

September 8, 2020

The Municipal Council for the Municipality of the County of Pictou met by teleconference/video-conference on Tuesday, September 8, 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 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 Clr. Turner that the agenda be approved as circulated.

AMENDMENT

It was moved by Clr. D. Parker and seconded by Clr. Butler that the agenda be amended to remove the discussion on the rural fire department study.

In support of the amendment, Clr. D. Parker informed Council that the study is making progress which will lead to the eventual presentation of recommendations to Council for consideration. He offered his opinion that Clr. Wadden does not accept that the County can manage the fire departments and he did not feel that a discussion on a report that is not yet complete is a valuable use of Council's time.

Clr. Wadden reported that she was of the understanding that Councillors can add items to the agenda before it goes out to Council and since she has been asked for information on the fire study she asked for it to be placed on the agenda so that she can get the information she needs to respond to those questions..

Clr. Palmer reported he does not want to see Council managing fire departments and agreed that Clr. Wadden should be able to add items to the agenda.

The motion to amend was defeated (Nay Votes: Clrs. Wadden, MacKeil, Baillie, Turner, Palmer, Thompson & Deputy Warden Murray)

The motion to approve the agenda carried. (Nay Vote: Clr. D. Parker)

MINUTES

It was moved by Clr. D. Parker and seconded by Clr. MacKeil that the minutes of August 4, 2020 be approved with the following corrections:

- Pg. 4 "the police have the experience" should read "the most competent people should be appointed to the inquiry."
- Pg. 5 "Clr. Wadden reported she contacted the TIR foreman in the area who came and looked at the area so it would not hurt to call TIR" should read "Clr. Wadden recommended that Clr. Boyles contact the local TIR foreman on this issue as she has had good success in the past with that approach".

Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence was received as and acknowledged from the following

- (a) Information Privacy Commissioner for NS – Asking that Council proclaim September 28th – October 4th as "Right to Know Week" in the Municipality.
- (b) Thank you letters for municipal funding (uncirculated) have been received from Tanner Himmelman (bursary), Big Brothers Big Sisters (sponsorship), Town of Trenton (Hemlock Grant), Abercrombie Cemetery Co. (MSG).

MOTION – RIGHT TO KNOW WEEK

It was moved by Clr. Boyles and seconded by Clr. MacKeil that Council proclaim September 28th to October 4th as "Right to Know Week" in the Municipality.

Clr. D. Parker commented that government has a poor history of working against the very principles we are being asked to approve therefore he would not be supporting the motion.

Motion carried. (Nay Vote: Clr. D. Parker)

UP-DATE – HIGH SPEED INTERNET PROJECT

The CAO reported that the contract with NOVA was signed last week, followed by a press release. The majority of the past week was spent with NOVA on the roll out of Phase 1. Matthew Savoie (a former employee of Plexis) has taken on the Project Manager role. The make ready work is commencing with NSP and the Bell system. In the coming weeks we will be developing the milestones and have a better handle on the groundwork. An in-person session is being planned with Council to go over all aspects of the project and answer any questions Council may have.

Clr. Wadden reported that she was glad to hear they were having a face-to-face meeting because she has been looking for the sales information. We need to have more discussion on this issue and she has some real concerns.

The CAO explained the ISP would be delivering services to the end customer but our network, as it is designed, needs to support those activities. It needs VOIP, internet and television so the equipment that has been sourced allows for those services to be provided. On the residential side the ISP pays the Municipality for every customer they sell services to. The Municipality will be more directly involved in the

commercial side and developing packages for some big users. We based all our projections on a market price and we would get 50% of that. The ISP will determine what the end product price is to the user but the market will bear what they can charge.

Clr. Butler questioned the public reaction to the press release that went out last week.

The Communications Officer replied that there were a lot of people who looked at it over a 24-hour period and social media comments have been positive. Going forward she will be working with NOVA's communications team on promotion and there have also been discussions on coverage in a CBC effort.

Clr. Thompson reported he was concerned about the press release and asked about the TV white space and if it was part of this phase of the project.

The CAO reported what is included in the \$11 million is the fiber for Ring 8 and a wireless component that is the Hardwood Hill area. That hill is critical for the roll out of the entire county and it is the best spot for height. I-Valley and Emmerich Winkler are looking at how the Municipality could accelerate a wireless solution that would give people some level of improved service while they wait for the arrival of fiber over the next several years. The TV white space is being examined on that side of the equation and there is no commercialization of TV white space yet but at best a pilot project. Industry Canada has not signed off, but it has progressed to the point that it would license the Municipality for a spectrum for a TV white space and test it as a solution. If it were viable then Industry Canada would grant us a license. The hot start is a concept they are working through to determine what the costs would be to do that.

Clr. Thompson reported he was dismayed that TV white space was talked about in the press release and suggested that information on that option should have waited for a later date because it gives a misimpression to the public who believe it is part of this project.

The CAO acknowledged that TV while white space is old technology, that aspect if the project is strictly a pilot initiative that would be a temporary solution to boost current levels of service to support circumstances where students and employees are working from home. We would be hard pressed to guarantee everyone 25 megabits but limited service may be available and we do not want to provide subservice.

Warden R. Parker reported we want to try and help people who have very limited service in the interim.

Clr. Palmer commented that he thought we were going to provide the service so he was glad that we are not. We have to very careful that the cost does not get out of hand and that future taxpayers do not have to pay for this project. We are not receiving any government funding and there must be a reason why.

Warden R. Parker pointed out this is going to be an investment and the quality we are going to provide will be far greater than current ISP's.

Clr. Turner reported that he has a concern regarding the hot start because Council has not approved the funding for that so including it in the press release was premature.

Warden R. Parker asked the wording of the press release and the CAO read from the press release as follows:

"The Municipality is exploring options that will provide an interim solution to serve more residents as the fibre optic network is built. The plan's objective is to allow for as many residents as possible to get access to internet services for educational needs and work from home solutions, should the pandemic necessitate. The plan does not supersede our network design; however, it would enable a short-term solution to address the immediate needs,"

RESOLUTION – 2020/21 – 2024/25 CAPITAL BUDGET

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 2020/21 – 2024/25 Capital Budget in the amount of \$81,298,734.00, the same having been reviewed and approved the Committee of Council as a Whole.

DATED at White Hill, N. S. this 8th day of September, 2020.

(Sgd.) David Parker
Randy Palmer

MOTION

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

RESOLUTION – MUNICIPAL GRANTS

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 approve the payment of the following Municipal Grants:

Municipal Services:

D04	D 4 St. Lights	\$ 80.00	Annual cost of St. Lights @ West Bch. Hall & West Branch United Ch.
D06	Salem Athletic Assoc.	\$ 1,017.38	Bandstand & Dugout Improvements
	Salem Presby. Church	2,600.00	Oil Tank Replacement
	West River Fire Dept.	2,500.00	Refrigerator
	West Riv. Presby. Church	1,850.00	Loch Bm. Church Repairs & Topsoil
D07	West Riv. Fire Dept.	\$ 2,500.00	Refrigerator
D11	Bridgeville Cemetery	\$ 400.00	Operating Expenses

Recreation:

Lismore Recreation Committee	\$ 150.00	Summer Recreation Projects
Caribou River Comm. Hall	150.00	Operating Expenses
Scotsburn Recreation	150.00	Operating Expenses
Hopewell 4-H	75.00	Program Expenses
Hopewell & Area Pk. & Footbridge Committee	75.00	Candy Cane Committee Expenses
D13 Recreation & Plan. Comm.	1,000.00	Ballfield Improvements

Council

i-Valley ICA	\$30,000.00	Broadband Documentary Expenses
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GRAND TOTAL \$42,547.38

DATED at MacLellan's Brook, N.S. this 8th day of September, 2020.

(Sgd.) Randy Palmer
Don Butler

MOTION

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

Motion carried.

RESOLUTION – SNOW CLEARING TENDERS

Clr. Dewar presented a resolution to Council as follows:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS public tenders have been called for the clearing of snow at the Municipal Administration Building, sewage treatment plants, other infrastructure sites, and several municipal roads;

WHEREAS tender responses were reviewed internally by staff to confirm compliance with tender specifications;

WHEREAS the Administration is recommending acceptance of tenders which offer the best equipment for specific sites, the best hourly rates, and the most efficient response times;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Municipal Council for the Municipality of the County of Pictou that Council accept the following tenders for snow clearing for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 winter seasons:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| (a) Municipal Administration Building | C & G Yorke Construction Ltd. |
| (b) River John STP | Eugene Mertin Foundations |
| (c) Hopewell STP | Brian V. MacLane Backhoe & Trucking |
| (d) Thorburn STP | Brian V. MacLane Backhoe & Trucking |
| (e) Alma Lift Stn., Chlorine & Water Booster Stns. | Brian V. MacLane Backhoe & Trucking |
| (f) Scotsburn Pumping Station | C & G Yorke Construction Ltd. |
| (g) Plymouth & MacLellan's Bk. Pumping Stations | Brian V. MacLane Backhoe & Trucking |
| (h) Jean Street & Holland Lane | C. F. Construction Ltd. |
| (i) Hidden Cove Drive, Pictou Landing | C & G Yorke Construction Ltd. |
| (j) Lakeside Court, Granton | Hans Rauh & Sons Construction |
| (k) MacIntosh Drive, Sylvester | Hans Rauh & Sons Construction |
| (l) Maple Estates Drive, Abercrombie | C & G Yorke Construction |
| (m) Oak, Maple & Pine Streets, Sylvester | Hans Rauh & Sons Construction |
| (n) Pump Road | Hans Rauh & Sons Construction |
| (o) Stanwood Drive & Barclay Ridge, Lyons Bk. | Hans Rauh & Sons Construction |

DATED at Lorne, N. S. this 8th day of September, 2020.

(Sgd.) Chester Dewar
Don Butler

MOTION

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

Motion carried.

RESOLUTION – WINTER SIDEWALK MTNCE TENDERS

Clr. Boyles presented a resolution to Council as follows:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS public tenders have been called for the clearing of snow on municipal sidewalks located at various locations for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 winter seasons;

WHEREAS tender responses were reviewed by Administration to confirm compliance with tender specifications;

WHEREAS Administration is recommending acceptance of tenders which offer the best equipment for specific sites, the best hourly rates, and the most efficient response times;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Municipal Council for the Municipality of the County of Pictou that Council accept the following tenders for snow clearing on sidewalks for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 winter seasons:

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------|--|
| (a) | Abercrombie | Scotia Plumbing & Property Maintenance |
| (b) | Alma | Brian V. MacLean Backhoe & Trucking |
| (c) | Hopewell | Scotia Plumbing & Property Maintenance |
| (d) | River John | Eugene Mertin Foundations |
| (e) | Riverton | Scotia Plumbing & Property Maintenance |
| (f) | Scotsburn & Lyon's Brook | Blaine F. MacLane Excavation |
| (g) | Walkerville Rd & East River Rd. | Brian V. MacLane's Backhoe & Trucking |
| (h) | Westville Road (Wellness Ctr.) | Scotia Plumbing & Property Maintenance |

DATED at Hillside, N. S. this 8th of September, 2020.

(Sgd.) Peter Boyles
David Parker

MOTION

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

Clr. D. Parker pointed out it should be clarified with Blane MacLane that he only received the 1 bid and to ask him if his rates have changed. He pointed out that Mr. MacLane indicated his bids were only good if he got all the areas he bid on.

The Deputy Municipal Clerk reported if Mr. MacLane declines the opportunity for this 1 location, they will bring it back to the Committee of the Whole for direction.

The Solicitor suggested that Council remove that particular tender from this motion.

It was agreed by Council that the award for Scotsburn and Lyon's Brook be removed from the resolution.

Motion carried.

RESOLUTION – ELECTION TARIFFS

Clr. Butler presented a resolution to Council as follows:

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the Municipal Council for the Municipality of the County of Pictou that the following Election Tariffs be established for the Municipality:

#	POSITION	FEES
1	Dep. Returning Officers	\$300/day
2	Poll Clerks	300/day
3	Training	75
4	Cleaner	125/day
5	Hall Rental	150/day

DATED at Ardness, N. S. this 8th day of September, 2020.

(Sgd.) Don Butler
Chester Dewar

MOTION

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

Motion carried.

RESOLUTION – COVID-19 POLICY EXTENSION

Deputy Warden Murray presented a resolution to Council as follow:

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 COVID-19:

POLICY #2020-09-54



MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF PICTOU 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 #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.
- d) The aforementioned policy amendments shall remain in effect until December 31, 2020 unless repealed by Municipal Council at an earlier date.
 - e) This policy may be extended and or amended by the Municipal Council at a duly called meeting of the Municipal Council.

3) Repeal

All former policies with respect to COVID-19 are hereby repealed.

DATED at Hardwood Hill, NS this 8th day of September, 2020.

(Sgd.) Wayne Murray
Peter Boyles

MOTION

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

RESOLUTION – TBR RENEWAL – INTERNET PROJECT

Clr. MacKeil presented a resolution to Council as follows:

**MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF THE
Municipality of the County of Pictou**

TEMPORARY BORROWING RESOLUTION RENEWAL

Amount: \$24,900,109

Renewal Project: Rural Broadband Project

WHEREAS Section 66 of the Municipal Government Act provides that the Council of the **Municipality of the County of Pictou**, subject to the approval of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, may borrow to expend funds for a capital purpose as authorized by statute;

WHEREAS the Council of the **Municipality of the County of Pictou** has adopted a capital budget for this fiscal year as required by Section 65 of the Municipal Government Act and are so authorized to expend funds for a capital purpose as identified in their capital budget;

WHEREAS pursuant to a resolution passed by the Municipal Council on the **12th day of June, 2019**, the Council postponed the issue of debentures and with the approval of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing dated the **28th day of August 2020**, did borrow from a chartered bank or trust company doing business in Nova Scotia a sum not exceeding **Twenty Four Million, Nine Hundred Thousand One Hundred and Nine Dollars (\$24,900,109)** for the purposes set out above and for a period not exceeding twelve months; and

WHEREAS Council has deemed it expedient that the period of borrowing be further extended;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED

THAT subject to the approval of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the authorized period of borrowing in the amount not exceeding **Twenty Four Million, Nine Hundred Thousand One Hundred and Nine Dollars (\$24,900,109)** be extended for a further period not exceeding Twelve (12) months from the date of the approval of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

DATED at Caribou, N.S. the 8th day of September, 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.

CHAIR

Deputy Warden Murray assumed the Chair.

MOTION – RTE 248 PASSING LANE

It was moved by Clr. Thompson and seconded by Clr. Turner that a letter be sent to TIR (with copies to the Traffic Authority, the M:A for Pictou East and Mr. Marshall Doyle) requesting a review of the passing lane on Route 348 East River East Side Road Plymouth which begins after the former Westray Bridge to the Plymouth Park intersection.

Motion carried.

CHAIR

Warden R. Parker resumed the Chair.

RURAL FIRE DEPARTMENT STUDY

Clr. Wadden asked where the Pictou Landing First Nations and the Pictou Island Fire Departments fall under this study and the CAO replied Pictou Island is different from a fire perspective as it has unique geography and therefore a different risk profile. The CAO reported the PLFN would be covered under Mutual Aid and automatic aid and was not included in the scope of the study.

Clr. Wadden asked about the PLFN School and the CAO replied that he would have to contact the consultant.

Clr. Wadden asked if Workers' Compensation covers firefighters over 65 years of age and the CAO replied that the Municipality has not yet verified the coverage limitations with the WCB.

Clr. Wadden asked how fire rates would be set and if that would be the responsibility of a new coordinator.

The CAO replied that how rates would be set has not been explored at this early stage and noted that ultimately Council sets fire rates. Additionally, the role of any newly created coordinator position has not been flushed out as we have not gotten to that level of detail yet.

Clr. Wadden asked if we know how the rating system is going to be allocated across the board and the CAO replied that there was no mention of that at this point.

Clr. Wadden asked if a fire department could opt out of this new system and if there would be repercussions from Council if they did.

The CAO commented that the wording around the new position needs to change and advised that he was not sure how one could opt out given that the end goal is to improve the fire service.

Clr. Wadden asked if any of the firefighters in Cumberland County are being paid honorariums and the CAO responded he did not know.

Clr. Wadden asked what the salary would be for the Fire Service Coordinator and the CAO advised that there has been no discussion on that but that position is probably going to be a position of the Municipality. It is hoped that the savings in operational inefficiencies will offset the expenses of this new position.

With respect to fleet management, Clr. Wadden explained that there are a variety of methods for servicing fire department vehicles, including local dealerships providing a mobile service, and the need for some vehicles to travel for maintenance work both within and outside of the province due to the specialty of accessing particular licensed technicians.

Clr. Wadden asked if we promote subdivision in areas that we invest a lot of money in for water and sewer services.

The CAO reminded Council that we will be going through an exercise to achieve minimum planning standards and those tools are meant to do that.

Clr. Wadden referred to the fact that the ability for fire departments to raise funds is hampered by provincial limitations on agricultural and forestry properties.

The CAO commented that this is a larger issue than just this municipality and recalled that the NSFM had established a committee to look at that issue.

Finally, Clr. Wadden requested that if there are further meetings on the fire study, she would appreciate receiving notice of those meetings as she would like an opportunity to participate, even in a virtual setting.

Warden R. Parker reported that the initial meeting with the fire chiefs had a number of difficulties around technology and was interrupted with fire calls. The second meeting which did not include the consultant was much more cordial and there was an willingness by the chiefs to look at ways of improving the fire service and perhaps a bit of relief that some of the administrative duties could be transferred to the coordinator position, leaving the chiefs to concentrate on the role of the fire departments. He reminded Council that there is still a third phase to the review so the material is not yet complete.

Clrs. Boyles, Butler and Deputy Warden Murray all agreed that the second meeting was very beneficial and that the chiefs are open to some change that will improve the fire service and are willing to work towards a solution.

Clr. Palmer recommended that any future meetings be arranged so that Councillors can attend virtually.

Clr. Turner reported that he had a request from a volunteer fireman to make a presentation to Council.

The CAO recommended that Council wait until after Phase 3 of the study is complete. He also commented that the chief is to be the spokesperson for each department and entertaining other firefighters will present a courtesy that would then need to be open to all members of the fire service.

Clr. Wadden thanked Council for letting her keep this item on the agenda and for the opportunity to ask those questions.

EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS

There were no emergency resolutions.

REFERRALS TO COMMITTEES & COUNCIL

Clr. Boyles asked that the intersection in Abercrombie be put on the next agenda so we do not lose sight of this important issue.

Clr. D. Parker reported that we need to investigate a forestry tax because it is not fair to homeowners who have to pay a deed transfer tax. Land is being purchased through assumption of mortgage and these transactions are in the millions of dollars so we have to look at ways to close some of these loopholes. It is important that we send a message that those who buys real estate pays the same tax.

Deputy Warden Murray reported attending the Atlantic Mayors Congress in Summerside and he would like to provide an update at the next meeting.

Clr. Wadden asked when the Audit Committee meets and the Deputy Municipal Treasurer replied that the Committee meets annually once the draft audit is complete which is still outstanding at the moment.

The CAO reported the Auditor may request the Audit Committee to meet at any time.

CLOSED SESSION

Council met in closed session at 9:03 p.m. to discuss matters relating to contract negotiations.

OPEN SESSION

Council resumed in open session at 9:15 p.m.

ADJOURN

It was moved by Clr. Turner and seconded by Deputy Warden Murray that the meeting adjourn.
(9:15 p.m.)

Motion carried.

Robert Parker
Warden

Brian Cullen
Municipal Clerk