

**PORT HAWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL
PUBLIC MEETING**

**Minutes of Meeting
Tuesday, February 7, 2012**

PRESENT

Mayor, Billy Joe MacLean
Chief Administrative Officer, Maris Freimanis
Director of Finance, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Erin MacEachen
Deputy Mayor, Ken Anderson
Councilor, Jim King
Councilor, Hugh MacDougall
Councilor, Mark MacIver
Director of Marketing, Tourism, Culture and Recreation, Paula Davis
Town Solicitor, Larry Evans

GUESTS

Caroline Cameron – Comhairle na Gàidhlig – The Gaelic Council of Nova Scotia
John Bain – Eastern District Planning Commission

1. CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Port Hawkesbury Town Council was held in the Shannon Studio, Port Hawkesbury Civic Centre, Tuesday, February 7, 2012. The meeting was called to order by Mayor MacLean at 7:00 p.m.

2. GALLERY PRESENTATIONS

a) *Comhairle na Gàidhlig – The Gaelic Council of Nova Scotia – Caroline Cameron*

Mayor MacLean welcomed Caroline Cameron, of the Comhairle na Gàidhlig – The Gaelic Council of Nova Scotia. Ms. Cameron provided an overview of the Gaelic Council's 2011 activities and discussed the 2012-2013 plan which included completing a draft of their Strategic Plan; preparing for their 2012 Forum, hosted in Antigonish County, May 26th; completion of their Asset Mapping project; a series of seniors' events; and, hiring a summer student. Ms. Cameron requested a contribution of any amount up to \$1000. She thanked Council for this opportunity and extended an invitation to attend the Forum on May 26th. Mayor MacLean inquired about changes in the competitive piping policies at St. Ann's Gaelic College; and Councilor J. King inquired about the Highland Dance program. Mayor MacLean thanked Ms. Cameron for her presentation and indicated that she would hear from Council.

b) *Eastern District Planning Commission (EDPC)– Operating Estimates*

Mayor MacLean welcomed Mr. Bain who presented the Operating Estimates for the 2012-2013 fiscal year as approved by the EDPC Board in accordance with the requirements of the MGA Section 258 (1). He stated there were revenue constraints; that the EDPC has been conservative with expenditures; and, that the proposed budget shows a 3.12% increase (approximate cost of living increase). The base contribution rate for the Town of Port Hawkesbury will increase from \$25,000 to \$35,000. This increase would most impact Inverness and Victoria Counties and would mean a more uniform assessment would be used on a smaller portion for all five municipalities. He added this would increase Inverness County's budget by 9.1% of the total budget for a total contribution of \$65,651.

c) Eastern District Planning Commission (EDPC)– Building Permits

Mr. Bain provided Council with a proposed list of 2012 application fees for the issuance of all building permits. He discussed the proposed increase of building permit fees by increasing the administrative fee from \$20 to \$40 per application, and an increase of 2 cents per square foot, or for renovations, an increase of 25 cents per \$1,000 of construction value. The EDPC are asking all municipal units to agree to the prescribed fees prior to them being adopted by the Commission.

Deputy Mayor K. Anderson stated he thought the rates were more than fair considering they have not changed in 10 years. He suggested indexing, rather than waiting every 10 years to revisit rate increases. He requested information regarding the level of service to see where the Town and all units stand re the allocation of resources in order to conduct a thorough and fair analysis to consider the base rate increase. Mr. Bain will provide this information to Council. Deputy Mayor K. Anderson stated he believes the base rate should be based on the amount of services received and the ability to pay; he recognized the good services that the Town was receiving. Councilor H. MacDougall suggested it would be beneficial to look at the rates in Antigonish. Mayor MacLean thanked Mr. Bain for his presentation and the great services for our dollar.

MOVED by Mayor MacLean to table the approval requests for the EDPC 2012 Operating Estimates and amendment to the 2012 Building Permit fees, to the next Committee of the Whole meeting, February 20, 2012.

3. ADDITIONS TO/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There were two additions to the agenda:

- a) The Cape Breton Highlanders – Military Exercise Request
- b) Committee Memberships - Update

MOVED by Councilor M. MacIver, and SECONDED by Councilor J. King “That Town Council approves the additions to the agenda as amended”. MOTION CARRIED.

4. MINUTES

a) Regular Town Council – January 10, 2012

The minutes of the January 10, 2012 Regular Town Council were approved.

b) Committee of the Whole – January 16, 2012

MOVED by Councilor H. MacDougall, and SECONDED by Councilor J. King “That Town Council approves the minutes of the January 16, 2012, Committee of the Whole meeting”. MOTION CARRIED.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There was no business arising from the minutes.

6. PROCLAMATIONS / DECLARATIONS / SPECIAL NOTICES

There were no proclamations, declarations or special notices.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence was received.

8. RESOLUTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION:

Director of Finance; Erin MacEachen asked for Council's approval regarding the following borrowing resolutions for the Bank of Nova Scotia:

a) Borrowing Resolution – Overdraft

Request of Council to approve a \$1,000,000 borrowing resolution for a short term period of financing to go into an overdraft position in our bank account, if required.

b) Borrowing Resolution – Scotia Visa Credit Cards

Request of Council to approve a \$25,000 borrowing resolution for Visa cards used primarily for fuel purchases that cannot be charged on credit with the local providers.

Deputy Mayor K. Anderson inquired if both resolutions could be deferred until the next fiscal year when a tender for banking services in place. He suggested to begin the tender process in the interim and to revisit these items with the bank service provider at that time. He also inquired who used the cards; the amount of cards held by the Town; and, which fuel provider would not grant credit to the Town. E. MacEachen stated we currently have the overdraft and Visa Card in place with the Bank of Nova Scotia; she would prefer to proceed with these resolutions. In the event of a new bank service provider, new resolutions, if required, would be considered at that time.

MOVED by Councilor M. MacIver, and SECONDED by Deputy Mayor K. Anderson “That Town Council approves the Bank of Nova Scotia borrowing resolutions for an overdraft (\$1,000,000) and Visa cards (\$25,000) and that a tender process begin for a bank service provider”. MOTION CARRIED.

On the question, Councilor H. MacDougall inquired if Council could receive copies of the monthly Visa statement showing the itemized charges. E. MacEachen will provide Council with copies of the Bank of Nova Scotia monthly statements to review fuel (and other) charges.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

a) Financial Requests:

- i. SAERC Girls Volleyball Team
- ii. Port Hawkesbury Highland Dance Association

MOVED by Deputy Mayor K. Anderson, and SECONDED by Councilor M. MacIver “That Town Council defers the funding requests of the SAERC Girls Volleyball Team and the Port Hawkesbury Highland Dance Association until the 2013 budget deliberations”. MOTION CARRIED.

b) FCM Annual Conference – Attendance

Deputy Mayor K. Anderson stated that given our financial status, we should withdraw from attending the 2012 FCM Annual Conference in Saskatoon until the budget is in place.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor K. Anderson, and SECONDED by Councilor M. MacIver “That Town Council denies funding for representation at the 2012 FCM Annual Conference in Saskatoon”. MOTION FAILED. Three nays and two ayes were recorded.

On the question, Councilor H. MacDougall stated that historically the FCM conference has been beneficial to the Town; has provided funds for the PHCC and other sustainable community monies; and, that there has always been money set aside in the budget for FCM attendance. He added he is in support of the FCM and representation from Council to attend. Deputy Mayor K. Anderson inquired how many times Councilors M. MacIver and King attended and FCM conference. They confirmed they have never attended.

Mayor MacLean stated that he attends the FCM conferences and may pay his expenses to attend the 2012 conference. He added the Town received \$1.3 million for the Green fund through the FCM and a loan of approximately \$900,000 at an interest rate of 2%. In addition the Town has benefitted from stimulus projects and contacts made.

Councilor M. MacIver asked if this item could be deferred and if there was money in the budget to send those who wanted to attend. E. MacEachen stated that funds would have to be set aside from the 2012-2013 budget. Councilor J. King inquired who wanted to attend. Mayor MacLean and Councilor H. MacDougall indicated interest in attending. Mayor MacLean asked for a motion for those who want to attend.

MOVED by Councilor J. King, and SECONDED by Councilor H. MacDougall “That Town Council approves the attendance of two members only attending the 2012 FCM Annual Conference in Saskatoon”. MOTION CARRIED. Two nays were recorded from Deputy Mayor K. Anderson and Councilor M. MacIver.

10. APPROVED ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

a) The Cape Breton Highlanders – Military Exercise Request

MOVED by Deputy Mayor K. Anderson, and SECONDED by Councilor H. MacDougall “That Council approves the Cape Breton Highlanders Military Exercise in Port Hawkesbury on March 15, 2012. Council will ask to direct the Cape Breton Highlanders to certain areas of the Town”. MOTION CARRIED.

b) Committee Memberships – Update

CAO, M. Freimanis provided an update on the request for volunteers for the Waterfront Development (many applicants), Wall of Fame (one applicant) and PHCC Events Committees (no applicants). He will meet with Councilor M. MacIver next week to review the list of applicants and prepare a report with the names of applicants for Council for the next Committee of the Whole meeting. M. Freimanis will meet with Councilor H. MacDougall to review the applicant for the Wall of Fame Committee. He confirmed to Deputy Mayor K. Anderson that no applications were received for the Inverness County Home Support Society. Mayor MacLean stated that Gerard Livingston will remain on the Inverness County Home Support Society board in the event no applications are received.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor K. Anderson, and **SECONDED** by Councilor J. King to recess In Camera at 8:00 p.m.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor K. Anderson to reconvene the Town Council Meeting at 8:18 p.m.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor K. Anderson, and **SECONDED** by Councilor J. King "That Town Council accepts the recommendation of Director of Finance, E. MacEachen to move to provide a 60/40 sharing retroactive arrangement for the non-union employees on the same basis as unionized employees and that staff return this to Council in policy form to be implemented if this motion passes". **MOTION CARRIED.**

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Deputy Mayor K. Anderson, and **SECONDED** by Councilor M. MacIver to adjourn the Town Council meeting at 8:20 p.m". **MOTION CARRIED.**

March 8, 2012
DATE

Maris Freimanis
APPROVED BY:
Maris Freimanis, CAO

Dawna MacDonald
RECORDED BY:
Dawna MacDonald