

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Tuesday February 11, 2025, following Asset Management Committee
Council Chambers
Municipal Administration Building
285 Beech Hill Road
Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

Present were: Warden Nicholas MacInnis
Deputy Warden John Dunbar (by Zoom)
Councillor Mary MacLellan
Councillor Adam Baden-Clay (by Zoom)
Councillor Richelle MacLaughlin (by Zoom)
Councillor Shawn Brophy
Councillor Wayne Melanson
Councillor Gary Mattie
Councillor Harris McNamara
Councillor Sterling Garvie

Regrets: None

Staff Present: Shirlyn Donovan, CAO
Beth Schumacher, Deputy Clerk
Megan MacInnis, Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Allison Duggan, Director of Finance

Others Present: Gallery (by Zoom)
Bob Hale, St. FX
Mark Chisholm, St. FX
S/Sgt Kim Hillier, RCMP
Sgt James Jessome, RCMP
Cpl Jim Floyd, RCMP

Call to Order – Chairman, Warden Nicholas MacInnis

The meeting of the Committee of the Whole was called to order by the Chair, Warden MacInnis, at 5:33pm.

Approval of Agenda

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

Moved and Seconded

That the agenda be approved as presented.

Motion Carried

Approval of January 14, 2025 Committee of the Whole Minutes

Warden MacInnis called for any errors or omissions in the Committee of the Whole minutes of January 14, 2025. Hearing none, the minutes were considered approved.

Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

Delegations

St. FX Bid to Host the 2030 Special Olympics Summer Games

Mr. Hale and Mr. Chisholm provided the committee with an overview of the timeline for the selected of a host community for the 2030 Special Olympics Summer Games. The community had previously hosted the games in 2018. A bid application is due at the beginning of the summer. A general overview of the economic impact to the community that the 2018 games had on the community was provided.

A request for support in the amount of \$100,000 over five years was made, and Mr. Hale noted that it would go towards event infrastructure, volunteer training, and athlete services. Members of the committee were provided with an opportunity to ask questions, and several members of the committee spoke highly of the 2018 event held in Antigonish and of Special Olympics overall. The Town will also be asked for \$100,000. The University will be providing a matching contribution, being mostly in-kind, and the budget for the event is expected to be around \$3 million.

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee recommends that Municipal Council approves a contribution of \$100,000 to the St. FX University bid for the 2030 Special Olympics Summer Games.

Motion Carried

Local RCMP Update

S/Sgt. Kim Hillier provided members of the Committee with an overview of the local RCMP operations. Five new officers are coming to the community in the next few months. Priorities of the local detachment were reviewed, which included enhanced road safety, member wellness, crime reduction, and increased police presence in the community. S/Sgt Hillier noted that local members of the detachment have been trained to utilize body cameras on their uniforms, and information on where to find out more about the camera policy was shared with the committee.

The floor was then opened up for questions and comments. A concern was raised about drugs in schools; discussion followed regarding the education and enforcement measures that are put in place to reduce the occurrence of that situation. The importance of having police presence for education programming in the schools. Members of the local detachment were thanked for their efforts in enforcement to catch those drinking and driving, and for their involvement in the community.

A question was asked about the presence of Fentanyl and cocaine in the community, and some information about what the local trends are was shared. Warden MacInnis noted that the recent arrests were welcomed, given the concerns raised during campaigning during the fall.

Continuing Business

Infrastructure Summary

Mrs. Donovan provided a high-level review of the infrastructure summary that was prepared at the direction of the committee. Staff was thanked for putting together the summary. A concern was raised regarding water and sewer capacity, and more information being needed to understand where the community sits for capacity of those services. Mrs. Donovan noted that a discussion about servicing capacity is scheduled to take place at the Joint Council meeting scheduled for February 19th. Discussion followed.

Councillor MacLaughlin noted that the new water tower in St. Joseph's was not included in the list, and Mrs. Donovan noted that it was likely due to it not yet being active due to a delay in the installation of the computer for that system. Councillor Mattie noted that new technology should be considered when looking at options for treatment systems.

Warden MacInnis noted his preference to look at a steering committee as opposed to a water commission when choosing terminology for a joint group with the Town looking at options for water and sewer servicing. He also noted that there is quite a bit of federal funding assistance that could be explored. Suggestions for different Town and County working groups were discussed, and staff noted that ideas could be explored following the Joint Council meeting and strategic priority setting sessions took place later in the month.

New Business

Streetlight – 81 Pomquet River Road (St. Andrews Community Centre)

Ms. Schumacher noted that the scope for a streetlight installation approved by Council in May of 2024 identified that a pole is required. Staff has brought the item to the committee for their awareness of the additional expense for this installation. Consensus was provided to proceed with the installation.

Surplus Equipment Sale – Dewatering Truck

Mrs. Donovan reviewed a recommendation for the sale of the dewatering truck, which was deemed surplus. A suggestion was made to have a mechanical assessment done of the vehicles when they are put up for sale as surplus. A question was asked about how the sewer systems are now cleaned out without the dewatering truck. Discussion followed.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council approve selling the 2009 International Dewatering Truck 7000 Series that was deemed surplus to Ron Chisholm for the bid price of \$61,220.00.

Motion Carried

Results of the Communications Strategy Request for Proposals

Ms. MacInnis provided the committee with an overview of the Request for Proposals (RFP) that was advertised before the holidays. Eleven bids were received, and after review by an internal committee that felt that the proposal by Forward Creative was the best proposal. The floor was then opened to the committee for questions. Questions about the types of feedback received from the community that led to the direction to proceed with undertaking a communication strategy request.

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee of the Whole recommends that Council award the tender for the proposed communications strategy to Forward Creative at a cost of \$29,825 (plus HST).

Motion Carried

Gateway Signage on Secondary Highways

Ms. MacInnis provided a summary regarding the work done to date in preparing gateway signage for secondary highways. She explained how the design follows the branding that was developed as part of the approved Tourism Strategy. Currently, staff is looking for feedback regarding the signage design. Discussion followed regarding the languages included on the signage, and different suggestions were put forward. Staff will gather more information and come forward with a revised proposal for the welcome message at the next Committee of the Whole meeting.

Staff Reports

Mrs. Donovan noted that the staff report is provided in the agenda package.

Community Events

- Councillor Mattie shared that a Valentine's Dance will take place at the Monastery Fire Hall Friday February 14th.

- Councillor McNamara shared that Trivia Night will be taking place at the Havre Boucher Hall February 14th
- Councillor Melanson noted that, starting Friday February 14th, the Winter Carnival starts in Pomquet.
- Councillor MacLaughlin noted that a breakfast will take place in St. Josephs on February 23rd.
- Councillor Baden-Clay shared that the Coldest Night of the Year event will be taking place on February 22nd.

Recess

Moved

That the Committee of the Whole meeting be recessed at 7:30pm.

Motion Carried

The Committee of the Whole meeting was resumed at 9:35pm. Consensus was given to defer the in-camera business to a future meeting.

Additions to the Agenda

There were no additions to the agenda.

Adjournment

Moved

That the Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned at 9:35pm.

Motion Carried

Warden Nicholas MacInnis

Shirlyn Donovan, CAO