

May 4, 2020

The Municipal Council for the Municipality of the County of Pictou met by videoconference on Monday, May 4, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Dist.	1	Clr. Don Butler
	2	Clr. Deborah Wadden
	3	Clr. Darla MacKeil
	4	Clr. Ronald Baillie
	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

Donn Fraser, Solicitor, Mac Mac & Mac
Brian Cullen, CAO/Municipal Clerk Treasurer
Karen Cornish, Deputy Municipal Treasurer
Carolyn MacIntosh, Deputy Municipal Clerk
Sueann Musick, Communications Officer
Jane Johnson, Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

Warden R. Parker called the meeting to order and requested that Councillors take a moment of silence in memory of former Councillor and REMO Coordinator Donald MacKenzie and to pray or reflect, as may be their preference, to help Council focus and properly do the work of the Municipality.

AGENDA

It was moved by Clr. Boyles and seconded by Deputy Warden Murray that the agenda be approved as circulated.

Motion carried.

MINUTES – FEBRUARY 10, 2020

It was moved by Clr. Dewar and seconded by Clr. MacKeil that the minutes of February 10, 2020 be approved as circulated.

Motion carried.

MINUTES – APRIL 6, 2020

It was moved by Deputy Warden Murray and seconded by Clr. Thompson that the minutes of April 6, 2020 be approved as circulated.

Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence was received and acknowledged as follows:

- (a) TIR – Requesting the execution of a Three-Year Cost Sharing Agreement for Subdivision Streets. (Adoption of Resolution required)
- (b) Pictou County Women’s Resource & Sexual Assault Centre – Asking that Council proclaim April as “Sexual Assault Awareness Month” in the Municipality.
- (c) Canadian Lyme Disease Foundation – Asking that Council proclaim May as “Lyme Disease Awareness Month” in the Municipality.

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

With the agreement of Council, Warden R. Parker advised that he would sign the proclamation proclaiming April as “Sexual Assault Awareness Month” in the Municipality.

LYME AWARENESS MONTH

With the agreement of Council, Warden R. Parker advised that he would sign the proclamation declaring May as “Lyme Disease Awareness Month” in the Municipality.

UP-DATE – COVID-19

The CAO informed Council that at the local level the Incident Management Team are continuing to maintain and plan our response the pandemic. They have been contacting local agencies such as the Food Banks, VON, Tearmann House and Viola’s Place to see if there are any resource challenges. Municipally there are no operational concerns. A delivery of PPE is expected this week from the Province. Communication and messaging from REMO are continue on the various platforms. There have been some conference calls about the NSFMM financing plan with the Province and Administrators so he hopes to have some text out to Council this week on what a potential policy would look like for taxpayers. The Province unexpectedly lessened some restrictions around recreation on Friday without consultation and most municipalities were not ready prepared for the opening of that infrastructure. The CAO advised that Incident Management Team meetings around COVID-19 are being reduced to 3 times per week.

Clr. Boyles reported that he has received some negative feedback from people who feel that it is too soon to ease some of the restrictions. He asked if the County had similar concerns and the CAO replied REMO has not met since some restrictions were lessened but administratively there are concerns about the lack of consultation with the municipal partners. He reminded Council that the restrictions are the result of Orders issued by the Chief Medical Officer and it will be Dr. Strang’s decision when and how those restrictions will be eased, keeping in mind that social distancing and hygiene protocols will still be in place (i.e.. 2 meters social distancing, gatherings of 5 or less people) and if the number of cases increase with the lifting of restrictions then those restrictions will be reinstated. The CAO reported that experts are saying that without a vaccine this virus is going to come in waves. We are in this for a period of time and restrictions may come and go. We may see the Maritime Provinces open but it may not allow other provinces such as Quebec across the border for a long time.

Clr. D. Parker reported that he is hearing people are feeling restricted because the Central Health Zone is not doing well. The CAO confirmed that in the Northern Zone our numbers are on the decline but Dr. Strang has been clear that we are all in this together and any restrictions will be lifted or imposed on the entire province.

Clr. Boyles pointed out that just because the Northern Zone’s numbers are staying the same someone from Pictou County may go and get tested in Halifax and those numbers stay in Halifax.

Clr. Palmer reported that numbers should also show the number of people recovered in the Northern Zone. The CAO reported the Province is not breaking down recovery numbers by zone and he pointed out that most tests are done in local regions.

UP-DATE – HIGH SPEED INTERNET PROJECT

The CAO reported that there has not been a lot of changes since last week. There was a meeting scheduled with the Canada Infrastructure Bank but it did not happen. The Pole Attachment Agreement has been returned to NS Power and efforts are underway to provide Bell with a copy of our Non-Dominant Carrier Agreement and proof of insurance. Work has started on the “Make Ready” applications and Bell is establishing an on-line system for the Municipality to facilitate that process.

Clr. Dewar asked if there was any more thought on hiring a supervisor for the project.

The CAO replied that we have a month-to-month agreement in place with Terry Dalton and Emmerich Winkler for project management. They have been assisting with the pole agreements and are starting work on planning for network operation. They are also working on the technical side of the application for funding to the CRTC which is due on June 1st.

Clr. D. Parker asked if the COVID-19 restrictions will have any impact on the project to proceed with the build. The CAO responded that there are some restrictions on workplaces but it should be safely constructed, and placement of equipment should not be a problem so it should be done in a safe manner. The telecommunications industry is an exempt category and is considered an essential service.

Clr. Wadden asked if the shutdown of Plexus was costing the County money and the CAO replied there was no cost to the County.

Clr. Thompson pointed that last week we agreed on the \$100 million project and the CAO responded there are 2 options, fiber rich \$68million project or the fiber max \$100 million. The CAO indicated that the larger project could come into play with the Canada Infrastructure Bank being part of the project and if we are able to attract \$20 million for other sources.

Clr. Thompson asked if you would have to retrofit the fiber for the more expensive project and the CAO replied it does not matter what model you go with, as the Phase 1 project is the same.

Clr. Thompson asked where we are sourcing the \$20 million and the CAO responded that there would be \$25 - \$30 million in the CRTC Fund and the Universal Broadband Fund has \$200 million. The CAO pointed out if we are successful in the CRTC fund then you are not precluded in other funds.

RESOLUTION – LANDFILL VOUCHER PROGRAM POLICY

Clr. Palmer presented a resolution to Council as follows:

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the Municipal Council for the Municipality of the County of Pictou that Council adopt the following Landfill Voucher Program Policy:

POLICY # 2020-05-44



MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF PICTOU LANDFILL VOUCHER PROGRAM POLICY

In accordance with Section 65 (am) of the Municipal Government Act, being Chapter 18 of the Revised Statutes of Nova Scotia, 1998, the Municipal Council for the Municipality of the County of Pictou hereby enacts a policy with respect to Landfill Vouchers.

Policy

1. Each residential assessment shall be permitted landfill vouchers to cover the cost of disposal at the Mount William Transfer Station up to 1,000 kilograms per fiscal period.
2. Vouchers shall be made available during the period of May 1st through November 30th of the fiscal year.

3. Vouchers must be used in accordance with the Municipality of the County of Pictou's Solid Waste-Resource Management By-Law; the Pictou County Shared Services Mount William Transfer Station Policies and the Solid Waste Management Regulations of Nova Scotia.
4. The form of voucher shall be upon agreement between the Chief Administrative Officer of the Municipality of the County of Pictou and the Chief Operating Officer of the Pictou County Shared Services Authority.
5. All other policies enacted with respect to the landfill voucher program are hereby repealed.

DATED at MacLellan's Brook, N.S. this 4th day of May, 2020.

(Sgd.) Randy Palmer
Andy Thompson

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Palmer and seconded by Clr. Thompson that the preceding resolution be adopted as presented.

Clr. Wadden asked are we going to be giving out a certain number of vouchers and the Deputy Municipal Treasurer replied that the voucher has been redesigned so now there are 4 vouchers on a page.

Motion carried.

RESOLUTION – MUNICIPAL GRANTS

Clr. Baillie presented a resolution to Council as follows:

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the Municipal Council for the Municipality of the County of Pictou that Council approve the payment of the following Municipal Grants:

Municipal Services:

D04 District 4	\$ 40.00	Annual cost of West Branch Hall St. Lights
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Recreation

North Nova Education Centre	\$ 2,000.00	Bursaries & Graduation Expenses
Northumberland Regional High Sch;	2,000.00	Bursaries & Graduation Expenses
Pictou Academy	200.00	Bursary
Tatamagouche Regional Academy	200.00	Bursary

DATED at River John, N.S. this 4th day of May, 2020.

(Sgd.) Ronald Baillie
Chester Dewar

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. Baillie and seconded by Clr. Dewar that the preceding resolution be adopted as presented.

Motion carried.

RESOLUTION – INTEREST RATE POLICY

Clr. D. Parker presented a resolution to Council as follows:

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the Municipal Council for the Municipality of the County of Pictou that Council adopt the following policy with respect to interest rates:

POLICY #2020-05-53



**MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF PICTOU
INTEREST RATE POLICY**

RECOVERY OF COSTS INCURRED

1. For the purposes of Section 507 of the Municipal Government Act, the interest rate shall be 12% per annum.

REPEAL

All former policies and/or practices with respect to interest rates are hereby repealed.

DATED at White Hill, N.S this 4th day of May, 2020.

(Sgd.) David Parker
Larry Turner

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. D. Parker and seconded by Clr. Turner that the preceding resolution be adopted as presented.
Motion carried.

RESOLUTION – INTERIM TAX BILLING POLICY

Clr. MacKeil presented a resolution to Council as follows:

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the Municipal Council for the Municipality of the County of Pictou that Council adopt the following policy with respect to interim tax billing:



**MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF PICTOU
INTERIM TAX BILLING**

In accordance with Section 112 of the Municipal Government Act, being Chapter 18 of the Revised Statutes of Nova Scotia, 1998, the Municipal Council for the Municipality of the County of Pictou hereby enacts a policy with respect to interim tax billing as follows:

1. The Municipal Council for the Municipality of the County of Pictou hereby provides for the payment of taxes by installment before the annual tax rates are set.
2. The installment shall be payable by the person assessed for the property for the current fiscal year.
3. The amount of the installment shall be calculated equivalent to 50% of the—taxes levied for the property for previous fiscal year.
4. The installment shall be due and payable on the 15th day of June, annually. Should the 15th day of June fall upon a Saturday or Sunday the due date shall be set by the Municipal Treasurer, nor more than 5 business days after the 15th day of June.
5. The amount of each installment shall bear interest, beginning on the date on which it falls due, at the same rate of interest determined for overdue taxes as detailed in Council's Policy on Interest Rates.
6. The Installment payment shall be applied in part payment of the taxes on that property for the current fiscal year.

REPEAL

All former policies and/or practices with respect to interim tax billing are hereby repealed.

DATED at Caribou, N.S. this 4th day of May, 2020.

(Sgd.) Darla MacKeil
David Parker

MOTION

It was moved by Clr. MacKeil and seconded by Clr. D. Parker that the preceding resolution be adopted as presented.

Motion carried.

RESOLUTION – COVID-19 POLICY

Deputy Warden Murray presented a resolution to Council as follows:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) assessed COVID-19 as a pandemic.

WHEREAS on March 22, the Province of Nova Scotia declared a state of emergency to help contain the spread of COVID-19. The state of emergency will be in effect for 14 days and may be renewed. The emergency order is valid until April 5, 2020.

WHEREAS as a result of the pandemic the Municipality of the County of Pictou must alter some of its policies and practices to aid in response to the Pandemic and help contain the spread of COVID-19.

THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL FOR THE MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF PICTOU hereby adopts the following COVID-19 Policy.

1) Purpose

- a) To provide direction and alter administrative provisions of certain municipal policies enacted by the Municipal Council for the Municipality of the County of Pictou.

2) Policy Statements

- a) The following changes to policy are hereby enacted in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic:
 - i) **POLICY #2001-07-08 MUNICIPAL VEHICLES:** All sections pertaining to staff use of vehicles are hereby suspended, until otherwise directed by the Chief Administrative Officer.
 - ii) **POLICY # 2020-05-44 LANDFILL VOUCHER PROGRAM POLICY:** Section 2 is hereby amended to state that Vouchers shall be made available during the period of June 1st through November 30 of the fiscal year.
 - iii) **POLICY #2019-12-11 LOW INCOME TAX EXEMPTION POLICY:** Section 5 is hereby amended to establish the deadline for the 2020/2021 fiscal year until April 30, 2020.
 - iv) **POLICY #2019-05-52 MUNICIPAL SERVICES GRANT POLICY:** Section 6 (a)-(d) Ratepayer Meeting Requirements are hereby suspended for the duration of Order of the Chief Medical Officer for Nova Scotia as amended limiting gatherings to no more five (5) persons; Section 7 (a) Financial Statements shall be amended in accordance with the following policy statements;
 - (1) The following terms shall now be applied to the Municipal Services Grant Policy:
 - (a) A Councillor may receive applications via email at any point from qualified applicants.
 - (b) The Councillor shall make a recommendation to a Committee of the Whole for the Municipal Council the amount of grant that an organization shall receive.
 - (c) The Municipality shall advertise on its website the new process for approval of Municipal Services Grants.
 - (d) A Municipal Councillor may contact any group to determine if they have any requirements for a Municipal Services Grant.
 - (e) Prior to payment of a municipal services grant a copy of the most recent financial statements of the organization shall be provided to the Administration of the Municipality.
 - v) **POLICY #2020-05-14 INTERIM TAX BILL POLICY** is amended as follows:
 - (1) Section 4 shall read" The installment shall be due and payable on the 22nd of July 2020.

- (2) Section 5 “The amount of each installment shall bear interest, beginning on the date on which it falls due, at the same rate of interest determined for overdue taxes as detailed in Council’s Policy on Interest Rates” is suspended.
- (3) Interest rate on the Interim Installment for the 2020-2021 fiscal year shall be set at 0 percent.
- b) The following policy amendments shall remain in effect until May 31, 2020 unless repealed by Municipal Council at an earlier date.
- c) This policy may be extended and or amended by the Municipal Council at a duly called meeting of the Municipal Council.

DATED AT Hardwood Hill, N.S. this 4th day of May, 2020.

(Sgd.) Wayne Murray
Randy Palmer

MOTION

It was moved by Deputy Warden Murray and seconded by Clr. Palmer that the preceding resolution be adopted as presented.

Warden R. Parker asked are we going to ask people to continue paying their bills and the CAO replied that we will make a statement that people continue paying their bills on time wherever possible.

Clr. Baillie asked will counter service be available by the time the interim bills are mailed out and the CAO responded that there may be service before the bills are due. The CAO explained the Province has not come out with a detailed recovery plan as yet.

The Deputy Municipal Treasurer advised that there will be those residents who will want to pay their bills as soon as they receive them. We will have to keep communicating that the office is still not open but at this time most calls coming into the office are from people looking for landfill vouchers.

Clr. Wadden asked for more information on the \$5.6 million deficit and the CAO replied that it is cash flow. You will levy taxes for 2020/2021 but the program realizes a certain percentage of the public have been negatively impacted in the previous weeks by COVID-19. The Municipality will go to the Municipal Finance Corporation and borrow money to pay the taxes for people who cannot pay them at present. The residents will then have 24 months to pay their taxes.

Motion carried.

MOTION – 3 YEAR J CLASS ROAD AGREEMENT

It was moved by Deputy Warden Murray and seconded by Clr. Dewar that the Warden and Chief Administrative Officer be authorized to sign Cost Share Agreement No. 2020-016 with the Minister of Transportation & Infrastructure Renewal on behalf of the Province of Nova Scotia.

Motion Carried.

EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS

There were no emergency resolutions.

NEW SCOTLAND BUSINESS PARK

Clr. Wadden asked for an update on the tender for traffic lights at the New Scotland Business Park.

Clr. Thompson replied they have been working on that for a while. The Province sold a portion of the East River Road to the Town of New Glasgow for \$1 which will eliminate the need for a roundabout in

favor of a signalized intersection. A tender for the traffic light work was issued recently and a contract award is expected by the end of the month. He also advised that work has begun on the construction of the lift station and the first development within the park is progressing nicely.

UP-DATE – VALLEY VIEW VILLA

Clr. Dewar informed Council the Villa had another good week with no issues. Some good news was received from the Province on the availability of funding to purchase two new boilers which are well needed.

INTERNATIONAL FIREFIGHTERS DAY

Clr. Boyles acknowledged that today is International Firefighters Day and commended all firefighters for the work that they do.

UP-DATE – RIVERVIEW ADULT RESIDENTIAL CENTER

Clr. D. Parker reported that there is no illness in the home and he informed Council the new youth home is Truro is now operational.

ADJOURN

It was moved by Deputy Warden Murray and seconded by Clr. MacKeil that the meeting adjourn.
Motion carried. (8:20 p.m.)

Robert Parker
Warden

Brian Cullen
Municipal Clerk