



Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

Committee of The Whole (COTW) Meeting
Wednesday, March 3, 2021

1. Meeting, Date & Time:

The COTW Meeting of the St. Mary's Municipal Council was called to order on Wednesday, March 3rd, 2021 at 7:00pm in the Council Chambers Sherbrooke, N.S.

2. Attending:

Warden Wier	Councillor Mailman
Deputy Warden Fuller	Councillor Malloy
Councillor Baker	Councillor Zinck
Councillor Harpell	

Also Attending:

Marian Fraser, Director of Finance
Marissa Jordan, Municipal Clerk & Special Projects Coordinator

Absent with Regrets:

Marvin MacDonald, CAO

3. Additions to the Agenda:

- No additions

4. Approval of the Agenda:

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

Motion approved.

5. Approval of Minutes:

On motion of Councillor Harpell and seconded by Councillor Malloy, Council approved the minutes of the COTW Meeting held Wednesday, February 17th, 2021.

Motion approved.

6. Business Arising from the Minutes:

- The Director of Finance updated Council on the Municipal Asset Management Committee. The committee met last week to discuss the next steps to work with the province to develop an asset management plan moving forward.

7. Correspondence:

a. St. Martha's Regional Hospital Foundation- Thank You Letter:

- Staff received a letter from the St. Martha's Regional Hospital Foundation thanking the Municipality for their support and \$5,000 contribution.

8. Other Matters of Business:

a. 3rd Quarter Finance:

- The Director of Finance (DOF) provided a third quarter finance update. The primary information provided in the quarterly report is a comparison of the annual budget amounts to actual revenues and expenditures for general operating and department budgets. All financial information was based on preliminary, unaudited information reported from the municipal financial system as of December 31st, 2020.
- Interest on investments revenue remains to be under what was budgeted for 2020/2021 due to
- prime rate.
- Deed transfer tax is projected to be over budget by approximately \$69,000
- All provincial and federal grants in lieu revenues have been received.
- Final fire tax levy funding will be released to volunteer fire departments next week.
- Correspondence has been received from Dept of Infrastructure and Housing regarding the deficit from Regional Housing Authority, our expenditures are expected to be between \$16,236 and \$17,901. The budget for 2020/2021 was \$8,000.
- Provincial COVID-19 funding relief was received and recognized under the equalization grant in the budget. It is recommended by staff that \$5,000 of this funding be transferred to the water utility to cover the additional expense incurred due to COVID (examples include water testing freight, interest relief, etc) A recommendation should be made for this transfer to occur.
- Uncollectable taxes/Allowance for doubtful accounts – PVSC have deemed the following municipal tax assessment accounts to be inactive, therefore the outstanding taxes are now considered uncollectable and a recommendation to write off the following accounts: 01515373 in the amount of \$18,952.57 and 00103527 in the amount of \$3,785.26.
- Council asked what PVCS means by an inactive account. The DOF said that it could be account with no physical land meaning there should not be an assessment and it is unable to be sold in a tax sale.
- District Grants –2020/2021 district grants must be expensed by March 31st, 2021. A breakdown by district has been included.
- Sherbrooke Library – additional spray foam insulation is scheduled to be installed before year
- end.
- Fitness Center – no revenue or expenses will be recognized for 2020/2021.
- Sherbrooke Sewer Utility – New sewer pump has been ordered. A source main break has occurred in Sherbrooke Village and expense associated will be expensed in 2020/2021 budget.
- Municipal Transfer Station – HHW waste disposal is over budget for this fiscal as the materials from several years have been properly disposed of by a company that handles the material. Staff are working on receiving a grant to offset this expense through divert NS.
- Projections have been done to year end for all 2020-2021 budgets. Based on these projections there will be an operating budget surplus for 2020-2021. In the past Council has passed a motion to transfer any operating surplus on March 31st above \$5,000 to the capital reserve fund.
- Council asked why the Regional Housing Authority budget has more than doubled. The DOF stated that Regional Housing Authority has a shortfall in their finances and that if Council would like, a detailed summary can be requested. Council agreed that they would like to have additional information requested.
- Council asked for clarification on the uncollectable taxes and why the amount is increasing. The DOF explained that if the property is assessed by PVSC, then that amount owed is still charged and a tax bill is generated. Council asked how this affects the budget. The Municipality is required to carry this amount over through the years as per the MGA. DOF said that there is a

reserve built up to handle the uncollectable taxes. Each year the Municipality budgets to put the current year's taxes back into the reserve. The Municipality cannot remove these accounts until PVSC confirms the account is inactive. This amount is budgeted each year and the current years taxes goes back into this line item.

On recommendation of Councillor Harpell and Deputy Warden Fuller, Council agreed to transfer \$5,000 of the Provincial COVID relief funding from the general operating to the water utility due to associated additional expenses cause by COVID19.

Recommendation adopted.

On recommendation of Councillor Baker and Councillor Malloy, Council agreed to AAN 01515373, write off all outstanding taxes in the amount of \$18,952.57 due to account being deemed inactive by PVSC.

Recommendation adopted.

On recommendation of Councillor Baker and Councillor Harpell, Council agreed to AAN 00103527, write off all outstanding taxes in the amount of \$3,785.26 due to account being deemed inactive by PVSC.

Recommendation adopted.

On recommendation of Councillor Malloy and Councillor Baker, Council agreed to Council transfer any operating surplus for 2020/2021 above \$5,000 into the capital reserve on March 31st, 2021.

Recommendation adopted.

b. Whale Sanctuary Project- Request for Letter of Support:

- Staff received an email from Mr. Vinick that provided an update on the Whale Sanctuary Project. The Whale Sanctuary Project is now engaged in the second stage of the permitting and application for a Crown Lands lease through the Department of Lands and Forestry for the use of the submerged lands within the area of the proposed sanctuary in Wine Harbour, Port Hilford.
- One requirement for this portion of the lease application is to provide professional references for the project. Mr. Vinick asked for a letter of support from the new Council given that they are sitting during the period of the permit application. A letter of support had been received from the previous Council.
- Mr. Vinick also stated that they have incorporated as a Canadian non-profit corporation and are applying for charity status for that corporation that will partner with the U.S. entity in establishing the sanctuary.
- Council agreed to have staff organize a presentation from the Whale Sanctuary before writing a letter of support.

c. Shared Services Agreement with MODG:

- The Municipality of the District of Guysborough (MODG) recently gave staff a new Shared Services Agreement Contract to review and sign. In previous history this service was provided through MODG but there was no formal contract. MODG ensured that the service was provided as needed.
- This new agreement outlines the services provided by MODG to the Municipality with respect to dog control, subdivision processing and land use planning as well as building inspection services. This new contract also includes a monthly charge for service.
- Council discussed the amount that is proposed to be charged monthly for dog services and asked how often this service is used within the year. The DOF stated that the hours for this service

would be for the Animal Control Officer to answer questions relating to issues related to animal control and the Municipality's By-Law. This person is also a special constable that can issue summary offence tickets.

- Council asked if there was any way for this amount to be reduced. The DOF suggested that if Council would like to discuss changes to the amounts/services within the contract, that an in camera session for contract negotiations may be more appropriate.

On motion of Councillor Baker and seconded by Councillor Zinck, Council moved into an in-camera session for Contract Negotiations at 7:26pm.

Motion approved.

On motion of Councillor Malloy and seconded by Councillor Zinck, Council reconvened to regular session at 8:02pm.

Motion approved.

- Council gave direction to the Director of Finance to request clarification on parts of the Shared Services Agreement with MODG and have the item added to an upcoming meeting to further discuss.

d. Brush Clearing on Cape Gegogan Road:

- Staff updated Council that the request for quotes deadline has closed and there were three quotes received; Wilson's Cove Excavation- \$1,475.00 plus HST, Liscomb Trucking & Backhoe - \$6,200.00 plus HST, KAT Forestry & Pallets- \$6,850.00 plus HST. CAO MacDonald awarded this tender to Wilson's Cove Excavation and the work has started this week.

e. Volunteer of the Year Award:

- Based on review and recommendation of Council, the Community Development and Recreation Coordinator reached out to Gabrielle Schupbach for the 2020/2022 Volunteer of the Year for the Municipality and will be representing the Municipality at the Provincial Awards (virtual) in late April.

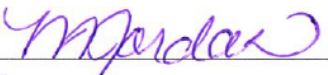
On recommendation of Councillor Mailman and seconded by Deputy Warden Fuller, Council agreed to have Gabrielle Schupbach as the 2021/2022 Municipal Volunteer of the Year.


Recommendation adopted.

9. Adjournment

On motion of Councillor Harpell and seconded by Councillor Zinck there being no further matters of business, Council adjourned at 8:03pm.

Motion approved.


Recorded By
Municipal Clerk/Special Projects Coordinator


Approved By
Warden Wier