



NOTICE

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

DATE: Wednesday, December 4th, 2024

TIME: 6:00 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, December 4th, 2024, at 6:00pm

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 November 20th, 2024
6. Business Arising from Minutes
7. Correspondence: N/A
8. Presentation: Sherbrooke Water Utility – Water Rate Study – G.A Isenor Consulting Ltd. and Blaine S. Rooney Consulting Ltd.
9. Other Matters of Business
 - a. Growth and Renewal for Infrastructure Development (GRID) Program – Grant Funding Application
 - b. Staff Report – Sewer Inflow and Infiltration Phase 1 & 2
 - c. Recplex Ice Rental Scheduling
 - d. Engineer: Standing Offer
 - e. COTW: Schedule Planning for January 1st, 2025, New Date Needed
10. In-Camera: Personnel & Contract Negotiations

Adjournment



Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

Committee of The Whole (COTW) Meeting

Wednesday, November 20th, 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 Fuller called the COTW Meeting of the St. Mary's Municipal Council to order on Wednesday, November 20th, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Sherbrooke, N.S.

2. Attending:

Warden James Fuller
Deputy Warden Beulah Malloy
Councillor Scott Beaver
Councillor Dana O'Connell
Councillor Emma Tibbo

Also Attending:

Doug Patterson, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
Marian Fraser, Director of Finance (DOF)
Jadzia Rudolph, Municipal Clerk

3. Additions to the Agenda:

- Addition to #7. Correspondence – Sherbrooke Volunteer Fire Department Letter
- Addition to #9. f.) Appointment to Fire Services Advisory Committee
- Addition to #10. In-Camera – Personnel

4. Approval of the Agenda:

On the motion of Councillor O'Connell and seconded by Councillor Tibbo the Council approved the agenda with the additions.

Motion approved.

5. Approval of Minutes:

On the motion of Deputy Warden Malloy and seconded by Councillor Beaver the Council approved the minutes of the COTW Meeting held November 6th, 2024.

Motion approved.

6. Business Arising from the Minutes:

- There was no business arising from the minutes.

7. Correspondence: Sherbrooke Volunteer Fire Department Letter

- Doug Patterson, Chief Administration Officer (CAO) received a letter from Kenneth Pye, Chief of the Sherbrooke Volunteer Fire Department regarding the status of their request for support for funding for a new fire truck.

8. **Presentation:** Hospital Administration – Andrew Heighton and Lindsay Stevens

- Andrew Heighton and Lindsay Stevens provided a presentation to Council on the current operational status of the hospital. Hospital administration staff have provided council their current successes and challenges. Lindsay informed council that the hospital is one of few that haven't had an Emergency Room (ER) closure, there are no vacancies in nursing recruitment, they have a new triage space added to the emergency department.
- Some of the challenges the hospital face are the space and location, due to growing needs, aging facility and growing population, staff are trying to explore solutions to continue to meet health needs of the community.
- Council agreed that staff should write a letter to support the Hospital and urge the importance of the St. Mary's Memorial Hospital to the Municipality.

9. **Other Matters of Business:**

a. November 30 Tree Lighting Event

- Please see the Agenda/Package for the report.
- Staff informed Council that all permits and safety precautions are in place to provide a safe and fun event in the municipality.

b. Sherbrooke Volunteer Fire Department – Follow Up

Councillor O'Connell declared "Conflict of Interest"

- Please see the Agenda/Package for the report and previous presentation made by the department.
- Council acknowledged the fire department's letter and council and staff are currently exploring options to increase funding. Staff are searching for solutions to the ongoing needs of the fire departments.

c. Construction and Demolition Waste Services

- Please see the Agenda/Package for the report.
- Significant regulatory changes interrupted past practices and as a result the municipality does not have a current public C&D waste disposal service solution in operation. Work and research efforts continue to find new solutions.
- Currently there is a large accumulation of C&D material on hand at the municipal transfer station that was collected in calendar years 2022 and 2023. Environmental regulatory changes initiated in July 2023 made this material both costly and logistically difficult to dispose of. However, it is a problem that stands to benefit from ongoing time being spent to seek the most cost-effective options for the permanent disposal of the material.
- Council asked staff to explore options for accepting brush collection.

On recommendation of Deputy Warden Malloy and seconded by Councillor O'Connell Council direct staff to continue work to provide a cost-effective residential C&D service and to identify the lowest cost option for the final disposal of the existing C&D waste still on hand at the transfer station.

Recommendation adopted.

d. Extended Producer Responsibility Recycling Program Update

- Please see the Agenda/Package for the report.
- There is an important change coming to recycling in Nova Scotia where producers of recyclable material have a responsibility to ensure their recyclables are collected and that the producer also has the responsibility to cover the costs of recycling collection programs. All provinces are in various stages of updating their recycling programs to an EPR approach.
- December 2025 is potentially when the new recycling program will begin.

e. Councillor Code of Conduct

- Please see the Agenda/Package for the report.
- Council received correspondence from the Office of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing stating that a Code of Conduct Working Group was established to develop a set of recommendations on the code of conduct framework, which included content to include in the code, sanctions that may be imposed if a breach occurred, and options for an investigator model for all municipalities in the province.
- After a recommendation to approve the policy at a Committee of the Whole, Council must be provided with the final copy of the policy at least seven days prior to a Council Meeting, therefore this policy could have final approval at the Regular Council Meeting on December 9th, 2024.

On recommendation of Councillor O'Connell and seconded by Deputy Warden Malloy Council agree to send all of council to attend NSFM Code of Conduct training.

Recommendation adopted.

On recommendation of Deputy Warden Malloy and seconded by Councillor Beaver Council repeal the Code of Conduct Policy adopted on June 10th, 2019.

Recommendation adopted.

On recommendation of Councillor Tibbo and seconded by Councillor O'Connell Council approve the Municipal Code of Conduct Policy as presented.

Recommendation adopted.

f. Fire Services Administration Committee Appointment

- As per the *Fire Services Advisory Policy* there can be 3 members of Council appointed to the Fire Services Advisory Committee, Council would like to appoint Warden Fuller as a Committee member on the Fire Services Advisory Committee.

On recommendation of Councillor Beaver and seconded by Councillor Tibbo Council agree to appoint Warden Fuller to the Fire Services Advisory Committee.

Recommendation adopted.

10. In-Camera: Personnel

On motion of Councillor Tibbo and seconded by Deputy Warden Malloy, Council agree to move in-camera for personnel at 7:13 pm.

Motion approved.

On motion of Councillor Beaver and seconded by Deputy Warden Malloy Council agree to reconvene to regular session at 7:46 pm.

Motion approved.

Adjournment

On motion of Councillor O'Connell and seconded by Councillor Beaver there being no further matters of business, Council adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Motion approved.

Recorded By
Jadzia Rudolph, Municipal Clerk

Approved By
Warden Fuller

Sherbrooke Water Utility – Water Rate Study

SUMMARY

The Sherbrooke Water Utility is due for a rate increase due to expenditures being greater than revenue generated. To change rates and increase revenue, the utility must apply to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB) and complete a water rate study. The rate study is completed by specialized consultants who complete the studies throughout the province, G.A. Isenor Consulting Ltd and Blaine S. Consulting Ltd.

BACKGROUND

When a utility within the province decides rates need to be changed it can apply to the Board to do so. The utility must prepare a rate study to support the application. Appendix B of the Water Utility Accounting and Reporting Handbook includes information on what is required in an application. That includes:

- Proposed rates and revenue and their impacts
- Historical and projected financial information
- The methodology and calculations for the rates
- A description of the system.
- A copy of the proposed rules and regulations

The NSUARB will hold a public hearing to review the application and provide final approval on the proposed rates and rules/regulations.

CONSIDERATIONS

Consultants G. A. Isenor Consulting Ltd and Blaine will present the proposed Sherbrooke Water Utility rate study which will be submitted to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board and provide Council with an overview of the process, proposed rates and rate comparisons across the province.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommend that the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's on behalf of the Sherbrooke Water Utility, apply to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board for changes in its rates for the water and water services and changes to its rules and regulations for customers serviced by the Utility, as set out in the Water Rate Study prepared by G.A Isenor Consulting Ltd in association with Blaine S. Rooney Consulting Ltd.

Growth and Renewal for Infrastructure Development Program (GRID) – Grant Application

SUMMARY

Municipal staff have reviewed the newly announced Growth and Renewal for Infrastructure Development Program (GRID) Grant released by the department of Municipal Affairs and Housing (DMAH) and are exploring the opportunities to apply for funding to assist with Municipal capital infrastructure projects.

BACKGROUND

DMAH have recently announced a call for applications under the Growth and Renewal for Infrastructure Development Program (GRID). GRID supports investment in priority municipal infrastructure projects that address critical capacity issues, build more accessible and adaptable communities and enable the preservation and expansion of services to support housing. This program was established as part of the renewed Service Exchange Agreement between the Province and the Municipalities. This partnership led to the creation of GRID, an application-based program, which supports provincial priorities and provides municipalities with increased flexibility in leveraging funding.

The program may provide funding for 50% of eligible project costs, though the actual cost-sharing percentage could vary based on project specifics or budget availability. Applicants must demonstrate their ability to cover the remaining project costs through municipal and/or other funding sources. Funding from GRID can be leveraged by municipalities as their portion of any cost-shared infrastructure program, provided that the other programs do not prohibit this. Funding priority will be given to shovel-ready projects that help communities address critical capacity issues, health and safety, expand services, build more accessible and adaptable communities, and projects that enable and/or preserve housing.

Eligible projects include the following:

1. Water, Wastewater and Stormwater - Construction, expansion and/or renewal of:
 - Facilities for the treatment and disposal of sanitary sewage, sanitary sewage collection systems
 - Water intake, treatment, pumping and storage facilities
 - Water transmission and distribution systems
 - Construction, expansion and /or renewal of storm sewers
 - Infrastructure which reduces/eliminates combined sewer overflows

2. Climate Change Adaptation - Capital Project Recommendations from Climate Hazard/Risk Assessments and Coastal and Inland Flooding Adaptations.

3. Accessibility projects - Capital projects required to comply with Accessibility, supported by accessibility plans and improvements to municipal infrastructure including sidewalks and active Transportation (excluding Fleet).

Applications are accepted between Oct. 18, 2024 to Dec. 13, 2024 and must include a resolution of Council supporting the submission of the project and detailed cost estimates. If successful the project must be completed by March 31st, 2026, therefore projects would be part of the 2025-2026 Municipal Capital Budget.

CONSIDERATIONS

Municipalities may submit two applications under the GRID program and rank the projects by priority. Below are budget estimates and brief description of two proposed project to apply for GRID funding.

Project #1 – Sewer Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) Phase 3 - Sonora Rd/HWY 7- Repair/Replacement of Manhole Structures and Covers, Repair of Lateral Connections

Phase 3 of the I&I study includes repair/replacement of manhole structures and/or covers, repair of lateral connections located on Sonora R./Hwy 7, to include chemical grouting of structure, replacement of grade rings with new thoroughly sealed grade rings, replacement of manhole covers with watertight cover and/or regrading interface to direct runoff away from cover.

As part of the 2021 I&I study detailed budgets and cost estimates were provided. Those figures have been updated with an inflation factor and the total project is estimated at \$86,677.

Project #2 - Wastewater Treatment Plant Automatic Screener

Screening is the first unit operation in wastewater treatment deployed to retain suspended or floating coarse materials. These materials may consist of wood, plastics, rags, paper, cloth, etc in the influent water. Screens are deployed at the headworks as it is important to remove these at the beginning of the treatment as they may cause damage to subsequent process equipment such as pumps, valves, pipelines, and impellers, reducing the overall treatment reliability and effectiveness.

At the wastewater treatment plant, influent water may contain different types of physical materials that cannot be retained using a single type of screen. Hence, varied sizes, capacities, and screen cleaning methodologies have been developed to effectively treat influent at different stages of treatment to suit the specific requirements.

The main purpose of wastewater screening equipment is to remove solid materials from the wastewater system. Solid materials can contaminate waterways, damage equipment, and reduce the overall efficiency of the system, which is why they must be removed at all costs.

Staff Report



The total estimated project cost for the Sherbrooke Sewer Plant Automatic Wastewater Screener is \$170,000.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Project #1 – Sewer Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) Phase 3 - Sonora Rd/HWY 7- Repair/Replacement of Manhole Structures and Covers, Repair of Lateral Connections:

To direct staff to apply to the Growth and Renewal for Infrastructure Development Program through DMAH for the Sherbrooke Sewer Utility Inflow and Infiltration Phase 3 project including, repair by chemical grouting and remedy of manhole deficiencies of lateral connections located on Sonora R./Hwy 7 with the Municipal share funded through the 2025/26 Capital Budget.

Project #2 - Wastewater Treatment Plant Automatic Screener

To direct staff to apply to the Growth and Renewal for Infrastructure Development Program through DMAH for a Wastewater Treatment Plant Automatic Screen at the Sherbrooke Sewer Plant with the Municipal share funded through the 2025/26 Capital Budget.

Sewer Inflow and Infiltration Phase 1 & 2

Chemical Grouting of Manholes

SUMMARY

The Inflow and Infiltration study conducted in 2021 by engineer consultants CBCL identified that the Sherbrooke Sewer Plant had various points of ground water entering the collection system.

BACKGROUND

The results of the study which was published to the Municipality of St. Mary's in April 2021, discovered may entry points of ground water into the sewer collection system. Through vast testing and video inspection, CBCL and Public Works staff have been able to compose a list of areas needed of repair. This has been set out by CBCL in four phases. In phase one and two, Public Works will be focusing on the repairs of the Westside Sherbrooke and the Old Road Hill branches.

In December 2023 staff applied to the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing through the Municipal Capital Growth Fund program and were successful in securing the funding for phase 1 and 2 projects. This funding will allow for chemical grouting of the leaking manholes in these two branches to be completed to stop the influx of ground water during rain events and high ground saturation periods.

Public Works has recently issued a tender for the Chemical Grouting of these manhole structures. This tender will close on November 29, 2024, at noon.

The second component of these phases are the replacement of the manhole covers on the above noted branches. This tender is open until Friday, November 29th at noon but no contactors were present for the mandatory site visit. Public Works staff will continue to work on securing a solution for this component and information will be brought forward when available for council approval.

CONSIDERATIONS

This project was part of the 2024/2025 capital budget with confirmed 50% cost share funding from the Municipal Capital Growth Fund and remaining 50% funded through the Canada Community Building Fund to a maximum total project cost of \$148,086 for all components. To comply with the grant funding terms and conditions this project must be completed by March 31st, 2026.

Staff Report



RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff will complete the bid analysis and will be ready to present the award recommendation at the Committee of the Whole Meeting based on the tender closing date of Friday, November 29th, 2024.

St. Mary's Recplex Rentals



HOW TO BOOK:

To book the Recplex call 902-522-2049 Monday-Friday, 8:30am-4pm. Bookings must be made 24 hours in advance & by Friday for weekend rentals. For rentals between December 21- January 3 be sure to make your reservation by December 20, 2024. The rental rate is \$135 per hour + hst.

DECEMBER AVAILABILITY

	Sunday	Monday Curling Ice	Tuesday Curling Ice	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6-10am							
10am							N/A
11am							N/A
12pm							
1pm							N/A
2-5pm		N/A	N/A				
5pm							
6pm					N/A		
7pm							
8pm				N/A			
9pm							
10pm							

Engineer Design Services

SUMMARY

Introduction:

As a small municipality there is no engineer on staff. Yet the Municipality has water, wastewater utilities and a transfer station. All these services require occasional engineering design support for maintenance and new capital projects.

The best strategy to meet engineering design service needs going forward is to complete a procurement for a three-to-five-year ongoing agreement with one firm who would get to know the Municipality's infrastructure and who could be called upon as needed for approved projects. Terms would be for three years with municipal option to extend an additional two years for quality work. Contract would have mutual cancellation clauses.

Work events and costs would only be incurred for approved, budgeted projects.

The Request For Proposals (RFP) to select a provider would collect and rate bidders for core people/expert pricing as part of the evaluation criteria. Specific project bids using the RFP pricing data would be quoted by the provider for each municipal project.

BACKGROUND

Examples of potential projects that could be supported: (current known items)

- 1.) Feasibility study for the extension of water and wastewater utilities to the Sherbrooke Housing Concept Property. (Part of budgeted Housing Project for a Neighborhood Concept) including utility capability/feasibility check for utility capacity for potential housing development for Pid # 37503422 on HWY #7 in Sherbrooke. (Pid 3703422 is the subject property of interest for housing by Community First Guysborough Housing Association).
- 2.) Engineering design for capital project Water Plant PLC and Automation Upgrade. (Engineering design within the current PLC project budget).
- 3.) Future Projects TBA.

CONSIDERATIONS

Benefits of an Ongoing Contract vs. Individual tenders:

1. Benefit of having one set of experts who commit to doing on site work and who develop a deeper understanding of the municipality's infrastructure.
2. Unique and high workload and risk for the municipality to write ongoing detailed contract A tenders and RFPs for complex engineering services coupled with significant work to evaluate proposals. Each event uses significant municipal FTE.
3. The Municipality experiences limited and few bidders for most municipal tenders given our rural location and often smaller jobs coupled with higher costs from bidders. A longer-term arrangement could solicit more bidders and better pricing.
4. Each individual tender costs all bidders money to bid. The costs are passed on to the municipality in bid pricing.
5. Speed is a significant factor: Each Tender/RFP is a several week process to a complete vs. the speed of starting an identified project same day with a pre-assigned service.

The selection process for the engineering service would be in the form of an open RFP competition posted to the provincial tender site and the municipal web site. A site visit would be required. Bidding would close in mid January 2025 and municipal council would approve the contract award with support of a staff completed proposal analysis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That municipal council supports the business strategy of creating a three-to-five-year service agreement with an engineering firm for municipal engineering design needs subject to council's approval of the proponent business award.