

**Regular Town Council Meeting
December 14, 2020
Town Council Chambers**

Present

Mayor L. Boucher
Deputy Mayor A. Murray
Councillor S. Cameron
Councillor W. Cormier
Councillor M. Farrell
Councillor D. MacInnis
Councillor D. Roberts

Also Present

D. Wilson, Deputy Clerk
S. Scannell, Community Development
M. Barkhouse, Human Resources
K. Gorman, Communications
K. Proctor, Town Engineer
L. Roy, Strategic Initiatives

Absent with Regret

CAO J. Lawrence

Call to Order

Mayor L. Boucher called the meeting to order at 6:07 PM.

Approval of Agenda

"It was Moved and Seconded to approve the Agenda with two additions." Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

"It was Moved and Seconded to approve the Minutes of the October 2nd Epoll, November 5, 2020 (Swearing In) Council Meeting, Regular and In Camera November 16th, Special December 1st Council and Special In Camera Council meeting of December 8th, 2020." Motion carried.

Presentations

- M. Barkhouse Re: 2020/21 Electric Utility Budget

M. Barkhouse took to the podium and provided Council with details on the Electric Utility budget. She noted the impact of Covid-19 on energy consumption as well as power purchase savings.

Council was advised that revenue had decreased due to Covid-19 which impacts expected annual savings. M. Barkhouse provided details on power purchasing expenses, and additional budget expenses and expanded on the details. She noted that the Electric Utility does not have debt.

M. Barkhouse responded to a query from Council.

"It was Moved and Seconded to approve the 2020/21 Electric Utility Budget as presented." Motion carried.

- Community Enhancement Advisory Committee
- S. Scannell provided Council

S. Scannell advised that staff are recommending that Council repeal the existing Recreation and Beautification and Land Rehabilitation Advisory Committees and establish a Community Enhancement Advisory Committee. He noted that a report and recommendation had been provided to Council.

Council was provided with the benefits and improvements proposed by the creation of the Community Enhancement Advisory Committee, and in particular, the issue of placemaking through the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS). He expanded on details related to placemaking

S. Scannell spoke to the positive impact that the Beautification Committee has made to the community, however, when looking at the goals of the MPS, the proposed changes will work more in concert with a Community Enhancement Advisory Committee.

It was noted that all current members of the Beautification and Recreation Committees would be eligible to apply to sit on the proposed Community Enhancement Advisory Committee.

S. Scannell responded to a question as to whether membership should be specific to Town residents. Discussion took place.

S. Scannell responded to questions from Council.

In response to a query from Council S. Scannell noted that if Council approves the proposed committee as proposed, and allowing time for the policy to be approved, calls for membership could likely be made in January 2021.

“It was Moved and Seconded to repeal the existing Recreation and Beautification and Land Rehabilitation Committees and establish a Community Enhancement Advisory Committee as presented.” Motion carried.”

Business from Minutes

- D. Davies Re: Book Sponsorship Request (Mayor L. Boucher)
- Mayor L. Boucher provided details on what action the County of Antigonish had taken regarding their request for sponsorship for the D. Davies book.

Brief discussion took place.

Mayor L. Boucher noted that further to discussion at the last meeting the Town will provide book sponsorship in the amount of \$1,000.00.

- R.K. MacDonald Appointment
- Mayor L. Boucher noted that the R.K. had recently revised their policy for Board members to include a wider scope that they would prefer Board candidates to demonstrate and expanded on the details.

Mayor L. Boucher requested that this matter be tabled until January 2021, with Council being in general agreement.

“It was Moved and Seconded to Table discussion on appointment of a Board member for the RK. MacDonald Nursing Home.

New Business

- Eastern District Planning Commission (EDPC) Membership
Mayor L. Boucher provided background details on the Town’s probationary membership with EDPC, and stated she feels the agreement has been beneficial to both the Town and EDPC and that the Town should apply to have permanent membership.

Council provided comment.

“It was Moved and Seconded that the Town write the EDPC to request full membership with the Eastern District Planning Commission.” Motion carried.

- New Years’ Levee
Mayor L. Boucher noted that with Covid-19 the New Years Levee will be cancelled.

It was generally agreed to write to acknowledge the Royal Canadian Legion for their involvement and to confirm continued New Years Levees in the future.

- New Position – Public Works Supervisor

That the job description and salary grid as proposed by the Director of Corporate Services for a Public Works Supervisor be approved as presented.

Correspondence

- Antigonish Hiking, Biking and Trails Association and Ski Antigonish (SKIA) Request for Assistance

Mayor L. Boucher introduced correspondence from SKIA regarding a request for financial assistance.

Councillor W. Cormier provided comment on tracks set for cross country skiing and snowshoeing by the group and spoke to accessibility and the location (Antigonish Golf and Country Golf Club).

Councillors provided further comment.

S. Scannell provided comment noting the total budget would be in the area of \$20,000 and would include the purchase of a snowmobile. He spoke further to the benefit to recreation community access.

Mayor L. Boucher provided comment on the benefit to the community with this partnership.

“It was Moved and Seconded that the Town provide funding support in the amount of \$5,000.00 (five thousand dollars) to Antigonish Hiking, Biking and Trails Association from Council’s discretionary funding conditional on the project proceeding.” Motion carried.

Staff Reports

- CAO Report

“It was Moved and Seconded to accept the CAO Report as presented.” Motion carried.

Committee Reports

- Recreation Committee

Councillor M. Farrell reported that the Recreation Committee met and discussed the evolution of the new committee. She thanked Councillors and staff for their input in Recreation over the past four (4) years.

- Accessibility Committee

Councillor D. MacInnis reported on an Accessibility Zoom meeting held with Upland and provided details. He noted that overall the timeframe to formulate an accessibility plan is approximately three (3) months, however the timeline could change somewhat due to the current pandemic.

- RCMP/Waste Management Advisory Committees

Councillor D. Roberts, Co-Chair of the RCMP Advisory Committee, reported on discussion from the past meeting regarding a desire to replace an existing gazebo at the Antigonish Education Centre with a suitable memorial site and put the following motion forth:

“It was Moved and Seconded that Council endorse the Strati Regional Centre for Education in removing the gazebo at the Antigonish Education Centre and replace it with a memorial garden.” Motion carried.

It was noted that there would be no cost to the Town or County and that an existing stone would be used as a memorial.

Discussion took place on ‘modified mufflers’ and information that can be forwarded to the RCMP in this regard.

Councillor D. Roberts reported on a recent Waste Management committee meeting and provided comment on various matters that were discussed.

Councillor W. Cormier provided comment on household hazardous waste and it was noted that a permanent site has been established at the Beech Hill Landfill Site which is now open.

- Beautification Committee

Deputy Mayor A. Murray noted the Beautification Committee had met and provided comment. T. Cameron and S. Scannell were recognized for their efforts over the past four (4) years.

Council was provided with details on the Christmas décor for this year. Deputy Mayor A. Murray spoke further to the success of the Storybook and Christmas parade.

- Fire Committee

Councillor S. Cameron noted he will be working with the fire Chief on a meeting schedule. It was noted that in the past meeting were held on an as-needed basis.

Brief discussion took place.

- Pictou Antigonish Regional Library (PARL)

Councillor S. Cameron noted he is the new representative on the PARL Board, and commended Councillor W. Cormier for his past representation. It was noted the Library will be celebrating its' tenth anniversary this spring.

It was further noted that beginning in January the library will be open seven days a week.

- Police & License Committee

Councillor W. Cormier noted that the Police & License committee had met in December. Brief discussion took place on 'modified mufflers' and information that the RCMP will accept in this regard.

Brief discussion took place on the tremendous success of push buttons at crosswalks and expenditures that need to be considered in advance of budget discussions.

With there being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:13 PM.