

Business Arising from Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes of the meeting held on September 11, 2014.

Presentations

Alton Natural Gas Storage LP (AltaGas) – Mr. David Birkett, President and Ms. Gina MacInnis, Environmental Consultant

Mr. Birkett began his presentation advising that Alton Natural Gas Storage (Alton) is investing approximately \$100 million in the project to create natural gas salt cavern storage facilities located near the Truro area. Areas covered by Mr. Birkett included the drilling process, environmental and regulatory approvals, and, the numerous consultations and studies that have been underway since 2006.

Ms. MacInnis was in attendance to speak on the topics of environmental studies and protecting the environment, addressing key points which included:

- extensive river monitoring and data collection to establish comprehensive ecological knowledge of the Shubenacadie River such as what species are present, in what numbers and at what time of the year;
- salinity, depth and temperature of the water;
- over 10,000 hours in the lab analyzing the data;
- measures taken to protect the fish habitat;
- actual brine and salt amounts being released into the River, at levels that can be tolerated by all organisms.

Mr. Birkett also provided an overview of the infrastructure and brining ponds at the facility; benefits of the storage of natural gas including job creation, stable and secure supply of natural gas, eliminating price volatility resulting in lower costs for consumers; and project timelines.

An invitation was extended to members of Council who are interested in touring the facility and sites. A tour usually takes about three hours and, for safety reasons, small groups are preferred.

Moved by Councillor Blair
Seconded by Councillor Stewart

“That the presentation from Mr. Birkett and Ms. MacInnis on Alton Natural Gas Storage be received.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Staff Presentations

Colchester County Arenas – Mr. Craig Burgess, Recreation Manager

Mr. Burgess indicated that he has been working with the North Shore

Recreation Centre, the Don Henderson Memorial Sportsplex and the West Colchester Arena, to address the declining ice/facility rentals over the past couple of years. Council had previously approved a budget of \$35,000 earmarked to provide support for these arenas. The purpose of this presentation is to provide Council with an update on progress to date and future initiatives to support Colchester County arenas.

Initiatives that have been completed to date include the purchase of ice time last year; implementation of 'try it' sessions for speed skating and sledge hockey; development of the Babes on Blades Program in Brookfield and Tatamagouche; development of promotional materials to aid with advertising; and received a grant for a program which will help youth to have access to facilities during the school hours.

Continued effort is being made to promote more participation within the arenas. Some initiatives include developing after school programs such as Pucksters and Parents and Tots; having equipment available at the arenas for public use; establishing a new commercial league in a couple of venues; introducing Ringette to Brookfield; continuing ice time rental over holidays and special events; promoting figure skating and CanSkate Program in all areas; speed skating 'try it' sessions; promoting broomball in the Tatamagouche and Debert arenas; and, running a successful Kidsport Program which provides funding opportunities for registration fees.

Promoting minor hockey in all of the areas is another key initiative being worked on. Efforts with minor hockey include working with groups to improve development at young ages and beyond; increasing interest in local officials; initiating programs for first year players; and, developing a plan to help reduce high costs for players.

Mr. Burgess indicated that continued efforts will be made to meet with minor sport groups to better understand their needs. Work will also continue with the arena Boards to help promote ice time and uses for the facilities during the off season.

Moved by Councillor MacInnes
Seconded by Councillor Gibbs

"That the presentation from the Recreation Manager on Colchester County Arenas be received."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

Personnel Policy Amendments –

Ms. Kelly Gratto-McCarthy, Human Resource Specialist, reported that staff is continuing to update policies, stressing the importance of having

**Policies 5.01, 5.04,
5.05, 5.06, 5.10, 5.11,
5.12**

current policies. There are seven personnel policy sections with the current focus on section five. Some changes are simple housekeeping items and others having more significant modifications.

Policy 5.01 now includes rest periods, which was formerly addressed in a separate policy, 5.02 Rest Periods. Other changes include the supervisor's authority to establish lunch hours, overtime hours, as well as incorporate the levels of responsibility.

Policy 5.05, newly numbered to 5.04, has been renamed Job Performance Reviews. Changes in this Policy include outlining the procedure for conducting performance reviews and responsibility areas have been revised for each level of authority.

Discussion was held on the appeal process with concern being expressed that the CAO should be involved and copied on all appeal levels.

Moved by Councillor MacInnes
Seconded by Councillor Blair

"That Council Committee recommends to Council that current policies 5.01, 5.02 (Rest Periods), 5.05, 5.06, 5.07, 5.10, 5.11, 5.12 be repealed; and,

That policies numbered 5.01, 5.04, 5.05, 5.06, 5.09, 5.10, 5.11, be approved as presented."

Motion Carried.
(Councillor Cooper opposed)

Since opportunity for discussion on the Service Recognition Policy was not provided before voting on the motion, it was noted that discussion would be held before final approval is given at Council at the end of the month.

Mayor Taylor raised concern on the issue of insurance coverage for members of Council, when travelling on municipal business, which came to light prior to delegates travelling to Pune, India.

Moved by Councillor Cavanaugh
Seconded by Mayor Taylor

"That insurance coverage for members of Council be referred to staff to look into and bring back to a future meeting."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Art Selection
Committee**

Moved by Councillor Gibbs
Seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That Councillor Christine Blair and Councillor Doug MacInnes be appointed to serve on the Art Selection Committee for the Municipality of Colchester’s Art Selection Program for 2014.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Signing of Three
Year Cost Share
Agreement for
Subdivision Streets**

It was noted that at its meeting on September 25, 2014, Council gave authority for Committee to take a decision on this item.

Mr. Ramesh Ummat, CAO, advised that this agreement is the same as previous agreements, with one change, which includes repaving of roads.

Concerns were raised about residents having to pay for repaving. The CAO advised that roads do not have to go on the list of priorities.

Moved by Councillor Cavanaugh
Seconded by Councillor MacInnes

“That Council approves that the Mayor and CAO be authorized to sign Cost Share Agreement No. 2015-008 for the three year cost shared paving of provincially owned subdivision streets.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Rescheduling
November Council
Committee Date**

The CAO advised that due to the Mayor travelling from November 12-14 for the Atlantic Mayors Congress, it is being suggested that the date for the November Council Committee meeting be changed from Thursday, November, 13th to Tuesday, November, 18th. It was noted that Deputy Mayor Masters would be out of town on November 13th as well.

Moved by Councillor Taggart
Seconded by Councillor Gregory

“That the date of Tuesday, November 18, 2014, be approved for the November Council Committee meeting.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Debert Water Utility

Mr. Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services, reported that three year budgets for water utilities are a requirement of the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board. Staff is seeking approval on the three year operating budget for the Debert Water Utility, as presented, as well as proceeding with a water rate review. The Debert Water Utility is

currently running in a deficit position. Mr. Fraser advised that now is the time to do a rate review as there could be bigger increases if we wait to do the review.

Discussion was held about low income families and affordability of rate increases and an inquiry was made about the possibility of assistance in the form of an exemption on water bills.

Concern was raised regarding the costs associated with the environmental testing requirements and frequency of such.

Moved by Mayor Taylor
Seconded by Councillor MacKenzie

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the 2014/15 Debert Water Utility operating budget be approved as presented; and,

That Staff be authorized to proceed with a Debert Water Utility water rate review effective fiscal 2015/16.”

Motion Carried.
(Councillor MacInnes opposed)

Waste To Energy Project Proposal

Mr. Ramesh Ummat, CAO, provided a brief summary on the five member delegation visit to Pune, India, in September. The delegation had detailed meetings and discussions with officials of the Pune Municipal Corporation and operational staff of Concord Blue Technologies Limited, as well as site visits to the facility in India. The delegation is recommending that the Municipality continue pursuing the Waste-to-Energy project.

Moved by Councillor Gregory
Seconded by Councillor Blair

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that staff be directed to:

- a) Approach and open a dialog with the Provincial Departments of Energy, Environment, Municipal Affairs and other departments to look at future potential approvals, regulatory regimes, requirements for building the facility, and uploading the energy to the transmission grid: and,
- b) Maintain regular contact with the Pune Municipal Corporation and Concord Blue Technologies Limited representatives to monitor the status of electric energy upload to the transmission grid in Pune and its stable performance; and

- c) Maintain contact with Lockheed Martin energy division and its representatives to monitor the status of their new pilot project and Waste-to-Energy facility in the US; and,
- d) Provide periodic and timely updates to the Council on the progress of the project.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Restoration of
Properties after
Completion of
Sidewalk in Onslow**

Councillor MacInnes indicated that it has been seven weeks since the completion of the sidewalk project in Onslow and the deficiencies to the area properties, namely dust on houses and replacing sod, have not been addressed as yet. Due to limited time left in the season to carry out this type of work, residents are concerned and frustrated that the necessary work will not be done.

It was also noted that there is property with a slope in the driveway, which has caused damage to a vehicle, and needs to be fixed before further damage is caused.

Discussion was held regarding contractual obligations and that the contractor has 60 days after completion of the project to address any deficiencies. After 60 days have lapsed, the County can withhold funds and proceed with carrying out the work. The 60 day contractual obligation ends at the end of October.

Moved by Councillor Taggart
Seconded by Councillor MacInnes

“That a letter be written to Mid Valley Construction advising that Council is establishing policy that will allow it to preclude contractors from bidding on future projects due to poor past performance and that if significant progress is not made within the next 48 hours to fulfill the outstanding deficiencies remaining on the sidewalk project for Onslow and for Brookfield, then Mid Valley Construction’s performance will be taken into account in future tenders.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Referring to the matter of the sloped driveway, Ms. Michelle Newell, Director of Public Works, advised that since damages have been caused to a vehicle, this issue would be reassessed.

**Nova Scotia Music
Week Contribution**

Councillor MacInnes provided a brief summary of this item advising that at a recent Interim CoRDA Board meeting, there was discussion on the upcoming Nova Scotia Music Week and their current financial position in being short \$3,421. The Interim Board is requesting both the County of Colchester and the Town of Truro to approve funding to

Nova Scotia Music Week, in the amount of \$3,421, with source of funding being CoRDA funds.

Moved by Councillor MacInnes

Seconded by Councillor Parker

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the request from the Interim CoRDA Board for funding in the amount of \$3,421 be granted to Nova Scotia Music Week, with source of funding being from CoRDA funds.”

Motion Carried.

(opposed by Councillor Stewart)

Property Tax Errors

Councillor Taggart raised the concern of property taxes being collected in error and there needs to be a mechanism in place to deal with this. One specific instance had a permit being issued by the County in 2011 for demolition but Property Valuation Services Corporation saying the permit was not received until 2013, thus, resulting in the resident being billed incorrectly. Councillor Taggart indicated that he would like to see a committee formed or policy in place to deal with these types of errors.

The Municipal Solicitor advised that the Municipality does not have the authority to change assessment records. Under Section 57 of the Assessment Act, such errors should be communicated with the Director of Assessment. The Municipality has the discretion to amend tax bills due to municipally generated errors and development of a policy may provide some clarity regarding this issue.

Moved by Councillor Taggart

Seconded by Councillor Cavanaugh

“That a policy to address property tax errors be referred to staff and brought back to Council at a future meeting.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Flooding in West Colchester

Councillor Taggart brought this item forward inquiring about the process for approval for funding for work associated with Flood Advisory Committee (FAC) due to the September 22, 2014 rain storm. The Municipal Solicitor advised that this can go directly to Council for approval.

As Chair of the FAC, Councillor Cavanaugh advised that damages are currently being assessed and, since FAC funding for this fiscal year has been used, recommendations will be put forth at the October Council meeting for approval.

**Tendering Policy –
Truckers Association
of Nova Scotia**

Referring to the discussion held at the September 25, 2014 Council meeting, Councillor Gibbs reported that many Councillors are still fielding calls relating to trucking services for contracts over \$1 million and the uncertainty regarding provincial rates and fuel surcharges. Suggestions were made to amend the Purchasing and Tendering Policy or to change the wording in tender documents to help clarify the issue.

Moved by Councillor MacInnes
Seconded by Councillor Gibbs

“That the wording be changed in tendering documents to reflect that contractors adhere to the 80/20 and pay to the Truckers Association of Nova Scotia as approved provincial rates plus any surcharge.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**INFORMATION
ITEMS**

**Remembrance Day
Services**

Councillor Taggart indicated that he would appreciate assistance from Council to cover off his area for Remembrance Day Services. Councillor Blair offered her assistance and would cover the services at 11:00 am in Bass River at the Memorial Park and 2:00 in Londonderry, on the main road near Lyons Club or the Community Centre if weather is not favourable.

**Review of Flood
Mitigation in West
Colchester**

Ms. Newell reported that staff will quantify work required to be done as a result on the flooding on September 22, 2014, and bring back to Council an estimate for review and approval.

Mayor Taylor advised that Nova Scotia Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal reported approximate damages of \$400,000 related to the flooding on September 22nd, which does not reach the \$1 million threshold required to qualify for provincial disaster relief.

Municipal Awareness

Mayor Taylor indicated that letters are going to the junior high and high schools in the County to see if there is interest in having presentations to students on Municipal Awareness. It was suggested that the presentations should also be offered to elementary schools.

Discussion was held on the possibility of having Municipal Awareness presentations in communities. Councillors were requested to report back to the Administration Office if there is interest in having presentations in their area.

**Province/Municipal
Fiscal Review**

Mr. Ramesh Ummat, CAO, advised that the documents have been released on the Province/Municipal Fiscal Review with feedback being

Attendance requested by December 15, 2014. Information sessions are being held in various locations throughout the province, with one in Truro at the Holiday Inn on October 28, 2014. Councillors are requested to report back to the CAO's office if they plan to attend the session.

It was suggested that Council should get together after the information session to review and discuss the report. Council agreed that dates be brought forth at October Council for this informal meeting.

Natural Playspace in Londonderry Councillor Taggart reported that he attended the Grand Opening of the Natural Playspace in Londonderry and commended the Recreation Department for their part in this project.

Directors Report A report from Mr. Crawford Macpherson, Director of Community Development, was circulated in the package for this evening's meeting.

CLOSED SESSION Moved by Councillor Cavanaugh
Seconded by Councillor Gregory

"That the meeting go into closed session at 11:40 pm"

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Gregory
Seconded by Councillor Cavanaugh

"That the meeting reconvene in open session at 12:00 am."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Adjournment Moved by Councillor MacInnes
Seconded by Councillor Gibbs

"That the meeting be adjourned at 12:03 am."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Tracey Veno
Recording Secretary