

**Town of Digby
Committee of the Whole
August 19, 2024
Council Chambers**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Deputy Mayor Mike Bartlett, Chair
Councillor Peter Turnbull
Councillor Paul Saulnier
Councillor William McCormick

STAFF PRESENT: Tom Ossinger, Chief Administrative Officer
Ed McCormick, Director of Public Works
Matthew Raymond, Director of Finance
Laura Lee Milner, Special Constable
Rob Hartmier, Grant Coordinator

REGRETS: Mayor Ben Cleveland
Leslie Brinton, Executive Assistant

A. CALL TO ORDER

Deputy Mayor Bartlett called the meeting to order at 6:03pm

B. AGENDA

B.1 Additions/Deletions

None

B.2 Approval

MOTION:

Moved by Councillor Turnbull and seconded by Councillor Saulnier that the agenda for August 19, 2024, be approved as presented.

Motion Carried

C. DELEGATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

C.1 Staff Sgt. Grant Ryland

Staff Sargeant Ryland communicated his honor in being able to address the council. He has been in his role now for two months and thinks this community is great. His commitment is to a community-oriented presence by his staff, making sure they are out in the community interacting with residents and have a presence outside of the detachment and their cars. He is looking to make a positive influence on the town and the Municipality. He also communicated he is far from retirement and is looking at being here for the long term. Deputy Mayor Bartlett asked if there were any updates on Wharf Rat rally policing plans and SS Ryland communicated that he has a full plan in place and expects to have 40-45 members on staff for the five days of the rally which includes plans for both rally's that are happening at the same time.

C.2 Allan Franklin - Vacant Building/Unsightly Properties

Mr. Franklin was looking for an update from his last visit to COTW. He communicated that he saw a number of the issues he presented at last meeting have been addressed. Deputy Mayor Bartlett communicated that those files were looked and work was done to address the presented issues. Councillor Saulnier requested that the By-Law officer reports could be moved up in the report portion of the meeting so Mr. Franklin could hear of the work that has and is being done on a number of files. Mr. Franklin inquired about other municipalities and rules around color palates. Councillor McCormick spoke about the tighter bylaws on home palate colors such as Wolfville however those bylaws relate to heritage homes. Mr. Franklin feels that the Town bylaws are pretty loose when it comes to exterior colors and is still upset with the home with multi-colored siding to it. Councillor Turnbull communicated that the bylaws need to be followed and the challenge with being too strict and too lenient dependent on the situation. Mr. Franklin feels that not enough has been done by council and that is was time it was dealt with.

D. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

D.1 July 15, 2024

MOTION:

Moved by Councillor Saulnier and seconded by Councillor McCormick that the Minutes of July 15, 2024 be approved as submitted.

Motion Carried

E. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- E.1 a) Letter – Minister Balser**
- b) Letter – Minister Thompson**

F. STAFF REPORTS

F.1 Special Constable **a) Dangerous or Unsightly Premises Reports**

The Dangerous and Unsightly report was included in the package. By-law Officer read the report as presented. Councillor Saulnier asked the By-law Officer if any of the 23 complaints that were received were official complaints? The By-law Officer communicated that these complaints were either emails or phone messages/calls and that is not considered to be an official complaint as it is not in writing. They move forward with these types of messages as best they can but as it is not official, there is less enforcement that can be done. There are very few formal complaints. The only way to go to court with a complaint is if it is official. Councillor Saulnier also asked if she could provide the actual timeline on her work, instead of 14 days to actually give the start date to the notices she gives. By-law officer also communicated that they did a sweep of the town and issued a number of notices on all abandoned vehicles. Deputy Mayor Bartlett also inquired about quotes for 10 Carleton Street and the By-law officer was still waiting on two more quotes.

b) Protective Services Report

The Protective Services Report was included in the package. By-law Officer read the report as presented. Deputy Mayor Bartlett communicated that there was a new owner to 26 Montague Row.

F.2 Chief Administrative Officer

a) Report

The Chief Administrative Officer report was included in the package. The Chief Administrative Officer read the report as presented.

Development Officer – two development agreement applications to PAC and those recommendations are being sent to Council for approval. Thomas Road project has had a lot of work done on it. The Development Officer shared some frustration with the Town’s planning consultant and his negativity towards the project and towards the developers.

The Chief Administrative Officer report was included in the package. A total of 2 development permits were issued. There were 5 building permits issued. There were 1 fire inspections completed. Fire department responded to 9 calls in June and 18 calls in July. The Visitor Information Centre seems to show an inconsistency with visitors over the last month. There seems to be no correlation as to why some days are slow and some days are busy. The Centre has now created a number of activities at their location to increase interest for visitors. The second round of Housing Accelerator Fund is now open and we are pursuing another application as it is due on September 13, 2024. The NS Emergency Management office asked for information on the July 11, 2024 flash flooding and the pre-evaluation form was submitted for Shore Road and Culloden Road. The CAO recommended to council that we expand our wayfinding signage program to include commercial businesses. Businesses would have to pay and we would provide and install. Deputy Mayor Bartlett communicated his support for this as it would allow the Town the ability to get uniform in the signage.

F.3 Director of Public Works

a) Director of Public Works report was included in the package. The Director touched on a few points of the report. 5-ton truck has been plagued with issues since being purchased and we need to move on from it. There is a tender being prepared to replace it. The tractor had a major leak but was caught before any issues. The Director communicated how lucky the town is to have 4 new student employees for the summer. Gardens are looking good, lots of small painting jobs. Transfer station has large numbers this year. Report on Mount Street is very thorough. Councillor Saulnier was impressed with the organization and cleanliness of the contractor. The Director communicated that there are plans in place for the Wharf Rat rally and directing bikes away from the construction area. Councillor Turnbull asked about the damage that was suffered at Fisherman’s Park by vandals. The Director has contacted the RCMP and a file has been opened.

F.4 Director of Finance

a) Report

Director of Finance Report was included in the package. Director of Finance read his package as submitted. Statement of Operations to date shows nothing out of the ordinary at this present time. Audit is still on track for September 1st, 2024. The Director communicated that he is looking for some direction on the delinquent Rent payments from the First Avenue rental property. It was decided by council to discuss the matter in camera.

F.5 Grant Coordinator Report

The Grant Coordinator Report was included in the package. The Grant Coordinator communicated that research and writing work has begun for the Housing Accelerator 2 Fund has begun with due date in middle of September. Working with CAO on that submission.

F.6 Returning Officer

The Returning Officer report was included in the package.

CORRESPONDENCE

G.1 EcoDrive Nova Scotia Initiative

There was a discussion on whether the Town wished to engage EcoDrive in their interests. It was determined after discussion that the Town would benefit from applying for another EV station grant that engaging in the request from EcoDrive.

G.2 Sydney Street Pub

Councillor McCormick communicated that the new work on the wayfarer signs would benefit the Sydney Street pub. Council felt that when you buy a property, there is not guarantee of a view. There was a consensus by the Council that the tree would not be moved as it was a dedicated tree.

H. NEW BUSINESS

H.1 Short Term Rental Act and Regulations

The CAO noted that this was a registration for all short-term rentals. All locations (pines, hotels etc) must register by sept 30,2024. This will help the town with the marketing levy requirements but is unfortunately another cost to businesses.

H.2 Municipal Code of Conduct

This information was supplied to Council by the CAO as an introduction to what will be approved as the expected Municipal Code of Conduct when approved in the fall.

H.3 Digby Station – Princess Helene painting, commercial kitchen, sound panels

Councillor Saulnier wished to see the Princess Helene painting that is in storage be put up in Digby Station. He also communicated that there needs to be some type of sound deadening installed in the Station as the echo in there is powerful. There was also a discussion on how close the location is to having a commercial kitchen. Venting and a commercial dishwasher is all that is needed and then the town could promote that location for rent as having a commercial kitchen for rent as well. There was also direction asked by the CAO as to whether the station should be part of the REMO access as a 'comfort center' if needed. Council agreed that it could be offered to REMO to use as such.

I. IN-CAMERA

I.1 Legal

Motion

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

Motion Carried.

Motion

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

Motion Carried.

Motion:

Moved by Councillor McCormick, seconded by Councillor Saulnier, that a recommendation be made to Council for the approval of the design and construction work for the Queen Street Lookoff.

Furthermore, it is recommended that the Town of Digby be authorized to accept donations and issue tax receipts for contributions towards this project.


Motion Carried

J. Adjournment

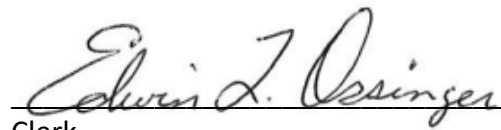
Motion

Moved by Councillor McCormick and seconded Councillor Turnbull that the Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned as there is no further business at 8:55 pm

Motion Carried.



Mayor



Clerk