section to the clerk or chief administrative officer.

Staff Report



(2) The returning officer and the assistant returning officer shall, before entering upon the duties of office, take the oath in prescribed form.

Note: Returning and Assistant Returning Officers selected by council shall take their oath publicly at the March regular council meeting. (Mallory will complete the oath upon her return to staff duties later this year).

Form 1: Oath or Affirmation of Returning Officer/Assistant Returning Officer/Revising Officer (Sections 4, 8, 33)

I, _____ swear (or solemnly affirm) that I will act faithfully and impartially in the performance of my duties as Returning Officer/Assistant Returning Officer/ Revising Officer in the Town/Municipality/Regional Municipality of _____.

Sworn (or affirmed) at _____
in the County of _____
this _____ day of _____,
_____, before me

(see Section 146)
Revising Officer

Returning Officer/Assistant Returning Officer/

Part Two: Simplified Overview of the Components of a Municipal Election

- 1.) Council appoints the Returning Officer and the Assistant Returning Officers.
- 2.) Council approves a service package and Tariff of Fees and Expenses.
- 3.) An information package supporting candidates will be prepared by the returning officer with applicable, oaths, nomination forms and other supporting information.
- 4.) Voters will have opportunities to verify if they are on the voter list or to be added to the voter list (Beginning July 2024.).
- 5.) Candidates can drop in to complete their nomination with the Returning Officer on the second Tuesday of September or candidates can attend a nomination meeting with the Returning Officer on any of the 7 business days preceding the second Tuesday in September.
- 6.) Voting is completed on October 19, 2024 (The third Saturday of October)

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Municipal Council appoints CAO Doug Patterson to assume the additional duties and responsibilities of the Municipal Returning Officer for the 2024 Municipal Election. Further, that Municipal Council appoints Interim Clerk Jazdia Graham, Clerk Mallory Fraser, and Receptionist Melanie Mills to assume the additional duties and responsibilities of the Municipal Assistant Returning Officer for the 2024 Municipal Election.