

Council Meeting - Minutes of the Meeting

December 8, 2020 6:30pm
Via WebEx Virtual Meetings

Attendance

In attendance	Don Clarke, Mayor	Chair
	Deputy Mayor Ty Walsh	
Councillors	Mike Trinacty	
	Rod Reeves	
	Derrick Jamieson	
	Chris Goddard	
	Adam Lutz	
	Karen Peckford, Finance Director	
	Mike Payne, CAO	
Regrets	Chantal Pineo, Executive Coordinator	

1. Call to Order

The Council Meeting was called to order at 6:30pm.

2. Approval of Previous Minutes

The previous Council Minutes were approved by motion of Council.

3. Approval of Agenda

The Agenda was approved as circulated with the following additions:

- Noise Bylaw
- Mayor's Update
- Correspondence
- Berwick Electric UARB Rate Hearing
- COVID 19 local update

Presentation: Valley Regional Enterprise Network (REN) Jennifer Tufts, joined by Board Chair Gerard D'Entremont.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented a lot of challenges for business and the REN's operations. There are lots of great efforts underway predominantly around the regional economic recovery task force with a broad range of partners. Council can assist by sharing and promoting the REN's efforts with the local business community and refer businesses to the REN. Ms. Tufts will share Berwick area data with CAO Payne for the information of Council. The REN has received great feedback from across the country on their 'Have it All' marketing and promotions campaign promoting the Annapolis Valley.

4.Recommendations from October COTW:

IT WAS MOVED and seconded

THAT

Council supports the Town of Berwick pursuing the train car project as a multi-purpose Community Development project and historical project for the Town.

MOTION CARRIED

Public Works was acknowledged for their excellent work preparing the site for the railway ties and tracks.

IT WAS MOVED and seconded

THAT

Council accept the Committees of Council which were presented at November Committee of the Whole.

MOTION CARRIED

THAT

Council supports the live streaming of Council Meetings in some capacity. Staff will formalize options, technology and detailed costs.

NO MOTION PRESENTED

Considerable discussion ensued with regard to the requirements and costs of livestreaming of meetings. The strong consensus of Council was that Council meetings will not be live streamed but Council is committed to otherwise sharing information as broadly as possible. Meetings of Council are well advertised through social media, the Town's website and a digital road sign. Agendas with background information, issue reports, staff work plans and meeting minutes are posted on the Town's website every month. Councilors are active in the community, accessible to all residents and actively solicit their input.

6. Ongoing Business

a. Committees

Council supports or is involved in a number of other committees not noted on the list of committees prepared by staff. They include:

Sports Hall of Fame
KMCC Board of Governance
Kings Point to Point Transit
Valley Regional Enterprise Network Liaison and Oversight

Other potential committees of interest involve:

Diversity/Social Justice
Climate Change
Local Area Business Network
Community Alcohol Partnership

CAO Payne will update the list of Committees of Council and will note the potential new subjects for consideration. There was an acknowledgement that there are a lot of committees and some mandates could be combined.

b. *Berwick Electric Utility and Review Board (UARB) Rate Hearing*

Don Regan, Al Dominee and Ms. Peckford will participate in a virtual rate hearing of the UARB tomorrow from 10:30am to 4:30pm. The hearing has been well advertised and the public is able to view the proceedings online. This is Berwick Electric's first application for a rate increase since 2011.

c. *NSFM AGM and Town Caucus Meeting*

Mayor Clarke contrasted the recent one day virtual AGM with the traditional three day event that would have many topical presentations, learning and networking.

Some key issues are:

- Nova Scotia Property Tax CAP: residential property tax assessment increases of owner-occupied homes have been capped to inflation; they pay less property tax for a similar property in a similar location than renter occupied homes or those homes bought or sold recently. NSFM has an interactive map on their website detailing the overall lack of fairness of the CAP program.
- Funding inequalities around roads and infrastructure that doesn't properly account for the use by citizens that live outside Town boundaries

d. *COVID-19 Update*

Four confirmed cases in the local area:

One case is travel related, outside the Atlantic bubble.

One case is related to Berwick and District School.

Two cases at a local poultry processing business.

- Mobile testing clinic at Berwick and District School today and tomorrow.
- Local poultry processing business closed tomorrow – working with Public Health to test all employees at a temporary test site to be set up at KMCC
- NS Public Health is actively exploring the setting up of a larger testing site, believed to be by appointment only, similar to the sites at Digby and Wolfville.

- Rentals by approved sports related groups at Town Hall gym have either been voluntarily dropped or cancelled through to December 12.

e. *Noise Bylaw*

Concerns were shared on behalf of a local resident whether the Town has a bylaw to address noise during evening and nighttime hours. The Nuisances Bylaw and the Peace and Good Order Bylaw were discussed. Both Bylaws concern only public spaces and would not appear to cover noise emanating from inside a residence that would be of sufficient volume to disturb a neighbor. There was some discussion about noise meters, bylaw enforcement and the role of the police. CAO Payne would like to explore the concern directly with the original complainant if that is possible.

f. *Mayor's Update*

Mayor Clarke provided an update on upcoming events:

Berwick Electric UARB hearing – December 9

Kings REMO meeting – December 10

AREA Board meeting – December 11

Valley Waste – December 16

Police Advisory Committee meeting – December 16 @ 6:30pm

Berwick Electric Commission meeting – December 17

Committee of the Whole meeting scheduled for December 22 is cancelled

Town Hall Administration Office closes at noon on December 24 and re-opens on January 4th.

g. *Correspondence:*

Mayor Clarke advised that he has received correspondence from Allan Lynch, a well-known travel writer about a project supported by the province and the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Lynch is compiling a unique repository of information that sets our Annapolis Valley Region apart. This repository would be used to create new tourism or marketing strategies. He is soliciting unique stories about the Mi'kmaq, our history, culture, agriculture, innovation, infrastructure and festivals. The work is to get actively underway in 2021.

7. Next Meeting: January 12, 2021 at 6:30pm.

8. Adjournment – Council adjourned at 8:42pm.