

**DIGBY TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
Monday March 1, 2021
Council Chambers**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Ben Cleveland
Deputy Mayor Mike Bartlett
Councillor Peter Turnbull
Councillor William McCormick
Councillor Paul Saulnier

STAFF PRESENT : Tom Ossinger, Chief Administrative Officer
Leslie Brinton, Executive Assistant

REGRETS:

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Cleveland called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS

B.1 None.

C. AGENDA

C.1 Additions/Deletions

Three additions to the Agenda under New Business J.2 Covid-19 spending J.3 Grants to Organizations and J.4 Dogs.

C.2 Approval

Motion

Moved by Councillor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor Turnbull that the Agenda for March 1, 2021 be approved with three additions under New Business J.2 Covid-19 spending J.3 Grants to Organizations and J.4 Dogs.

Motion Carried.

D. DELEGATIONS & PRESENTATIONS

D.1 None.

E. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

E.1 February 1, 2021

Motion:

Moved by Deputy Mayor Bartlett and seconded by Councillor McCormick that the Minutes of February 1, 2021 be approved as presented.

Motion Carried.

F. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

F.1 Covid-19 Property Tax financing program

The CAO spoke about the Property Tax Financing Program with the recent change of the Premier and the appointment of the new cabinet the CAO has not reached out to the Province to see if the financing program would be offered to Municipalities this year however there is likely nothing prohibiting the Town of Digby offering the program again. Mayor Cleveland provided an overview To the new Council members of the program that was offered last year. When the Town launched this Program in the fall of 2020 we only had one commercial property take advantage of the program and once the Province announced a rebate to tourist accommodation owner that tax bill was paid in full as it was a requirement in order to qualify for the Provincial rebate. The new Minister of Municipal Affairs will be coming to meet with the Council at some point if anyone has questions prepare them before his arrival. .

G. REPORTS

G.1 Chief Administrative Officer Report

The CAO spoke about the Covid-19 popup testing site here in Digby and his assistance along with the REMO coordinator in finding a suitable location in a limited amount of time. The CAO also spoke about the Intermunicipal agreement between the Town and Municipality that has been in place since 2009 for the formation of a Regional Emergency Management Organization. The position is currently an employee of the Municipality of Digby the agreement for the cost of the operations is 60% from the Municipality of Digby and 40% from the Town of Digby. The salary allocation for that position is \$5,000 the district pays \$3,000 and \$2,000 for the Town. The Municipality has done a review of the breakdown on the current salary. The review concluded That the allocation of \$5,000 does not properly reflect the duties and time for REMO duties and that the proper allocation should be \$10,000 with the Municipality of Digby paying \$6,000 and the Town of Digby paying \$4,000 this allocation does not result in a pay increase for the REMO Coordinator. The CAO believes that this salary for the REMO Coordinator's position represents very good value for both the town and the District. The tax overpayment for John MacAlpine has been signed by John and released. The Covid-19 gathering limits and physical distancing limits in the Health Protection Act Order have changed over time and continue to do so. The current hosting limit is 50 per cent of a venue's capacity to a maximum of 100 indoors this includes meetings of council and other committees. The Racquette pond park sign has been worked on by EyeCandy Signs a draft was distributed to the Council for review. The wording on the draft to indicate the longest serving Mayor we may not want to have that working on there. The family was ok not having that on there. The plan for the park will be to have interpretive panels installed there and that will likely be the place to have signage on the former mayor and the history The CAO reached out to our MLA Gordon Wilson and he is waiting to see what the spring sitting will entail. Then he can ask that this be put on a private members legislative agenda.

G.2 Digby Area Recreation Commission

The reports was distributed to the Council is the package.

G.3 Committee of the Whole

There are five recommendations coming forward from the Committee of the Whole Meeting for Council consideration.

Motion:

Moved by Councillor Saulnier, Seconded by Councillor McCormick

Whereas Marcus Zwicker of WestFor Management Inc. and Jamie Stephen of TorchLight Bioresources made a presentation to the Digby Town Council at the Committee of the Whole meeting held on February 16, 2021 regarding a potential feasibility study on the development and operation of a municipality-owned, community-wide district system.

And whereas the feasibility study will not require a financial contribution from the Town of Digby but would require municipal staff time and access to available utility and planning data.

Therefore be it resolved that the Council of the Town of Digby support WestFor Management Inc.'s application to the Nova Scotia Forestry Innovation Transition Fund for funding of a feasibility study of a district heating system development for the Town of Digby.

And therefore also be it resolved that the Town of Digby through the CAO provide staff time and access to available utility and planning data.

Motion Carried

Motion:

Moved by Deputy Mayor Bartlett and seconded by Councillor Saulnier that Council approve the installation of a handicap parking spots to be located on the east side of Water Street near the Lighthouse, Water Street to the South of the Promenade and relocate the one near RBC to the Corner to enable easier access to the sidewalk.

Motion Carried.

Motion:

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Councillor Turnbull that Council approve the Covid-19 Operating Reserve Fund for the purpose of retaining received but yet unspent Covid-19 Safe-Restart grant funding.

Motion Carried.

Motion:

Moved by Councillor Turnbull and seconded by Deputy Mayor Bartlett that Council approve The upgrade to the traffic lights at the Victoria Street and Warwick Street intersection in the amount of \$25,000.00 that will be added to the Capital Budget and funded from the Capital Reserves.

Motion Carried.

Motion:

Moved by Deputy Mayor Bartlett and seconded by Councillor McCormick that Council amend the HR Policy # 2014-09 Provision of Workplace Apparel Policy as presented.

Motion Carried.

Motion:

Moved by Councillor Turnbull and seconded by Councillor McCormick that Council adopt the HR Policy #2021-01 Smoke-free Workplace Policy as presented.

Motion Carried.

Motion:

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Deputy Mayor Bartlett that Council adopt the Covid-19 Response Policy as presented.

Motion Carried.

G.4 Digby Area Tourism Association

The report was distributed to Council in the meeting package.

H. CORRESPONDENCE

H.1 Property Valuation Services Corporation

The CAO received correspondence from PVSC and provided it in the package for information to Council. Mayor Cleveland will reach out to PVSC and see if someone can come and speak to Council.

I. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

I.1 None.

J. NEW BUSINESS

J.1 Decker memorial

Councillor Saulnier asked for some sort of memorial to the young man who recently passed as a result of a house fire perhaps we consider naming a section of the trail "Decker's Way" or something to honor the memory of this young man. The Public Works Department asked if they could use one of the benches along the trail and they would pay for a memorial plaque for a bench. The CAO has been speaking with a gentleman that was interested in doing a sign or something to also honor the memory but that person wanted to remain anonymous but he would likely be willing to work with us on a design and carving for the trail. Councillor Saulnier would like a design that could be used in the future for other memorials.

J.2 Covid-19 spending

The Town of Digby received Covid-19 funding the spending criteria still is totally unclear. One item that we are doing is an electronic upgrade of audio and visual equipment so that we can conduct Business during the Covid-19 pandemic. The CAO inquired to see if Council wanted to upgrade their tablets the current tablets have been used for 5 years and they are small and we can upgrade them under this funding program. The Council would like to have full size rather than small tablets. The CAO will look into the purchase of new Council devices.

J.3 Grants to Organizations

The deadline for applications for the Community Grant Program ended on January 31 all the submissions are now on the Digby Cloud for viewing. The CAO is suggesting that Council review them at the upcoming Committee of the Whole Meeting in March.

J.4 Dogs

Councillor McCormick asked about registration for dogs is this an annual fee. The current fee comes from the Dog By law that we have in place if Council wants to change the fee from yearly to once time only we can look into this but it will involve the development of a new by law. Councillor McCormick also asked about the current dog park is there a plan to expand that dog

park and make it larger the dog park was created from a grant that we received if in the future grant money became available again it can be discussed.

K. **IN CAMERA**
K.1 **None.**

L. **ADJOURNMENT**

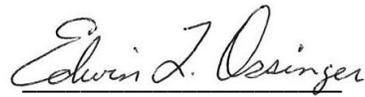
Motion:

Motion for adjournment was moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Councillor Turnbull at 7:13 P.M.

Motion Carried.



Mayor Ben Cleveland



Clerk E. Tom Ossinger