

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF ANTIGONISH

Tuesday, April 9, 2024, 5:30pm
Council Chambers
Municipal Administration Building
285 Beech Hill Road
Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

1. Call to Order – Chair, Warden Owen McCarron
2. In-Camera Items
 - a. Contract Negotiations
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of March 26, 2024 Committee of the Whole Minutes
5. Business Arising from the Minutes
6. Delegations
 - a. Alex Oulton and Duncan Robertson – Canadian Federation of Independent Business – Proposed Marketing Levy
 - b. Linda Asselin, Owner – Antigonish Evergreen Inn – Proposed Marketing Levy
7. Continuing Business
 - a. Municipal Government Act Amendments
 - b. Update on Bill 407 – Antigonish Consolidation Act
 - c. Continuation of Municipal Boundary Review
8. New Business
 - a. Tender Award – Bulky Waste Collection
 - b. Antigonish Community Transit Emergency Funding Request
9. Community Events

This item provides Councillors with an opportunity to briefly bring to the attention of Council events that are taking place in their communities.
10. Additions to the Agenda

11. Adjournment

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES CHART (amended October 2022)

COUNCIL PRIORITIES	
<p><u>NOW</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WATER UTILITY DEVELOPMENT <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Expansion & Renew Aging Infrastructure b. Securing Long-Term Source Water c. Long-Term Financial Plan 2. DEVELOP & IMPLEMENT AN EVENTS & TOURISM PLAN 3. CONNECTIVITY – CELLULAR AND BROADBAND 4. RENEWABLE ENERGY 5. NEXT GEN SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT 	
<p><u>NEXT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN: Update & Implementation • ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN: Implementation • COMMUNITY HUBS: Plan & Implementation 	<p><u>ADVOCACY/PARTNERSHIPS</u></p> <p><i>Connectivity Funding (Prov & Feds)</i> <i>TIR Service Provision (Prov)</i> <i>Long-Term Care Facility Funding (Prov)</i> <i>Aging In Place Program (Prov)</i> <i>Accessible/Affordable Housing</i></p>
ADMINISTRATION	FINANCE
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CELLULAR & BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY 2. EVENTS & TOURISM 3. ASSET MANAGEMENT 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING: Plan & Implementation - Ongoing
PUBLIC WORKS	RECREATION
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WATER UTILITY DEVELOPMENT 2. NEXT GEN SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION 2. COMMUNITY HUBS
SUSTAINABILITY	PLANNING
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. RENEWABLE ENERGY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LCC • COMMUNITY SOLAR PROJECT 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MANDATORY MINIMUM PLANNING: Development & Implementation 2. EASTERN ANTIGONISH PLANNING STRATEGY & BYLAW: Complete Review

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Tuesday March 26, 2024, Following Asset Management
 Council Chambers
 Municipal Administration Building
 285 Beech Hill Road
 Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

Present were: Warden Owen McCarron
 Deputy Warden Bill MacFarlane
 Councillor Donnie MacDonald
 Councillor Shawn Brophy
 Councillor Remi Deveau (by Zoom)
 Councillor John Dunbar
 Councillor Gary Mattie
 Councillor Harris McNamara

Regrets: Councillor Mary MacLellan
 Councillor Hugh Stewart

Staff Present: Glenn Horne, CAO
 Beth Schumacher, Deputy Clerk
 Shirlyn Donovan, Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
 Marlene Melanson, Director of Recreation (by Zoom)
 Tammy Feltmate, Director of Sustainable Communities (by
 Zoom)

Others Present: Gallery
 Frank and Lelia Machnik
 Rochelle Benoit
 Paul Curry

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 6:30 pm.

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 February 13, 2024 Committee of the Whole Minutes

Warden McCarron called for any errors or omissions in the Committee of the Whole minutes of February 13, 2024.

Moved and Seconded

That the minutes of February 13, 2024 be approved as presented.

Motion Carried

Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

Delegations

Frank and Lelia Machnik – Marketing Levy By-law Feedback

Mr. Machnik provided members of the committee with copies of his notes prior to his presentation. Mr. Machnik raised concerns with the process of notification regarding the proposed marketing levy and outlined several concerns with the proposed levy due to the cost to the visitors and the lack of benefit to operators who are already successfully marketing their establishments. He asked about how rural tourism operators were involved in the consultations that took place when the tourism strategy was developed. Mr. Machnik thanked Warden McCarron and Councillor Dunbar for their assistance in bringing forward his concerns. Mrs. Machnik noted that she has been touch with several fixed-roof accommodation operators, who have a concern with the proposed levy only being applied to those operations. A concern that the tourism study did not include the rural operators was raised, as well as the focus on written publications when so much business is now done online.

The floor was opened for questions from the committee. Councillor Dunbar thanked those presenting and expressed his support for their stand on the proposed levy. Councillor McNamara noted that he has spoken to operators in his district, who have also expressed a concern with the proposed levy and wonder what the benefit to their operations will be. Councillor Mattie thanked the presenters and agreed that the Internet is having an impact on the industry. Councillor Deveau shared the feedback that he has heard from operators in his district, and Councillor MacDonald noted that he had read through the letters included in the summary of consultation and asked a question of staff regarding the intent for the use of the funds that would be collected by the levy.

Rochelle Benoit – Marketing Levy By-law Feedback

Ms. Benoit provided members of the committee with copies of her notes prior to her presentation. She spoke on behalf of her business, Pomquet Beach Cottages, and expressed concern with the proposed marketing levy with particular mention of the increased cost of their clientele, administrative burden and costs, and the limited collection of the levy from one operator type to fund events and marketing that would benefit a variety of operators in the sector.

The floor was opened to questions and comments from the committee. Councillor Deveau expressed his support for the operators, having spoken with Ms. Benoit and others in his district. Deputy Warden MacFarlane agreed with the concern raised about one type of operators being levied for the benefit of the sector. Councillor McNamara expressed his support for operators raising concerns with the marketing levy as proposed. Councillor MacDonald thanked Ms. Benoit for her presentation, and Councillor Dunbar also noted his concern with one sector paying for the benefit of the rest.

Paul Curry – Antigonish Tourism Association

Mr. Curry provided an overview of a presentation that included marketing materials that have been created by the Antigonish Tourism Association to promote the community. Shoulder-season events, such as the Antigonish Jazz Fest, have been created to increase tourist traffic in the community outside of the regular summer travel season. A grant from Tourism Nova Scotia has been acquired and will be used to build a new website to promote the region as a tourism destination.

Mr. Curry provided an overview of the opportunity of the levy, and outlined the intended use of the funds raised by the levy to reinvest in tourism needs in the community. He noted that similar levies are being collected by other communities in Nova Scotia and across Canada. He shared examples of investments by surrounding communities to build the tourist trade in their areas.

The floor was opened for questions from the committee. Councillor McNamara noted that many of the businesses highlighted on the first slide of the presentation were in the Town. He expressed that he felt that the marketing levy should be applied to many of the types of businesses in the tourism sector, and not just fixed-roof accommodations. Discussion regarding the wording of the legislation to allow the collection of the levy from fixed-roof accommodation providers, and not other providers, followed. Councillor Mattie noted that many operators in his community don't open year-round, due to their remote locations and challenges posed by the weather, and they don't see as much of a benefit to their operations. Mr. Curry noted that events to encourage bookings in the shoulder seasons are being considered, and not just for the off-season.

Councillor MacDonald thanked Mr. Curry for his presentation. Councillor Deveau expressed that he has been a supporter of having an event coordinator for the community, but having a marketing levy targeting only a limited number of operators is a concern with many that he has spoken to. He suggested looking at the Town and County hiring a coordinator on a term basis to undertake the marketing exercises envisioned to get a better idea of the likelihood of success. Deputy Warden MacFarlane noted that he appreciates having a tourism and marketing strategy but has a concern with the administration of the levy.

Councillor Dunbar asked for clarification regarding what municipalities in Cape Breton have a marketing levy. He expressed that he agreed with those who had raised concerns with the levy. He asked for clarification regarding the mission of the Antigonish Tourism Association to promote the community, and discussion followed. Councillor Brophy spoke about the impact of marketing for year-round activities when many rural operations are only seasonal.

Warden McCarron thanked Mr. Curry for his presentation and thanked those who provided their feedback on the proposed marketing levy throughout the consultation phase.

Continuing Business

Marketing Levy By-law – Consultation Results

Mrs. Donovan thanked those who came in to present as delegations, as well as the operators who submitted feedback that was included in the agenda package. She noted that staff will leave this information with the committee for further direction of how to proceed.

Status of the Antigonish Consolidation Act

Mr. Horne provided an update regarding the status of the Antigonish Consolidation Act. Councillor McNamara asked for clarification regarding the amendments that were made at the Committee of the Whole House on March 25th. Mr. Horne provided a summary of the changes that were made by the Committee of the Whole House. Further questions were asked by the committee regarding boundaries and the timing that has been proposed.

Councillor Dunbar asked for clarification regarding the change sheet that was posted on the Legislature's website. Councillor Brophy asked whether Councillors would have any ability to provide input in the proposed boundaries when those are being determined. Councillor Dunbar expressed that he feels that Council and the public should have input in the proposed boundaries, and that request should be expressed to the Province.

New Business

Audit Committee Reappointment

Mr. Horne put forward the recommendation that Bobby Mattie be reappointed for a one-year term.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends to Municipal Council that Bobby Mattie be reappointed as the public member of the County's audit committee for a one-year term.

Motion Carried

EDPC Appointments

Mr. Horne brought forward the appointments of Eastern District Planning Commission staff to municipal positions, as outlined in the letter from Mr. Bain dated February 13, 2024. These positions include Building Inspectors, Development Officers, Fire Inspectors, Administrator for Dangerous and Unsightly Premises, and Special Constables for the purpose of enforcing the Building/Fire Codes, Dangerous and Unsightly Premises, and Land Use By-laws.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council approves the annual appointments of Eastern District Planning Commission staff to Municipal positions, as proposed.

Motion Carried

By-law Enforcement Officer Appointment – Dog Control Officer

Mrs. Schumacher brought forward a recommendation to appoint the new Dog Control Officer as a By-law Enforcement Officer for the purpose of enforcing the Dog By-law.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council appoint Bern Balawyder as a By-law Enforcement Officer for the Municipality of the County of Antigonish for the purpose of enforcing the By-Law Respecting the Responsible Ownership of Dogs.

Motion Carried

Paqtnkek Powwow Sponsorship Request

Mrs. Donovan spoke to a sponsorship request that has been received from Paqtnkek, in support of their Powwow taking place at St. FX

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council commits to a \$5000 Friendship Sponsorship for the 2024 Paqtnkek Powwow.

Motion Carried

Proclamation – March 26th as Purple Day for Epilepsy Awareness

Mr. Horne read aloud the proclamation.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends to Municipal Council that the proclamation of March 26th, 2024 as Purple Day for Epilepsy Awareness in Antigonish County be approved.

Motion Carried

Community Events

- Councillor McNamara shared that the Havre Boucher community centre have an event booked every night for residents in the area.
- Councillor Mattie noted that on Good Friday, the Monsignor Hall will be holding a fish cake dinner, \$12 adults, \$6 for youth.
- Councillor Deveau shared that a community cleanup is being planned in District 5. Residents will clean-up roadways and have a barbeque.
- Warden McCarron shared that chase the ace is ongoing in St. Andrews, and that curling is winding down after a successful season.

Reports from Inter-Municipal Boards, Committees, and Commissions

Antigonish Heritage Museum Board

- The Board did not have a regular meeting at the beginning of March but are meeting on the 8th of April. Warden McCarron spoke about how engaged the new curator is in the museum operations, and Councillor Dunbar shared that the second Lego contest just ended.

Antigonish Arena Association

- The Board met last week and approved financial statements, where a small surplus was shared. Public commendation of the arena manager, noting a number of challenges that they have had to overcome and successful upgrades that have taken place at the facility. Councillors were recommended to go to the facility to see the positive changes that have been made.

Eastern District Planning Commission

- The Board will be meeting in early April.

Eastern Regional Solid Waste Management Committee

- Meeting on March 28th.

Pictou Antigonish Regional Library

- No report

RK MacDonald Nursing Home

- Next meeting March 28th.

County Paqtnkek Joint Steering Committee

- Nothing to report.

Consolidation Steering Committee

- Nothing to report.

Community Navigation and Physician Retention Services Association

- Had first meeting with the new navigator, who has been in the role for two months.

In-Camera Items

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee of the Whole adjourn to an in-camera session to discuss Personnel Matters at 8:04 pm.

Motion Carried

Moved and Seconded

That the in-camera session adjourns at 8:21 pm.

Motion Carried

Additions to the Agenda

There were no additions to the agenda.

Adjournment

Moved

That the Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned at 8:22pm.

Motion Carried

Warden Owen McCarron

Glenn Horne, CAO

SENT VIA EMAIL

April 4, 2024

Warden Owen McCarron
285 Beech Hill Road
Beech Hill, NS, Canada
B2G 0B4

Subject: Verbal Submission Regarding Marketing Levy Affecting Small Businesses

Warden, and members of Council, thank you for allowing me to join you today. My name is Alex Oulton, and I am a policy analyst at the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, based in Nova Scotia.

As you may know, CFIB is Canada's largest non-profit organization devoted solely to the needs of small businesses. We represent members from all sectors and regions, with 97,000 members across Canada, 4,000 of which are in Nova Scotia.

We are speaking with you today to share concerns we have heard from small businesses in your county surrounding the marketing levy and the cost this has on their businesses. Our members feel the marketing levy placed on their accommodation business is negatively impacting their operational costs and adding unnecessary administrative burden.

One concern with the new marketing levy is the unseen costs of credit cards and other fees that small businesses in the County of Antigonish will have to pay. As the 3% marketing Levy is collected and remitted back to the county, your local small businesses will still be left to pay the associated credit card fee on the sum of the transaction inclusive of the 3% markup. Essentially this process makes small businesses pay to collect taxes for the County.

In addition, CFIB's members feel this levy adds to their red tape burden which is already considerable. As we have seen in Halifax's example, a lack of clear communication surrounding the remittance and reporting process can have serious consequences. If it was not for a council vote to provide some flexibility, their could have been thousands of dollars in fines levied against rental operators as a result of unclear processes and red tape. In CFIB's Atlantic municipal survey, 59% of our members stated red tape should be a top concern for their municipal governments. This marketing levy in their view therefore not only cost their business but also take away from valuable time. It is unfair to expect small businesses to take on the paperwork burden of collecting a tax while the municipality receives the full benefit at no cost.

Red tape, Cost of doing Business, and Taxes are at the top of the list as the main factors Nova Scotia small businesses would like to see their government focus on¹. As a result, small businesses are increasingly sensitive to initiatives that add to the burdens already being felt by small businesses.

Our members ask that you ensure this marketing levy does not add unnecessary red tape and consider providing a rebate to cover the direct costs such as credit card fees coming from this new marketing levy. Further, the benefits from initiatives and programs funded by the collection of this marketing levy should be greatly focused on the small, local, independent accommodation and tourist businesses in the community.

In Conclusion, we want council to understand that small businesses in this community are concerned about the implementation of this new levy and we ask that you keep these small businesses at the front of your mind.

I am happy to answer any questions and thank you for your time today.

¹ CFIB Your Voice Survey, December 7-19, 2023. Based on responses from 3403 CFIB members. For comparison purposes, a probability sample with the same number of respondents would have a margin of error of +/-1.7%, 19 times out of 20.

Glenn Horne

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: March 28, 2024 7:56 AM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: Fwd: EXTERNAL: Proposed Levy on Fixed Roof Accommodation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Linda Asselin <linda@antigonishevergreeninn.ca>
Date: March 28, 2024 at 6:41:52 AM ADT
To: shawn.brophy@anigonishcounty.ca, Owen McCarron
 <Owen.McCarron@antigonishcounty.ca>, Bill MacFarlane
 <Bill.MacFarlane@antigonishcounty.ca>
Cc: Paul Curry <antigonishtourism@gmail.com>
Subject: EXTERNAL: Proposed Levy on Fixed Roof Accommodation

[You don't often get email from linda@antigonishevergreeninn.ca. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Tuesday evening, this week, I had the privilege of attending the meeting regarding the levy that the town has approved but has not yet been approved by the County of Antigonish. I attended with Paul Curry as a representative of the Antigonish Tourism Association as well as the owner of the Antigonish Evergreen Inn which I believe is in your district. Some time ago, back in January, I sent an email explaining my position on the matter and there was no mention of my message, which was also sent to Warden McCarron.

When I asked to speak, I was denied the privilege because of time constraints. I guess I should have applied for the time prior to the meeting. I didn't know that was necessary. Warden McCarron suggested that I send an email with what I wanted to say so here goes.

Councillors and the folks who did speak on behalf of fixed roof businesses keep calling the levy a tax even further, they say it is no different than the GST. The difference, which few will acknowledge is that the LEVY will stay right here. IT IS NOT A TAX. Plain and simple. Every attempt by Paul to clarify seemed to fall on deaf ears. The Levy, which is 3 percent, will stay right here in our area to promote tourism for businesses in both the Town and the County. We need to educate them on what the levy can do to help improve the visibility of Antigonish as a tourist destination thereby extending our busy season, providing more jobs for local people and improve our local economy.

The business owners that spoke last evening have seasonal operations that are open from

mid June till possible late September. The Antigonish Evergreen Inn, Micro Tel, Coastal Inn and the Oasis, are all in the County of Antigonish and are open 12 months of the year. We have owned our business for 10 years and this winter was the worst yet even including the 2 winters of COVID. This should not be happening in an area that has so much to offer potential visitors looking for winter/spring activities.

An example of this, and this is what I wanted to mention last evening is what we experienced after the huge snow fall we had. We received several calls from New Brunswick and Quebec, inquiring if there were any snow mobile trails in our area. I explained that yes, we do have a trail (BROWNS MOUNTAIN) that can be accessed close to our inn. They can park in our parking lot and jump on the snow mobile and go directly to the trail. I knew this because in previous years we have had guests bring their all terrain vehicles and do the same.

Out of the several calls we had, one group of 4 men came and stayed with us for 2 nights. They had the best time and told me they only did the trails on our side of the highway. They enjoyed meeting other snow mobiles and enjoyed visiting with them in the warming shelters along the way. They went out for dinner downtown both nights they were here.

Just imagine how this would extend our fall season if this were promoted. Not only increasing business for the hotels but also for the restaurants and other businesses.

The Antigonish Tourism Association which was formed just a few years ago, just prior to COVID, has taken great strides with the few business and local supporters involved. Jazz Fest was a huge success. Guests that stayed with us who regularly attend jazz festivals said it was better than the one in Halifax and that was just the first year. We could be very well be on a roll to be the best there is in Nova Scotia.

In the conversation last evening, there was considerable agreement that we do need a tourism initiative but the funds should come from our tax dollars, not from a levy. This is a great idea if only it were a constant, reliable resource that we could absolutely depend on. We need finances on a constant basis to generate the advertising we need. The levy will allow us to have the funds without having to increase taxes for the already overburdened taxpayers of Antigonish town and county.

One thing, I know for certain, is that in the Antigonish Tourism Association, formed by local business concerned for the future of tourism in our area, you have a group of people eager to make things happen and the energy to do it. All we need is financial support. The proof is in the pudding and Jazz Fest definitely proves that.

I would like the opportunity to present my views at any future council meeting where the levy is being discussed. There is so much more I would like to add.

Sent from my iPhone

Sent from my iPad

MEMO FOR INFORMATION

TO: Committee of the Whole
FROM: Glenn Horne, CAO
SUBJECT: ***MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENTS CONTAINED
WITHIN THE FINANCIAL MEASURES ACT***
DATE: April 5, 2024

Bill 419 - the Financial Measures Act, is the legislation traditionally used to implement the government's budget, providing legislative authority or amendments where required. As introduced, Bill 419 makes many amendments to the Municipal Government Act. A complete summary of those amendments is provided below. As of writing, Bill 419 is before the Committee of the Whole House. It is expected that it will have received third reading shortly.

Of note, if approved, these amendments will:

- Clarify council's role regarding substantive matters and "approval in principle" of a development agreement where the final administrative contractual details will be dealt with by the CAO without triggering a need to return to Council.
- Authority for Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to designate healthcare facilities as a planning area (e.g., long-term care facility) to which municipal development rules related to planning, development, and subdivision do not apply.
- Require accommodation marketing platforms [AirB&B, VRBO, etc...] to collect and remit marketing levy fees to the municipality directly.
- Allow municipalities to serve property tax bills by electronic means if agreed to by persons writing. If electronic means is agreed to, preliminary notices of tax sale also be sent, in addition to mail, electronically to the person.
- Allow municipalities and villages to sell and lease property below market value for any purpose which is deemed beneficial to the municipality or village by council or the commission.
- Allow councils and commissions to be notified in camera of a Code of Conduct complaint making it to the investigation stage.
- Require that in addition to the investigator's recommendation, the section under which the Code of Conduct complaint was lodged be made public.

Topics related to development approval process and supporting housing development	
MGA	Remove the requirement for certified copies of planning documents to enable electronic submission of planning documents to the provincial Director of Planning and Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Add regulation-making authority for Minister for submission/filing, review, and approval of documents.
MGA/HRMC	Requirement for an electronic statement from the Clerk to verify that planning documents/amendment to by-law/development agreement are a true and original copy where no certified copy is required and remove requirement for the Province to return two copies (written notice as per the Act will be returned).
MGA	Allow the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to discharge a completed development agreement in part or in whole rather than Council.
MGA	Clarify council's role regarding substantive matters and "approval in principle" of a development agreement where the final administrative contractual details will be dealt with by the CAO without triggering a need to return to Council.
MGA	Require that appeals for site plan and variances must state grounds for appeal and limit an appeal to substantive matters. This includes regulation-making authority for the Minister to prescribe non-substantive matters to which appeals may not be made.
MGA	Enable the requirement of off-site improvements necessary to support the development or the payment of money-in-lieu of the contribution for off-site improvements through a development agreement.
MGA	Allow non-substantive development agreement amendments to be approved by the Development Officer rather than Council (authority exists for council to define substantive and non-substantive amendments within a development agreement).
MGA	Allow councils to provisionally approve a development agreement or an amendment to a development agreement during the same public meeting when the Council passes a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting amendment to the municipal planning strategy; • Supporting amendment to the land-use by-law; and • Supporting amendment to the municipal planning strategy and the supporting amendment to the land-use by-law.

	This provisional development agreement or amendment to a development is approved once the supporting amendment to the municipal planning strategy and/or land use by-law takes effect. Appeal period runs from the provisional approval.
MGA	Authority for Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to designate healthcare facilities as a planning area (e.g., long-term care facility) to which municipal development rules related to planning, development, and subdivision do not apply.
Housing in HRM Act	Extension of the Executive Panel on Housing in the HRM for 2 additional years (until 2026).
Topics to support modernization and efficiencies	
MGA/HRMC	Require accommodation marketing platforms to collect and remit marketing levy fees to the municipality directly.
MGA/HRMC	Authorize posting on a municipal website as an alternative method of notice. This applies to the following notices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public Hearing for Sale or Lease of Municipal Property - Special purpose tax accounts - Sale of Distressed Goods - Tax Sale Advertisement - Adoption of By-laws - Planning documents (MGA only, changes already made to HRMC) - Notice of sale land no longer required for parks, playgrounds, or public purposes - Notice of Public Hearing for Street Closures
MGA/HRMC	Allow municipalities to serve property tax bills by electronic means if agreed to by persons writing. If electronic means is agreed to, preliminary notices of tax sale also be sent, in addition to mail, electronically to the person.
MGA/HRMC	Allow municipalities and villages to sell and lease property below market value for any purpose which is deemed beneficial to the municipality or village by council or the commission.
MGA/HRMC	Allow performance bonding for site plans.

MGA	Provide village commissions a mechanism to request to change the name of a village as chosen by the village commission. The name change could be granted by Governor-in-Council.
Topics to support Code of Conduct	
MGA/HRMC	Allow councils and commissions to be notified in camera of a Code of Conduct complaint making it to the investigation stage.
MGA/HRMC	Require that in addition to the investigator's recommendation, the section under which the Code of Conduct complaint was lodged be made public.
MGA/HRMC	Allow municipalities and villages to collect Code of Conduct fines in the same manner as taxes, and fines will be considered general revenue.
MGA/HRMC	Mayor, councillors, or commissioners who are absent from three or more consecutive regular meetings as a result of being sanctioned will not lose their seat.
Topics relating to other significant administrative items	
MGA/HRMC	Clarify deemed easement on a plan of subdivision is retroactive to the date of the survey or approval of the plan of subdivision, even if that pre-dates the Act.
MGA/HRMC	Changes to requirements for capital reserve funds to reflect changes in public sector accounting standards.



News release

Government Pauses Legislation to Consolidate Antigonish

4 April 2024 | 3:34 PM

Municipal Affairs and Housing

NOTE: The following is a statement from John Lohr, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Over the last few weeks, we have heard from a significant number of people sharing their concerns over the bill to consolidate the Town and County of Antigonish.

While both town and county municipal officials did vote in favour of consolidation, we simply cannot ignore the voices of the residents.

Therefore, after careful consideration of what we have heard, the bill to consolidate the Town and County of Antigonish will not be proceeding.

I understand that this will be very disappointing for the people in support of consolidation. I want to thank the Mayor and Warden of the Town and County of Antigonish and the residents both in support and opposition of this process for their commitment to their communities.

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MEMO FOR INFORMATION

TO: Committee of the Whole
FROM: Glenn Horne, CAO
SUBJECT: ***CONTINUATION OF MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY REVIEW***
DATE: April 5, 2024

On January 31, 2024, the attached letter was sent to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (the Board), communicating Council's decision to confirm its request for consolidation and requesting the suspension of activities related to the County's boundary review until the outcome of special legislation was known. While official correspondence was not returned, the Board was supportive of this approach.

Based on Min. Lohr's statement of April 4, 2024, consolidation will not be moving forward. Therefore, an application to the Board on the County's boundary review must be submitted. We are working with the Board and our consultants at Stantec to determine next steps.

April 5, 2024

glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

Glenn Horne
Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

Dear Mr. Horne:


M10417 - 2022 Municipal Boundary Review - Municipality of the County of Antigonish (MB-21-01)

The Board notes the Province's announcement yesterday that Bill 404 to consolidate the Town and Municipality will not be proceeding. Accordingly, the Board now requires the Municipality to file its municipal boundary review application. As you are aware, this application has been due since December 31, 2022.

The Board understands from prior correspondence that the Municipality has retained Stantec Consulting Ltd. to facilitate its required boundary review study and that public consultation is underway. The Board directs that the Municipality's application be filed no later than **May 14, 2024**.

The date of **Tuesday, June 18, 2024**, starting at 9:00 a.m. and continuing into the evening, if required, has been reserved for the hearing, and a public session, as well as **Wednesday, June 19, 2024**, if required. The Board has reserved conference rooms for the hearing at the Charles V. Keating Centre, St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia.

Yours very truly,


Bruce Kiley
Chief Clerk

cc. John A. Lohr, Minister of NS Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Owen McCarron, Warden, Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Nick Barr, Director Governance & Advisory Services, NS Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF ANTIGONISH RFP #31524-BW FOR BULKY WASTE COLLECTION

LUMP SUM FEE BID

GFL Environmental Inc. enters \$77,625.00 including HST, as the bid price.

The breakdown of the charges are as follows:

Base Price:	\$ 67,500.00
15.0% HST:	\$ 10,125.00
TOTAL:	\$ 77,625.00

This rate includes:

- The supply of all labour, and 2 rear-load collection vehicles to transport all designated materials that are collected at curbside from the residents of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish during the weeks of May 27 – May 31 and June 3 – June 7, 2024. All collected materials will be transported to the Beech Hill Solid Waste Resource Management Facility, Beech Hill, Antigonish County.

Collection of the Bulky Waste materials will be done in compliance with all the regulations of both the Nova Scotia Occupational Health & Safety Act, and the Nova Scotia Department of Transportation Traffic Control.

Enclosed please find:

- A bid bond in the amount of 10%.
- A copy of our latest Letter of Good Standing with the Worker's Compensation Board of Nova Scotia.
- A copy of our Certificate of Recognition from Construction Safety Nova Scotia
- A copy of our Certificate of Insurance indicating our liability insurance coverage of \$5,000,000.00.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any additional information.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Don Laidlaw
Regional Sales Manager



MEMO FOR DECISION

TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: Glenn Horne, CAO

SUBJECT: ***ANTIGONISH COMMUNITY TRANSIT SOCIETY EMERGENCY FUNDING REQUEST***

DATE: April 5, 2024

SUMMARY

A request has been made for emergency funding from the Antigonish Community Transit Society (ACTS). Based on a review of the available information, staff are recommending that ACTS's 2024/25 community partnership grant funding be provided immediately upon Council approval to address the society's financial needs.

BACKGROUND

Please see the attached request for emergency funding from ACTS. Based on the conditions described in the letter ACTS is requesting additional financial assistance be considered for the current fiscal year, ending March 31, 2024. No amount has been specified.

CONSIDERATIONS

As follow-up information to this request, I note the following:

- The Town, County and ACTS have recently awarded a complete transit service review, which includes a review of its service and financial models, to WSP. This work will commence in the coming weeks.
- ACTS received \$45,000 from the County in fiscal 2023/24.
- ACTS has submitted an application for \$60,000 to the County for fiscal 2024/25.
- Since this request was received, ACTS has been informed that its Rural Transit Funding (RTF), a provincial grant supporting rural transit services, will increase by \$126,000 annually, beginning in fiscal 2024/25, which is a significant increase.
- ACTS does not have a cash flow shortfall at this time but may later in the first quarter of 2024/25, prior to receiving the increase in RTF funding.
- The same request has been submitted to the Town of Antigonish; it is unknown when it will be considered.

The deadline for Community Partnership Grant submissions was Tuesday, April 2. Consideration of grant requests is slated for late April / early May. Notice of grant approval is provided following the approval of the County's annual operating budget and organizations may request payment in July unless there are extenuating circumstances.

OPTIONS

Option #1 – Reject the request.

This option needs no explanation.

Option #2 – Provide emergency funding.

ACTS has not indicated a preferred amount and has indicated that it does not have a cash-flow shortage. With that information, Council may still authorize a small funding amount of \$5000, which is an approximately 11% increase in its existing grant.

Option #3 – Provide 2024/25 Grant Early

Municipal Council will consider Community Partnership Grant requests in advance of the 2024/25 operating budget. It is expected that a contribution will be made to ACTS. Rather than providing an approved grant in July/Aug 2025, under the circumstance the approved grant amount can be provided immediately following Council's approval, likely in early May. This timing ought to alleviate any potential cash-flow challenges.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff are recommending Option #3.



Antigonish Community Transit Society
133 Church Street
Antigonish, Nova Scotia B2G 2E3
Email: antigonishcommunitytransit@gmail.com

March 4, 2024

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS
B2G 0B4

Re: Antigonish Community Transit Society request for financial assistance

Dear Owen,

Antigonish Community Transit Society (ACTS) continues to experience increased demand for our door-to-door and fixed route services.

To date our Book-A-Ride service has provided over 12100 rides to clients who have no other means of transit, an increase of over 2000 rides over the same period in 2022-23. In January 2024 we had our single largest month ever with 1472 rides. We try to keep up with demand for this service but do not have the capacity and frequently must turn people away.

Our fixed route has had 6400 riders to the end of February, an increase of over 1500 over the same period of the last fiscal year. It is worth noting that we had several days in February where we were unable to provide transport for either service due to weather conditions. So, our February ridership would probably be greater.

The irony is that the busier we are the further in debt we go!

Our CTAP funding has not increased in several years, yet the operational costs for the book-a-ride service continue to rise. Expenses for insurance, repairs, maintenance, fuel, and replacement vehicles have increased significantly, especially over the last 4 years. These costs cannot be passed along to riders. It would make our services too expensive and beyond the reach of these most vulnerable members of our community.

Further, these costs do not include the salaries of our staff and drivers. Several of our staff members are retired and work for ACTS to give back to their communities. Most drivers only make \$16 per hour, only \$1 more than minimum wage and only 80¢ more as of April 1st when the minimum wage will increase. Currently, we do not have the financial ability to pay a wage to attract and retain drivers. We continue to receive requests for evening and weekend services. With an increase in funding, we would have the ability to pay a

competitive wage with benefits to attract staff which would then allow us to provide evening and weekend services. Until then, we are simply not able to address these needs. I have included our financial records to the end of January 2024. As you can see, we are anticipating a significant deficit for the current financial year. While we do have some savings in an account at the East Coast Credit Union, they have been set aside for capital purchases and are dedicated to the fixed route.

We did have a surplus for fiscal 2022-23 which is carrying us for the moment. A portion of this was one-time COVID relief funds provided from the Federal Government in the amount of \$165, 572. We do not expect to receive any further financial relief for the current year or going forward.

We are hereby requesting additional financial assistance be considered for the current fiscal year.

At this time, I'd like to advise you that Mr. Ron Honda will be taking over the role of General Manager for Antigonish Community Transit Society when I leave at the end of this month. He can be reached at the ACTS email (antigonishcommunitytransit@gmail.com) and his cell phone number is 902 318 9981. Please direct any questions to his attention as of April 1st, 2024. Until then, I may be contacted at that email address or at 902 870 5433.

Sincerely,



Madonna van Vonderen
Executive Director
Antigonish Community Transit Society

Cc: Greg Sewell, Director, Community Transportation, NS Department of Public Works
Mayor Laurie Boucher, Town of Antigonish
Minister Michelle Thompson, MLA Antigonish, Minister of Health and Wellness
Board of Directors, Antigonish Community Transit Society

Antigonish Community Transit Society
MASTER Budget 2023-2024
January 31st,2024

REVENUES	2023-2024	YTD	Variance	%
Charitable Donations	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 887.25	\$ 1,612.75	35%
Corporate Sponsorship	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 4,200.00	24%
County of Antigonish	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ (5,000.00)	111%
CTAP	\$ 85,580.00	\$ 77,020.00	\$ 8,560.00	90%
Fare Assistance Program	\$ 13,100.00	\$ 9,550.00	\$ 3,550.00	73%
Fares	\$ 101,000.00	\$ 91,440.02	\$ 9,559.98	91%
Federal GST Rebates	\$ 13,000.00	\$ 16,290.71	\$ (3,290.71)	125%
Fuel Tax Rebate	\$ 6,700.00	\$ 4,105.43	\$ 2,594.57	61%
Fundraising Income	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00	0%
Misc (Interest, CT Rewards Redemption Etc.)	\$ 2,800.00	\$ 4,036.40	\$ (1,236.40)	144%
Town of Antigonish	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ (5,000.00)	111%
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 320,680.00	\$ 304,629.81	\$ 16,050.19	95%
Vehicle Expenses	2023-2024	YTD	Variance	%
Fuel	\$ 67,000.00	\$ 47,962.78	\$ 19,037.22	72%
Insurance	\$ 9,140.00	\$ 12,915.42	\$ (3,775.42)	141%
Parking/Tolls	\$ 100.00	\$ 16.18	\$ 83.82	16%
Repair Expenses	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 44,490.85	\$ (4,490.85)	111%
Vehicle Expense - Other	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 18.65	\$ 1,481.35	1%
Vehicle Registration	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 482.57	\$ 1,517.43	24%
Vehicle Expense Totals	\$ 119,740	\$ 105,886	\$ 13,854	88%
General & Admin Expenses	2023-2024	YTD	Variance	%
Advertising & Promotions	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 753.40	\$ 246.60	75%
Association Dues & Fees	\$ 500.00	\$ 892.73	\$ (392.73)	179%
Bank charges & Interest	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 1,205.42	\$ 1,794.58	40%
Contractual (Accounting, Legal, Consulting)	\$ 12,500.00	\$ 9,105.68	\$ 3,394.32	73%
Insurance - Board	\$ 1,325.00	\$ 965.00	\$ 360.00	73%
Meeting/Conference	\$ 350.00	\$ -	\$ 350.00	0%
Office Expenses	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 3,282.27	\$ 717.73	82%
Office Utilities, R&M, Cleaning	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 1,231.01	\$ 968.99	56%
Other - Uniforms	\$ 800.00	\$ 976.06	\$ (176.06)	122%
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 274,000.00	\$ 259,234.16	\$ 14,765.84	95%
Staff/Board Meetins/Travel Expenses	\$ 200.00	\$ -	\$ 200.00	0%
Staff/Volunteer Training Expenses	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	0%
Telephone & Internet	\$ 1,700.00	\$ 1,629.72	\$ 70.28	96%
General & Admin Expense Totals	\$ 302,575	\$ 279,275	\$ 23,300	92%
Total Expenses	\$ 422,315.00	\$ 385,161.90	\$ 37,153.10	91%
Revenue Less Expenses (NET)	-\$101,635.00	-\$80,532.09	-\$21,102.91	\$0.79

ACTS has a surplus of \$154,000 from fiscal 2022-23. Please see notes for explanation