
MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF ANTIGONISH

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 23, 2023, 5:30 pm
Council Chambers
Municipal Administration Building
285 Beech Hill Road
Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

Present were: Warden Owen McCarron
Councillor Mary MacLellan
Deputy Warden Hugh Stewart
Councillor Donnie MacDonald
Councillor Shawn Brophy
Councillor Remi Deveau
Councillor John Dunbar
Councillor Gary Mattie
Councillor Bill MacFarlane
Councillor Harris McNamara

Regrets: None

Staff Present: Glenn Horne, CAO
Beth Schumacher, Deputy Clerk

Others Present: Speireag Hendra, A Roof Over Your Head
Connie DeCoffe, A Roof Over Your Head
Richie Connors, A Roof Over Your Head
Gallery

Call to Order – Chairman, Warden Owen McCarron

The meeting of the Committee of the Whole was called to order by the Chair, Warden McCarron, at 5:50pm for the purpose of addressing the in-camera business in advance of the regular meeting.

In Camera Items

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee of the Whole move to an in-camera session at 5:50pm to discuss Litigation / Potential Litigation.

Motion Carried

Moved and Seconded

That the in-camera session adjourns at 6:13pm.

Motion Carried

The meeting was recessed at 6:13pm.

The meeting of the Committee of the Whole was called back to order by the Chair, Warden McCarron, at 6:30pm with the gallery and presenters present.

Approval of Agenda

Warden McCarron called for any additions or deletions to the agenda.

Moved and Seconded

That the agenda be approved as presented.

Motion Carried

Approval of May 9, 2023 Committee of the Whole Minutes

Warden McCarron called for any errors or omissions in the Committee of the Whole minutes of May 9, 2023.

Moved and Seconded

That the minutes of May 9, 2023 be approved as presented.

Motion Carried

Approval of May 18, 2023 Committee of the Whole Minutes

Warden McCarron called for any errors or omissions in the Committee of the Whole minutes of May 18, 2023.

Moved and Seconded

That the minutes of May 18, 2023 be approved as presented.

Motion Carried

Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes of May 9, 2023 or May 18, 2023.

Delegations

A Roof Over Your Head

Speireag Hendra introduced the team from a Roof Over Your Head and provided an overview of the population served by the organization. Currently, they have 160 open files and have served 268 individuals in the past fiscal year. Connie DeCoffe discussed the different kinds of housing situations that many of their clients find themselves in, and how those differ from a traditional view of homelessness. The types of services that A Roof Over Your Head provides their clients was shared.

Ms. Hendra noted that there is not a shelter in the community, with the closest shelter being in New Glasgow. This location poses challenges where it is out of town with limited transit options, and that shelter does not admit children. Not having a shelter in the community also poses a concern when there is extreme weather. The availability of affordable housing, challenges in finding housing that permits pets, and changes in the housing supplement qualifications can present significant barriers to those struggling with housing in the community.

Upcoming projects and goals include undertaking a strategic planning process. An option for a shelter for emergency housing, as well looking for ways to support a transitional housing model. Several options for support, through land donation, partnerships, participation in their board, and supporting funding for strategic planning were listed.

Discussion followed. Questions included the capacity at the shelter in New Glasgow (the facility just increased to 30 beds), involvement with the Nova Scotia Public Housing Authority, suggestions for contacting the Eastern District Planning Commission to start discussions early on to identify potential sites or policies that might need to be updated to support initiatives, community support, and the typical demographics of clients. The presenters noted that a grant funding application was made to the Town seeking support in doing a needs assessment, and to the County to look at undertaking strategic planning. Members of Council expressed how important the work that the group was doing is to the community.

Warden McCarron thanked the representatives for their work and presentation.

Continuing Business

Draft Presentations to Council and Committees Policy Amendment

Mr. Horne reviewed the staff memo and policy revisions that were prepared based on the feedback received from the Committee at the last meeting. Mr. Horne invited further discussion on the draft policy. Councillor McNamara expressed concerns with several proposed clauses, including:

- Every presentation not coming forward to Council for approval. His preference would be for the Committee to discuss every request instead of the process as proposed.
- Requiring ten working days for a presentation request to be considered, instead of a shorter timeline.
- Making these revisions to the policy where there haven't been problems with the public requesting to appear as delegations to date, and he feels that the changes as proposed restrict public access to speak to a committee or Council.

Mr. Horne clarified that the purpose of the policy is not to dissuade individuals from presenting at Committee or Council meetings, and that he felt that having every presentation request brought forward to the Committee of the Whole could add an additional layer to the process. Mr. Horne noted that a ten-day timeline for considering presentations is consistent with the practice in other communities. Other clauses that were raised in the discussion were noted to be outside of the scope of the proposed amendments.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council approves the amendments to Policy 17 - Public Participation at Council/Committee Meetings, as proposed.

**Motion carried.
9 in favour, 1 against.**

Review of Community Partnership Grant Recommendations

Mr. Horne noted that there was no carry-over from the discussions held at the Special Committee of the Whole meeting on May 18th. Those decisions will carry over into budget deliberations.

New Business

Streetlight Request – Havre Boucher Park

Councillor McNamara brought forward a request to have a streetlight installed at the Havre Boucher Park, to facilitate the function of security cameras on the property. Mr. Horne noted that, while the policy speaks to the installation of streetlights at dangerous intersections and along roadways, lighting on private lands is typically the responsibility of the private-property owner.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council approves the installation of a streetlight at the Havre Boucher Park.

**Motion carried.
8 in favour, 2 against.**

Community Events

- Councillor MacLellan shared that the soft opening of the Lobster Interpretive Centre in Arisaig took place earlier in the month and was attended by local MP Sean Fraser and his family. Fundraising activities are underway by the centre and lottery tickets will be for sale.
- Councillor Mattie shared that on July 8th there will be the Tracadie & District Fire Department First Annual Show & Shine.

- Councillor McNamara shared that the walk for the Alzheimer's Foundation is taking place on May 28th in Havre Boucher.
- Councillor Deveau shared that over the past week, le Jeux l'Acadie was held in the community. Very positive feedback was received regarding the athletic facilities in the community.
- Councillor MacFarlane shared that the new highway by-pass through Marshy Hope has opened and has made a significant difference in the community. He suggested sending a letter to the Dexter Nova Alliance and the Minister of Public Works thanking them for the project and what it means for the community.
- Councillor Dunbar attended the CACL Ham and Bean Dinner on May 12th. He also attended Mayfest, and he noted that on Sunday June 4th there will be a Lobster Dinner (takeout only) at Bayfield.
- Councillor Brophy shared that he also attended Mayfest and volunteered at the door. He also suggested sending a letter to Joe MacDonald regarding the by-pass, where Mr. MacDonald was so involved in advocating for it to be built.
- Warden McCarron shared that he attended the Make Your Move Antigonish at Maryvale. He also attended McHappy Day, where the proceeds raised were donated to the St. Martha's Hospital Foundation. Warden McCarron also attended the Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner.

Reports from Inter-Municipal Boards, Committees, and Commissions

Antigonish Heritage Museum Board

A tea is being planned this upcoming weekend.

Antigonish Arena Association

The ice season has ended, and the ice is being removed in preparation for summer activities.

Eastern District Planning Commission

The board meeting has been rescheduled to Friday June 2nd.

Eastern Regional Solid Waste Management Committee

Nothing to report. The next meeting is scheduled for May 25th.

Pictou Antigonish Regional Library

The last meeting was held on May 18th, where the budget was presented. Some updates were shared about the new library under construction in Pictou.

RK MacDonald Nursing Home

The board meeting is scheduled to take place on May 25th.

County-Paqtnkek Joint Steering Committee

Work is underway to plan a Joint Councils meeting for a tentative date of June 20th.

Consolidation Steering Committee

Nothing to report.

Community Navigation & Physician Retention Services Association

Billy Yvonne has signed on to be the Physician Navigator and is expected to begin in early June.

Additions to the Agenda

There were no additions to the agenda.

Adjournment

Moved

That the Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned at 7:28pm.

Motion Carried


Warden Owen McCarron


Glenn Horne, CAO