

**Regular Council Meeting
May 17, 2021
Virtual Via Zoom**

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

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

Media
Observers

Call to Order

Mayor L. Boucher called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Approval of Agenda

“It was Moved and Seconded to approve the Agenda with additions.” Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

“It was Moved and Seconded to approve the Minutes of the In Camera and Regular Council Meetings of April 19th, and Special and In Camera Minutes of May 3rd, 2021.” Motion carried.

Presentations/Proclamations/Flag Requests

- Strait Area Ground Search and Rescue – Removed from Agenda.
- Proclamation; Lyme Disease Awareness Month
Mayor L. Boucher provided comment on the prevalence of ticks in this area and read aloud and signed the Proclamation declaring May 2021 Lyme Disease Awareness Month.
- Antigonish Highland Society; Request to Fly Gaelic Flag
“It was Moved and Seconded that the Town fly the Gaelic flag on May 31, 2021.” Motion carried.
- Antigonish Victorian Order of Nurses (VON); Re: Flag, Proclamation and Exterior Lighting at Town Hall
Deputy Clerk D. Wilson noted she had advised staff of the VON that the Town does not have a policy regarding exterior lighting at Town Hall.

Mayor L. Boucher provided positive comment on the work the VON does and read aloud and signed the proclamation declaring May 23-29, 2021 as Von week in the Town of Antigonish.

“It was Moved and Seconded that the Town fly the VON flag from May 23-29, 2021.” Motion carried.

New Business

- Town of Antigonish Operations During Covid Lockdown (J. Lawrence)

CAO J. Lawrence provided an overview on how the Town is operating and how various Town Departments and how operations are proceeding during the lockdown. He noted that this time staff are endeavoring to ensure field staff are working during regular hours as much as possible to deliver services as close as it would during regular business hours.

CAO J. Lawrence responded to a question from Mayor Boucher regarding staff and agreed to relay comments regarding their efforts during this time.

- Canadian Association of Community Living (CACL) Re: Property Tax

CAO J. Lawrence noted that Council had received a report previously circulated in August 2018 regarding a request from CACL to be taxed as residential instead of commercial.

Mayor L. Boucher noted correspondence was received from the Chair of CACL requesting consideration for tax exemption this year and moving forward and provided further comment.

Councillor S. Cameron put forth the following motion:

“It was Moved and Seconded that based on Section 71.2 of the Municipal Government Act that the Town consider adopting a policy reducing the tax rate from commercial tax rate to residential rate for the CACL.”

Discussion took place with each Councillor providing comment.

Mayor L. Boucher encouraged CACL to apply through the Town’s Community Grant program, to relieve some of the financial pressure on CACL.

Motion defeated.”

- Request to Approve Terms of Reference for the Antigonish Regional Emergency Management Advisory Committee

S. Scannell provided comment on work being carried out by H. Lam and noted the Terms of Reference is to provide structure to the Advisory Committee.

“It was Moved and Seconded that Town Council approve the Terms of Reference for the Antigonish Regional Emergency Management Advisory Committee as presented.” Motion carried.

- By-law Repeals; Swimming Pool By-law and Building By-law (S. Scannell)

S. Scannell provided a brief overview noting the reasons for repealing the Swimming Pool and Building By-law are contained within the distributed report and that it brings them in line with

operations under the Building Code Act and Eastern District Planning Commission, and requested Council give First Reading to have them repealed.

Brief discussion took place.

“It was Moved and Seconded to give First Reading to amending the Repeals By-law to include the Swimming Pool and Building By-laws as presented with a public hearing to be held on June 21, 2021.” Motion carried.

- Lodging Home Registry By-law; Housekeeping Amendments (S. Scannell)
S. Scannell provided an overview of proposed housekeeping amendments to the Lodging Home Registry By-law.

Council was advised that the Bylaw was passed in early 2020 to support the Land Use Bylaw and noted that this By-law is being put in place to address further proliferation of the Land Use Bylaw. Council was advised that 96 properties have been registered, some have been inspected and some pending, with follow up to be made with others.

S. Scannell provided additional comment noting the amendments will provide clarity and responded to questions.

Brief discussion took place.

“It was Moved and Seconded to give First Reading to housekeeping amendments to the Lodging Home Registry By-law with a public hearing to be held on June 21, 2021.” Motion carried.

- Low Income Tax Property Reduction (M. Barkhouse)
M. Barkhouse spoke briefly to her request to have the date for residents to apply for the Low-Income Property Tax Reduction application extended to June 30, 2021. She noted this is due to the current pandemic and the ability of those applying to complete their application.

Brief discussion took place.

“It was Moved and Seconded that the Low-Income Property Tax Reduction date for applications be extended to June 30, 2021.” Motion carried.

- Deer
Councillor S. Cameron questioned whether there is anything in the way of the Town’s Bylaws that addresses the matter of ticks.

S. Scannell provided comment noting there is only a dog control bylaw, however, he noted this matter was discussed last year. He noted that in general staff have been directing people to the Department of Natural Resources so that their department might identify whether there is an issue with the number of deer. One of the recommendations of Natural Resources is to discourage the feeding of wildlife and noted it could be considered for inclusion under the Community Standards Bylaw. S. Scannell agreed to forward the points to Council for their information.

It was noted that staff will be working on an update for the public.

Deputy Mayor A. Murray agreed to investigate plants that deer do not like.

Business from Minutes

There was no Business from Minutes

Correspondence

- A. Penney Re: Dr. J.H. Gillis Parent Fundraising Committee Grad 2021
Mayor L. Boucher provided comment on the correspondence and noted that due to the pandemic educational systems are unable to host graduation events.

Councillor S. Cameron provided additional details on the financial commitment he received as a result of a conversation with A. Penny

Brief discussion took place.

“It was Moved and Seconded that Council provide funds for the Dr. J.H. Gillis Parent Fundraising Committee 2021 in an amount of up to \$4,000. from their discretionary funds subject to all events being held upholding pandemic restrictions and approval from Dr. Strang.”
Motion carried.

It was noted that the funds would have to be made payable to an appropriate organization.

- Eastern District Planning Commission (EDPC) Request to Appoint Staff
Mayor L. Boucher acknowledged correspondence from J. Bain of EDPC requesting new staff appointments.

“It was Moved and Seconded that Town Council approve the appointments of Andre Sampson and Amanda Estabrooks as alternate Building Inspectors and Lee-Ann Martin as alternate Development Officer, replacing Lewis Pope.” Motion carried.

Staff Reports

- CAO Reports
Mayor L. Boucher called on Council for any questions they may have on the CAO report.

Brief discussion took place with staff responding to questions from Council on lighting at the Regional Fields and racquet courts. S. Scannell agreed to check on the status of lights for the racquet courts.

Councillor M. Farrell inquired about repairs to lawns following winter works, in particular a residence on Archibald Court. K. Proctor provided comment on discussion staff had with the property owner as to snow being piled on the property. K. Proctor agreed to look further into the matter.

Councillor M. Farrell read from an email she received from a resident regarding a building permit. She was advised the person should contact the Eastern District Planning Commission for direction.

In response to a question from Councillor M. Farrell, Mayor L. Boucher agreed to meet with representatives of the CACL regarding previous discussions this evening.

CAO J. Lawrence advised Council that the strategic priorities list will be included on the June agenda.

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

Committee Reports

- Police & License Committee.

Councillor W. Cormier stated he had nothing to report.

- Fire Committee

Councillor S. Cameron reported on an upcoming virtual songwriting workshop with Mary Beth Carty.

Council was advised that while the People’s Place Library was fully accessible at the time it opened, but there are now some shortcomings. Councillor S. Cameron advised that an accessibility audit will be carried out at the People’s Place Library at no cost to the Town.

- Community Enhancement Committee

Deputy Mayor A. Murray noted that the Community Enhancement Committee did not meet, however, work is ongoing for Canada Day.

- Solid Waste Management

Councillor D. Roberts advised that the Waste Management meeting was not held due to the pandemic and that the Regional Waste Management meeting was also cancelled.

Councillor D. Roberts provided details on recent clean up at Chisholm Park by St. FX Nursing Students noting they collected eighteen (18) bags of garbage.

- Accessibility Committee

Councillor D. MacInnis advised that a (tentatively virtual) meeting of the Accessibility Committee is scheduled for June 9th to receive updates on the Town’s Accessibility Plan.

- Planning Advisory Committee

Councillor M. Farrell stated she had nothing to report.

With there being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:16 PM.