

Regular Camera Council Meeting
July 20, 2020
Location: Various Via Zoom

Present

Mayor L. Chisholm
Deputy Mayor M. Farrell
Councillor W. Cormier
Councillor A. Murray
Councillor D. MacInnis
Councillor J. MacPherson
Councillor D. Roberts

Also Present

J. Lawrence, CAO
D. Wilson, Deputy Clerk
M. Barkhouse, Corporate Services
K. Gorman, Communications
L. Roy, Strategic Initiatives

Media

Observers

Call to Order

Mayor L. Boucher called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

Approval of Agenda

"It was Moved and Seconded to approve the Agenda as presented." Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

"It was Moved and Seconded to approve the minutes of the In Camera and Regular Council June 15, 2020 and Special Council meetings held June 30th and July 6th, 2020." Motion carried.

Business from Minutes

Councillor J. MacPherson noted that from the previous Minutes discussion had taken place on the railway crossing at the east end of Main Street and provided Council with details of a conversation he had with an employee of the railway.

Councillor D. Roberts provided additional information on a conversation she had had with a railway employee regarding repairs at the West end of Main Street.

New Business

- Welcome – L. Roy
- Mayor L. Boucher welcomed Lise Roy to the meeting and provided details on her role.

Special Guest

- Corey LeBlanc
- Mayor L. Boucher indicated C. LeBlanc would likely join Council at a meeting for which a date is to be determined.

Staff Reports

- CAO Report

- Allowance for Doubtful Accounts (AFDA)

M. Barkhouse provided Council details on the allowance for doubtful accounts (those felt to be uncollectable). She noted staff cleared up a significant number of old electric accounts in 2018 and 2019, noting that electric accounts are the largest allowance as it has the largest accounts receivable and the least amount of recourse if an account falls into arrears. The auditor's letter to management requested that the Town establish a procedure for calculating the AFDA. She advised Council on the method to be used moving forward and how it would allow staff to build an allowance that is reflective of current predicted uncollectible accounts noting the AFDA accounts apply to the following: Electric, Property tax, Sewer, General and Water.

M. Barkhouse responded to a query from Councillor W. Cormier.

- Property Taxes Request for 239 Hawthorne Street Fire

M. Barkhouse advised she had received a request for an update from a property owner regarding property tax for a townhouse that recently burned down. She noted that after speaking with Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC) the tax assessment had been reduced dramatically. She requested Council consider changing the property tax and other levies outstanding based on prorating the assessed value by the dates before and after the fire and provided further details.

"It was Moved and Seconded to update property tax levy to tax rolls 09376151, 0981755, 09081747, 09081739 and 0908176 with a \$991.07 credit each due to property damage caused by a fire on June 19, 2020 fire at 239 Hawthorne Street." Motion carried.

- Interest on Capital Investments - Update

M. Barkhouse provided an overview of changes made to the Water and Electric Utility financial statements for the 2019-20 year-end further to direction from the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board. She noted interest should not be accounted for on the Statement of Operation but within the Depreciation Reserve Fund.

Council was advised that the changes have resulted in a decrease in expected revenue for both the Water and Electric Utilities for the fiscal year. M. Barkhouse indicated that the Town was also instructed to correct 2019-20 interest on investment account resulting in a balance in the 2019-20 statements and that the interest has been allocated to the Depreciate Fund Investment on the Balance Sheet, and further that the budgets going forward will not include this interest on investment in the Statement of Operations.

M. Barkhouse responded to a query from Councillor W. Cormier. Brief discussion took place.

CAO J. Lawrence provided brief comment on the matter.

Correspondence

- Municipal Affairs and Housing – Re-appoint P. Smith – Eastern Mainland Housing Authority Board (3-year term)

Mayor L. Boucher noted that correspondence was received from Municipal Affairs stating that the Ms. P. Smith's appointment to the Board will soon expire. She further noted that it has been determined that P. Smith has an interest in remaining on the Board.

"It was Moved and Seconded to re-appoint P. Smith the Board of the Eastern Mainland Housing Authority

- CAO Report (continued)

Mayor L. Boucher asked for questions from Council. Councillor J. MacPherson stated he found the building report from EDPC quite brief.

Councillors A. Murray and D. Roberts stated they also felt the report was brief. Councillor D. Roberts provided additional comment.

CAO J. Lawrence noted he would speak with J. Bain on the matter.

Councillor W. Cormier questioned details on the street sweeper and paving. CAO J. Lawrence noted the major paving tender has gone out and will close in a couple of weeks. He stated he would speak with the Town Engineer on the street sweeper.

"It was Moved and Seconded to accept the CAO Report." Motion carried.

- Committee Reports

Fire Committee

Councillor W. Cormier stated he had nothing to report.

Solid Waste Management/Police Advisory Board

Councillor J. MacPherson stated that a meeting of the Waste Committee was not held, however the Police Advisory Board will meet September 3rd.

Beautification/Canada Day Committees

Councillor A. Murray indicated things went very well with the flower program. Flowers have been hung on Main, James and St. Andrew's Streets and the planter boxes have been filled. Work is ongoing around the arena, the tall grasses have been re-installed at the east end of Main Street and that Chisholm Park looks great.

Council was advised that Canada Day went off quite well, with positive comments received. Councillor A. Murray thanked those involved in the project. Mayor L. Boucher congratulated the Committee for their great work.

Police & License Committee

Councillor D. Roberts noted she had planned to have Police & License meeting last week, however she agreed to postpone the meeting until September. She updated Council on the Electronic ticketing process, lighting at crosswalks, and that additional beacons have been ordered.

Further to a conversation with Mayor L. Boucher it was noted that the RCMP are looking at the matter of loud mufflers.

D. Roberts noted that there will be outdoor checker boards that will be a legacy for the 55+ Games and noted that one would be installed at Chisholm Park and the other at the RK Nursing Home, with plaques eventually being installed.

Accessibility Advisory Committee

Councillor D. MacInnis indicated he had received an email from the Mayor indicating the province looking for updates from municipalities to determine how much of an extension would be given for putting a plan in place. Mayor L. Boucher noted an RFP has gone out to get help with the plan.

Recreation Committee

Deputy Mayor M. Farrell noted the Town and County Recreation Departments have partnered together for an equipment loan program. Details were provided on how to borrow equipment. Deputy Mayor M. Farrell agreed to share the contact information with Council.

Mayor L. Boucher provided positive comment on the program. Deputy Mayor M. Farrell thanked staff for their work on the project.

Planning Advisory Committee

Mayor L. Boucher stated that no meeting had been held and some developments going on and provided positive comment.

Councillor J. MacPherson questioned Council's position on the opening of St. FX University. CAO J. Lawrence suggested it was inappropriate to bring this forward without notice to Council.

There was general discussion on the appropriateness of bringing this forward given that St. F.X. has made application to the Department of Health and the plan has been approved.

There was further discussion around the role of the Town on any Oversight Committee.

It was Moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:46 PM.