

## **Committee of the Whole Committee Report/Updates**

**Submitted by: Mayor Brenda Chisholm-Beaton**

**February 2023**

Submitted to Council – February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

### **Team Cape Breton Strait – Post-MIT REAP**

Work on the Rising tIDE fund (ongoing since December 2022) continues (which is a fund to provide investment capital to mid-stage Innovation-based companies and to assist with talent/expertise needed to grow/mature their companies). Chad Munro – a team member – has taken the lead on this file; he is working on attracting private investors to get this pilot started. We also have a meeting request in with the Provincial Department of Economic Development with Minister Susan Corkum-Greek. We continue to meet regularly each second Thursday of each month to continue work on our must win battles.

(Chair/Team Champion Brenda Chisholm-Beaton)

### **Allan J MacEachen Regional Airport**

We had a very productive meeting on February 16<sup>th</sup>. Staff reviewed the runway assessment to let the committee know the current state of various sections and requirements for replacement in the next 3+ years. The committee supported sending a copy of this assessment to Minister Corkum-Greek as a follow up from our meeting last fall. Staff and operator provided updates. It was noted that the airport traffic is currently very slow, but it is hoped that it will pick up as the winter ends/Spring begins.

We hope to meet next month (March 29<sup>th</sup>) to begin budget work for the airport. We also decided it was best to set a regular meeting day every three months to create consistency for future meetings/committee work needed.

(Chair: Brenda Chisholm-Beaton, Vice Chair: Melanie Samson)

### **NSFM Executive Board Meetings**

Provincial Code of Conduct working committee is hosting a series of consultation meetings with elected officials to gather feedback on both the sanctions and the preferred model, as well as potential costings of the preferred model. Its great to see lots of NSFM members participating – if council wants to attend any, happy to forward any future dates remaining to join in the discussions (virtual).

On the NSFM Board side, we had a Public meeting of all NSFM members on January 26th to determine next steps on the proposed structural changes. Thanks to Deputy Mayor Hughie MacDougall and Councillor Aucoin for attending/participating. All of the recommended changes were adopted by the members at large – so NSFM now has a new set of bylaws to roll out over the next few months. NSFM staff will be sharing this plan as it becomes more concrete over the next several weeks. NSFM executive met Feb 16<sup>th</sup> for a special meeting of the board to discuss some of the policy changes that would be required to implement the new bylaws. Our next NSFM board meeting is to be held March 31, 2023.

Additional NSFM meetings:

Shadow Minister of Municipal Affairs MLA L Nicoll was held virtually January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023 - to discuss the needs of municipalities, current issues and opportunities, as well as ways to work better together.

(Chair/President – Mayor Brenda Chisholm-Beaton, Town of Port Hawkesbury, Vice-chair/Vice President: Mayor Carolyn Boliver-Getson).

### **Cape Breton South Recruiting for Health**

An executive meeting was held January 19<sup>th</sup>, with our monthly CBSRH meeting held January 26<sup>th</sup>. I wasn't able to attend the full-member meeting on January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023, but was able to chat and get an update from the CBSRH Manager Gina MacDonald (and will include her manager's report - see attached).

On another note, our small executive is in the process of reconnecting with NS Health staff regarding reimagining health care in the Cape Breton South region and what that pilot can look like – and revisiting the community feedback we were able to gather in late 2022. Any updates on this I'll report on in future COW reports.

(Chair – Juanita Mombourquette, Vice-chair – Amanda Mombourquette)

### **Port Hawkesbury Accessibility Advisory Meeting**

New PHAAC members and returning members were ratified at the February 7<sup>th</sup> Public meeting of Council, which will position our next tentative meeting to take place for Monday March 6<sup>th</sup> or March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 (we hope to see which date yields a better quorum). Report to follow.

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

## **Unity Drive: Joint Industrial Park Commission**

No formal meetings were held in January/February up to the time of this report; the next meeting date is yet to be determined.

(Chair: Mark MacIver, Town of Port Hawkesbury)

## **Destination Cape Breton Association**

The next DCBA meeting is to be held tomorrow - February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022. The Finance committee met today (Feb 21<sup>st</sup>), and the budget information will be presented at tomorrow's meeting. As the new vice-chair of DCBA, I now chair the industry committee; our first meeting was held on February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023. We had the opportunity to have a review of the work plan for DCBA which will be presented also at tomorrow's DCBA meeting.

(Chair: Rodney Chaisson; Vice-chair: Brenda Chisholm-Beaton)

## **Pitu'paq**

We will continue to work on a survey to distribute to municipal and First Nation elected officials as well as other T&R stakeholders for some time in the new year - to find out what interest there may be for participation. Next meeting date is set for Friday February 24<sup>th</sup> (report to follow) (Chair: Shirley MacNamara)

## **Strait of Canso Offshore wind Task Force**

Our February 7<sup>th</sup> SCOWTF meeting will be rescheduled to next month. The SCOWTF executive met February 15<sup>th</sup> to discuss work on a capacity building proposal, that we submitted in draft form for feedback for February 17<sup>th</sup> with the Province (waiting on this feedback, but more work may be needed to create a final proposal for submission). We have another executive meeting to work on the March agenda set for this Friday February 24<sup>th</sup> (Report to follow).

Community consultation work: a presentation was given to Victoria County on February 6<sup>th</sup>, to discuss the genesis and the mandate of the SCOWTF and to request if anyone from that municipality would be interested in joining the task force. Warden Morrison noted they'd let us know and were glad we were able to accommodate their request to come and present (presenters were Warden Amanda Mombourquette, CEO of the CB Partnership Tyler Mattheis, and myself). Victoria County Council asked lots of great questions, and we are looking forward to their future participation on the task force.

(Co-Chairs: Amanda Mombourquette and Brenda Chisholm-Beaton).

## **Other work:**

### **Federation of Canadian Municipalities – Meeting of PTA Presidents and**

**Executive Directors:** I attend all PTA meetings in my capacity as President of NSFM with CEO Juanita Spencer. The first meeting of this year was held on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and discussions centered around the national issues impacting municipal units. Considerable conversations centred around housing needs, increased costs for policing, as well as municipal needs specific to each Province/Territories nationally.

**SeaBreeze Tech Pilot Project Update:** I had the opportunity to join update calls on January 24<sup>th</sup> and February 8<sup>th</sup> with Jaime Moreu (Brezo) and Ivan Barroeta (Blue Float) and it was noted that they continue to make progress. Ivan noted that he'd like to occupy office space in Apaq't Place at the waterfront as soon as he can, and it will be positive to have one of our first tenants in the innovation space working at the waterfront. We hope to have some signage finalized in the weeks to come. Several members of the SCOWTF were able to attend as well (Iaian Langley, Tyler Mattheis, and Amanda Mombourquette).

### **Committee Consultation Session for Local Committees in Port Hawkesbury:**

We had a planning call on January 25<sup>th</sup> to finalize plans for our Local Committee Consultation event for January 30<sup>th</sup> (Thanks to Terry, Deputy Mayor MacDougall, Councillor MacQuarrie and Aucoin for helping with final planning/design).

The Committee Consultation Session was held January 30<sup>th</sup> in the evening in person – and was well-attended. I participated with several from Council and senior staff in a Council/Staff-led workshop to firstly – thank former, current, and new committee members for their work and dedication to the town, and secondly, to review and discuss the Town's strategic priorities on economic development/housing, recreation/AT, accessibility, and waterfront development (Jan 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022). Roundtable discussions were held, and staff captured and reported out the discussions had at each table.

Thanks to Councillors Aucoin and MacIver for coming to assist with moderating this session, as well as CAO Terry Doyle and Jason MacMillan, Michelle Farrow, Gordie Snook, and Jason MacMillan.

It was an excellent session, with great engagement from our past, current, and new community committee members. Incredibly excited for the future for all our local committees. Melissa created a document that was shared with all local committee members for further feedback. The completed document will be shared with Council and all the local committees.

**State of the Province Address by Premier Tim Houston:** I attended this annual address hosted in CBRM on January 27<sup>th</sup> – and it was a phenomenal networking opportunity as well as informative address that laid out the Province’s plans for 2023 with regard to improving important files like housing, health care, economic development and more. It was impressive to have the Strait region mentioned several times with regard to its importance in the emerging green energy industry. It was also promising to hear that here is a plan to open a medical school at CBU that will train more medical health care professionals right here on the island – and may begin as soon as 2025.

**Floating Accommodations Meeting:** I was invited to participate on January 30<sup>th</sup> in a group discussion about the potential of exploring “floating accommodations” that ideally could be anchored at the Port Hawkesbury waterfront. It was hosted by Strait Area Chamber of Commerce President John Ouellette, and in attendance were Town staff, NSCC representatives, CB Partnership representatives, as well as ACOA and Strait of Canso Superport Marine staff. This opportunity could provide all-inclusive accommodations year-round and was discussed in terms of providing a solution for pending industry needs, as well as the potential for meeting the housing needs for NSCC students. Discussions will continue.

**Everwind Fuels Community Liaison Committee:** I was asked to sit on the Everwind Fuels Community Liaison Committee, and we met virtually January 18<sup>th</sup>, and again on February 15<sup>th</sup>. This is a great opportunity for information sharing, and for asking questions regarding their important green hydrogen file. This will continue as a monthly meeting. If council has any questions you’d like me to take to subsequent meetings don’t hesitate to ask/contact me. Also, if any citizens have questions, happy to take those forward as well.

### **Cape Breton Regional Enterprise Network – Economic Development Officer**

**discussion:** As Council knows, we have a shared economic development officer (EDO) between the Town of Port Hawkesbury and Richmond County. This year saw this role filled by a new EDO – Martin Thomson – who started at the end of January. Both Warden/CAO of Richmond and Mayor/CAO of Port Hawkesbury had an informal discussion with CEO Tyler Mattheis regarding what focus and work the new EDO – Martin Thomsen – might take in the next 6-12 months on behalf of both the Town and County.

We initially noted we’d like to see Martin immediately working on the green hydrogen and offshore wind file as its important to ensure we have a detailed proposal ready to help build local capacity and prepare for this industry. We know things are moving fast and the next 6-12 months will be critical in ensuring we are prepared for this new industry and all the potential it brings. Other important work needed, and in some ways related, is for Apaq’t Place and the Joint Park Commission.

Its also important to note - Martin has experience in offshore wind from Scotland and will be a huge asset as our shared EDO, we are very excited to work with him into the future!

Next steps: both the Warden and I feel like it would be great to get both councils together to meet with Martin and to also have a more formal discussion about this position and focus in the short and long-term for both Port Hawkesbury and Richmond. Tyler also noted that he'd like to set up presentations for both councils in the near future as well.