

Minutes of a Town of Pictou Committee of Council meeting convened at the CN Station – Council Chambers on the above date. Mayor Jim Ryan presiding.

Present: Councillors Nadine LeBlanc, Melinda MacKenzie and Shawn McNamara

Also Present: Kyle Slaunwhite, CAO
Michelle Young, Community Development
Curtis MacKinnon, RCMP
Wayne Robinson, Fire Chief
Iain MacIsaac, Public Works
Sally O’Neill, Recreation
David Nicholson, Finance
Nicole MacDonald, Deputy Clerk

Regrets: Deputy Mayor Dan Currie

1. **Private Session – Sale of Municipal Property; Contract Matters (5:30 pm)**
2. **Public Session – Audit Committee Meeting (6:00 pm)**
3. **Public Session – Call to Order (Immediately Following Audit Committee)**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

It was acknowledged that Town Council was meeting in the unceded territory of Mi’kma’ki, the ancestral and unceded land of the Mi’kmaq people.

4. **Changes/Approval of Agenda**

Motion: To approve the agenda with one addition:
5d. Red Dress Day

Moved, Seconded and Carried

COC-05-06-24-

5. **PROCLAMATIONS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- a. Lyme Disease Awareness Month – May
The Chair recognized May as Lyme Disease Awareness month.
- b. Gaelic Awareness Month – May
The Chair recognized May as Gaelic Awareness month.
- c. Mental Health Week – May 13-19
The Chair recognized May 13-19 as Mental Health Week.
- d. Red Dress Day – May 5

May 5 was recognized as Red Dress Day, the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people.

6. Presentations

a. Hector Arena

Ron Clarke, Hector Arena Manager, shared some of the reasons behind major increases in expenses over the last two years, including furnace oil, insurance, sewer repairs and paving projects. The major snowstorm also caused rental revenue loss and an increase in winter snow removal. He also shared how a core group of volunteers contribute to the bottom line by helping with maintenance, start-up, and year-end work.

Questions/Comments:

- Why did insurance increase so much? – across the board
- Do you compare ice prices to other rinks? – yes, set same rate as other Pictou County rinks, except the Wellness Centre
- How do you still try to make access affordable? – several free adult, toddler and open skates, local businesses sponsor Friday skate, other skates are by donation (pay what you can)
- Any upcoming major projects? – replace Zamboni
- Woody’s Slice Memorial Golf Tournament donations was appreciated

7. Departmental Reports

a. Fire Department

- Report was included in the Council package
- Congratulations to those members recognized for their service during the recent banquet
- Question on training

b. RCMP

- Report was included in the Council package
- A reminder not to leave valuables in vehicles overnight, to lock cars, not leave keys in cars or leave cars running
- New building tender came in over RCMP allowance, will be re-tendering
- Question on mental health training – all members have training
- Question on whether recent car thefts are thought to be organized – most cars are found abandoned, so not likely organized

c. Community Development

- Report was included in the Council package
- Donation by Pictou Garden Club for Market Square lighting
- Entertainment on waterfront 7 days a week again this year – twice at Marina, 5 times at Marquee
- Question on what wayfinding signage means – use of universal symbols, rather than script, pays attention to colors and font size
- Becoming an Art Town event – June 7 and 8

- 16 artist displays were selected that will be displayed at the Cultural Hub

d. Public Works

- Report was included in the Council package
- Capital tenders came in under budget
- Patching budget – partnered with Westville, rates lower from last year
- Marina – legging under kiosks needs work
- Permanent breakwater – drawings received, tender to go out soon
- Question: Will kiosks be open and accessible? Yes
- Question: How is the street sweeper working? – good, Stellarton and Trenton have hired us to complete work int their streets
- Question on brush dump and town cleanup dates

e. Parks and Recreation

- Report was included in Council package
- Congrats to Heather Mattie and Chloe MacEachern on being selected as Volunteers of the Year
- Question on what equipment is being installed at Veterans Drive Park
- Question on why swings were removed at Broidy Park – due to skatepark installation
- Question on when Day Camp registration will be open – to be determined
- Question on whether the day camp program can be expanded – indoor space impacts numbers, working on some options

f. Variance

- \$255,000 surplus; Operating Reserve will grow to \$136,000
- Question on RCMP retro pay and whether it is included in the 2024-25 Operating Budget – yes
- Question on when we will we hear from NSUSRB on water rate study – anticipated for June

8. Appointment Committees

a. Fisheries Museum – Councillor LeBlanc

- Preparing to hire summer students
- Received grant for accessible doors

b. Lobster Carnival – Councillor LeBlanc

- Ham & Salad dinner was very successful
- Lobster Ball at the Legion was very well attended
- Next fundraiser will be Wrestling at the Hector Arena on May 24, 7:00 pm
- The last set of advanced tickets will go on sale on Wednesday, once these sell out there will be no tickets available for the beer garden

c. Habitat for Humanity – Councillor McNamara

- Braking ground will take place on May 29, hope to start foundation first week of June

- d. CEF – Councillor McNamara
 - Making presentations to other municipal councils and some schools
- e. Accessibility Committee – Councillor MacKenzie
 - Planning for Access Awareness Week and flag raising
 - Pictou County Transit starting to operate at end of month
- f. deCoste Centre – Councillor MacKenzie
 - Strategic Planning with Strategic Moves Virtually
 - The new building is taking shape and looking spectacular

9. Recommendations/Reports from Private Session

One contract and one land matter were discussed.

Capital tenders have come in under budget. Council has decided to expand the scope of planned projects and add an additional project rather than reduce spending. Sanitary services and sidewalk replacement will be added to the Coleraine Street project and sidewalk replacement on Faulkland Street from Patterson to Prince Street have been added.

Direction was given to the CAO to negotiate the sale of a piece of town owned land.

10. Recommendations

- a. Grants to Organizations

Last year, \$162,100 was distributed to community groups. This year, \$370,072 has been requested. Council is working closely with staff to determine how to best distribute available funding so that as many worthy projects can be supported as possible.

A final recommendation will be shared at the next Regular Council meeting.

11. Discussions

- a. Infrastructure Report

Superintendent MacIsaac presented an update to the Infrastructure Report. Sidewalk, sanitary and sewer line considerations have now been added to the report that previously had a Streets Pavement Condition Index. This information can be used to make future unbiased decisions around capital project priorities.

Council asked for staff to place this on the next Regular Council meeting agenda for acceptance.

- b. Upcoming Meeting Schedule
 - July 8 and 22
 - No August meetings unless required
 - September 9 and 23

12. Correspondence

13. Comments/Questions

- Ross MacDonald, Municipal Affairs Advisor, was present to observe the business of the meeting

14. Adjournment

There being no further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:00 pm.

Approved

Jim Ryan
Mayor

Kyle Slaunwhite
CAO