

September 16, 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, September 16, 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

ABSENT

Evan Hale, Director of Emergency Services

IN ATTENDANCE

Brian Cullen, CAO, Municipal Clerk-Treasurer
Sueann Musick, Director of Corporate Services
Karen Cornish, Deputy Municipal Treasurer
Logan McDowell, Dir. of Public Works & Development (videoconference)
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 Clr. Boyles and seconded by Clr. Elliott that the agenda be approved as presented. **Motion Carried**

EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS

There were no emergency resolutions.

MINUTES

Clr. Palmer asked if there were any errors, omissions, or corrections in the minutes for August 19, 2024. The members of the Committee entered no errors, omissions, or corrections. The Chair proclaimed the minutes of the meeting on August 19, 2024, as the official record of the meeting. **Motion Carried**

Clr. Elliott said in the motion made on the Mill Road discussion that the minutes should state that the province should take back ownership of the road so that a housing opportunity would not be missed.

REPORTS

PUBLIC WORKS AND DEVELOPMENT

The Public Works and Development Report for the month of August 2024 was received as presented.

Clr. Boyles asked if anything else had been done regarding the Evan MacDonald Road. Mr. McDowell said nothing had been done, but the discussion would be worth following up on.

Warden Parker said the Blue Acres Sidewalk tenders appear ready to go out, but Council has not seen any safety or cost changes. Mr. McDowell said that updated costs and safety elements have been received and can be provided to Council. They are currently with the Department of Environment, and these can be made available.

Clr. Thompson said that residents in District 11 are asking when this will be tendered. Clr. Thompson said the drawings do not need to be returned to the Council; civil engineers do that work. Clr. Thompson said in terms of cost, tender the project and see what comes back. Blue Acres has a liability, which is another lawsuit waiting to happen. The sidewalks are for people who don't have transportation, and they are being forced onto the road in the winter. This project should be tendered.

Warden Parker said that the water and sewer lateral costs are getting extreme. The Warden said that the cost-sharing needs to be reviewed. Mr. McDowell agreed that the costs are well above the cost recouped for payment. Warden Parker said there is an unfairness to the general tax-paying residents. Mr. McDowell said this issue was raised by some residents who were surprised that the costs had not increased.

Clr. Parker said residents in non-serviced areas building a new home can expect to pay 10-15 thousand for a well drilled and 15-20 thousand for a new septic system. Clr. Parker said asking many non-serviced residents to subsidize those costs is unfair and unacceptable. Clr. Wadden said this had been previously discussed by Council and requested that it be put on a future agenda to be addressed.

Clr. Butler requested additional details about the expressions of interest in the land mass in Riverton. Mr. McDowell said there have been multiple expressions of interest from different development companies, which have ramped up lately. Those who have reached out have suggested developments between 70 and 100 units, with varying ideas of the types of units.

Clr. Dewar said this has been going on for years, and because it is vacant, people think they will get it for next to nothing. Clr. Dewar said that the residents should have some say in this. Clr. Dewar said this location has natural gas, water, sewer and sidewalks. Clr. Palmer said that if the lot were to be sold, it would have to come to Council for approval. It would be up to Councillors to decide if this was a fair deal, and Council should look at fair market value. CAO Cullen said that fair market value is what the willing buyer and willing seller agree to for a price; Council would have to decide the price.

Warden Parker said that as the seller, Council would not have to agree to any price that comes; this land does have value. The Warden said caution should be used when considering this complicated issue for the residents in that area.

Clr. Palmer has received several calls about the status of the MacLellan's Brook/Coalburn Water Project. Mr. McDowell said the horizontal and vertical design through the consultant is almost complete. Hydrant flow tests in the area have been completed. The remaining work is the hydraulic design; three different pressure zones are being dealt with, and this causes complicated hydraulics and will determine costs. Clr. Palmer asked the approximate date this would go for tender. Mr. McDowell said biweekly design meetings are held, and the belief is that the hydraulic design will be completed in approximately a month.

DEVELOPMENT OFFICER REPORT

The Development Officer Report for the month of August 2024 was received as presented.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Emergency Services Report for the month of August 2024 was received as presented.

FIRE INSPECTOR REPORT

The Fire Inspector Report for the month of August 2024 was received as presented.

BUILDING INSPECTOR REPORT

The Building Inspector Report for the month of August 2024 was received as presented.

BYLAW OFFICER'S REPORT

The Bylaw Officer's Report for the month of August 2024 was received as presented.

Deputy Warden Murray said that people are asking questions and seeking an update about a dangerous and unsightly property on Condon Road in Scotsburn. Mr. McDowell said that Mr. Hale would be requested to provide an update.

Clr. Parker stated that the issue has been ongoing for more than three years and that there has been little or no effort to resolve it. Clr. Parker said the home the complaint centers around is usually vacant, with dogs left to protect the building. The dogs are malnourished and have been previously seized due to neglect. This is a severe situation, and the individual who has repeatedly filed complaints is very frustrated.

BUSINESS ITEMS OR ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION

STREETLIGHT APPROVAL

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Dewar and seconded by Clr. Turner to approve the installation of a streetlight at 24 Munro Avenue Extension. **Motion Carried**

BUSH TRIMMING AT INTERSECTIONS

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Boyles and seconded by Clr. MacKeil to write a letter to the Department of Transportation to request the brush trimming at intersections be cut back far enough to see vehicles coming. **Motion Carried**

Clr. MacKeil stated that this is a safety concern for residents, and it is important to trim the foliage and the sides of the roads in a timely manner. Clr. MacKeil completely supports this motion.

ROAD MAINTENANCE WORK FROM THE TOWN LINE IN LINACY TO COVE ROAD

Clr. Boyles is concerned with the road work being done in Linacy from the town line to Cove Road and said it is insufficient. Clr. Boyles said the province intends to skim the road and that no other work would be done to maintain the road.

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Boyles and seconded by Warden Parker to send a letter to the Department of Public Works with a copy sent to MLA Tim Houston requesting the work being done on the section of the road between the town line in Linacy to Cove Road be reconsidered to include doing complete asphalt work, ditching and other tasks necessary to extend the road's life. Clr. Boyles would also like to include in the letter asking why one part of Pictou East is being treated differently than another.

Motion Carried
Nay Votes: Clr. Wadden
Clr. Palmer
Clr. Thompson

ROAD MAINTENANCE ON HIDDEN COVE ROAD

Clr. Wadden and Mr. McDowell met with residents of District 2 in August; by then, residents were satisfied with the work done on the road. The concern is that the tenders are not issued early enough for the summer maintenance and snow issues. Clr. Wadden said the hope is that these can be tendered earlier and the maintenance work can be done earlier in the spring. Clr. Wadden said the tender contract should be for a couple of years and should not be done as a single-year contract with the stipulation that the work is done satisfactorily.

Mr. McDowell said there is no reason this could not be put to tender earlier, and a multi-year contract could benefit the municipality. Mr. McDowell said this would be taken into consideration for the following year.

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Wadden and seconded by Deputy Warden Murray to request that staff come to the next council meeting with recommendations for a summer road maintenance policy.

Motion Carried.

PAVING ENTRANCE OF HIDDEN COVE ROAD

Clr. Wadden said there are very serious concerns about the potholes at the end of Hidden Cove Road. That stretch has an 80 km/h speed limit and is very close to a sharp corner.

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Wadden and seconded by Clr. Turner to send a letter to Keith MacDonald at Public Works to request the first part of the Hidden Cove Road be paved to make it easier to pull out onto that road and for staff to look at the cost of paving to consider this for a future capital project. **Motion Carried**

ROAD TRAILS ACT

Clr. Palmer said the province has developed a policy allowing four-wheeled and two-wheeled off-highway vehicles to access roadways in designated areas to travel from one trail to another.

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Palmer and seconded by Clr. Thompson to approve the recommendation to endorse the two areas depicted as designated areas for off-road vehicles under the Road Trails Act. **Motion Carried**

Warden Parker asked if the province approved of these roads. Clr. Palmer said the province has the final say and thinks these will meet the policy's regulations. The roads will be submitted to the province for approval.

Clr. Palmer said the RCMP, ATV Club, and Department of Natural Resources were all in attendance at a meeting held at the fire hall and agreed that this would be a good thing. The residents at the meeting said this would be used and respected.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Clr. Boyles said the Friday night kitchen parties will be held at Hillside Hall from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. The cost is \$5.00, and lunch will be provided. There is no charge for musicians who will be playing.

Clr. Thompson said that the Plymouth Fire Department will hold a breakfast on Saturday, September 21, 2024, at 8:00 a.m.

The Springville Church and Community Hall will be hosting a take-out dinner, and the cost will be \$15.00 per plate.

Clr. Thompson distributed a poster from the Aberdeen Health Foundation. The Foundation is seeking participants to help with a study titled "Mental Wellness and Early

Intervention Program.” Clr. Thompson encouraged Council members to hang up the poster in each community.

Warden Parker said that Pictou County is the only place outside Halifax where the FORBO program is available. No questions are asked and there is no cost to families. This program does not require a referral, and they have trouble getting enough participants.

Clr. Parker said an adult dance will be held on Saturday, September 21, 2024, from 9:00 to 1:00 a.m. There will be a silent auction, with the proceeds going to the Union Centre Community Hall. This event will be a bring-your-own-refreshments event, costing \$15.00.

Warden Parker said the Terry Fox Run was held on Sunday, September 15, 2024. The Warden raised \$3,925, which contributed to the total. It was announced that the runs had raised more than \$10,000 in the Pictou runs. The Warden thanked everyone who supported this.

Clr. Wadden said the Little Harbour Fire Department will hold the annual plank salmon dinner on Friday, October 20, 2024, from 3:00 to 5:00. Tickets are \$25.00 each.

Clr. Elliott said that thoughts and prayers go to those in the River John community and to the families for the loss of the 15-year-old boy. A benefit dance for the Heighton-Rushton families will be held on September 28, 2024, from 8:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. This will be a 19+ event. Admission will be \$10.00, and donations are welcome. A silent auction will be held from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and donations are being accepted. The phone number to contact to donate to the auction is (902) 754-7524 or donations can be dropped off at River John Motor Company.

Deputy Warden Murray said the annual turkey dinner will be held at the Presbyterian Church in Scotsburn on Saturday, September 21, 2024. Tickets are available online or at A&M Small Engine and must be pre-purchased.

Deputy Warden Murray said there will be a soup luncheon at noon at the Lyon’s Brook United Church on Saturday, September 21, 2024, at 12:00 p.m. Tickets must be pre-purchased.

Deputy Warden Murray said that Scotsburn Recreation will host a networking day on Saturday, October 19, 2024, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. This event will be held at the Scotsburn School and will be a meet-and-greet for the local businesses and residents.

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 9:04 p.m.

CHAIRPERSON

MUNICIPAL CLERK