

**PORT HAWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
Held Virtually  
Minutes of Meeting  
January 18, 2022**

**Present**

Mayor, Brenda Chisholm-Beaton  
Deputy Mayor, Jason Aucoin  
Councillor, Blaine MacQuarrie  
Councillor, Hughie MacDougall  
Councillor, Mark MacIver  
Chief Administrative Officer, Terry Doyle  
Director of Finance, Erin MacEachen  
Director of Marketing, Recreation, Tourism & Culture, Michelle Farrow  
Manager, Engineering and Public Works, Jason MacMillan  
Manager, Facilities and Operations, Gordie Snook

**1. Call to Order**

A meeting of the Committee of the Whole was held virtually Tuesday, January 18, 2022 and called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton.

**2. Additions to Agenda**

- NSCC Collaboration Opportunity - Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton
- Housing Coordinator Application – Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton
- Winter Parking Bylaw – Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin
- In Camera Meeting if time allows - Personnel Matter – Councillor, M. MacIver

**3. Approval of Agenda**

**MOVED by Councillor, H. MacDougall and SECONDED by Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin “to approve the agenda as amended”. MOTION CARRIED.**

**4. Presentations**

There were no presentations for the January 18<sup>th</sup> Committee of the Whole Meeting.

**5. Council Reports on Assigned Committees**

Councillor MacQuarrie was having technical difficulties joining the meeting virtually.

**Councillor H. MacDougall**

*Policy Advisory Committee* – A meeting was held on January 11<sup>th</sup> virtually. Staff Sargent D. Morin discussed the new all way stop at the Granville Street and Old Sydney Road intersection. There was discussion around winter parking at the meeting. There were no tickets issued by RCMP but the RCMP is willing to assist whenever they are needed.

*Festival of the Strait Committee* – Held a meeting January 11<sup>th</sup>. Planning will move forward for the 2022 summer.

*Strait Area Transit* – A virtual meeting is scheduled for January 19<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am.

Councillor M. MacIver

*Eastern District Planning Commission* – A meeting was held on January 13<sup>th</sup>. Minutes will be available.

*Waterfront Advisory Committee* – The meeting that was scheduled for January 18<sup>th</sup> was cancelled.

Deputy Mayor J. Aucoin

*Strait Richmond Housing Matters Coalition* – A meeting was held on January 12<sup>th</sup>. The Deputy Mayor had worked with CAO, T. Doyle to provide an update to the Coalition of the work the Port Hawkesbury Housing Advisory Committee has done to date. One of the main topics of discussion is creating a not for profit for housing.

*Eastern District Planning Commission*- A meeting was held on January 13<sup>th</sup>. The EDPC Director is looking to get some information back to the board on hiring another staff member within the Eastern District Planning Commission.

*Housing Advisory Committee* – A meeting is scheduled for January 19<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.

*Parks, Recreation and Active Transportation* – A meeting is scheduled for January 26<sup>th</sup> at 5pm.

*Allan J. MacEachen Regional Airport Committee* – A meeting is scheduled for January 25<sup>th</sup> at 3pm.

Mayor B. Chisholm-Beaton

Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton had asked Council how they would like to proceed moving forward with her updates on her monthly report; if Council would like for her to read off her report during the meeting.

**The consensus of Council was for Mayor, Chisholm-Beaton to continue to circulate her monthly report electronically and if Councillors have any questions she can review items that Council wish to discuss verbally.**

She had circulated her report with Council prior to the meeting and reminded Council and the gallery that her report is available for review on the Town of Port Hawkesbury website.

Mayor, Chisholm-Beaton had also attached a Year in Review Report which will be posted on the Town of Port Hawkesbury's website.

**6. CAO REPORTS**

**i. FINANCE**

The following finance report was presented by Director, E. MacEachen:

- Review of the Revenue versus Budget Variances,
- Review of the Expenditures versus Budget Variances,
- Residential and Commercial Assessment trends,
- 2022/2023 Budget process

Director, E. MacEachen had sent out as part of her report a detailed Income Statement up to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021. Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin had asked if there was any funding available to make up for the loss in revenue for the sales of service. E. MacEachen had said we still have left over funding from the Safe Restart fund.

She had reviewed that there was an increase of 5% since 2014 with regards to residential assessments. Commercial has had an 8% decline since 2014. In 2022/2023 there is \$52,000 less in taxation revenue than in 2014 fiscal. Residential capped assessment increased by 3.2% over last year, and commercial & resource assessments declined.

**Councillor, B. MacQuarrie had joined the meeting via telephone at 7:30p.m.**

Director, E. MacEachen had asked Council how they would like to proceed with the budget process for 2022/2023 fiscal. She had reviewed last year's budget process. She had suggested meeting in February to discuss the Capital plan in order to put tenders out earlier in the spring.

Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin will be out the country March 3<sup>rd</sup>-March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton had asked Council if they would like to proceed the budget process virtually.

**The Consensus of Council was to move forward with the process as presented.**

**ii. ENGINEERING and PUBLIC WORKS REPORT**

Manager of Engineering and Public Works, J. MacMillan provided a detailed update on many of the projects and initiatives ongoing in his department including:

- Traffic Sign Report,
- WTP Process Control Upgrades,
- Granville Street/Old Sydney Road Intersection Upgrades,
- Water Main Repairs,
- Recycle Cape Breton (ReCollect Waste App),
- Street Light Survey,
- Public Works Activity Report,
- Toolbox Safety Talk, and
- Safety Courses

Manager, J. MacMillan provided an overview of activities in the Public Works Department that took place in December. Staff had responded to 7 water main breaks during the months of December and January. He also introduced the new ReCollect Waste App that residents can now download on Apple and Android devices. The app will provide residents general information on sorting, collection schedules and will allow for staff to push communication if there is an interruption or change in the collection schedule. He also reviewed the results of the street light survey that staff had recently conducted and reported that only 4 street lights were in need of repair.

Councillor, M. MacIver had asked if the speed sign could be moved to another location along Reeves Street. Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin had asked if the reports could be broken down to reflect the day and time. Manager, J. MacMillan had asked Council to email him if they would like specific reports generated from the traffic signage database.

### **iii. FACILITIES, OPERATIONS AND PARKS**

The General Manager, Facilities, Parks and Operations, G. Snook provided a report on the many initiatives ongoing in his department including;

- Civic Centre,
- Fields and Parks
- Strait Area Pools,
- Fire Hall, and
- Accessibility

General Manager G. Snook had reviewed that the Civic Centre currently follows the Covid-19 guidelines from Hockey Nova Scotia which will be in effect until January 31<sup>st</sup>. The walking track is now opened from 6a.m. until 4p.m. Monday to Friday and users can sign in with maintenance or at box office. The gym hours have expanded hours to add Sundays (9 a.m. - 1 p.m.) Manager, G. Snook had notified Council that he is still waiting on the reply on the funding for the tennis courts lighting. There is a meeting scheduled to discuss the lights for the soccer/ball field. 2022 Summer Student application was submitted to Service Canada with a reply expected by early April. The Accessibility Committee continues to meet weekly, and the committee has partnered with Victoria County to assist each other with the Municipal Accessibility Plan. The accessibility survey was relaunched and G. Snook had asked Town staff and Council to fill it out if they haven't already done so.

### **iv. MARKETING, RECREATION, TOURISM & CULTURE**

The following report was presented by Director, M. Farrow for Recreation, Marketing, Tourism & Culture. The report included:

- Recreation Programming,
- Strait Area Pool,
- Upcoming Events, and
- Marketing and Communications

Director, M. Farrow gave a detailed overview of the activities in the Recreation department. The pool has reopened as of January 18<sup>th</sup> and users can call the pool office to book a swim time. She had reviewed the December events such as the TOPH Parade, Sensory friendly Santa etc. The Recreation department is delaying the release of the Winter flyer until ongoing restrictions are better understood. Winter leisure kits will be distributed in partnership with the School's Plus program. 2021 Tis the Season shows were very well attended. Granville Green planning is underway with sponsorship packages being delivered to potential funders by the end of January. Matt Minglewood Concert is scheduled for February 12<sup>th</sup>. Evan and Doherty is scheduled for March.

Deputy Mayor J. Aucoin had provided Council with the details of the boxing event he has been working on. There will be a 10 card amateur boxing match in May held in partnership with the two boxing clubs that are based out of Eskasoni and Afton.

### **By-Law and Policies**

CAO T. Doyle had stated that there was no new bylaw and policies to review this evening. The newest bylaws and policies are: a Taxi Bylaw, Taxi Policy as well as a Code of Conduct for Elected Officials. The next policy that staff will be looking to finalize will be on governance. CAO, T. Doyle would like to dedicate a meeting to review that policy.

Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton asked Councillor, B. MacQuarrie if he had any Committee Updates to share with Council.

#### Councillor B. MacQuarrie

ECRL - January 13<sup>th</sup> meeting was rescheduled to February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton had reviewed the approved additions. Councillor, B. MacQuarrie did not have any additions to add to the agenda.

## **7. Other Business**

### **i. Medical for Council – Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin**

Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin discussed adding medical and dental benefits for Council. Director E. MacEachen had stated that based on the Municipal Salary Survey, 32% of Municipalities around the province provide medical and dental to their councillors and 67.9% do not. 13.2% provide pension to their councillors. Richmond (100%) and Victoria County (cost shared) both provide while Inverness and the Town and County of Antigonish do not provide.

She also stated that medical and dental benefits would have to be set up as a separate class than the employee class.

Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin would like to have 100% of medical and dental paid for by the Town.

**The consensus of Council was for Director, E. MacEachen to seek information on pricing and to poll other Municipalities (similar in size) to see what they offer their Councillors and to report back to Council at the February Committee of the Whole Meeting.**

### **ii. Funding Opportunities – Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin**

Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin discussed replacing the Zamboni and asked if Council had reviewed the document that had been sent to them regarding funding.

CAO, T. Doyle stated that staff is currently collecting information on the cost of a new Zamboni and are preparing a Rink Revitalization application and if successful Council will need to decide if they wish to contribute to the Zamboni.

Manager, G. Snook has a meeting set up to discuss pricing etc. with the Saunders sales representative.

CAO, T. Doyle had notified Council that the lighting project in Antigonish was \$400,000 and Soccer field lights would be in excess of that.

Councillor, B. MacQuarrie had asked what the cost of a new Zamboni would be. Manager G. Snook had stated that the Rink Revitalization fund covers 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the cost up to \$100,000 and that an estimate on a new machine would be roughly \$140,000 – \$170,000.

**iii. Body 'N' Soul Request- Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin**

CAO, T. Doyle had reviewed the request that came via email from Body'N'Soul management. They are requesting an additional entrance be constructed to the gym so users would not be limited to the Civic Centre hours of operation. CAO, T. Doyle had reviewed blue prints of the Civic Centre. He reviewed the challenges with adding an additional door; costs, concrete and masonry work, the current security surveillance system is aged, so any enhancements would require a replacement system. The largest obstacle would be fire code regulations that all doors accessing the gym have panic hardware (push bar) on the interior, which would give gym patrons access to the rest of the building. There was a discussion around hours of operations. CAO, T. Doyle had notified Council that Town staff are accommodating with respect to hours.

**The consensus of Council was to discuss further at the February Committee of Whole.**

**iv. Joint Business Park – Unity Drive - Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton**

Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton had notified Council that a meeting has been scheduled for January 27<sup>th</sup> at 5p.m.

Councillor, M. MacIver had asked if he was an alternate on the Committee. Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton had stated that the Joint Development Commission has legislation that states that the Mayor, Warden, and two Councillors from each municipality are members.

**v. Covid-19 Support to Businesses – Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton**

Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton had reviewed a request regarding the Province's Sector Impact Support Program. Business Owner Ashley Taylor had asked the Mayor for an advocacy letter from the Town to include the businesses that are not included in the Sector Impact Support Program.

**The consensus of Council was to send a letter of advocacy to the Province to consider including the businesses that do not qualify for the Sector Impact Support Program.**

**8. Approved Additions**

• NSCC Collaboration – Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton

A request came in from carpentry class instructor, Charles Probert asking if the Town of Port Hawkesbury would be willing to collaborate on a tiny home. The Town would purchase the materials and the carpentry class would build the tiny home that could be used as the Town decides.

**The consensus of Council was for CAO, T. Doyle and Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton to meet with instructor Charles Probert to discuss the details of the tiny home project.**

• Housing Coordinator – Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton

CAO, T. Doyle stated that the Housing Advisory Committee has asked to pursue an application to the Community Capacity Building Fund. Staff had submitted an application. The application involved funding for a consultant, legal assistance to help establish a housing not for profit society, and a land trust.

The total asks was \$85,000 with a \$15, 000 in kind contribution from the Town of Port Hawkesbury. Staff from Nova Scotia Housing had been in contact with CAO, T. Doyle where the Town is not a not for profit society, therefore the local Chamber of Commerce has agreed to partner with the Town and resubmit the application.

• Winter Parking – Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin

Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin had asked if the Town should consider diverting the focus from education to enforcement.

CAO T. Doyle stated that progress has been made and Staff has met with Staff Sargent D. Morin on enforcement. RCMP have been assisting in storms by visiting properties with cars on the street. The past storm was an issue as there were eight cars on street however; only two cars were left on the road where there was no one home. A summary offence ticket option is something that staff can explore.

The local towing companies do not wish to tow residents

- In Camera Session – Councillor, M. MacIver  
Councillor, M. MacIver would like to defer to the February 1<sup>st</sup> Public Meeting.

**The Consensus of Council would like to defer to the February 1<sup>st</sup> Public Meeting.**

**9. Future Meetings**

- Public Meeting February 1, 2022
- Committee of the Whole February 15, 2022

**10. Adjournment**

**MOVED by Councillor, B. MacQuarrie and SECONDED by Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin to “adjourn the January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022 meeting of the Committee of the Whole at 9:33.p.m.” MOTION CARRIED.**

Feb 2 2022  
Date

T. Doyle  
Approved :  
Terry Doyle, P. Eng.  
Chief Administrative Officer

Melissa Warner  
Recorded by:  
Melissa Warner  
Communications and  
Administrative Officer