



Truro Town Council Meeting
Monday, December 5th, 2016 at 1:00 pm
Council Chambers – Town Hall

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A regular public meeting of Truro Town Council was held on Monday, December 5th, 2016 at 1:00 pm in the Council Chambers of the Truro Town Hall.

Present: Mayor W.R. (Bill) Mills, Deputy Mayor C. Fritz, Councillors D. Joseph, B. Kinsman, T. Chisholm, W. Talbot and C. Hinton

In Attendance: Director of Corporate Services A. Currie, Fire Chief B. Currie, Director of Planning J. Fox, Director of Public Works A. MacKinnon, Police Chief D. MacNeil, Director of Parks, Recreation & Culture D. MacKenzie, Town Solicitor J. Rafferty and CAO M. Dolter

SWEARING IN

The Mayor opened the meeting and stated the first order of business would be the swearing in of Councillor C. Fritz, as she was not able to attend the November meeting. Mayor Mills carried out the swearing in of Councillor C. Fritz.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion of Councillor B. Kinsman and Deputy Mayor C. Fritz, the agenda was approved as circulated. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion of Councillors T. Chisholm and W. Talbot, the Public Hearing minutes and Public Council minutes of November 7th, 2016 were approved as circulated. Motion carried.

PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS

a) Presentation – United Steelworkers Union

Lawrence MacKay presented on behalf of the United Steelworks Union. The Union was making a request to municipalities across Canada to pass a resolution that would formally request the Provincial governments to educate and train prosecutors, police, and health and safety inspectors regarding the “Westray amendments” made to the Criminal Code so they may be better followed and implemented.

It was agreed that Council would review the information and resolution provided. The Mayor thanked Mr. MacKay for his presentation.

IN-CAMERA SUMMARY REPORT

The CAO advised Council that there were six issues discussed by Council at the last In-Camera meeting and there is one issue to be discussed by Council at the incamera meeting today.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

CAO Report

The CAO report for the month of November was presented to Council.

On motion of Councillors C. Hinton and W. Talbot, it was moved that the CAO Report for the month of November, 2016 be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Corporate Services Report

The Corporate Services report for the month of November was presented to Council.

On motion of Deputy Mayor C. Fritz and Councillor D. Joseph, it was moved that the Corporate Services report for the month of November, 2016 be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Fire Report

The Fire Report for the month of November was presented to Council.

Councillor C. Hinton noted that at the last Council meeting she requested an update on 66 Lyman Street and asked if that update was ready.

The Fire Chief advised that the property owners have been provided with a list of requirements to be completed in order to adhere to the Fire Safety Act and they were working on those improvements.

On motion of Councillors W. Talbot and B. Kinsman, it was moved that the Fire Report for the month of November, 2016 be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Planning and Development Report

The Planning and Development report for the month of November was presented to Council.

Councillor C. Hinton noted that at the last Council meeting, she mentioned creating an unsightly premises committee. She stated that at the recent UNSM Fall Conference, she had a chance to speak with Doug Griffiths, author of “13 Ways to Kill a Community” and he suggested that such a committee should come from a more positive stance with a name, which she agreed with. Councillor C. Hinton asked what the next step would be.

The Director of Planning advised that he has been making inquiries to other Planning Directors across the province to determine what their course of action has been regarding this type of committee. Of those he has spoken with that do have committees, he noted that the committee mandates are very limited. The Director stated that he is still exploring options and was not prepared to make a recommendation yet. He did note that with the current Municipal Government Act amendments taking place, there may be changes implemented that would add more “teeth” to the current regulations and legislation.

On motion of Deputy Mayor C. Fritz and Councillor W. Talbot, it was moved that the Planning and Development report for the month of November, 2016 be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Police Report

The Police Report for the month of November was presented to Council.

On motion of Councillors D. Joseph and T. Chisholm, it was moved that the Police Report for the month of November, 2016 be accepted as presented. Motion carried.

Public Works Report

The Public Works report for the month of November was presented to Council.

Councillor T. Chisholm asked that at this point, if it would likely be March before the Town could hold a public meeting regarding the deer issue.

The Director of Public Works stated that it would be around that time, as the Town wanted to ensure it has gathered all of the information and determined the pros and cons of each potential course of action.

Councillor C. Hinton stated that she had received a call regarding bushes and trees blocking the line of sight on Lyman Street, and asked what the course of action would be to have that looked at.

The Director of Public Works stated that the resident should contact his office with details and they can inspect the location.

Councillor W. Talbot noted that at the UNSM conference last week, he had an opportunity to speak with Minister Hines of the Department of Natural Resources, during which he asked him about the deer issue. He stated that the Minister referred him to the nuisance animal legislation and said municipalities can apply for a permit, so he derived that the Department was not going to be very involved in the solution.

The CAO confirmed that the Town has heard that response from the Department before, and that is why the Town has been trying to work with them towards a solution. He stated that the Town does not have the expertise regarding wildlife. The CAO noted that there is nothing in the Municipal Government Act that assigns wildlife as a municipal responsibility.

On motion of Councillor T. Chisholm and Deputy Mayor C. Fritz, it was moved that the Public Works Report for the month of November, 2016 be accepted as presented. Motion carried.

Parks, Recreation and Culture Report

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Report for the month of November was presented to Council.

On motion of Councillors D. Joseph and C. Hinton, it was moved that the Parks, Recreation and Culture Report for the month of November, 2016 be accepted as presented. Motion carried.

QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

Deputy Mayor C. Fritz asked if the public meetings regarding the deer issue could occur prior to April so that whatever the plan will be is incorporated into next year’s budget.

The CAO stated that staff could look into that possibility. There is discussions that need to occur with the Department of Natural Resources, the Town Solicitor and the Police Chief as well. He noted that if the meetings do not occur prior to April, some level of contingency can be established in the budget.

Deputy Mayor C. Fritz asked if she could get an update on the water issues on James Street, and on the corner of Waller and Alana Drive.

The Director of Public Works advised that he met with the residents on James Street, including an engineering consultant working with the Federal government regarding the water coming out of the facility in that area. He stated that he believed a contractor has been hired and the work should be completed soon. As for the Waller and Alana Drive issue, the Director stated that Town crews installed a catch basin last week which should alleviate the issues.

Deputy Mayor C. Fritz advised that the Diversity Committee would be making preparations soon for African Heritage Month in February.

Councillor D. Joseph stated that the shoulder of the street near Munroe Court is completed corroded because of the amount of 18 wheelers. He asked if a discussion has taken place with CN regarding this issue.

The Mayor advised that the Town has sent them a few letters and met with the regional representative last year regarding their responsibilities for that area and there has been no response that he is aware of.

The Director of Public Works stated that he has not had any response from CN either.

Councillor D. Joseph noted that he had emails concerns on Empire Loop to the Director of Public Works and asked if the matter had been resolved.

The Director of Public Works stated that the issue had not been resolved. He noted that he met with the gentleman and there appeared to be a mix up in terms of whose responsibility the issue may be. The Director advised that from his perspective, it is a homeowner issue. There is a large drain that was put in by the developer but then when each of the individuals came along and graded the properties, they did not grade it all the way to that ditch; they left another little hole between there and that ditch. He stated that he offered the Town's services to go and survey and show him the best ways for him to mitigate the drainage problems.

Councillor B. Kinsman asked if there was a tentative date for the new artificial ice surface at the Civic Square.

The Director of Public Works stated that Nova Scotia Power has not yet received inspection orders for the pad and once that is complete, the transformer can be installed. It should be a fairly speedy process.

The CAO advised that the tentative opening date is December 19th.

Councillor B. Kinsman advised that he received an email from a resident who was confused about the new sewer charge. According to the information provided by the Town in the water bills, it would seem like residents and businesses who use under 1250 cubic meters would be charged \$0.63 per cubic meter and businesses using more than 1250 cubic meters would be charged \$0.05 per cubic meters. He expressed concern that this does not seem to encourage water conservation.

The Director of Corporate Services advised that the tiered rate system works in that everyone is charged \$0.63 per cubic meter up to 1250 cubic meters. After 1250 cubic meters is when the rate drops to \$0.05 per cubic meter. She noted that the Town's website includes an explanation of the sewer charge.

The Mayor noted that the waste water treatment facility that is shared with the County of Colchester is subject to any new regulations enacted by the Provincial and Federal governments and major costly upgrades have been occurring.

Councillor T. Chisholm asked if the Director of Public Works had looked at the corner of Upham and Pleasant Street yet regarding the possibility of a four way stop. He stated there was a lot of development up on Pleasant Street now

The Director of Public Works stated that the intersection has not been looked at yet. It has been looked at in the past and it was determined that there was not enough accident history or enough vehicles to warrant a four way stop, but it can be reviewed again.

Councillor T. Chisholm noted that a walkway from the west end of Upham Drive, up the hill, was discussed for the school age kids and he asked if that would be included in next years' budget.

The Director of Public Works advised that it was something that could be deliberated at budget time.

NEW BUSINESS

a) Demolition of 11 Alice Street

The CAO stated that 11 Alice Street has been on the unsightly premises listing for several years and is in such a deteriorated condition that it is beyond repair.

The Building Inspector noted that Council has received a report on the property, which he summarized. He stated that there's been approximately 15 years of notices to the owners, and the owner has done the minimum each time in answer to each notice. The last few years, the owners has not completed any repairs to the building and it has sustained substantial water damage since then and is beyond repair. The Building Inspector was recommending that it be demolished.

On motion of Councillor C. Hinton and Deputy Mayor C. Fritz, it was agreed that the property at 11 Alice Street is dangerous and unsightly, and the owner(s) of 11 Alice Street are ordered to, by January 31st, 2017, to demolish the house on the property and remove the resulting debris, or if the owners do not do so, the Town may demolish the building and the costs of the demolition will be a lien against the property. Motion carried.

b) Demolition of 208 Prince Street

The CAO advised that 208 Prince Street has been on the unsightly premises listing since July 21st, 2016 and is in such a deteriorated condition that it is beyond repair. He noted that in this case, the owner has requested that the Town demolish the building.

The Building Inspector noted that Council was received a report on the property, which he summarized. It was his recommendation that the building be demolished.

On motion of Councillors D. Joseph and T. Chisholm, it was agreed that the property at 208 Prince Street is dangerous and unsightly, and the owner(s) of 208 Prince Street are ordered to, by January 31st, 2017, demolish the house on the property and remove the resulting debris, or if the owners do not do so, the Town may demolish the building and the costs of the demolition will be a lien against the property. Motion carried.

c) Tax Exemption Request – Marigold Cultural Centre

The CAO advised that the Cobequid Arts Council, owners of the Marigold Cultural Centre, were requesting exemption from commercial tax. It is the recommendation of staff that the tax exemption for the properties requested be approved. The CAO stated that the current 2016-17 budget does reflect the property tax exemption. He noted that all tax exempt organizations must meet the requirements of the Town's Tax Exemption Bylaw in order to continue to receive the property tax exemption, which this organization does.

On motion of Councillors D. Joseph and W. Talbot, the property tax exemption request by the Cobequid Arts Council for assessment account numbers 01444115 and 01530666, beginning in the 2016/17 fiscal year and future years as long as the organization continues to meet the criteria stipulated in the Town's Tax Exemption Bylaw, was approved as presented. Motion carried.

d) Committee Appointments – New Councillors and citizens

The CAO advised that with the addition of the two new Councillors, they need to be officially appointed to committees that have vacancies left by the outgoing two Councillors. Staff is recommending that Councillor W. Talbot be appointed to the Art Collection Committee, Audit Committee and Truro Industrial Development Society; and recommending that Councillor C. Hinton be appointed to the Central Nova Tourist Association, Farmers' Market Advisory Committee, Heritage Advisory Committee, and Truro Police Board.

The CAO advised that staff is also recommending that Gloria Upham, a citizen representative, be reappointed to the Cobequid Housing Authority.

On motion of Councillors B. Kinsman and T. Chisholm, the committee appointments were approved as presented. Motion carried.

e) Appointments to Liaison and Oversight Committee for Regional Economic Network

The CAO advised that the Town of Truro, Municipality of the County of Colchester, Town of Stewiacke, Millbrook First Nations and the Truro and Colchester Chamber of Commerce have agreed to enter into a three year pilot project to enhance the economic development opportunities in the region. Within the governance structure of this partnership a Liaison and Oversight Committee will be created to work with the Board of Directors and the Provincial government as well as appoint the nominating committee for the Board of Directors. Under the conditions outlined by the Province, the Board of Directors will be wholly made up of members of the region's business community. The CAO stated that the Town has two Council positions on the Liaison and Oversight Committee which we have been asked to fill as soon as possible to allow the Board to be selected in a timely manner. It is the recommendation of staff that Mayor Mills and Councillor T. Chisholm be appointed to the committee, as both individuals were involved in the initial regional development initiative that was started in September 2015.

On motion of Deputy Mayor C. Fritz and Councillor Hinton, Mayor Mills and Councillor T. Chisholm were appointed as the Town of Truro's representatives on the Liaison and Oversight Committee for the Colchester Regional Enterprise Network. Motion carried.

f) Amendments to Travel Policy/Procedure

The CAO advised that a current review of Town policies has brought attention to potential changes that would be of benefit to the Town as a whole. Staff is recommending amendments to the current Travel Conference Policy, in that it be divided into a Policy and an Operating Procedure. This change allows for the separation of the policy versus the procedural aspects of the policy. Council has been provided with drafts of both documents. If approved, both of these documents would replace the current Travel Conference Policy. Policy changes would be a requirement of Council to make, while the procedures associated with the policy could be changed through an administrative decision. This allows for a much more effective and efficient use of time for both Mayor, Council and staff and allows for faster operational change as needed.

On motion of Councillors W. Talbot and T. Chisholm, the Travel, Meal and Miscellaneous Allowance Policy and Travel, Meal and Miscellaneous Allowances Standard Operating Procedure were approved as presented and will replace the current Travel Conference Policy. Motion carried.

g) Appointment of Deputy Mayor

The Mayor called for nominations for the one year term of Deputy Mayor, to commence in January 2017.

Councillor B. Kinsman nominated Councillor T. Chisholm. Councillor T. Chisholm declined the nomination.

Councillor T. Chisholm nominated current Deputy Mayor C. Fritz, which was seconded by Councillor C. Hinton.

The Mayor called three more times for nominations for Deputy Mayor. Being none, Cheryl Fritz was approved as Deputy Mayor.

ACCOUNTS

It was moved by Councillors D. Joseph and T. Chisholm, that Council approve for payment the accounts as presented be approved for the month of November, 2016. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Councillors D. Joseph and T. Chisholm, it was moved that the meeting be adjourned at approximately 2:45 p.m. Motion carried.

W.R. (Bill) Mills
Mayor

M.W. Dolter
CAO