

**PORT HAWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

**Minutes of Meeting
Monday, March 19, 2012**

PRESENT

Mayor, Billy Joe MacLean
Chief Administrative Officer, Maris Freimanis
Director of Finance, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Erin MacEachen
Councilor, Hugh MacDougall
Councilor, Mark MacIver
Director of Marketing, Tourism, Culture and Recreation, Paula Davis
Director of Parks and Facilities, Gordie Snook (Alternate)
Town Solicitor, Larry Evans

REGRETS

Deputy Mayor, Ken Anderson
Director of Public Works, Jim MacNeil
Director of Parks and Facilities, Jim Pyke

GUEST

Corporal J.P. Boucher, RCMP, Inverness County District

1. CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Committee of the Whole was held in the Shannon Studio, Monday, March 19, 2012. The meeting was called to order by Mayor MacLean at 7:30 p.m.

2. PRESENTATION – Friends of the Pool

Note: This presentation was held immediately prior to the Special Public Meeting to accommodate the large group of presenters and the gallery representing The Friends of the Pool.

Mayor MacLean welcomed Dr. Trevor Boudreau, Chair, Friends of the Strait Area Pool. Dr. Boudreau thanked Mayor MacLean and Town Council for the opportunity to speak personally and on behalf of the Friends of the Strait Area Pool. Dr. Boudreau commented on the upgrading of infrastructure that included new lockers; new lighting and a salt water filtration system; heat pumps; an accessible parking lot and the upcoming installation of a dehumidification system – all adding to improving the facility and the potential for growth of the pool.

The following guests addressed Town Council and explained what the Strait Area Pool means to them:

1. Alexis (Hubba) Steel (Water fitness)

Ms. Steel uses the facility for health reasons which have improved because of the pool's salt water.

2. Marguerite Howlette (Water exercise)

Ms. Howlette, a retiree, stated the pool promotes both physical and emotional well being. Her son received his swim badges from the Strait Area Pool and she hopes her grandson will as well. She commended the staff for their good work.

3. *Sandy Wright (Spin & Swim)*
Mr. Wright, a retiree, attends Spin & Swim classes regularly. He stated the importance of the pool programs for an aging population. He added that the pool staff is welcoming, supportive, dedicated to a fun atmosphere, and that Coline MacEachern was an admiral role model for groups of all ages.
4. *Iaian Langley (Parent/Family Swimmer)*
Mr Langley was a member of Red Cross swimming lessons and swim team, took scuba diving lessons, and is a lane swimmer. His children host and attend pool parties as well as take lessons. He referenced the pool as a priority for many people and appreciates the budget concerns. He asked Town Council to consider dividends from the pool that are not recorded which included a healthy active community.
5. *Dean Hart (Former Swim Team Member, President of FAST)*
Mr. Hart stated that the pool is beneficial for a healthy life style. The FAST program represents youth from 8 – 18 years old who use the pool five days per week/10 months per year and participate in swim meets and tournaments across NS. FAST students learn to work as a team and have no issues with drugs or alcohol. He commended Rob Allen on his coaching abilities and positive influence on youth.
6. *Diane Poirier (ROC Centre Group)*
As Executive Director, ROC, Ms. Poirier stated the pool is a place where barriers are removed for those who are viewed as different. It is an option for those who are on a budget and cannot participate in other sports. She added that the pool provides mental and physical benefits to its users.
7. *Marilyn Talbot (SAERC School/TEC)*
Ms. Talbot addressed the pool's benefit for promoting learning and fun environment of equality among special needs people. It also assists those individuals with mobility issues and is a place for training for the Special Olympics. She stated that the pool staff are attentive and promote a safe and fun atmosphere to special needs individuals. The pool and SAERC were drawing cards for her family to move to Port Hawkesbury.
8. *Lesley Bland (Pool Staff Member)*
As a pool instructor, Ms. Bland learned leadership qualities and responsibility which carry over to her role as a member of SAERC Student Council. She stated the importance of teaching swimming lessons and water safety to kids.
9. *Nancy MacKinnon (Public Health)*
A longtime pool user, Ms. MacKinnon learned to swim, received her Red Cross badges and was a member of the swim team. The pool is a safe environment for her child and provides immeasurable benefits for the health of our community. From a public health perspective, she added that as we are in the middle of an obesity epidemic, the pool is important for the health of our communities.
10. *Dr. Pluta (Family Physician and Parent) - Absent*
Dr. Boudreau read a letter on behalf of Dr. Pluta, who is a family physician in Port Hawkesbury. He recognized the importance of the pool as part of a regular fitness program for both young and old and those suffering from conditions such as osteoarthritis. Water exercises have become more and more important in promoting healthy living. Dr. Pluta appreciates the budget concerns and funding required to operate the pool.

11. *Dr. Trevor Boudreau, Chair, Friends of the Pool*

Dr. Boudreau and his wife are both health care professionals and recognize that importance water fitness. He stated the pool is important as it relates to health benefits; educational and training benefits; building confidence and promoting bonding in groups of all ages; teaching valuable life saving and injury prevention lessons; and providing an environment in which elders can socialize and network. Dr. Boudreau thanked all of the presenters and those in the gallery for their support. He thanked Town Council and asked for their cooperation to keep the pool open. He added an engaged community is a strong community and that the future success of the pool will be achieved through the cooperation of pool users, Friends of the Pool, Town Council and staff, partners, and stakeholders. Strong cooperation, engaging partnerships and creative goal setting is required for the pool to succeed and he looks forward to working with Town Council.

12. *Yvonne Fox*

Ms. Fox commended the group for their excellent dialogue. She stated the importance for all counties to work together as a unit. She thanked Dr. Boudreau for the great work he did and stated that pool users must form a committee of who is attending per county to tackle this issue as a group instead of one on one basis.

Mayor MacLean thanked Dr. Boudreau and The Friends of the Pool for their presentations. He stated Town Council is supportive of the Strait Area Pool and provided an overview of the operating costs per year and the debt load incurred by the Town of Port Hawkesbury. Mayor MacLean added this was an opportunity for Friends of the Pool and all pool users to reach out to their respective Councils, in particular, the Municipalities of the Counties of Inverness and Richmond, to assist Town Council with cost sharing regarding the yearly operating and capital improvement costs.

Councilors M. MacIver, J. King and H. MacDougall thanked everyone for attending. Councilor M. MacIver stated Town Council is not looking to close the pool but that we have a responsibility to the taxpayers. He added that Town Council will work as a group to find a solution. Councilor Jim King recognized the importance of the pool and stated Town Council would look at different alternatives to keep the pool open. Councilor Hugh MacDougall said Town Council has to vote on where money will be expended and at the end of the day it will be Council's decision. He appreciated the interest in the pool and recognized the importance of recreation in this area.

CAO Maris Freimanis stated the Town is going through a budget process and staff is looking at the services, areas of cost reduction, areas of improvement, and that all areas are subject to review. He added it is important to understand that many facilities are used by the region as a whole and that it is important to reach out to partnerships. The choices Town Council makes will be of benefit for all our residents. No conclusion has been drawn to date but Town Council will make the final decision as per the direction it will take. He thanked the group for their attendance and comments.

3. ADDITIONS to /APPROVAL of AGENDA

There were no additions to the agenda.

MOVED by Councilor M. MacIver, and SECONDED by Councilor J. King "That Town Council approves the agenda." MOTION CARRIED.

4. DIRECTORS' REPORTS

i. RCMP – Corporal J. P. Boucher

Mayor MacLean welcomed Corporal J.P. Boucher who provided an update on the RCMP occurrence of statistics of all violations from February 2 – March 19, 2012. Corporal Boucher stated there were 25 checkpoints set up in Port Hawkesbury and three drug charges were before the court. The house invasions which took place in the fall resulted in one person under house arrest and one person in jail. He added there was one charge of impaired driving and a demonstration relating to Lake Ainslie. The RCMP is planning for the Tall Ships and summer festivals. As a business owner, Mayor MacLean stated his ongoing concern relating to drugs in Port Hawkesbury.

ii. Finance – Erin MacEachen

E. MacEachen presented her Finance Report and provided updates and cost analyses on the IT Project; Banking RFP; and Budget. She stated in depth training has begun on the new accounting software with the accounts payable process designated as the first to go live. The first cheque run is scheduled April 19, 2012. The banking RFP is delayed until March 21, 2012 with proposal submissions requested by the first week of April. The two most significant changes in Provincial funding requirements are equalization revenue which is expected to drop by \$100,000 and education costs anticipated to increase by \$70,000. In addition, two tax sales are scheduled for April 2 and May 14, 2012. Both sales have one property listed.

MOVED by Councilor H. MacDougall, and SECONDED by Councilor J. King “That Town Council receives the RCMP Report and the Finance Report”. MOTION CARRIED.

On the question E. MacEachen confirmed to Mayor MacLean that the budget shortfall to recover is estimated at \$500,000. In response to Town Solicitor L. Evans question about the IT project, she stated that the Intermunicipality Service Agreement is serving the nine municipalities well with no disputes around finances or cost sharing.

iii. Park and Facilities – Gordie Snook (Alternate)

G. Snook provided the Parks and Facilities report on behalf of Director Jim Pyke. He stated numbers were noticeably lower with the 32nd NuStar Minor Hockey Tournament. He provided updates on maintenance for the Creamery/Waterfront and the Mini Mall. Shift Energy will provide a free audit, proposal for discussion and recommendations for energy use reductions at Town facilities. An update on Tamarac Park and the PHCC was provided. Mr. Snook attended a Risks and Rinks Workshop in Halifax. Councilor M. MacIver inquired about the excessive power readings at the Creamery /Waterfront. E. MacEachen stated that NSP will be provided safe access to the meter for review and the Town will be rebated for the actual reading on the meter.

MOVED by Councilor M. MacIver and SECONDED by Councilor J. King “That Town Council receives the Parks and Facilities Report”. MOTION CARRIED.

iv. Marketing, Tourism, Culture and Recreation – Paula Davis

P. Davis provided updates on the Cultural Award – Strait Area Chamber of Commerce; Farmers Market; Film Series; and Funding for the Queens Jubilee. ECBC funding will include the PHCC website refresh; integration of online registration for programs; refresh of marketing ad and branding for the PHCC; and, sequencing of updating on the townofporthawkesbury.ca website will be resolved.

P. Davis' report also included updates on Destination Cape Breton; a March 21 Events Meeting, and the March Break Activities 2012 calendar and the Aquatics Report. She highlighted the work of Mary MacDonnell-MacNeil and Coline MacEachern. Councilor H. MacDougall commended P. Davis on her report.

MOVED by Councilor H. MacDougall, and SECONDED by Councilor J. King "That Town Council receives the Marketing, Tourism, Culture and Recreation Report". MOTION CARRIED.

On the question, Mayor MacLean recognized the efforts of Director Jim Pyke and volunteers for their work on the 32nd NuStar Minor Hockey Tournament.

v. Public Works – Maris Freimanis

CAO, M. Freimanis presented the Public Works Report on behalf of Director Jim MacNeil.

MOVED by Councilor M. MacIver, and SECONDED by Councilor H. MacDougall "That Town Council receives the Public Works Department Report". MOTION CARRIED.

5. IN CAMERA SESSION - Various Items

MOVED by Councilor M. MacIver, and SECONDED by Councilor J. King "to recess In Camera at 7:57 p.m.". MOTION CARRIED.

MOVED by Councilor J. King, and SECONDED by Councilor H. MacDougall to reconvene the Committee of the Whole Meeting at 8:27 p.m.

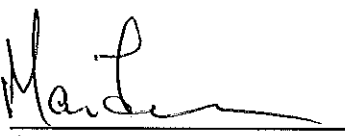
MOVED by Councilor H. MacDougall, and SECONDED by Councilor M. MacIver "to accept Francis Lamey's request to purchase land from the Town located on the east side of 2 Tamarac Drive, and, to accept the RCMP contract recommendations of CAO M. Freimanis". MOTION CARRIED.

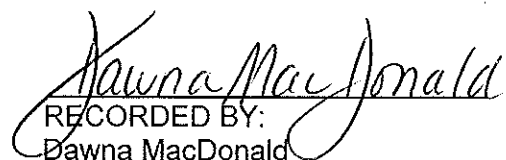
MOVED by Councilor M. MacIver, and SECONDED by Councilor J. King "to accept the economic adjustments to staff wages and salaries, both union and non-union, effective April 1, 2012". MOTION CARRIED.

6. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councilor J. King, and SECONDED by Councilor H. MacDougall "That Town Council adjourns the Committee of the Whole Meeting at 8:30 p.m.". MOTION CARRIED.

April 10, 2012
DATE


APPROVED BY:
Maris Freimanis, CAO


RECORDED BY:
Dawna MacDonald