

COUNCIL COMMITTEE

The Regular Session of Council Committee of the Municipality of the County of Colchester was held in the Courthouse, Truro, Nova Scotia, on Thursday, May 12, 2016.

Roll Call

The roll was called with the following Councillors in attendance:

Mayor Bob Taylor	
Councillor Christine Blair	District 1
Deputy Mayor Bill Masters, Chair	District 2
Councillor Geoff Stewart	District 3
Councillor Mike Cooper	District 4
Councillor Lloyd Gibbs	District 5
Councillor Karen MacKenzie	District 6
Councillor Michael Gregory	District 7
Councillor Ron Cavanaugh	District 8
Councillor Doug MacInnes	District 9
Councillor Tom Taggart	District 10
Councillor Wade Parker	District 11

Staff Present

Mr. Rob Simonds, Chief Administrative Officer
 Ms. Michelle Newell, Director of Public Works
 Mr. Crawford Macpherson, Director of Community Development
 Mr. Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services
 Mr. Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor
 Ms. Tracey Veno, Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Gregory
 Seconded by Councillor Blair

“That the agenda be approved with the following amendments:

- Add Item 11b, Fort McMurray;
- Add Item 11c, South Colchester Academy;
- Add Item 13 in Closed Session, Legal Advice;
- Move Item # 11 up to precede Action Item #5; and,
- Addition of an extra set of minutes on table from the April 19th Maintenance Budget Meeting.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Councillor MacInnes
 Seconded by Councillor Stewart

“That the minutes from the meetings held on April 14th, 19th, 26th & 27th, 2016, be approved as presented.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Business Arising from Minutes

Referring to the minutes of April 14, 2016, Councillor Parker asked for an update on a presentation from the RCMP. It was noted that Mayor Taylor, staff and the Police Advisory Board have had discussions with the RCMP regarding Council's concerns relating to RCMP as well as the desire to have a presentation from the RCMP.

ACTION ITEMS**Teakwood and College Road**

At the request of Councillor Parker, a number of photos were distributed to show the conditions of extensive water accumulation and lack of drainage in the College Road/Teakwood Court area. This has been an ongoing problem and falls under the Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (NSTIR). Part of the problem may be caused by a developer dumping fill in the area. Councillor Parker indicated that he would like to have legal advice on who is responsible.

Councillor Parker also addressed the issue of four or five catch basins having wooden tops that are rotten, which is a serious safety concern. NSTIR has been notified about these catch basins but nothing has been done.

Mr. Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor, advised that this is a NSTIR system, therefore, NSTIR has to repair. If an individual or business has caused damage, they would be liable. One would have to have legal standing or legal authority to proceed, namely the landowner. Litigation is not always the best option as there is potential for civil liability.

Mr. James also indicated that there is a Ditches and Watercourse Act which is very old, convoluted and difficult to read. He indicated that he is not sure if the Act would apply but there may be something in the Act to allow the Municipality to become involved. Councillor Parker requested that the Municipal Solicitor explore the Act and report back to Council.

Moved by Councillor Parker
Seconded by Councillor MacKenzie

"That a firm letter be written to the Nova Scotia Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal Minister, copied to MLA's, requesting that the issue of water accumulation in the area of Teakwood Court and College Road be addressed."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

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Mr. Keith Shane, resident of the noted area, spoke regarding this issue indicating that it has been an ongoing problem for 20+ years. NSTIR has tried over the years, without success, to remediate the problem by redirecting the water flow, fixing culverts eight different times, and blasting the gravel but not fixing the pipe. Residents have contacted Lenore Zann, County Councillors, the Village of Bible Hill and NSTIR regarding this issue and would like to have something done.

Canadian Junior Angus Association – Request for Funding

An application for funding was submitted to the Municipality by the Canadian Junior Angus Association seeking funding assistance for Showdown 2016, an event being held in Truro from July 28-30, 2016. The group has requested assistance in the amount of \$2,500. The request fits under the criteria of the Economic Development Grants Policy.

Discussion was held about where the event was being held. It was confirmed that the Showdown 2016 would be held at the Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition grounds.

Concern was expressed that groups requesting funding should be making a presentation to Council and that this should be part of the criteria in the Policy.

Moved by Councillor Cavanaugh
Seconded by Councillor Gregory

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that funding in the amount of \$1,000 to the Canadian Junior Angus Association for the 2016 Showdown event being held in Truro, be approved, with source of funds being Economic Development Grants.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Not Since Moses Run – Request for Funding

A request for funding in the amount of \$5,000 was submitted for the Not Since Moses Run being held in Five Islands August 20th and 21st. The Run has taken place for a number of years but this is the first time the group has requested funding. This event will attract a large number of people to the area from all over the world and the Five Islands Lighthouse Park will be used as a destination for some of the activities.

Discussion was held regarding criteria of the Economic Development Policy, the tremendous work of the Committee hosting the event, this event being a great opportunity to promote tourism for the County, the event budget, and the economic spinoff for the area.

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A question was raised about the group requesting funding has not-for-profit status. Mr. Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor, advised that under the Registry of Joint Stocks, it comes up as a company, not a not-for-profit organization. However, the entity may own the rights to the event but it is morphed into a community event. There could be ways to work around this. It was suggested that any approved funds be held until clarification is received.

Moved by Councillor Taggart
Seconded by Mayor Taylor

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that funding in the amount of \$5,000 be approved for the Not Since Moses Run being held in Five Islands on August 20-21, subject to clarification that the event is not-for-profit, with source of funds being Economic Development Grants.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Great Village Bridge Street Light

Ms. Michelle Newell, Director of Public Works, advised that Council had previously directed staff to investigate options for lighting on the new bridge in Great Village. Three options were presented with staff recommending option 3, which would have Nova Scotia Power install a new 400-watt flood light on one of the existing poles between the sewage plant and the bridge, at a cost of approximately \$35 per month.

Concern was expressed that this is another case of downloading by the province and this should be addressed by the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

Moved by Councillor Taggart
Seconded by Councillor MacInnes

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that staff direct Nova Scotia Power to install a 400-watt floodlight on the existing pole adjacent to the Great Village Bridge, at a monthly cost of \$35, to be funded through the general tax rate.”

Motion Carried.
(Councillor Cavanaugh opposed)

Lower Debert River Funding

Ms. Newell advised that funding for the Lower Debert River flood mitigation work was discussed at the April Council meeting. Due to the deadline for applications under the Flood Risk Infrastructure Investment Program (FRIIP), April Council gave authority for May Council Committee to make a final decision on funding for this project.

An application was received from Mr. Bennett, owner of the Elm River Park Campground in Lower Debert, for assistance with flood mitigation work on his property. The County's Flood Advisory Committee (FAC) discussed the project and costs of the remedial work at their April 2016 meeting. The estimated cost of \$350,000 for the project exceeds the funding capacity of the FAC. The project could be funded through the Major Flood Reserve, however, the available funds in this reserve for 2016/17 is \$42,000.

Ms. Newell advised that it is also important to note that the Municipal Government Act restricts direct assistance for businesses.

As the Councillor bringing this item forth, Councillor Taggart indicated that with the provincial funding through FRIIP, this is an opportunity to have the work done with 50% cost sharing from the Province, plus the possibility of federal funding.

The question was raised about whether the applicant would be contributing to the cost of the project. Discussion was held regarding the Flood Policy requirements to have applicants pay for a portion of flood remediation work. Concern was expressed that the Policy indicates applicants are to pay 25%, 50% or 75% of the work costs, however, of the \$201,000 spent on projects, only \$21,000, or 15% has been recovered.

Discussion was held on the potential shortfall in funding, even with the 50% funding through the FRIIP, as well as funding options including the possibility of completing the work in phases over two or three years.

Moved by Councillor Taggart
Seconded by Councillor Gibbs

"That Council approves the Lower Debert River Project, to be carried out over two years, subject to receiving provincial funding through the Flood Risk Infrastructure Investment Program and possibly federal funding; and,

That the project be funded through the Major Flood Reserve."

Motion **Defeated.**

(Mayor Taylor, Councillors Blair, Stewart, Parker, MacInnes and Cavanaugh opposed)

Sewer Servicing – Hub Centre Drive

Ms. Newell presented this item indicating that it was prompted by a request from Green Diamond Equipment to cost share on the construction of a sewer line on Hub Centre Drive.

Estimated costs as determined by an Engineer retained by Green Diamond were approximately \$125,000. Staff reviewed the design, and a connection at Highway 2 can be accommodated, and found that the estimated cost of \$125,000 was reasonable. The sewer can be extended an additional 300 metres beyond Green Diamond which would service the remaining lots on Hub Centre as well as a number of lots on the proposed expansion of Hub Centre. The cost of such expansion would be approximately \$150,000.

It was noted that any servicing beyond this would require a pumping station and possibly five to seven lots within the future extension of Hub Centre Drive would not be serviceable without a pumping station.

Moved by Councillor MacInnes
Seconded by Councillor Cavanaugh

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the extension of sewer to the end of Hub Centre Drive be approved, and that it be funded through the sewer rate.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Brief discussion was held regarding expanding the sewer service area. Ms. Newell indicated that the sewer boundary would be reviewed and could be brought back to Council fairly quickly.

**Tourism Funding Request
– Truro/Colchester
Chamber of Commerce**

With the permanent shut down of the Central Nova Tourist Association (CNTA), there was concern that there would be a void in tourism for this region. Mr. Devin Trefry, former Acting Executive Director for CNTA, created a program to maintain tourism for the upcoming tourist season. Mr. Trefry worked with the local Chamber of Commerce, along with their sister organization for Cumberland County, to negotiate with Tourism Nova Scotia for provincial funding for the local Visitor Information Centres (VIC) for another year.

Correspondence from the Truro and Colchester Chamber suggests that a Regional Tourism Committee be formed and tasked with hiring a Regional Tourism Coordinator for the tourist season as well as developing a longer term strategy. The Chamber is requesting that the Municipality contribute funds that would have been allocated to CNTA to help fund this initiative. Similar requests have been made to the Towns of Truro, Stewiacke, Amherst, Parrsboro and Cumberland County. The total request at this time is \$26,369.28 for core operating funds and an additional \$5,000 to help staff the VIC at the Palliser. Funds for tourism were included in the 2016/17 budget.

Moved by Mayor Taylor
 Seconded by Councillor MacInnes

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the Municipality agrees to support the Regional Tourism Committee initiative with \$26,369.28 core funding and \$5,000 for the Palliser VIC and appoints Councillor Stewart as the Colchester representative on the Committee.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Fort McMurray

At a Special Council meeting held on May 10, 2016, Council granted authority for May Committee to approve funding to the relief efforts for Fort McMurray.

Discussion was held regarding the Municipality making a donation to the relief efforts for Fort McMurray and the various possible avenues in which to make the donation, such as through the Red Cross, Salvation Army, and Food Banks. Council expressed a desire to donate to a local charity to help people who are coming home to Nova Scotia and require assistance. However, it was noted that it would be difficult to identify those needing support and what local charities are being utilized for relief assistance. Council suggested that the Mayor of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, Melissa Blake, be contacted for suggestions regarding the best place to make a donation.

Some members of Council expressed concern with making a donation at the expense of taxpayers. Although it was felt that it is important to support, it should be done on an individual basis and not through the Municipality.

Moved by Mayor Taylor
 Seconded by Councillor Parker

“That Council approves a \$5,000 donation, funded through the Operating Reserve, to the relief efforts for Fort McMurray; and,

That staff be directed to contact Mayor Melissa Blake for input on the best place to make the donation.”

Motion Carried.

(Councillors Stewart, Taggart, MacInnes, and Gregory opposed)

South Colchester Academy

Councillor Stewart advised that South Colchester Academy was one of two successful recipients of the Samsung's Solve for Tomorrow Challenge, receiving a \$50,000 technology grant.

Moved by Councillor Stewart
Seconded by Councillor MacInnes

“That a letter and certificate of acknowledgement be sent to the South Colchester Academy in recognition of being awarded the Samsung’s Solve for Tomorrow Challenge.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Directors Report

A report from the Director of Corporate Services was circulated prior to this evening’s meeting.

Responding to an inquiry about year-end financials and a meeting with Auditors, Mr. Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services advised that he was hoping to get a meeting arranged for the end of the month.

Recess

Moved by Councillor Gregory
Seconded by Councillor Cavanaugh

“That the meeting go into closed session at 9:45 pm.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Cavanaugh
Seconded by Councillor Gregory

“That the meeting reconvene in open session at 10:00 pm.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition - Request for Funding Support

Moved by Councillor Taggart
Seconded by Councillor MacKenzie

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that funding to the 2016 Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition in the amount of \$2,500 be approved, with source of funds being Economic Development Grants.”

Motion Carried.

(Mayor Taylor, Councillors Stewart, Gibbs, Cavanaugh and MacInnes opposed)

Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Cavanaugh

Seconded by Councillor Gregory

“That the meeting adjourn at 10:24 pm.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Tracey Veno
Recording Secretary