

**PORT HAWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL
PUBLIC MEETING
Shannon Studio
Minutes of Meeting
February 20, 2024**

Present

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

Regrets

Manager of Facilities, Operations, and Parks, Gordie Snook

1. Call to Order

A Public Meeting of the Port Hawkesbury Town Council was held in the Shannon Studio and virtually on Tuesday, February 20, 2024, and called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton.

2. Additions to Agenda

- i. Municipal Affairs- Councillor. J. Aucoin

3. Approval of Agenda

MOVED by Councillor, H. MacDougall and SECONDED by Councillor, B. MacQuarrie “That the Town of Port Hawkesbury approves, the February 20th Public Meeting Agenda as amended”. MOTION CARRIED.

4. Gallery Presentations

There were no gallery presentations.

5. Acknowledgements

Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton made the following acknowledgements:

- February is African Heritage Month.
- Heritage Day
- National Flag Day of Canada

Deputy Mayor M. MacIver wanted to give thanks the Public Works Department on the snow removal efforts and for keeping the intersections clear during the recent major storms.

6. Approval of Council Minutes

- i. Public Meeting of Council – January 9, 2024
There were no errors or omissions.
- ii. Public Hearing – January 23, 2024
There were no errors or omissions.
- iii. Bylaw & Policy Meeting – January 23, 2024
There were no errors or omissions.
- iv. Special Public Meeting of Council – January 23, 2024
There were no errors or omissions.

8. Business Arising from Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

9. Council Committee Reports

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED by Deputy Mayor, M. MacIver and **SECONDED** by Councillor, B. MacQuarrie
“THAT the Town of Port Hawkesbury approve the January 23, 2024, Committee of the Whole Minutes as presented.” MOTION CARRIED.

10. Business Arising from the Minutes

Councillor, B. MacQuarrie asked for an update from the recent meeting with the Town of Port Hawkesbury’s and Richmond County’s representatives consisting of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Warden, Deputy Warden and the two CAO’s with respect to the Joint Council meeting agenda. CAO, T. Doyle indicated that he had sent a draft agenda to the Richmond County CAO, T. MacCulloch. There is a meeting scheduled with him to discuss the options.

Councillor, J. Aucoin mentioned that he thought that the Councils were to see the agendas before the agenda was to be set. He expressed his concerns with not having the ability to have items added to the agenda.

CAO, T. Doyle stated that there are twelve shared services items that are a possibility for the agenda. Deputy Mayor, M. MacIver noted that Council asked the Mayor and Deputy to attend the meeting to discuss the possible agenda to bring back to their respective Councils. CAO, T. Doyle noted that the agenda will need to be agreed upon by both Councils in order to be finalized.

11. Council Reports on Assigned Committees

Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton had submitted her report electronically and it was included in the agenda package.

Councillor, B. MacQuarrie

Cape Breton South Recruiting for Health – A meeting was held on January 26th.

Strait of Canso Offshore Wind Task Force – A Meeting was held on February 13th.

Port Hawkesbury Development Advisory Committee – A meeting was deferred due to lack of quorum. The next meeting is scheduled for March 12th.

Councillor H. MacDougall

Strait Area Transit Meeting was held on January 19th. The next meeting is to be determined.

Landrie Lake Water Utility was held on February 1st.

Port Hawkesbury Development Advisory Committee – A meeting was held but didn't have quorum the next meeting is scheduled for March 12th.

Waterfront Advisory Committee Meeting – A meeting is scheduled for March 18th.

Deputy Mayor, M. MacIver

The Waterfront Advisory Committee was rescheduled until March 18th due to scheduling conflicts and storm cancellations.

Landrie Lake Water Utility was held on February 1st.

Councillor, J. Aucoin

Nothing to report on this month.

12. CAO Reports.

CAO, T. Doyle gave a quick overview of the Departmental Reports including:

- Engineering and Public Works
- Finance, and
- Marketing, Recreation, Tourism, and Culture,
- And Facilities, Operations, and Parks

CAO, T. Doyle noted the work that the Public Works team had successfully completed snow removal over the two major snowstorm events in February. There were three water main breaks during that same period. T. Doyle noted there are two properties left on the Tax Sale that is taking place on March 12th. He also asked that Council please send their availability to Director of Finance E. MacEachen to schedule the first budget meeting. He indicated that Director of Recreation, Marketing, Tourism and Culture, M. Farrow had listed some of the upcoming events throughout her report. He also covered a brief description the Facilities and Operations report.

Councillor, J. Aucoin wanted to thank Public Works for their great work over the major snowstorm events that occurred in February.

13. Correspondence

Mayor, B. Chisolm-Beaton brought forward correspondence that was circulated in the agenda package from the office of Municipal Affairs and Housing regarding the recent amendments to the Land Use Bylaw and Municipal Planning Strategy.

Councillor, J. Aucoin noted that he was in touch with the Town's Municipal Advisor, Ross MacDonald to discuss the Residential Development Tax incentives. R. MacDonald advised that Council should set up a meeting at the Municipal Affairs Office. He asked Council if they would be interested in travelling to Halifax to have an in-person meeting to discuss tax incentives for residential development.

MOVED by J. Aucoin and SECONDED by Councillor, H. MacDougall "That the Town of Port Hawkesbury staff contact the Department of Housing Municipal Affairs Office to schedule a meeting with the Minister to discuss tax incentives for residential development." MOTION CARRIED.

14. Proclamations/Resolutions

There were no proclamations or resolutions.

15. Other Business

i. Council Expenses, CAO, T. Doyle

CAO, T. Doyle, gave an update on Council Expenses for the month of January. He reminded the gallery that Council expenses are posted on the Town of Port Hawkesbury website.

ii. 2024 Municipal Election – CAO, T. Doyle

CAO, T. Doyle brought this item forward in advance of the next election. The Town's Electronic Voting Bylaw was only valid for one year in 2020. CAO, T. Doyle asked how Council would like to deliver the election this year. This item was introduced in December. He asked for the direction of Council to move forward.

He discussed the challenges to be running both paper and electronic systems. Director, E. MacEachen spoke about her experience supporting the 2020 Returning Officer and spoke about the voting process and noted that there is some room for human error with the hybrid format.

Councillor, H. MacDougall asked about having a Returning Officer that knows the process and the systems.

Councillor, J. Aucoin noted that he strongly supports using the hybrid format that was used in 2020 due to the aging population in Port Hawkesbury.

Councillor, B. MacQuarrie asked about the percentage of voter turnout on the municipalities that switched to fully electronic/paperless voting for the 2020 election.

Deputy Mayor, M. MacIver asked what software would be used and how it would like to work. For him it depends on how user friendly the advanced the voting software is.

16. Approved Additions

- i. Approved additions were discussed in Correspondence.

17. Future Meetings

The future meetings of the Town Council are scheduled as follows:

- i. Public Meeting of Council, Tuesday March 5th at 7pm
- ii. Committee of the Whole- Tuesday, March 19, 2024, at 7pm

18. Public Question Period

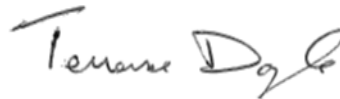
There were no questions from the gallery.

19. Adjournment

Town of Port Hawkesbury Public Meeting of Council adjourned at 7:38p.m.

March 6, 2024

Date



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



Recorded by:
Melissa Warner
Communications and
Administration Officer