

COUNCIL COMMITTEE

The Regular Session of the Council Committee of the Municipality of the County of Colchester was held in the Courthouse, Truro, Nova Scotia, on Thursday, February 13, 2020.

Roll Call

The roll was called with the following Councillors in attendance:

Mayor Christine Blair	
Councillor Bill Masters	District 2
Deputy Mayor Geoff Stewart, Chair	District 3
Councillor Mike Cooper	District 4
Councillor Lloyd Gibbs	District 5
Councillor Michael Gregory	District 7 (<i>arrived at 6:09 pm</i>)
Councillor Bob Pash	District 9
Councillor Tom Taggart	District 10
Councillor Wade Parker	District 11

Regrets

Councillor Eric Boutilier	District 1
Councillor Karen MacKenzie	District 6
Councillor Ron Cavanaugh	District 8

Staff Present

Rob Simonds, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
 Crawford Macpherson, Director of Community Development
 Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services
 Michelle Newell, Director of Public Works
 Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor
 Tracey Venno, Recording Secretary
 Mark Austin, Economic Development Officer (*arrived at 6:20 pm*)
 Devin Trefry, Research, Policy and Community Engagement Officer
 Dave Westlake, Protective Services Coordinator (*for Item No. 7*)
 Paul Smith, Senior Planner (*for Item No. 13 and 15*)

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Taggart
 Seconded by Councillor Masters

“That the agenda be approved with the following amendments:

- Add Item No 13b, Fire Service.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Councillor Cooper
 Seconded by Councillor Parker

“That the minutes of meeting held on January 16, 2020, be approved as presented.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Business Arising from Minutes

There was no business arising from the meeting held on January 16, 2020.

ACTION ITEMS

**Tax Exemption Request –
Springside Community Centre
Association**

Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services, advised that a request for a tax exemption has been received from the Springside Community Centre Association (SCCA). The SCCA is a newly formed not for profit association located in Upper Stewiacke who recently purchased the former United Church. The mandate of the SCCA is to provide a community centre and maintain the heritage status of the property. The request meets the criteria of eligibility for a tax exemption.

Moved by Councillor Cooper
Seconded by Councillor Masters

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that the request for a tax exemption from the Springside Community Centre Association be approved.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Saltscapes Expo 2020

Devin Trefry, Research, Policy and Community Engagement Officer, advised that the County participated in the 2019 Saltscapes Expo, in partnership with the Town of Truro, Downtown Truro Partnership, Cliffs of Fundy Geopark, Fundy Geological Museum and the Parrsboro Shore of the Municipality of Cumberland, with great success. Staff is seeking Council directive for participating in the Saltscapes Expo 2020. It is anticipated that costs will be approximately \$5,000 as staff will be able to repurpose supplies and materials from last year.

Moved by Councillor Taggart
Seconded by Councillor Pash

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that funds in the amount of \$5,000 be allocated in the 2020/21 budget for participation in Saltscapes Expo 2020.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Purchase of Replacement Fire
Repeaters**

Dave Westlake, Protective Services Coordinator, indicated that this item relates to the purchase and installation of two repeaters utilized by all Fire Services in the Municipality. Staff’s plan is to purchase two fire repeaters a year over the next three years, to replace aging infrastructure. These repeaters will be for the Hilden and Shubenacadie Repeater Sites. \$20,000 was allotted in the 2019/20 capital budget for the repeaters however, the price comes in slightly over budget at \$20,196.03.

Brief discussion was held on replacing all at once as opposed to over three years, and if there is a contingency plan should the existing repeaters fail prior to replacement. Mr. Westlake confirmed there is a contingency plan in place.

Moved by Mayor Blair
Seconded by Councillor Masters

“That Council Committee recommends to Council that Nova Communications be awarded the purchase and installation of two new fire repeaters at a cost of \$20,196.03 including rebated tax.”

Motion Carried. *(Councillors Cooper and Gibbs opposed)*

Award of Tender – Truro Road Sidewalk

Michelle Newell, Director of Public Works, advised that a tender for the reconstruction of the sidewalk on Truro Road in Hilden along Highway 2 was advertised on the Provincial and County websites. A total of nine responses were received by the February 4th deadline. Basin Contracting was the low bidder at \$351,580 excluding HST, and the tender was deemed to be complete. Council's approved capital budget includes \$500,000 for the project, funded 50/50 Gas Tax and Active Transportation (AT) Rate. Staff is recommending that the tender be awarded to Basin Contracting.

Detailed discussion was held regarding the source of funds with concern being expressed on the use of Gas Tax Funding for sidewalk projects; and, where the AT money is spent and who makes the decision on how it is used. Mr. Fraser advised that the suggested funding sources are outlined in the approved capital budget, however, it was noted that funding sources can change as per Council wishes. He also noted that specific projects are eligible for Gas Tax funding and sidewalks meet the criteria.

Additional discussion was held concerning local preference. The next lowest bidder was a local company coming in marginally higher than Basin Contracting and Councillor Pash indicated that he would like to see the award go locally.

Moved by Councillor Gregory
Seconded by Councillor Masters

"That Council Committee recommends to Council that the tender for the reconstruction of the Truro Road Sidewalk in Hilden be awarded to Basin Contracting for a total contract amount of \$351,580 excluding HST; and,

That an internal contingency of \$35,000 be approved, to be spent only on authority of the Director of Public Works."

Motion Carried. *(Councillors Cooper, Taggart and Parker opposed)*

Concerns of Commo Road Residents

A presentation was received from residents of Commo Road on February 4th concerning Goodwood Plastics and the matter was referred to tonight's Committee meeting. Key concerns of the residents included pollution of the environment, outside storage of plastic around property, lack of zoning and noise by-laws, increased property taxes/lower property values and quiet enjoyment of personal properties. As the Councillor for the area, Councillor Masters indicated that he told the residents he was not in favour of a noise by-law or zoning in rural areas but would like to see staff look into the concerns of the residents and report back accordingly.

Discussion was held regarding support for the company relative to solid waste, but it was also noted that they need to follow rules and regulations and this falls within Nova Scotia Environment's jurisdiction. Further discussion was held relative to concerns about well contamination and potential hazards if ever there were a fire. Referring to plastics in and around

the property, it was suggested that this could possibly be Dangerous and Unsightly.

Moved by Councillor Masters
Seconded by Mayor Blair

“That the concerns of the residents of Commo Road be referred to staff for investigation.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Old Salmon River School Property

Councillor Gibbs brought this item forward indicating that he has had two groups expressing interest in the Old Salmon River School property; the Salmon River Fire Brigade (SRFB); and, a community group looking for green space. There has been no response to date on a letter to the Salmon River Fire Brigade regarding their needs assessment and he would like to see this item move forward, suggesting letters be sent to the CFFA regarding their needs for a training facility and to SRFB regarding their needs for the lands for a new hall. Councillor Gibbs also suggested the possibility of some public consultation regarding green space.

Discussion was held on the needs of the Salmon River Fire Brigade; the past motion of Council which indicated support in principle regarding the lands pending a needs analysis; other potential municipal uses for the property/lands; and processes for giving lands to not for profit organizations.

Moved by Councillor Gibbs
Seconded by Councillor Taggart

“That a letter be sent to the Salmon River Fire Brigade relative to a needs assessment for a new fire hall.”

Motion Carried. (*Councillor Parker opposed*)

Cost Accounting /Decisions – Municipal Solid Waste

Councillor Taggart raised concerns regarding too many decisions being made without credibility throughout the province relative to solid waste. This Municipality invested money on an in-depth study, and he inquired as to whether we are comfortable with the data that was provided and if this information is confidential or can be shared. The CAO and Acting Director of Solid Waste advised that the study provides true costs for the handling of per tonnage solid waste. Mr. Fraser indicated that he could pull together the cost per tonne for different streams and the CAO noted that a written synopsis can be provided of the baseline assessment as provided by PWC.

Oberland Research Project

Councillor Taggart advised that the Director of Public Works has been in contact with Nova Scotia Environment concerning participating in the Oberland Research Project. More information regarding this project will be coming forth at the February Council meeting.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Proposed Spending for Remaining Grant Funds

Paul Smith, Senior Planner, provided a brief overview of this item indicating that it is to inform Council of staff’s intention for the remaining funds from the

Low Carbon Communities grant received in 2019 for the Solar Colchester marketing and administration costs. \$12,500 of the \$41,581.50 grant is remaining which must be spent in the fiscal year in which it is received.

As per the Department of Energy and Mines, all goals for the grant have been met and staff have been advised that the balance of the funds can be spent on related initiatives. Staff intend to allocate \$5,000 to the Home Energy Assessment Rebate Program; and \$7,500 to the House Needs Assessment.

Fire Service

Referring to recent discussions on funding for fire related services, Councillor Cooper brought to the attention of Council an article in the February 7th issue of the Chronicle Herald on the dire risk on the Eastern Shore as it relates to recruitment of volunteers. He noted that the article indicated the proposed operating budget for 2020/21 for Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency is \$73.3 million for 460 paid and 509 Volunteer Firefighters.

Director's Report

A report from the Director of Corporate Services was circulated in the package for tonight's meeting.

CLOSED SESSION

Moved by Councillor Gregory
Seconded by Councillor Pash

"That the meeting go into closed session at 7:40 pm."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Gregory
Seconded by Councillor Pash

"That the meeting reconvene in open session at 8:52 pm."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Review of Sustainability Planner Position

Moved by Mayor Blair
Seconded by Councillor Masters

"That Council Committee recommends to Council that the position of Sustainability Planner become a permanent, fulltime position, commencing April 1, 2020; and,

That the said position be placed at Range 7 of the Municipality's Salary Scale."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Other

Moved by Councillor Taggart
Seconded by Councillor Gregory

"That a follow up letter be sent to Indigenous Services Canada requesting an update on the status of the application of Millbrook First Nation."

Motion Carried Unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Gregory
Seconded by Councillor Cavanaugh

“That the meeting adjourn at 8:54 pm.”

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Tracey Veno
Recording Secretary