



Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

Committee Of The Whole (COTW) Meeting

Wednesday – August 21st, 2019

1. Meeting, Date & Time:

The COTW Meeting of the St. Mary's Municipal Council was called to order on Wednesday, August 21st, 2019 at 1:00pm in the Council Chambers Sherbrooke, N.S

2. Attending:

Warden Mosher
Councillor Findlay
Councillor Kaiser-Kirk
Councillor Malloy
Councillor Smith

Also Attending:

Marvin MacDonald, CAO
Marian Fraser, Director of Finance
Marissa Jordan, Municipal Clerk/Special Projects Coordinator

Absent With Regrets:

Councillor Baker
Deputy Warden Dort

3. Approval of Agenda:

On motion of Councillor Malloy and seconded by Councillor Findlay, Council approved the agenda as presented.

Motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes:

On motion of Councillor Smith and seconded by Councillor Findlay, Council approved the minutes of the COTW Meeting held Wednesday, August 7th, 2019.

Motion carried.

5. Business Arising from the Minutes:

Boundary Review:

- Staff has worked out a rough idea of boundaries if Council were reduced to 5 districts.
- Staff will present more information at the next COTW as well as recommended next steps

IT MOU:

- Council asked if there have been any other municipalities that have signed IT MOU.

- Director of Finance informed Council that members of the Group of Nine (GON) will meet for an update on Sept 5th, 2019.

6. Presentations:

a. Juanita Spencer- Chief Executive Office of the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM):

- Mrs. Spenser informed Council of the NSFM's new direction to increase advocacy and public communication.
- NSFM is currently working on changes to resolutions that are taken to the provincial government. They are looking to reduce the number to three main priorities a year and to keep the same resolutions each year until completed.
- NSFM has created two new positions, one to help with communications and another to help members access funding from the FCM.
- NSFM will be starting a new women's and youth forum to generate more awareness and education of municipal government.
- Councillor Kaiser-Kirk expressed her disappointment with people attending NSFM conference sessions and not returning to sessions, or the disruption if they are returning late.
- Councillor Smith expressed her concern with the cost of the conferences and training for smaller Municipalities.
- Councillor Smith expressed her concern that smaller municipalities may not be able to send as many Councillors due to cost, which gives less voting power at the conferences.
- Councillor Findlay expressed that the conference in Quebec did not allow for all to take part in educational excursions.
- Council expressed their concern about rural internet in this area and Develop NS's initiative.
- Council expressed their concern about the sale of Liscomb Lodge and the potential of lost employment if it is sold to someone that chooses not to run it as a business.
- Council updated Mrs. Spenser on new things happening in our Municipality.

7. Correspondence:

On motion of Councillor Findlay and seconded by Councillor Kaiser-Kirk, Council moved into an in camera session for contract negotiations at 2:16pm.

On motion of Councillor Findlay, Council returned to a regular session at 2:48pm.

8. Other Matters of Business:

a. September Meeting Dates- Strategic Plan Review & Committee of the Whole:

- Strategic Plan Review-September 4th, 2019- 10am
- Committee of the Whole- September 4th, 2019- 1pm

Council recessed at 2:59pm.

Council reconvened at 3:04pm

b. Director of Finance- 1st Quarter Finance Review:

Municipal Operating Budget:

- (1) Property tax bills were sent out at the end of May.
- (2) Variances in residential and commercial tax revenue vs budget estimates are due to assessment appeals through PVSC. There is still one major commercial account that has an outstanding PVSC appeal. Depending on the outcome from this assessment appeal it could have an impact on the commercial revenue.
- (3) All provincial and federal grants in lieu revenues will be applied by the deadline of September 30th, 2019.
- (4) Appropriation to Regional School - Education expense – will be over budget for 2019/20 – actual expense for 2019/20 will be \$561,724 vs \$557,000 budgeted; \$4,724 over budget
- (5) Correction Services expense - will be under budget – actual expense for 2019/20 will be \$42,917 vs budgeted \$44,000
- (6) Deficit from Regional Housing Authority – the 2018/19 actual expense payable to Housing NS was \$8,812 (\$812 over the allotted amount set up from 2018/19). This was down from 2017/18 expense of \$15,273.
 - Council requested a copy of the Housing Authority Financial Statements.
- (7) General government services expenditure appear to be on track for the first quarter.
- (8) Solicitor expense includes first quarter billing for annual retainer and expropriation court expenses.
- (9) Property valuation services expense includes both the first and second quarter payments to PVSC
- (10) Valuation allowance; would council like to review potential tax sale accounts for tender?
- (11) Protective Services - Annual grants and training grants to Fire departments will be released within the next couple weeks.
- (12) RCMP – policing, actual 2019/20 expense will be \$476,820 vs \$482,394; \$6,000 under budget
- (13) Property inspection – building inspections – shared service with Guysborough Municipality for building inspector services, did not receive any invoices for services during first quarter
- (14) Planning and Subdivision – \$24,000 available for updating of planning documents (consulting fees)
- (15) Regional Enterprise Network closure expenses – to date expenses incurred as part of the closure process have been covered by funds remaining from last year's payments
- (16) Major grants to organizations will be issued at the end of July. See district grants update attached.
- (17) Cultural services; Sherbrooke Library - funds have been budgeted for repair work; work to be completed within the next couple months. Administration will be researching alternate heating methods for the library for this winter.

Department of Community Development and Recreation:

- (1) Recreation & Community Development – Community Use of Schools grants have been carried over from last fiscal year. The Friends of Stonewall Park money remains from last fiscal at \$5,311 this money is being used to leverage a green jobs grant for the summer. All other programming is on track for the first quarter.
- (2) Fitness Center – The fitness center is now closed for the summer months.

- (3) St. Mary's Recplex – Seasonal operation, some maintenance will be done over the summer. Sherbrooke Day Camps are held at the Recplex over the summer. Pickle ball is also being held throughout the summer on Monday evenings.

Department of Economic Development:

- (1) Advertisements for the position of Economic Development and Planning Officer will be done within the next month.
 - Economic Development Position to be posted in the newsletter and other areas this week.
- (2) Tourism Promotion/Saltscapes- 2019/20 Saltscapes event took place in April.

Department of Public Works:

- (1) Municipal Transfer Station – Scrap metal has been sold with \$10,117 revenue collected. Stumpage contact was awarded and work performed, revenue from stumpage should be received in the near future. The RFP for the disposal of C&D will be going out within the next couple weeks. All other operations at the transfer station are on track for the first quarter.
- (2) Sherbrooke Sewer Utility – Sewer utility rates increased in 2019/20. The utility lost revenue from a few customers due to change in use of properties. All other items in budget are on track for first quarter.

Capital Reserves:

- (1) General Capital
 - a. Dry Hydrant – Sonora tender has been awarded for approximately \$5,500. Engineering for one in Aspen is currently underway.
 - b. Office Generator – Administration are working on developing an RFP to purchase and install generator
 - c. Hospital Road Repairs –Staff would like council to consider moving this expense from the capital reserve budget to the gas tax budget and use the double up funds from 2019/20.
 - d. UV System for sewer – Still waiting to hear from the funding application submitted
- (2) Gas Tax Reserve
 - a. One time double up gas tax funds were received at the end of July.
 - b. Suggestion of water upgrade second filter – NSE requirements
 - c. Suggestions of Hospital Road upgrades be expenses from gas tax budget
- (3) Roy Steed Fund
 - a. Zamboni – CAO is currently in active negotiations to purchase a used Zamboni
 - b. Outside Repairs- work is being completed throughout the summer; painting, replacing rotten outside siding, roofs above doors, etc
 - Council suggested that the driveway entrance to the Recplex is in need of maintenance.

MFC Section:

- The Director of Finance provided an overview of the Nova Scotia Municipal Finance Corporation's program for a municipal high interest pooled savings.

On recommendation of Councillor Kaiser-Kirk and seconded by Councillor Findlay, Council agrees to moving \$500,000 of Municipal funds from the Royal Bank General Account to a MFC High Interest Saving Account.

- Council asked what happens when the balance in the general account exceeds 2 million.
- The Director of Finance stated that the interest rate would increase.

Recommendation adopted. (1 Nay-Councilor Malloy)

On recommendation of Councillor Kaiser-Kirk and seconded by Councilor Malloy, Council approved the 2018/2019 Audited Financial Statements.

Recommendation adopted.

On recommendation of Councillor Findlay and seconded by Councillor Kaiser-Kirk, Council agreed to cover the cost for the upgrade to the second filter system at the water treatment plant using \$20,755 from the gas tax fund.

Recommendation adopted.

Adjournment

On motion of Councilor Malloy there being no further matters of business, council adjourned at 3:49pm



Recorded By
Municipal Clerk/Special Projects Coordinator



Approved By
Warden Mosher