



NOTICE

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

DATE: Wednesday, May 15th, 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, May 15th, 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 May 1st, 2024
6. Business Arising from Minutes
7. Correspondence : N/A
8. Other Matters of Business
 - a. Audit Process – Verbal Update
 - b. Tourism Levy – Staff Report
 - c. Municipal Volunteer of the Year Award – Staff Report
9. In Camera: Contract Negotiations and Legal

Adjournment



Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

Committee of The Whole (COTW) Meeting

Wednesday, May 1st, 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, May 1st, 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 James Harpell

Councillor Courtney Mailman

Councillor Beulah Malloy

Councillor Charlene Zinck

Absent with Regrets:

Also Attending:

Doug Patterson, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

Marian Fraser, Director of Finance (DOF)

3. Additions to the Agenda:

- Addition to 7.D Letter to Honourable Greg Morrow, MLA Guysborough – Tracadie from Sherbrooke Garage and Towing Ltd.

4. Approval of the Agenda:

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

Motion approved.

5. Approval of Minutes:

On the motion of Deputy Warden Fuller, and seconded by Councillor Malloy, Council approved the minutes of the COTW Meeting held April 17th, 2024.

Motion approved.

6. Business Arising from the Minutes:

- There was no business arising from the minutes.

7. Correspondence:

- a. Thank you letter from St. Mary's Shooters Association
 - See the attached correspondence.
 - Council received a letter from St. Mary's Shooters Association thanking Council for the grants to organization they received.
- b. Renewal Canada Community-Building Fund Agreement Update
 - See the attached correspondence.

- c. Whale Sanctuary Ocean's Day
- See the attached correspondence.
 - Council received a letter from The Whale Sanctuary asking if the municipality could contribute to their event "Ocean's Day" on June 1st, 2024.

On recommendation of Deputy Warden Fuller, and seconded by Councillor Baker, Council agree to support and participate in the first annual St Mary's Oceans Day event in partnership with the Whale Sanctuary. Further, the municipality will contribute \$300.00.

Recommendation adopted.

- d. Letter to Honourable Greg Morrow, MLA Guysborough – Tracadie from Sherbrooke Garage and Towing Ltd.
- Council received a letter from Sherbrooke Garage and Towing Ltd. to write to the Honourable Greg Morrow, MLA Guysborough – Tracadie.
 - Council by consensus agreed to write the letter to Honourable Greg Morrow in support of Sherbrooke Garage and Towing Ltd.

8. Other Matters of Business:

a. Review June Council Meeting Dates

- Council discussed and has set new dates for the upcoming Council meetings in June.

On recommendation of Councillor Harpell, and seconded by Councillor Baker, Council agreed to move the June 5th, 2024 COTW meeting to May 29th, 2024.

Recommendation adopted.

On recommendation of Councillor Malloy, and seconded by Councillor Harpell, Council agreed to move the Regular Council meeting from June 10th, 2024 to June 17th, 2024.

Recommendation adopted.

Adjournment

On motion of Councillor Harpell, and seconded by Councillor Malloy, there being no further matters of business, Council adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Motion approved.

Recorded By
Marian Fraser, Director of Finance

Approved By
Warden Wier

Tourism Levy- Coastal Nova Scotia

Economic Development

SUMMARY

Coastal Nova Scotia has requested a Tourism Levy be added to fixed-roof accommodations in Guysborough County as per their presentation at the January 17, 2024 Committee of the Whole meeting.

BACKGROUND

Coastal Nova Scotia Marketing Levy in St Mary's (Guysborough County)

Estimate for Guysborough County

- 30.4% Occupancy
- \$140 average room rate
- Estimated \$46,284 annually

Municipality responsibilities:

- No enforcement by staff
- Bylaw before implementation
- Service agreement for the collection and remittance of the levy to Coastal Nova Scotia

Amendments to the Municipal Government Act in October 2022 enabled municipalities to enact a bylaw to charge a levy of up to 3% on rooms registered under the Tourist Accommodations Registration Act, creating a valuable and sustainable source of funding for the marketing and promotion of the region. Coastal Nova Scotia would ask to work with St. Mary's, and the other municipal units in our region, to develop a bylaw and service agreement to govern how the levy would be collected, administered, and used for tourism destination marketing, based on best practices within the province.

Coastal Nova Scotia has been working with the other three destination marketing organizations in the province to create consistent wording so visitors are not experiencing several models across Nova Scotia.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Coastal Nova Scotia has brought the matter forward via email in 2023. See attached for briefing note.
- Coastal Nova Scotia presented to Council on January 17, 2024 COTW requesting consideration of the levy.

- The marketing levy was raised as an item for discussion at the joint Council meeting for St. Mary's, Guysborough and Mulgrave on April 10, 2024.
- Coastal Nova Scotia has offered to talk about the benefits of implementing a marketing levy at a community meeting with fixed-roof accommodation providers in attendance (in-person or virtual).
- The joint Council meeting had recommendations for each Council to consider as outlined below.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommend

1. *That the levy be investigated by Council with appropriate consultation conducted with all fixed-roof accommodation providers.*
2. *Should the levy be implemented, that an annual reporting mechanism be in place with Coastal Nova Scotia to ensure that funds are being spent locally on St. Mary's tourism marketing; and should this not be the case that the funds be redirected back to the Municipality (or the bylaw repealed).*
3. *That the timing of the bylaw enactment would not apply to previously made reservations.*

Tourism Marketing Levy

Briefing Note: 03/03/23

Purpose:

The introduction of provincial enabling legislation offers you a powerful new tool to invest in your community. Enabling Legislation was introduced on October 14, 2022 to create a consistent, province wide approach for municipalities to charge a tourism marketing levy of up to 3% on room rates of licensed fixed roof accommodations. This legislation aligns Nova Scotia with other provinces in supporting tourism and offering a new and vital source of revenue to be reinvested into the region. Tourism levies currently exist in Halifax (2001), Yarmouth (2007), Cape Breton (2011), and Digby (2022) and provide incremental annual revenue to those regions.

For more information or questions about this information please contact:

Cindy MacKinnon
Managing Director
cindy@coastalnovascotia.ca

By adopting a bylaw that will allow a tourism marketing levy to be collected in your municipal unit and administered through DEANS, together, we can significantly increase the economic impact for Northumberland and Eastern Shores.

Recommendation:

It is our recommendation that each of the municipalities in the Pictou, Antigonish, and Guysborough Counties adopt a consistent municipal bylaw to enact a tourism marketing levy. As the tourism marketing organization, DEANS is well positioned to administer the levy and support your municipality in enforcement. DEANS has strong working relationships with industry partners, provincial government departments, and the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia, along with municipalities.

We recommend that bylaws be considered immediately, allowing for an implementation date of January 1, 2024.

DEANS Responsibilities:

- Establish a Marketing Levy Advisory Committee comprised of industry representatives from each county.
- Draft the bylaw for consistent implementation.
- Develop a service agreement, based on best practices.
- Report annually on levy disbursements and activities.

Municipal Responsibilities

- Adopt bylaw and service agreement.
- Collect levy and remit funds to DEANS.
- Liaise with DEANS staff to ensure successful collection process.

Use of Levy

- It is our suggestion that the levy collected in each county would be spent by DEANS in that county.
- Attract major events, build capacity in event hosting, encouraging volunteering and skill development.
- Attract new visitors and economic activity to communities during the shoulder season.
- Marketing support with incremental digital campaigns and resources.

Anticipated Levy Revenue

Using an average occupancy rate (pre COVID) and an average room rate, we have calculated the average annual levy revenue per county. Occupancy data has been provided by the Nova Scotia Tourism Agency.

Antigonish

31.3% Occupancy at \$140 room rate Estimated levy collection of \$235,242.

Guysborough

30.4% Occupancy at \$140 room rate Estimated levy collection of \$46,284.

Pictou County

54% Occupancy at \$140 room rate Estimated levy collection of \$330,309.

The total levy is estimated to be \$611,835 annually, a valuable collective investment in your community. This funding source can be additionally leveraged with grants and funding programs for our region.

The adoption of a tourism marketing levy will put us on an even playing field with other areas that have a levy. Revenue to support events, implement new marketing campaigns, and run effective social media strategies will increase our tourism growth and ensure a sustainable tourism industry.

Municipal Volunteer of the Year Award

Selection of Volunteer of the Year

SUMMARY

The Municipality of the District of St. Mary's has put out a nomination form for residents to nominate someone within their organization/community who has shown exceptional volunteerism. The municipality will hold its annual Volunteer Appreciation Event in the Fall. The event celebrates the accomplishments of volunteers within the municipality, including a formal presentation to the Volunteer of the Year.

Residents could nominate through Microsoft Forms on the website, through email, and by telephone provided they could answer the questions and the individual nominated is a volunteer in any capacity. The winner will be invited to attend the Provincial Luncheon in Truro at the Rath Eastlink Community Centre on September 18th.

BACKGROUND

Local residents submit volunteer applications to support the great volunteers residing in St. Mary's. Each year, municipalities across the province celebrate the invaluable contributions of their community members through the title of Municipal Volunteer of the Year. This recognition aims to honor outstanding individuals whose dedication, commitment, and contributions have significantly impacted our organization and the community we serve. The Municipal Volunteer of the Year is not merely a title, but a symbol of commitment to service, inspiring others to follow suit in their acts of kindness and civic engagement. From organizing neighbourhood clean-up initiatives to helping a neighbour, these unsung heroes represent the heart of community and the belief that positive change begins at the grassroots level. Their tireless efforts serve as a symbol of hope and unity, reminding us all of the power of collective action in building a brighter, more compassionate society.

CONSIDERATIONS

Dedication and Commitment: The selected candidate should demonstrate consistent presence, reliability, and willingness to go the extra mile should be evident.

Impact and Contribution: The Council will consider the nominee's tangible impact on our community. Leadership qualities, including the ability to inspire and motivate others. The Volunteer of the Year should exhibit leadership not only in their actions but potentially influence others.

Attitude and Enthusiasm: Their genuine commitment and infectious spirit should inspire others to get involved and make a difference.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Council agrees to select _____ as the 2024 St. Mary's Municipal Volunteer of the year.