

Committee of the Whole

Committee Updates October 19/21

Mayor Chisholm-Beaton

One Cape Breton: Gateway Project

The Cape Breton Partnership lead team continues to work to secure funding for project scoping, I should have an update for Council on next steps in the coming weeks.

Housing Advisory Committee (Port Hawkesbury)

The last housing meeting held in September didn't have a quorum, and tomorrow night's meeting has had to be rescheduled.

Chair – John Ouellette

One Nova Scotia – REAP Project

Our team attended a three day workshop in HRM in September and we narrowed down a list of “must win” battles, which included but is not limited to the planning of an annual innovators retreat and continuing to work with stakeholders currently involved in the Marine Innovation Centre located at the Port Hawkesbury Waterfront. The two strategies that the team is in the process of developing around growing our Innovation ecosystem here in the Cape Breton Strait region is to work on retention/attraction of IDE - Innovation Driven Enterprises and Entrepreneurs - (Innovators Retreat) and also the opportunity to build capacity for home-grown Innovation (Marine Innovation Centre). Whereas the Innovators retreat can be used as a tool to better understand our IDE “customer” and how to support them, and also the retreat can allow us to invite national and global innovators (as its continues to grow momentum) to showcase our region as a place to innovate. More to come.

Allan J MacEachen Regional Airport.

The Airport meeting was held September 22nd. Along with the handling of usual airport committee business, Covid continues to be a huge challenge for Celtic Air and has reduced flights dramatically. There was also consensus at the committee that with the current situation

and the need to ensure the airport's future sustainability that we work on a strategic planning session to be held with this committee and other key stakeholders to discuss the airport's future and to also ensure that we have a multi-year plan we can follow to see that it is going to be in a growth and recovery position post-covid. Amanda and Brenda agreed to connect with Carla Arsenault of the Cape Breton Partnership to work on a plan that can be brought forward to the next Airport committee meeting. Carla, Amanda and I connected on October 7th to discuss the plan for a strategic session, and we will meet again in the next week or two to continue the conversation and have potential dates/info for the airport committee to consider in advance of the next meeting (TBD) in November.

Note: Some other homework I had was to connect Dave to our Fire Chief Donald MacDonald regarding work assistance at the airport – I was able to do that September 27th.

(Chair: Brenda Chisholm-Beaton, Vice Chair: Amanda Mombourquette)

NSFM Executive Board Meetings

As Towns Caucus Chair, I attend our NSFM virtual executive board. Currently I am part of the organizing committee for the upcoming NSFM Fall convention (virtual), and I will be making a presentation for Collaboration Success Stories with Warden Bruce Morrison from Victoria County on the One Cape Breton/One Unama'ki initiative. Lastly, I've put my name forward for vice president of nsfm in the upcoming elections, and my nomination was accepted, so if all goes well, I'll be successful.

(Chair – Deputy Mayor Emily Lutz , Vice Chair – Amanda McDougall).

Government FOCUS (Female Objectives Cape Breton Unama'ki Strait)

Our survey data collection is concluded and we are in final design of the mentorship program for women and girls in Eastern Nova Scotia. Tentatively we will be hosting a multi-day session in February 2022 for our Indigenous Mentorship program and a one-day session for group mentorship sessions (general) with matching of one-on-one mentor-mentees beginning in November/December. We hope to have 100 women engaged between both programs. The project end date will be April 2022.

(Co-chairs Karen Bernard & Brenda Chisholm-Beaton)

Strait Richmond Housing Matters Coalition

Meeting was held October 13th, and updates were provided regarding the service based counts project, as well as updates from homelessness coordinator, and other service groups. We had a great committee consultation engagement session on the topic of “non-profit housing entity” to meet our region’s needs for accessible and affordable housing. There were robust conversations on the pros and cons, and the conversation will continue to discuss next steps and future directions for Richmond and the Town of Port Hawkesbury. Next meeting date is: November 10th.

(Chair – Amanda Mombourquette)

Cape Breton South Recruiting for Health

Next meeting is on October 28th. It should be noted that since the September meeting, I agreed to sit on the sub-committee to review resumes and interview for the new navigator position which we coordinated in the last two weeks of September and interviewing took place October 6th and we are in the process of finalizing the job posting to the successful candidate. More information and October meeting report to follow.

(Chair – Juanita Mombourquette)

Waterfront Advisory Committee

Next waterfront meeting is yet to be determined. Any reports will follow.

(Chair - Mark MacIver)

Destination Cape Breton Association

We continue to work on our post-pandemic Tourism recovery plan, and we continue to focus on the online presence and opportunities to promote Cape Breton to the world both in the tourism shoulder as well as during the winter too. I’ve agreed to another 3-year term on DCBA and currently hold the executive board position of secretary.

Accessibility Advisory Meeting

We met virtually October 18th – we didn't have a quorum but we did take the opportunity to flesh out next steps for supporting the work needed to complete our Port Hawkesbury Accessibility Plan that will be due in April 2022. With the hour or so we spent on the call we talked about creative ways we could engage with the community around accessibility challenges and opportunities, and we also had Cathy volunteer to set up a social media page for our committee (she has completed this already and we are now at 112 citizen members from town, and so far conversations are super engaging). Matt and I agreed to meet prior to the next meeting to put forward a tentative timeline to the committee to keep us on track with our April 2022 deadline – and we hope to have a draft plan to present to council in February 2022. We will be aiming to meet again Monday October 25th.

(Co-chairs: Matthew Higgins and Brenda Chisholm-Beaton).

Economic Development Advisory Meeting

We met on October 13th. We had a great update by Erin MacEachen about the economic development-related projects ongoing in town, with a great presentation about the “Connect Port Hawkesbury” multi-modal trail project. We also had great conversations/updates on the offshore wind, port marketing, and other items. It was determined that this committee could work on an economic development strategy that could potential align with the Cape Breton Partnership Island-wide one (Megan will continue to work on this at future meetings). Housing was also discussed as well as waterfront development opportunities. Housing shortages in particular was highlighted as a huge barrier in many of our local committees (CBSRH, SRHMC, etc.). Housing will stay on our committee's radar.

(Chair) Kevin MacEachern (vice chair) Ashley Taylor

Cape Breton Regional Enterprise Network

We met virtually September 20th to review the CBREN work plan and to discuss updates from each of the participating communities. Next meeting is yet to be determined. Any reports will follow.

(Chair – Bruce Morrison)

Strait Area Chiefs Mayors and Wardens of the Strait

The challenges around Covid have hindered the bi-annual meetings held for this group. The chair has polled the membership for potential meeting dates in late spring but we couldn't achieve a quorum. The Chair will poll for a meeting this fall, with the hopes of having quorum to meet virtually in November. Updates to follow.

(Chair – Mayor Laurie Boucher – Town of Antigonish)

Other work:

Georges Narbonne: I met with Georges October 18th (he is an Instructor with the NSCC Nautical Institute here at the Strait Campus). He talked about the opportunity of establishing a St. John's Ambulance "Brigade" here in Port Hawkesbury – who continually meet for training and who also work as volunteers in the community to be able to be on hand to offer their life-saving expertise/skills. He mentioned attending hockey tournaments, or community events, etc. and even volunteering in other ways. He said the Brigade can also potentially work with the PHVFD if there is interest. He asked if their might be interest in some training space should this opportunity be possible. I told Georges to create a two-pager to describe the idea and how it would benefit the town and that he could potentially present at a future public meeting to see if Council has interest in supporting in-kind meeting space for a few times each month. (Information to follow).

Seasonal Services: I participated in a planning meeting Oct 18th to assist with this year's plan. I've been tasked completing the social media components after Remembrance Day concludes.

Offshore wind discussions: The Strait Area Chamber of Commerce has agreed to continue to conduct research and make connections regarding this file – and Iaian Langley and Keven MacEachern whom both sit on their board, are continuing with other stakeholders from NSBI, ACOA and the Cape Breton Partnership to continue this valuable work. I participate in calls or meetings when my schedule allows.

Port Hawkesbury Sports Wall of Fame – I met with John Davis on September 24th to call all of the winning recipients who are going to be inducted this fall. The calls were very positive.

Municipal Government Talk – I was invited on September 23rd to TEC (Port Hawkesbury) to present/discuss Municipal government to the Grade 8 French Immersion students. The students asked some excellent questions and it was a great session. It was nice to be able to do some student outreach and talk about the town and its future.

Truth and Reconciliation Events (Orange Ribbon Ceremony and the Blanket Exercise): I worked with Michelle Farrow and First Nation leaders to organize these events throughout the early part of September, and both events were hosted on September 22nd. These were well attended by members from both the Town and surrounding communities. We had the honour of having guest speakers attend the Orange Ribbon Ceremony, including the Honorable Judge Laurie Halfpenny-MacQuarrie, Councillor Steven Googoo from We'koqma'q First Nation, Councillor Anita Basque from Potlotek First Nation, and Elder Katie McEwan from Membertou First Nation and a Residential School Survivor. The blanket ceremony had more than 40 community members registered and it was a powerful event as was relayed by all who attended. Feedback we received in the days that followed were very positive and many citizens who were unable to attend the blanket ceremony expressed a desire to participate if the town planned on hosted another in the future.