

FEBRUARY 24, 2020
STELLARTON, NOVA SCOTIA

MEETING

A meeting of the Stellarton Committee of the Whole was held on Monday, February 24, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. in Council Chambers.

PRESENT

Chair Deputy Mayor S. Campbell, Mayor D. MacGillivray, Coun. S. Lawand, and Coun. G. Pentz. Also present was the Town Clerk S. Higdon.
Regrets Coun. B. Knight.

AGENDA

The Agenda was approved on motion by Coun. G. Pentz, seconded by Coun. S. Lawand. **Motion Carried.**

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Minutes of January 27, 2020 were approved on motion by Mayor D. MacGillivray, seconded by Coun. S. Lawand. **Motion Carried.**

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There was no business arising from the minutes.

PRESENTATIONS

- a. **Citizens for Stellarton Memorial Rink** – Darren Stroud; Power Point Presentation, Highlighting:
 - SNC Lavalin Report; Disclaimer
 - Executive Summary
 - Objectives of the Group
 - Guiding Principles; measured and logical steps – community support 1,246 signatures; test integrity of perimeter foundation
 - Focus areas – Structure & Architecture; Ice Plant Refrigeration & Surface related; associated costs
 - Methods – community involvement
 - Key Findings; building was not condemned; repairs/upgrades identified; structural features; Refrigeration concerns
 - High Level Conclusions – maintenance
 - Aging Building Report; cost estimates by priorities and categories
 - Revised Estimate Costs without ice plant, refrigeration and ice surface
 - Request to Town Council:
 - o Keep the Stellarton Memorial Rink Building standing
 - o Keep at warm idle; power, water and minimal heating to prevent deterioration
 - o Assign a Councillor and staff to oversee/support volunteer committee responsible for moving forward on the recommendations of this Group
 - o Zero additional debt. Modest to no operating budget.
 - Recommendations; focus on an indoor community centre / recreation centre
 - Funding; volunteer base; long term considerations
 - Presentation complete appendix and exhibits

Chair S. Campbell thanked Darren Stroud for presentation; questions/comments:
Mayor D. MacGillivray comments: Thanked Darren and the group for their work. He reported that the Bingo license is gone; asked for clarity on cost estimates and questioned the accuracy of quotes in their presentation; he added that the Town had their own experts inspect building conditions. Mayor D. MacGillivray clarified that

identified savings were because of Councillor B. Knight. Mayor D. MacGillivray clarified re comments made at previous meeting that Councillors were not willing to meet with Group; what was purpose of another meeting, any new information?

Coun. S. Lawand comments re the Group's request of Council; to keep the building while awaiting funding scenarios. Did the Group look for funding within this last year? D. Stroud responded that no fundraising efforts were made until they knew the fate of the building. Coun. S. Lawand asked if future fundraising campaign would generate the amount of money needed. D. Stroud responded that they will target each priority accordingly; there should not be a "rush". Coun. S. Lawand re insurance and liability issues if building left on warm idle. D. Stroud emphasized on moving forward and not having any more deterioration of the building. Coun. S. Lawand re outside body taking control of rink; has this option been discussed by Group? D. Stroud feels that it was not a part of the volunteer effort. Mayor D. MacGillivray commented that, at a meeting last July, the Town would be willing to sell the rink for \$1.00 (one dollar).

Coun. G. Pentz asked if Staff had any questions or comments.

Town Accountant Brenda MacKay provided comments / feedback regarding Presentation: B. MacKay stated that there is still substantial impact to the Town; it would compromise the Town's ability to invest in other projects. She referred to the volunteer efforts made by the Track and Field Association; a \$2.4 million project, 10% of costs raised through tremendous fundraising. B. MacKay re concerns of fundraising and limited grant monies available. She referred to the Town's Debt Service Cost Ratio; capital expenses included snow plow trucks, new sidewalks, backhoe, large sewer projects, etc.; future expenses as required for public building accessibility by 2030; concerns re borrowing when debt service cost ratio is high; more scrutiny by province; risk factors; unknown future emergencies and associated costs. Operational costs; an increase in the tax rate may be only option. The Town currently funds numerous recreational related programs/facilities; non-essential services as per the MGA.

Coun. S. Lawand as he understands the situation; the Town cannot borrow or project any future funding based on the financial situation of the Town right now.

Mayor D. MacGillivray asked Town Engineer B. Murray re the scope of work and associated costs review. B. Murray stated he met with Mr. Stroud and went over the quotes provided in the presentation; architectural and structural issues; some savings with the Balodis quote. The MacIvor and Stewart Masonry Ltd. provided quote; major issue with the back wall; the scope to perform required work will need to be determined by structural engineering company and go through the building permit process. He commented that the SNC Lavalin Report recommended replacing all four walls. Darren Stroud concurs that certain issues will need to be approved by the relevant professional i.e. structural engineers.

Chair S. Campbell reported that Council will review all information and make final decision at Council meeting March 9, 2020.

- b. **Highland District Soccer Association** – Andy Kenney, Executive Director; Daniel Roper, President of the Highland District Soccer Association; and Gary Matheson, employee of the Complex.

Mr. Roper re correspondence sent to Council from Andy Kenney detailing request for an operation grant of \$20,000. He provided information about the Soccer Association and various events held at the facility; very community oriented; potential for more.

Andy Kenney provided some background on current and previous funding from stakeholders and the Town.

Questions/Comments:

Coun. S. Lawand acknowledged and thanked Gary Matheson for all the work he does for the organization. Coun. S. Lawand asked if this funding request is above and beyond what the Town gives as a grant in lieu of taxes (around \$87,000)? Mr. Kenney confirmed that this would be in addition to that amount. Coun. S. Lawand asked about

the support from other sports organization using the facility. Mr. Roper provided some information about user fees and membership / player fees. Mr. Kenney re drop in number of soccer players; economic challenges; diversification of the facility. Coun. S. Lawand sees facility as a regional asset and recommends the Mayor bring issue forward at a Mayors and Warden meeting. Mayor MacGillivray agreed to discuss at next Mayors and Warden meeting and requested the figures needed. Coun. S. Lawand re worst case scenario i.e. no funding provided. Mr. Roper and members of the association knows that they may need to explore all options; a default in the mortgage of a building on Town-owned land; unknown result at the moment.

CORRESPONDENCE

- a. NS Municipal Affairs and Housing Re: Municipal Elections – Town Clerk S. Higdon brought this to the Committee’s attention that in March, they will have to appoint the Returning Officer; preliminary discussions with other CAO’s in the County; looking at the cost of electronic voting; also looking at one Returning Officer for the whole county.
- b. Premier of Nova Scotia, Honourable Stephen MacNeil Re: response to letter dated January 23rd regarding representation on Transition Team – Town Clerk S. Higdon read letter for the record.
- c. Big Brothers Big Sisters Re: Request for Lane Sponsor – Town Clerk S. Higdon re this request for \$100. Mayor D. MacGillivray reported that in the past, each Councillor donated \$20 each. Town Clerk will collect sponsor money and forward it.

OPEN FORUM

Phyllis Porter-Baker comments:

- Referred to the old Claritone Building; Town did not tear down building; resulted in a profitable endeavor; building subsequently sold and is now a large business providing jobs, etc.
- Memorial Rink pictures taken; read article about the memorial rink; a lasting memorial in recognition of those who lost their lives in the two world wars.

Brian Atkinson comments:

- Rink situation; no one want to close the rink
- Financial concerns
- Attended meetings; voiced opinion
- Council very supportive; not fair to demand meetings when someone is dealing with family issue

Darren Stroud additional comments:

- There is a quote in progress to replace all four walls by MacIvor and Stewart Masonry Ltd.
- Will provide to Council for their review when complete

Patty Lloyd comments:

- Financial issues; amount of money being put into the Wellness Centre
- Costs may increase with the closing of Northern Pulp
- Budgetary concerns

NEXT MEETING DATE: March 23, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT on motion Coun. G. Pentz.