

**TOWN OF DIGBY
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
November 20, 2023
Council Chambers**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Deputy Mayor Mike Bartlett, Vice Chair
Councillor Peter Turnbull
Councillor William McCormick (7:03 PM)
Councillor Paul Saulnier

STAFF PRESENT: Tom Ossinger, Chief Administrative Officer
Leslie Brinton, Executive Assistant
Ed McCormick, Director of Public Works
Laura Lee Milner, By Law Enforcement Officer
Matthew Raymond, Director of Finance

REGRETS: Mayor Ben Cleveland, Chair

A. CALL TO ORDER

Deputy Mayor Bartlett called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM

B. AGENDA

B.1 Additions/Deletions

Two additions to the Agenda H.6 Rick Foote letter and H.7 Digby Area Community Gardens.

B.2 Approval

Motion:

Moved by Councillor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor Turnbull that the agenda for November 20, 2023, be approved as amended.

Motion Carried.

C. DELEGATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

C.1 None.

D. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

D.1 October 16, 2023

Motion

Moved by Councillor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor Turnbull that the Minutes of October 16, 2023, be approved as presented.

Motion Carried.

E. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

E.1 Administrative Assistant/Special Project Coordinator

The draft job description was presented by the CAO at the last Committee of the Whole Meeting and since that time the CAO was speaking to the newly hired Grant Coordinator for the Town of Yarmouth, we have obtained a copy of that job description from the Town of Yarmouth as we will compare the two. We will likely be looking for a one year commitment for the position. The CAO would like to review the new job description once more before having Council approve the job description.

F. STAFF REPORTS

F.1 Chief Administrative Officer Report

The Chief Administrative Officer Report was presented. The planning department issued five Development permits for the month of October. There was one application for Development Agreements received. The building department issued three building permits during the month of October. The Fire Inspector conducted one site visits at 110 Water Street no deficiencies were found. Digby Fire Department no report was received. The Office of the CAO is reporting on Municipal Capital Growth Program this is a one-time program for 2023/2024 that provides investments for capital infrastructure to service Nova Scotia's growing population while supporting provincial priority areas. The Senior Management Team reviewed the criteria for the application it is being recommend submitting application for generators for Town Hall and lift stations 1, 2, 3, and 4. The deadline to apply is December 13, 2023. The Marketing Levy by Law Amendments were discussed and coming up later on the agenda. The Marketing and Promotion Levy Advisory Committee met on November 6th at that meeting Charles Otter stepped down from the position of Chair temporarily and Saskia Geerts will be acting chair. Subsequently the CAO was advised that Mr. Otter will no longer be employed with the Pines Resort effective November 10th this will create a vacancy on the committee as the accommodation owner member for the Committee we will be commencing advertising for a new representative.

F.2 Director of Public Works

The Director of Public Works presented his report. The Director highlighted his report the mini home has had the skirting installed, water and sewer are hooked up and two decks have been installed. The Downtown washrooms are just in need of final touches opening will not be happening until spring. Shore Road culvert design is completed, and we are just awaiting the completed tender documents. Digby Station renovation is nearly completed the last two remaining doors have arrived. Shreve Street traffic review is completed, and the report will be coming up later the agenda. Christmas Daddies is soon

going to not require the building at the Public Works compound the arrangement made many years ago was that the building your eventually be turned over to the town once thy no longer required a space. The Director is asking for suggestions on what the space could be used for if they no longer require it just give it thought at this point, we are still waiting for official word from Christmas Daddies on the space.

F.3 Director of Finance

The Director of Finance report was distributed in the package some items to highlight would be the CBC reporting on October 13th that HRM would be freezing all municipal permit and development fees for two years if the province was to implement this province wide it could result in a loss of development fees of \$4,500 and potentially reduced building permit fees of \$4,000 annually. Audit fees for the 2022/2023 financial statements included an additional charge of \$5,000 related to the extra work done with respect to Asset Retirement Obligations. This is a once time fee. Microsoft 365 is currently being used by a couple of Town staff the Director of Finance did a web poll through the AMANS list serve most other municipal units who responded to the question are using Microsoft 365 the Director is recommending that the town look at the pros and cons of moving all staff to Microsoft 365. One on one pension meeting will be set up for January this is a service they offer as our pension advisors to come once a year and set up one on one meeting with staff. WCB coverage for Digby Fire is higher than the group average the town needs to ensure that safety is a priority with respect to fire department operations. Rental units rent payments are up to date for 53 Mount Street however the residential dwelling rental is overdue 2 months as of November 9th it has been discussed with the tenant. Written notice has been sent to the residential tenant advising them of the 5% rental increase effective April 1, 2024. The Director received notice from Municipal finance regarding a change to the Financial Reporting and Accounting Manual which may have implications for future operating budgets and therefore future tax rates. Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund is a program that funds 80% if we wish to explore the opportunity to put solar on any town or town owner buildings such as DARC however an energy audit or study would need to be completed to determine the viability of roof top solar we are too late for this round of funding however the Director is recommending that the town consider adding the cost of an energy audit to the future operating budget. The Director also presented a power point to the Committee on the recent Association of Municipal Administrator Conference highlighting the conference.

F.4 Special Constable

a) Dangerous or Unsightly Premises Reports

The Dangerous or Unsightly administrator is reporting on two properties. 2 Prince William Street multiple complaints have been received concerning the color scheme for the property careful consideration should be given to the approach and working used to avoid any discrimination when addressing the complaints. 140 Water Street received a complaint about the condition of the east facing exterior wall where a large crack is seen forming. Written notice with photo evidence was send to the registered owner indicating a response to the notice. On October 23 notice was sent indicating that they have a permit

to demolish the site and have a contractor secured to do the work however they are just awaiting a reply from DFO to given them clearance before the demolition will commence. The site will continue to be monitored closely moving forward.

b) Protective Services Reports

Protective Services report was presented.

C.C.T.V – one item to note is that three cameras dropped signal and lost video and have now been brought back online.

Parking Control – No issues or concerns.

Civic Address- One civic address required verification.

Dog Control- during an investigation into a solid waste complaint it was discovered that 2 dogs and 5 cats were left inside a home. A call to the SPCA was made for a wellness check on the animals. The SPCA did a wellness check on November 6 and nothing has been reported from the SPCA to the by law Officer at this time.

Crossing Guards- One item to note would be the children not using properly when using a bicycle, it would be recommended that the school implement a crosswalk/bicycle safety program.

Vending Licenses-1 event license issued, and 1 vending licensed was declined due to the arrival of the off season and the potential for the use of the space for snow push off.

Taxi licenses-Received reports of a taxi drivers suspected of illegal activity after hours there is no evidence to support the claim RCMP assistance maybe needed to monitor the driver for compliance.

Solid Waste Management- three solid waste management files are open and will be monitored for progress.

G. CORRESPONDENCE

G.1 Cooke Inc. -Digby Ferry Redeployment

Mayor Cleveland received correspondence from Cooke Inc. concerning the ferry redeployment. The Committee discussed drafting a letter to the minister and make an official statement regarding the consideration of redeployment. The Committee directed the CAO to draft a letter and copy the neighbouring municipalities.

H. NEW BUSINESS

H.1 Digby Station Usage

The Senior Management Team is continuing along with policy reviews and Digby Station usage came up and with the recent renovations to the space what is the vision of the Council as far as space rental. Do we wish to fully stock the kitchen or provide minimal supplies in the event of an emergency as we wanted to use the space for a warming centre. Council thoughts were to provide minimal supplies and a few pots and look at amending the policy to include a kitchen fee if you wish to use that space. There is currently lots of tables and chairs.

H.2 WSP Traffic Plan Victoria Street/Shreve Street

WSP has completed the traffic plan for Shreve Street and Victoria Street there are some recommendations that are coming forward from the report. The CAO along with the Director of Public Works have a meeting scheduled with the MLA and representatives from the School on Friday to further discuss.

H.3 Municipal Capital Growth Program

The CAO has discussed this in his report. The applications will be accepted until December 13th and will require a letter of support for the project discussed.

H.4 Draft Digby Marketing and Promotions Levy By Law

The draft Digby Marketing By law is coming forward for final review and recommendation to Council is no more amendments are required.

Motion:

Moved by Councillor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor Turnbull that the Committee recommends to Council the Draft Digby Marketing and Promotions Levy by Law as presented.

Motion Carried.

H.5 Draft Town Staff Gift Card Policy

Last year it was discussed that Council increase the gift card amount to staff for that one year and at that time it was discussed that staff would review the policy and bring any recommendations back that is why the draft is coming forward tonight for the Committee feedback.

Motion:

Moved by Councillor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor McCormick that the Committee recommends to Council the Draft Town Staff Gift Card Policy as presented.

Motion Carried.

H.6 Rick Foote Email

Rick Foote emailed Councillors regarding the Kings Transit and the WSP public input session perhaps this is an item that can be added to a Joint Council meeting with the Municipality of Digby likely it will not be until January or February.

H.7 Digby Area Community Gardens

This letter arrived today from the Digby Area Community Gardens asking for permission to plant three or four fruit trees in the Town of Digby with the intention of offering access to safe and nutritious food to residents. To obtain funding for the trees an application for funding will be submitted on or before December 3. If successful in obtaining grant funding, it will be used to hire an arborist to plant and care for trees. The Committee gave direction to the CAO to draft and send a letter of support for the project.

I. IN-CAMERA

I.1 Contract

Motion:

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Councillor Turnbull that the Committee move to In Camera for Contract.

Motion Carried.

Motion:

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Councillor Saulnier that the Committee move out of In Camera for Contract.

Motion Carried.

J. ADJOURNMENT

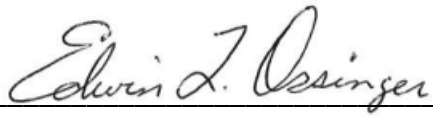
Motion:

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded by Councillor Turnbull that the meeting be adjourned as there is no further business at 8:34 P.M.

Motion Carried.



Mayor



Clerk