

JULY 24, 2023
STELLARTON, NOVA SCOTIA

MEETING

A meeting of the Stellarton Committee of the Whole was held on Monday, July 24, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. in the Large Committee Room, Stellarton Town Hall.

PRESENT

Chair Deputy Mayor B. Knight, Mayor D. MacGillivray, Coun. S. Lawand, and Coun. G. Pentz. Also present was CAO Susan Higdon and Town Engineer B. Murray.

Regrets: Coun. S. Campbell

1. Coun. B. Knight called meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. **Approval of Agenda**

The Agenda was approved as amended to include Claremont Update and correspondence from Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing regarding State of Emergency and Open Forum, on motion by Coun. S. Lawand, seconded by Mayor D. MacGillivray. **Motion Carried.**

3. **Approval of Previous Minutes**

The Minutes of June 27, 2023 were approved on motion by Coun. G. Pentz, seconded by Coun. S. Lawand. **Motion Carried.**

4. **Business Arising from the Minutes**

There was no business arising from the Minutes.

5. **Correspondence**

- a. **NS Dept of Natural Resources and Renewables** Re: 2 Billion Trees Program Launch – CAO S. Higdon received email from the province regarding the 2 Billion Trees Program Launch; open to municipal governments; supports tree planting initiatives. CAO S. Higdon will look into this program for Council.
- b. **Ecology Action** Re: Coastal Protection Act Joint Statement – CAO S. Higdon reported that this was sent to the Mayor; wondering if the Town of Stellarton would be interested in signing onto a Joint Statement from NS Municipalities and the Ecology Action Centre; calling on the province to release the regulations for the Coastal Protection Act. Discussion; for Council's information if they wanted to sign on.
- c. **Pictou County Partnership** Re: Side Hustle Starter Kit Webinar – CAO S. Higdon re press release from Pictou County Partnership regarding the Side Hustle Starter Kit Webinar; provides training support and step by step methodology to help entrepreneurs launch their side hustle business. For Council's information.
- d. **Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing** regarding the State of Emergency – CAO S. Higdon read email to Council re severe flooding across the province; available resources; coordination of action. The province-wide State of Emergency is an administrative function under the Emergency Management Act and supersedes any municipal SoE's; and will allow the province to work with its partners in a coordinated province-wide response to and recovery from this event. For Council's information.

6. **South Foord Culvert (per-approved via Email)**

CAO S. Higdon reminded Council that this was sent via email on July 13; it was in the capital budget, but the cost came in higher; needs Council approval. Coun. S. Lawand made motion to approve the South Foord Culvert project at \$25,000.00, seconded by Coun. G. Pentz. **Motion Carried.**

7. St. Vincent Sanitary Sewer Tender Recommendation – Town Engineer B. Murray reported that the tender closed for the St. Vincent Sanitary Sewer; amount is \$122,450.00; over budget of \$22,000.00; looking for approval to go ahead with project. Coun. S. Lawand made motion to award tender to S. W. Weeks in the amount of \$122,450.00, seconded by Coun. G. Pentz.

On the Question:

Coun. G. Pentz re the difference in timelines for completion of work; 6 weeks and 18 weeks.

Motion Carried.

8. Cleaning of Reservoir Site in Back of Cedar Drive – Town Engineer B. Murray provided information to Council; piece of property up by the Reservoir and back side of Cedar Drive; some clearing completed; need to scarify the land, stump removal, and repair ruts. Coun. G. Pentz made motion to approve the cleaning of reservoir site, seconded by Coun. S. Lawand.

On the Question:

Coun. S. Lawand re affected area and surrounding; lots of logs and wood chips; what are the plans for this?

Town Engineer B. Murray stated that Council gave no direction to clean that up at this point.

Coun. S. Lawand would like to get costs to clean up that area as well.

Motion Carried.

9. Claremont Update – Town Engineer B. Murray reported that Municipal Affairs is looking for construction start and stop deadlines for their approval process of this project – the amended amount. B. Murray went back to contractor – if approved – work from Foord Street to Belmont can be completed this year; and do the remaining portion of the street next construction season. If the work is longer than that estimate, he recommends re-tendering in the winter.

10. Community Information Meeting Re: Poplar Street – CAO S. Higdon reported that there will be a meeting July 25, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at the corner of Cambey and Poplar with citizens along with Town Engineer, Mayor, CAO and Council; Town Engineer and CAO will be meeting with Kirk Schmidt in the morning to discuss that particular piece of land. The meeting will provide an opportunity to answer questions that the residents presented. Discussion commenced.

11. Open Forum

Chris MacDonald, 127 Acadia Avenue comments:

- Property across from his residence is unsightly
- Submitted an Unsightly Property Complaint already
- What can be done; a very frustrating situation
- Garbage and smell

CAO S. Higdon replied that there has been an order issued by Mannie Withrow, Building Official; three things required to be done within 30 days; order reads, "Remove miscellaneous debris accumulated in the yard, remove the washer and dryer from the yard, remove or store used tires, pile all wood pallets up in a neat manner and pallets are not to be used as fencing materials; and shed is to be used for storage only."

Discussion re children in house; CAO S. Higdon re provincial jurisdiction, Child Protection Services; she added that the Town cannot go into the dwelling.

Coun. S. Lawand comments; as long as minimal clean-up is done, they are abiding the bylaw; situation is subjective on what is acceptable. There are other properties in Town; it's a lengthy process.

Coun. G. Pentz commented that the outbuildings are being used as dwellings; needs to be investigated.

CAO S. Higdon referred back to the three orders against the property; the 30 days will be up on August 17, 2023; the owner has until that time to remediate the issue; if not, the Town can go and clean up the property and put the incurred charges on their taxes.

Coun. S. Lawand recommends updating the current policy and bylaws, implementing fines for repeat offenders.

Mike Ince, 52 Acadia Avenue comments:

- Concerns about the unsightly properties in Town
- Across the street from his property

CAO S. Higdon advised him to fill out a Municipal Complaint Form for Unsightly and Dangerous property to begin the process

- Concerns about unsafe conditions for children at a property
- Post Office needs attention
- Structure/cabin near train tracks
- Trees overhang Stop Signs impeding visibility
- Change bylaw

Mayor D. MacGillivray comments re time lines for property clean up and/or demolition; Council is working on these issues.

Coun. B. Knight re following all legal requirements as well as barriers when dealing with such offenders and complaints.

12. Next Meeting Date: Monday, September 25, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.

13. Adjournment on motion by Coun. G. Pentz.