

1. CALL TO ORDER/ATTENDENCE

1.1 Roll Call/Regrets

Warden Linda Gregory called the March 29, 2021 Council session of the Municipality of the District of Digby to order at 5:00 pm. The meeting was held in the Municipal Chambers.

The following Councillors were present: Warden Linda Gregory, Deputy Warden Matthew Ross, Councillor George Manzer, Councillor David Tudor and Councillor Angela Thurber.

Staff present: Jeff Sunderland, Chief Administrative Officer, Tyler Pulley, Manager of Municipal Services, Cora Lee Ross, Manager of Corporate Services, and Pat Stevens, Executive Assistant, who took the minutes of the meeting.

Guests: Jimmy MacAlpine and Trudy LeBlanc

1.2 Pause to Seek Guidance

Warden Gregory welcomed everyone and asked that they pause to seek guidance for the meeting.

1.3 Reading of Mission Statement

Warden Gregory read the Municipality's mission statement.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROCEDURAL ISSUES

2.1 Approval of Agenda-Additions/Deletions

MOVED and seconded that the agenda for March 29, 2021 be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

2.2 Delegations/Presentations – presentation to former Warden Jimmy MacAlpine

Warden Gregory advised former Warden Jimmy MacAlpine that everything he has done for the community and Council was appreciated, he was an inspiration to others, respected by all, has worked with all three governments and went above and beyond his duties to Council as a forward-thinking Councillor. He was then presented with a gift.

Former Warden Jimmy MacAlpine thanked Council for the gift and advised that twenty years ago he joined Council, has enjoyed serving the County and said it was a pleasure working with Council.

All Council and staff spoke to Mr. MacAlpine regarding his retirement.

Council went into a recess at 5:15 pm.

The meeting resumed at 5:30 pm.

2.3 Approval of Minutes of February 22, 2021

MOVED and seconded that the minutes from February 22, 2021 be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

2.4 Unfinished Business from Minutes of February 22, 2021

a) St. Mary's Bay Protector's letter –

MOVED and seconded to respond to St. Mary's Bay Protectors addressing the concerns stated in their letter.

MOTION CARRIED

2.5 CAO Report

a) Meeting Reminders

Warden Gregory went over the meeting dates/reminders.

b) Action Items from Previous Meetings

All action items have been addressed to date.

c) Update on Capital Projects 2020-2021

The Warden gave an update on the Capital Projects 2020-2021.

d) Financial Report

i) Payables

MOVED and seconded that the payables for February 2021 in the amount of \$396,991.49 be approved.

MOTION CARRIED

ii) Income and Expense Report

The Income and Expense Report for February 2021 was circulated.

MOVED and seconded that the Income and Expense Report from February 2021 be approved.

MOTION CARRIED

3. STANDING COMMITTEE ITEMS

3. By-Law & Policy

1) Expanded Service Hours and Four-Day Work Week Policy

MOVED and seconded to approve the Expanded Service Hours and Four-Day Work Week Policy.

MOTION CARRIED

2) Change Council, Committee of the Whole and By-Law & Policy meetings from Mondays to Tuesdays

MOVED and seconded to change Council meetings, Committee of the Whole meetings, and By-Law & Policy meetings from Mondays to Tuesdays for the duration of the nine-month pilot program.

MOTION CARRIED

3) 2021-2022 Low Income Tax Exemption

MOVED and seconded to approve the increase of an additional \$1000 to the criteria for qualifying for the 2021-2022 Low-Income Tax Exemption as well as the increase of an additional \$25 per category for exemption.

MOTION CARRIED

4) IT Contract

MOVED and seconded to approve the IT Contract as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

5) Letter to be sent to the Department of Justice requesting meeting re: RCMP

MOVED and seconded that a letter be sent to the Department of Justice requesting a meeting regarding the RCMP.

MOTION CARRIED

6) New Salary Scales

MOVED and seconded to accept the new salary scales for building inspector, assistant building inspector, trail coordinator and tax administrator as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

MOVED and seconded to approve the staff salaries for 2021/22 as presented with 0.3% cost of living increase applied.

MOTION CARRIED

MOVED and seconded to provide an additional 2% increase to all staff salaries as a show of appreciation for the challenging year they have had in providing services during the Covid-19 pandemic.

MOTION CARRIED

7) Waste Check

MOVED and seconded to approve \$20,017 funding for Waste Check.

MOTION CARRIED

8) Tax Bill interest rate

MOVED and seconded to reinstate the pre Covid-19 interest rate on overdue tax bills to 15% from 10% annually effective April 1, 2021.

MOTION CARRIED

1 OPPOSED (Warden Gregory)

9) Flexible interest rate

MOVED and seconded to have administration staff investigate if a program can be set up in the TownSuite Financial system with a flexible interest rate for those on payment plans for their taxes owed.

MOTION CARRIED

10) Re-naming Airport

MOVED and seconded to rename the Digby-Annapolis Regional Airport to the Digby Municipal Airport and to accept all financial costs of the name change.

MOTION CARRIED

11) Contract with IRIS Communications

MOVED and seconded to keep the contract with IRIS Communications for another 3 months and continue with the 3-month payment agreement.

MOTION CARRIED

COTW

1) Letters to be send on behalf of the Clean Ocean Action Committee

MOVED and seconded to send letters on behalf of the Clean Ocean Action Committee, regarding the renewal of the Moratorium on oil and gas exploration on Georges Bank, to the President of Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities, The Honourable Chuck Porter, Minister of Nova Scotia Energy & Mines and The Honourable Seamus O'Regan, Minister of Department of Natural Resources, with our MLA Gordon Wilson copied on the letters.

MOTION CARRIED

2) Digby Municipal Fire Association - foam

MOVED and seconded to recommend to Council the approval of \$3,040 from the 2020/2021 budget to cover the cost of the foam for the Digby Municipal Fire Service.

MOTION CARRIED

3) **BUSINESS ITEMS**

1. EPR – letter to Minister

Extended Producer Responsibility

MOVED and seconded to send a letter in support of Extended Producer Responsibility to the Minister of Environment.

MOTION CARRIED

2. Bus route

Council has directed the CAO to arrange to meet with the Town CAO regarding the proposed change to the bus route.

3. Surplus Transfers

MOVED and seconded to transfer remaining Covid-19 Safe Restart funding in the amount of \$198,058 to the operating reserve until such time as the Province releases guidelines as to how these funds can be spent.

MOTION CARRIED

MOVED and seconded to transfer \$435,130 to the Capital Reserve, which represents specific accounts that were unspent due to the effects of Covid-19.

MOTION CARRIED

MOVED and seconded to transfer \$63,750 to the Operating Reserve, which represents specific projects that were delayed due to Covid-19.

MOTION CARRIED

4. Administrative Hearing Notice – Cooke Aquaculture

Discussion ensued

MOVED and seconded to send a letter of support for Kelly Cove Salmon Ltd.'s application to the Aquaculture Administrator to have Ocean Trout Farms Inc. reallocate it's license and lease (AQ#0983) to Kelly Cove Salmon Ltd.

MOTION CARRIED

2 OPPOSED

5. INFORMATION ITEMS

5.1 Correspondence

There was discussion on the correspondence received this month.

5.2 General Information Items

There was no general information received this month.

5.3 Advisory Committees Minutes/Reports

a) Heritage Advisory

Jane Murphy Leighton's obituary was circulated.

MOVED and seconded to send a donation to the Wilson Collier Committee at the Western Counties Regional Library Charitable Association, in the amount of \$200, in memory of Jane Murphy Leighton.

MOTION CARRIED

b) Joint RCMP

January 2021 minutes were circulated.

c) PAC

February 2021 minutes were circulated.

5.4 Other Council Committees

5.5 Joint Intermunicipal Committees Minutes/Reports

a) DARC

February minutes and March Recreation Director, Facility Manager and Active Living Manager reports were circulated.

b) Kings Transit Authority

Financial Forecast to March 31, 2021 was circulated.

c) Waste Check

January 2021 minutes, March meeting notes and January Waste Check Connections were circulated.

- d) Western Counties Regional Library
A newsletter and December 2020 minutes were circulated.

5.6 Outside Boards/Committees Minutes/Reports

- a) DATA
February meeting notes, Treasurer report and Digby Lights Campaign were circulated.
- b) Digby Harbour Port Association
November 2020 minutes were circulated.
- c) South West Biosphere Society
March meeting notes, report and October 2020 minutes were circulated. Their AGM is coming up in April.

5.7 Councillor District Activity Report

Councillor Tudor gave an update to Council on various district activities he attended such as assisting with the food bank, Brier Island Trail Society with fund raising, TIR calls and questions regarding the tax sale.

Councillor Manzer gave an update to Council on various district activities he attended such as dealing with road concerns and unsightly conditions.

Councillor Thurber gave an update to Council on various district activities she attended such as the Bear River Fire Dept service award banquet, calls and emails regarding issues, webinars, an Engage Nova Scotia quality of life webinar which is six weeks long, free and online and assisted constituents in Smith's Cove on a project.

Deputy Warden Ross gave an update to Council on various district activities he attended such as calls on dirt roads and garbage calls regarding dumping sites. Thanks to Ritchie Nickerson who assisted in the cleanups.

Warden Gregory gave an update to Council on the various district activities she attended such as the Bear River Fire Dept service award banquet, a meeting with end-of-life fishing gear and dealt with knocked down mailboxes. Warden Gregory also gave an update on the Mayors/Wardens/CAO's zoom minutes.

6. IN CAMERA ITEMS

6.1 Personnel Issue

MOVED and seconded to go In Camera for a Personnel Issue at 6:34 PM

MOTION CARRIED

The regular meeting resumed at 6:37PM

MOVED and seconded that Ian Ferguson be appointed for a two-year term on the Planning Advisory Committee.

MOTION CARRIED

A group photo of Council wearing the Epilepsy ribbon was taken.

7. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED and seconded that the meeting be adjourned at 6:37 PM.

MOTION CARRIED

Warden Gregory

Jeff Sunderland, CAO