

January 15, 2024

The Property Services Committee for the Municipality of the County of Pictou met in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Administration Building by videoconference and teleconference on Monday, January 15, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

**PRESENT**

- 1 Clr. Don Butler
- 2 Clr. Deborah Wadden
- 3 Clr. Darla MacKeil
- 4 Clr. Mary Elliott
- 5 Deputy Warden Wayne Murray
- 6 Warden Robert Parker
- 7 Clr. David Parker
- 8 Clr. Larry Turner
- 9 Clr. Peter Boyles
- 10 Clr. Randy Palmer
- 11 Clr. Andy Thompson
- 12 Clr. Chester Dewar

**IN ATTENDANCE**

- Brian Cullen, CAO, Municipal Clerk-Treasurer
- Sueann Musick, Director of Corporate Services/Deputy Clerk
- Karen Cornish, Deputy Municipal Treasurer
- Logan McDowell, Director of Public Works & Development
- Evan Hale, Director of Emergency Services
- Adam MacInnis, Communications Officer
- Shellie Pettipas, Administrative Assistant

**CALL TO ORDER & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Clr. Palmer, Chair of the Property Services Committee called the meeting to order and acknowledged that we are on the ancestral territorial lands of the Mikmaq people.

**AGENDA**

It was moved by Deputy Warden Murray and seconded by Clr. Parker that the agenda be approved as presented. **Motion Carried**

**EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS**

There were no emergency resolutions brought forward.

## **MINUTES**

Clr. Palmer asked if there were any errors, omissions, or corrections in the minutes for December 18, 2023. The members of the Committee entered no errors, omissions, or corrections. The Chair proclaimed the minutes of the meeting on December 18, 2023, as the official record of the meeting. **Motion Carried**

## **REPORTS**

### **PUBLIC WORKS AND DEVELOPMENT**

The Public Works and Development report for the month of December 2023 was received as presented.

### **DEVELOPMENT OFFICER REPORT**

The Development Officer Report for the month of December 2023 was received as presented.

### **EMERGENCY SERVICES REPORT**

The Emergency Services Report for the month of December 2023 was received as presented.

### **FIRE INSPECTOR REPORT**

The Fire Inspector Report for the month of December 2023 was received as presented.

### **BUILDING INSPECTOR REPORT**

The Building Inspector Report for the month of December 2023 was received as presented.

### **BYLAW OFFICER'S REPORT**

The Bylaw Officer's Report for the month of December 2023 was received as presented.

## **ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION**

### **COALBURN/MCLELLAN'S BROOK WATER EXTENSION PROJECT DESIGN**

Mr. McDowell said the Coalburn/McLellan's Brook Water Extension Design Project was tendered in June 2023. MOPC received responses from three engineering consulting firms. The firms who submitted responses were:

- a. Strait Engineering Limited (SEL)

- b. CBCL Limited (CBCL)
- c. WSP Canada Inc. (WSP)

Mr. McDowell said the quality of the bids received was satisfactory, and confirmation was done with each bidder of their comprehension of the project and the possible challenges. Mr. McDowell said that upon review, the recommendation would be to award the tender to Straight Engineering Limited (SEL) for \$251,180.00 plus HST.

It was moved by Clr. Thompson and seconded by Deputy Warden Murray to follow the MOPC staff recommendation that the tender be awarded to Straight Engineering.

**Motion Carried**

### **BYLAW RESTRICTIONS REGARDING VACANT PROPERTIES**

Clr. Boyles said there were complaints received and concerns expressed in District 9 regarding two vacant properties. Clr. Boyles received a call from the Fire Chief at the Linacy Fire Department regarding two properties that the owners had just walked out of and left the doors open. Clr. Boyles expressed the dangers of these sites. The current bylaw protocols do not allow immediate action to board up the properties. Clr. Boyles said Municipal Staff should be given broader authority to act immediately in securing vacant buildings.

Mr. Hale stated that the process begins with taking the complaint, looking at the nature of complaint and who would be best suited to respond to it, whether it be the Bylaw Officer or the Fire Inspector.

Mr. Hale agrees with the chief about these homes being vacant. The current protocol is to do a title search and reach out to property owners and order them to secure the buildings. If they fail to comply within a prescribed time, then staff would go out and do the work and charge it on taxes. The quickest time from complaint to securing a residence would be 6-7 weeks.

CAO Cullen said that the threshold for this is high, and the notion that someone might go on the property isn't a valid argument to Provincial standards. It would have to be documented that there is an imminent threat that people are entering onto the property. Mr. Cullen said that trying to shorten the time frame is an option and that, typically, title searches are back within 10 days.

It was moved by Warden Parker and seconded by Clr. Boyles to ask staff to prepare a policy to shorten the period of time when the homeowner is first notified of the time that the vacant residence is boarded up.

**Motion Carried**

### **FIVE DOLLAR FEE AT PICTOU COUNTY SOLID WASTE**

Clr. Boyles said that MOPC residents were being charged a \$5.00 fee to dispose of a bag of garbage. This fee is supposed to be waived for MOPC residents who visit the site.

Clr. Boyles said discussions were had with staff at Pictou County Solid Waste, and it was felt this issue would take a month to correct, but the policy is already in place and staff should be notified of this.

CAO Cullen said that this policy does not include recyclables because there is no limit on the number of bags curbside for collection. Mr. Cullen said this program is utilized well at the landfill, and 3,000 vehicles have not been charged this year compared to 2,400 in the last fiscal period, and residents must report this to landfill staff at the gate on the way in.

**COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Clr. Thompson gave a shout-out to the Plymouth Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary. The Ladies Auxiliary applied for and received a small grant from Community Links. The Ladies Auxiliary will be hosting several non-profit groups from around Pictou County and doing a food handling course this Saturday. The idea for the funding for this came from Joanne Cumminger and the funding is for the course along with the cost to certification. Clr. Thompson said if this works well this time there may be a second round if funding is secured.

**MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION**

There were no motions of reconsideration.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There was no further business before the meeting, so the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

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CHAIRPERSON

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MUNICIPAL CLERK