

**DIGBY TOWN COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
MONDAY May 4, 2020  
Video Conference Call**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mayor Ben Cleveland  
Councillor Mike Bartlett  
Councillor Danny Harvieux  
Councillor Peter Turnbull

**STAFF PRESENT :** Tom Ossinger, Chief Administrative Officer  
Leslie Brinton, Executive Assistant  
Matthew Raymond, Director of Finance

**REGRETS:**

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Cleveland called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

**B. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

B.1 None.

**C. AGENDA**

**C.1 Additions/Deletions**

One addition to the Agenda under New Business J.8 Cooke's Aquaculture.

**C.2 Approval**

**Motion**

*Moved by Councillor Harvieux and seconded by Councillor Bartlett that the Agenda of May 4, 2020 be approved with one addition under New Business J.8 Cooke's Aquaculture.*

**Motion Carried.**

**D. DELEGATIONS & PRESENTATIONS**

D.1 None.

**E. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

E.1 April 7, 2020

**Motion:**

*Moved by Councillor Harvieux and seconded by Councillor Turnbull that the Minutes of April 7, 2020 be approved as presented.*

**Motion Carried.**

**F. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**F.1 None.**

**G. REPORT**

**G.1 Chief Administrative Officer Report**

The CAO report was presented. The Investing in Canada Infrastructure project start up meeting was held on Friday. The Racquette Garden Road survey sketch was provided by the Surveyors and will be discussed in Camera further. The Covid-19 restrictions are still in place under the Provincial State of Emergency the CAO reached out to Dr. Strang for guidance on festivals and events this will be further discussed under New Business. The Digby REMO continues to run virtually and contacts with the CAO's when required. The Property Tax Deferral Program developed by the NSFM and the AMANS have been working together to develop a program to help municipalities this will be further discussed in Camera. The Low Income Property Tax Exemption filing deadline has been extended to July 31, 2020 due to the filing deadline with CRA being extended this will allow time for the Notice of Assessment to be returned and will be able to be filled with the application for the tax exemption. The Interim tax billing was scheduled to be sent out the last week of April but was delayed until the May Council Meeting will be discussed under New Business for Council to consider the recommendation of the Finance Director and the CAO to send the Interim bill in the next week however move the due date of that billing to August 31, 2020. The interest rate approved by Council back in 2018 was to reduce the interest rate down 1% over a 5 Year period however staff is suggesting that we lower that interest rate directly to 15% now rather than wait the period of time to allow this to lower gradually this will also be further discussed under New Business.

**H. CORRESPONDENCE**

**H.1 Gail Hersey**

The CAO received correspondence for a concerned citizen on the raising of chickens in Town we currently do not have a policy that deals specifically with chickens however we are currently using the Land Use By law and the Noise By law moving forward Council may wish to develop a policy or a By Law regarding chickens some research will have to go into this before creating a policy or By law the CAO will reply to Ms. Hersey on her concerns brought up in the correspondence.

**H.2 Saskia Geerts**

The Mayor and the CAO received correspondence from Ms. Geerts in regards to their interest in land where the old fire hall was located they are interested in purchasing the lot of land either to square up their lot of land or to preferable purchase the entire lot of land and are asking for Council to consider selling the lot and a price for that lot. Council gave direction to the CAO to begin looking at the request.

**I. NOTICE OF MOTIONS**

**I.1 None.**

**J. NEW BUSINESS**

**J.1 Digby Area Recreation Commission Budget**

The Digby Area Recreation Commission budget is coming forward tonight this budget has been presented and passed by the Municipality of Digby Council with the intention to move any budget

surplus to a Capital Reserve this budget being presented is pre covid-19 there are things that will change if programs don't move forward there will be a loss of revenue from programs etc however there will be greater saving by not having programs. Discussion ensued on the amount of saving that could be generated and what the spending might look like perhaps we ask DARC to move any surplus to a Capital Reserve but Council be the ones to have the say in how this money is spent during these challenging times we have to be extra cautious on how that money is spent. Council would like to have the new Recreation Commission Manager come and speak to Council once restrictions lift.

**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor Turnbull and seconded by Councillor Bartlett that Council approve the Digby Area Recreation Commission 2020/2021 budget and to move any surplus funds to a Capital Reserve but will require the approval of Council prior to the spending of the reserve.***

**Motion Carried.**

**J.2 Interest Rate on tax accounts**

The recorded resolution that Council adopted in 2018 was to reduce the interest rate by 1% over a 5 year period of time as a phased in plan at this time staff is recommending that Council amend this interest rate down to 15% in an effort to help tax payers at this time.

**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor Harvieux and seconded by Councillor Turnbull that the Interest Rate on tax accounts would be set at 15% for 2020/2021.***

**Motion Carried.**

**J.3 Timing of interim tax bills and due dates**

The CAO discussed in his report the spring interim tax bill and the timing to be set out and the possible due date move to August 31, 2020 this may allow those affected by Covid-19 some additional time to pay their bills.

**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor Turnbull and seconded by Councillor Bartlett that the Interim bill be sent out in the next couple of weeks with a due date of August 31, 2020.***

**Motion Carried.**

**J.4 2020 Tourism Season-opening of VIC-Summer festivals and events**

With the current restrictions in place by the Province and the Chief Medical Officer or Health the opening of the Visitor Information Center will not be happening as scheduled for mid-May this is most unfortunate however with the Covid-19 pandemic happening it is very unlikely that much travel will be happening. The current situation for staffing is that only two of the employees had planned to return and we also applied for the Canada Summer Jobs position maybe eligible to be funded 100%. It is also very unlikely that festivals and events will be allowed to happen we are just monitoring the news briefing for an update to that.

**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor Harvieux and seconded by Councillor Bartlett that the Digby Visitor Information Centre not be opened for the 2020 tourism season.***

**Motion Carried.**

The CAO reached out to Dr. Robert Strang for direction on festivals and events as well as EMO Nova Scotia. Dr. Strang's response was to watch for updates but it is unlikely large festivals and events will go forward. Mayor Cleveland has been speaking with the organizer of Lobster Bash

and Digby Scallop Days and they are awaiting further direction from the Province before making a decision to proceed. Council discussed correspondence that should be sent to the festivals on the status of issuing a permit for the event at this time.

**Motion:**

***Moved by Mayor Cleveland and seconded by Councillor Bartlett that Council send correspondence to the three festivals indicating the Town's status of not issuing a festival permit during the Covid-19 pandemic.***

**Motion Carried.**

**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor Harvieux and seconded by Councillor Turnbull that the Mayor and Councillor July 1 Canada Day BBQ event is cancelled for 2020.***

**Motion Carried.**

**J.5 Grants to Organizations**

All the 2020/2021 Grant applications are now ready for Council they will be uploaded to the Digby Cloud and a date should be set to hold the evaluation meeting. A date of Monday May 11, 2020 at 6:00 PM has been set.

**J.6 Nomination and Appointment of Deputy Mayor**

Mayor Cleveland asked for nominations for the position of Deputy Mayor. Councillor Turnbull nominated Councillor Bartlett for the position.

**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor Turnbull and seconded by Councillor Harvieux that Councillor Bartlett be elected as Deputy Mayor.***

**Motion Carried.**

**J.7 Appointment to Digby Area Recreation Commission Board**

Discussion ensued and Deputy Mayor Bartlett agreed to take this position and the CAO will send correspondence along to DARC on the appointment.

**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor Turnbull and seconded by Mayor Cleveland that Deputy Mayor Bartlett be appointed to the Digby Area Recreation Commission Board effective immediately.***

**Motion Carried.**

**J.8 Cooke's Aquaculture**

Mayor Cleveland has been speaking to representatives of Cooke's Aquaculture on the potential of a hatchery on Digby Neck this is a very large project and will create employment for the area.

**K. IN CAMERA**

**K.1 Property Sale**

**K.2 Draft Covid-19 Property Tax Financing Plan Policy**

**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor Harvieux and seconded by Councillor Bartlett that Council move to In Camera.***

**Motion Carried.**

Council moved out of In Camera

**Motion:**

***Moved by Councillor Turnbull and seconded by Councillor Harvieux that Council agree to sell Lot # 101 of PID # 30322168 to Shelley Papineau for \$5,000.00 plus applicable HST.***

**Motion Carried.**

**Motion:**

***Moved by Deputy Mayor Bartlett and seconded by Councillor Harvieux that the draft Covid-19 Property Tax Financing Plan Policy be tabled at the June 1, 2020 Council Meeting.***

**Motion Carried.**

**L. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:**


***Motion for adjournment was moved by Councillor Harvieux and seconded by Councillor Turnbull at 8:07 P.M.***

**Motion Carried.**



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Mayor Ben Cleveland



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Clerk E. Tom Ossinger