

**PORT HAWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Shannon Studio
Minutes of Meeting
January 23, 2024**

Present

Mayor, Brenda Chisholm-Beaton
Deputy Mayor, Mark MacIver
Councillor, Blaine MacQuarrie
Councillor, Jason Aucoin
Director of Finance, Erin MacEachen
Manager, Facilities and Operations, Gordie Snook
Manager, Engineering and Public Works, Jason MacMillan
Manager, Recreation and Active Living, Corene Gillis-Dorey

Guests

Innovation & Economic Development Officer Richmond County and Town of Port Hawkesbury, Martin Thomsen

Regrets

Councillor, Hughie MacDougall
Chief Administrative Officer, Terry Doyle
Director of Marketing, Recreation, Tourism, & Culture, Michelle Farrow

1. Call to Order

A meeting of the Committee of the Whole was held in the Shannon Studio, Tuesday, January 23, 2024, and called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton.

2. Additions to Agenda

There are no additions to the agenda.

3. Approval of Agenda

MOVED by Councillor, B. MacQuarrie and SECONDED by Deputy Mayor, M. MacIver “to approve the agenda as presented.” MOTION CARRIED.

4. Presentations

Martin Thomsen – Cape Breton Partnership

Economic Development Officer, M. Thomsen provided Council with a brief update from the Cape Breton Partnership. He indicated that the Partnership has been working to standardize quarterly reporting throughout this fiscal year. He highlighted some of the areas in his report. He reviewed the Cape Breton Regional Enterprise Network Membership and staff. He touched on the events of the Cape Breton Regional Enterprise Network over the past quarter such as the Investors Summit, Safety First in the Strait Lunch and Learn, and the Wind Task Force Session most recently held in December. He indicated that Council may contact him if they have any questions about the report. Martin provided Council with updates on projects that the Cape Breton Partnership have been working on throughout the year. He noted that the Manager of Energy Sector Development position has recently been filled with John Dickie being the successful

candidate, John will start his position on February 5th. The day-to-day management of the Energy Sector will be the responsibility of the incoming Manager of Energy Sector Development. He welcomed feedback on his report. Council thanked him for his initiatives and updates from the Partnership. Councillor, B. MacQuarrie mentioned that it would be beneficial to have an update at the February Port Hawkesbury Development Meeting on the International Council of Shopping Centers Conference taking place in Whistler. M. Thomsen will check with the staff member that attended the conference.

5. Council Reports on Assigned Committees

Deputy Mayor, M. MacIver

An Eastern District Planning meeting was held on January 15th.

A Police Advisory Meeting was held on January 16th. The Winter Parking Restrictions issue was brought forward and the RCMP Staff Sargent will reach out to CAO, T. Doyle.

A Waterfront Advisory Committee meeting will be held on January 29th.

Councillor, J. Aucoin

An Eastern District Planning Meeting was held on January 15th.

Councillor B. MacQuarrie

He was in attendance for his first Allan J. MacEachen Regional Airport Committee Meeting that was held on January 10th.

The Port Hawkesbury Development Advisory Committee was held on January 15th.

An Eastern Counties Regional Library Meeting was held on January 18th.

The Strait Area Transit Board Meeting was held on January 19th.

Mayor B. Chisholm-Beaton

Circulated her report prior to the meeting.

CAO REPORTS

i. Facilities, Operations and Parks

Manager, Facilities Operations and Parks, G. Snook gave a brief presentation of the projects and initiatives in the Facilities, Operations and Parks department including:

- Civic Centre,
- Town Parks & Beautification,
- Feilds,
- Food Bank,
- Airport

- And Accessibility

Manager of Facilities, G. Snook indicated that the portable backup generator has been ordered with Samson Equipment and should arrive by June 2024. The Summer Student application has been submitted. Councillor, J. Aucoin asked about the rusting of “the Wave”. G. Snook mentioned that the artist as been on site numerous times working on it and plans to be back to address.

Director of Finance, E. MacEachen provided an update on the Allan J. MacEachen application for funding with respect to the runway revitalization.

MARKETING, RECREATION, TOURISM AND CULTURE

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

- Strait Area Trails,
- Recreation Programming,
- Upcoming Shows & Events,
- Granville Green,
- Sports Wall of Fame,
- Grants,
- And Marketing and Communications

E. MacEachen provided an update from the Recreation Department in M. Farrow’s absence. Councillor, J. Aucoin wanted to thank Manager of Recreation C. Gillis-Dorey for her work on the First Night event that was very successful again this year.

Finance

Director, E. MacEachen updated Council on the initiatives in the Finance Department:

- Budget Process,
- Annual Audit,
- Strait IT,
- LOTAMA,
- And 2024 Assessment Update

Director E. MacEachen presented the 2024 budgetary process and asked to receive feedback from Council on the process for this year. Council is happy with approving the Capital Budget prior to the operating budget. She reviewed some public engagement options. Councillor, B. MacQuarrie asked what Councils thoughts were for public engagement, his thoughts were to have just a feedback session for the public to speak to Council. Deputy Mayor mentioned that he would like to advertise what Council’s priorities are in advance of the budgetary process.

Director, E. MacEachen indicated that understanding the budgetary process is important leading to education and information sharing and she indicated that there may be an engagement piece that can be utilized on the new website.

Councillor, J. Aucoin would like to see the educational pieces prior to the priority setting session.

Director E. MacEachen reviewed the assessment trends for 2024 noting that the assessment trends have increased 6%. The appeals process is currently open until the end of February.

ENGINEERING and PUBLIC WORKS

The Manager of Engineering and Public Works, J. MacMillan provided a key update in the department including:

- Traffic Sign Report,
- TOPH202310 Sydney Rd Sidewalk Renewal
- Municipal Capital Growth Program,
- Public Works building Demolition,
- RFP TOPH202114 Public Works Building,
- RFP TOPH202313 Landrie Lake Water Utility- Environmental Assessment,
- Public Works,
- And Extended Producer Responsibility for Paper Products and Packaging- like Products

Manager of Engineering and Public Works, J. MacMillan noted that the deadline for the Public Works Building just closed and staff are going through the proposals to build the building. He described the Extended Producer Responsibility for Paper Products and Packing like Product and is seeking a motion of council to opt in or out of the program. He highlighted some of the benefits of the program.

The consensus of Council was to move forward to the Special Public Meeting following the Committee of the Whole for a motion for consideration.

Other Business

i. Winter Parking Restrictions – CAO, T. Doyle

Director, E. MacEachen did attend the Police Advisory meeting and there was a conversation around towing vehicles if there was obstruction to snow removal. RCMP will be putting an ad in the Reporter that there will be stricter enforcement around Winter Parking.

ii. Strait Area Pool – Manager, C. Gillis-Dorey

Manager of Active Living, C. Gillis-Dorey reviewed some of the history and initiatives of the Strait Area Pool. She reviewed that there is an inhouse instructor to teach bronze cross and bronze medallion. There are a number of wellness programs offered at the

pool. She reviewed that Winter registration has taken place and some of the classes have filled up in a minute – birthday parties and school trips are extremely popular. She reviewed the bather load and user usage for May – October 2023. E. MacEachen reviewed the financials. She noted that there is a (\$110,000) deficit that has been constant for the last few years. Councillor, J. Aucoin noted that he appreciates the work the pool staff have done. Councillor, B. MacQuarrie thanked C. Gillis-Dorey for the presentation.

iii. Flag Raising Events 2024 – CAO, T. Doyle

Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton reviewed the flag raising schedule.

The consensus of Council was to move forward to the Special Public Meeting following the Committee of the Whole.

8. **Approved Additions**

There are no approved additions.

9. **Future Meetings**

Councillor, J. Aucoin asked for an update on the request that came from the Public Meeting held on January 9th. E. MacEachen noted that there is a tentative date set with the Municipality of the County of Richmond with the Mayor, Warden, Deputy Mayor, and Deputy Warden for February 8th to discuss the Joint Public Meeting Agenda.

Positive conversations were held with the Warden of The Municipality of the County of Inverness, and the CAO would be reached out to, to set a date.

- ~~Public Meeting of Council~~ February 6, 2024
- Joint Public Meeting Committee of the Whole February 20, 2024

10. **Adjournment**

The Committee of the Whole adjourned at 8.05p.m.

February 21, 2024



Date

Approved
Terry Doyle, P. Eng
Chief Administrative Officer

Recorded by:
Melissa Warner
Communications and
Administrative Officer