

**PORT HAWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
Shannon Studio  
Minutes of Meeting  
May 21, 2024**

**Present**

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

**Regrets**

Manager, Facilities and Operations, Gordie Snook

**1. Call to Order**

A meeting of the Committee of the Whole was held in the Shannon Studio, Tuesday, May 21, 2024, and called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton.

**2. Additions to Agenda**

- Clean Foundations Thriving Forests Proposal – Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton

**3. Approval of Agenda**

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

**4. Presentations**

Destination Cape Breton – CEO, Terry Smith

CEO, T. Smith provided Council with an overview of the initiatives of Destination Cape Breton over the past year. He noted that the new marketing levy has been in effect since January 1, 2024. The Province passed recent legislation with respect to short term rental making the administration of the levy much easier. He provided Council with website traffic over the past year as well as room nights sold which were down 1% last summer based on a series of unfortunate extreme weather events. He reviewed this year's strategy. The Tourism Employment in Nova Scotia. Mr. Smith also indicated that visitor economy future growth of Cape Breton Island and the goals of Destination Cape Breton. They are focusing on Increasing the length of stay and staff are working on capturing all the events that are happening around the island which will increase the average spend. There is an application into ACOA to develop and implement a strategy plan. There was a Q&A following the presentation.

Councillor, B. MacQuarrie asked about the Levy Education position Mr. Smith indicated that there is a need for that position to enforce operators to pay their levy fees and to

assist the newer operators in collecting the levies. There was a question about the Gateway project. T. Smith stated that the Cape Breton Partnership was a partner on that project, and the final report should be sent along from the Cape Breton Partnership, once available.

There was a question about winter tourism in the area and what events and initiatives are in place to attract private jets to the area for ice fishing, and hunting excursions etc. CEO, T. Smith said that the product is needed to attract people. There is a developer in Cheticamp that is developing a high-end hotel that would be attracting some of the market that are on jets. Cape Smokey Ski Resort is another appealing attraction to the area.

## **5. Council Reports on Assigned Committees**

Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton circulated her report prior to the meeting.

### Deputy Mayor, M. MacIver

A Police Advisory Meeting is scheduled for June 11<sup>th</sup>.

A Waterfront Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

### Councillor, H. MacDougall

Sports Wall of Fame Meeting was held on May 9<sup>th</sup>.

Festival of the Strait Committee Meeting - April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Port Hawkesbury Development Committee a meeting was held on May 14<sup>th</sup>.

Waterfront Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

### Councillor, J. Aucoin

Had attended the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities that was held in Baddeck on May 8-10<sup>th</sup>.

### Councillor B. MacQuarrie

Planning Advisory Meetings were held on April 25<sup>th</sup> and again May 21<sup>st</sup>.  
Strait Area Transit Meeting was held on May 19<sup>th</sup>.

A Cape Breton South Recruiting for Health meeting was held on May 16<sup>th</sup> it was the first in person meeting since Covid-19. He noted that there have been significant staffing improvements since last year. He stated that the Strait Richmond Hospital Site Manager, Angela Meagher indicated that there have been 22 new nurses hired as well as a full-time social worker. The Island Gateway Center is now called the Port Hawkesbury Health Centre.

A meeting with the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing was held on May 10<sup>th</sup>.  
Strait of Canso Offshore Wind Task Force held a meeting on May 14<sup>th</sup>.  
The Port Hawkesbury Development Committee held a meeting was held on May 14<sup>th</sup>.

## **6. CAO REPORTS**

### **i. Finance**

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

- Budget Process,
- Annual Audit,
- Water Utility Technology,
- And Tax & Utility Bills,

Director, E. MacEachen noted that there have been significant number of budget meetings over the past month and another meeting is scheduled for May 27<sup>th</sup>. The Finance Department is in the process of reviewing options to replace the water utility handheld. First interim tax bills and utility bills have been sent out.

### **ii. Facilities, Operations and Parks**

CAO, T. Doyle noted that G. Snook was not able to be in attendance but would be available for questions and comment if needed.

Councillor, B. MacQuarrie asked about clarification on the building inspection report. CAO, T. Doyle noted that there is a more in-depth inspection taking place as well as the roof is being inspected. He stated that the problematic areas have been identified.

### **iii. 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,
- Grants,
- And Marketing and Communications

Director, M. Farrow noted that the Strait Area Trails Association have developed and printed new trail maps. On September 6<sup>th</sup> the Port Hawkesbury Civic Centre will host a Screaming Eagles pre-season game and she noted that all the sky boxes are currently full and tickets will be on sale by Friday May 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **iv. ENGINEERING and PUBLIC WORKS**

CAO, T. Doyle noted that there is a significant amount of detail in the staff report. Deputy Mayor, M. MacIver asked about the Public Works Building.

Councillor, J. Aucoin asked for an update on Old Sydney Road. CAO, T. Doyle noted that the work that is being completed now is work that needed to be completed from last year. There were several contract deficiencies that needed to be addressed by Brylin Construction that have been identified by the Contract Engineer.

## 7. Other Business

### i. ArtCon Tattoo Convention – CAO, T. Doyle

CAO, T. Doyle indicated that there was a presentation made to Council last year. The Director of Marketing has looked at several costs that will be associated with this event. The organizer is asking for a reduction in the rental rate. The recommendation is to waive the fees at the rental rate which equals an 18% rental reduction rate. Councillor, J. Aucoin wanted to congratulate the organizer Donny Boudreau and would like to increase the rental reduction rate. Councillor B. MacQuarrie would like to increase the rental reduction rate to 25%. CAO, T. Doyle wanted to ensure that the direct costs of the event and lost revenue potential were covered.

### ii. Alternative Voting By-Law – CAO, T. Doyle

CAO, T. Doyle noted that Council has passed a motion. There is an AMA template that was submitted.

**Consensus is to move forward to the Special Public Meeting following the Committee of the Whole.**

### iii. Budget 2024/2025 – Director, E. MacEachen

Deferred to the next meeting. The next budget meeting date is Monday May 27<sup>th</sup> at 5pm.

### iv. Recommendation from Planning Advisory Committee – CAO, T. Doyle

#### **Commercial Restricted (C-4) Zone**

CAO, T. Doyle reviewed the suggested changes to the Commercial Restricted (C-4) Zone. He reviewed the motion that was coming forward from the Planning Advisory Committee.

**Consensus of Council was to move the item forward to the Special Public Meeting.**

#### **Memorial Drive**

CAO, T. Doyle reviewed the recommendation coming forward from the Planning Advisory Committee with respect to development on Memorial Drive. Councillor, J. Aucoin stated that the Planning Advisory Committee had full support for this development. Councillor, B. MacQuarrie mentioned that Council has been looking for local entrepreneurs in our area and he is 100% supportive of it.

**Consensus of Council was to move the item forward to the Special Public Meeting.**

CAO, T. Doyle noted that the existing development agreement with Smith and Fraser needs to be discharged and is incorporated into the motion of recommendation.

**8. Approved Additions**

**Clean Foundation Thriving Forest Proposal – CAO, T. Doyle**

CAO, T. Doyle reviewed the proposal that has been brought forward from the Strait Area Trails Association. He reviewed the areas of possible tree planting. The suggested areas are Prince Street Park, Oaklee Ballfield, Dan Willie MacDonald Ballfield, and the Old Irving Gas Station. He noted that there is no financial requirement needed from Council.

Deputy Mayor, M. MacIver stated that he would like to hear more about the Prince Street Park and how to enhance the sledding hill and promote it. Councillor, J. Aucoin had some areas of concern with the Dan Willie Field, and Oaklee Field AT Trail that is going to be going through there due to drainage. Councillor, H. MacDougall asked about the ballfields areas and Prince Street Park and noted the maintenance of the park. Councillor, B. MacQuarrie asked about maintenance as that was an area of concern over the past number of years. Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton asked about the type of trees and some of the areas.

**Consensus of Council was to move forward to the Special Public Meeting.**

**9. Future Meetings**

- Public Meeting of Council June 4, 2024
- Joint Public and Committee of the Whole June 18, 2024
- Public Hearing June 18, 2024

**10. Adjournment**

**MOVED by Councillor, J. Aucoin and SECONDED by Special Public Meeting the Committee of the Whole adjourned at 8:20p.m. MOTION CARRIED.**

June 19, 2024



Date

Approved  
Terry Doyle, P. Eng  
Chief Administrative Officer

Recorded by:  
Melissa Warner  
Communications and  
Administrative Officer