

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy & Strategy Committee

Held in Council Chamber, 10 Allée Champlain Drive, Cookville, NS

January 17, 2023 – 9:00 a.m.

Attendance

Deputy Mayor Hubley, District 4, Chair
Mayor Carolyn Bolivar-Getson
Councillor Leitha Haysom, District 1
Councillor Martin Bell, District 2
Councillor Wendy Oickle, District 3
Councillor Cathy Moore, District 5
Councillor Sandra Statton, District 6
Councillor Michelle Greek, District 7
Councillor Kacy DeLong, District 8
Councillor Reid Whynot, District 9
Councillor Chasidy Veinotte, District 10, Vice Chair

Staff

Tom MacEwan, CAO
Alex Dumaresq, Deputy CAO
Jeanette Renton, Casual Recording Secretary
April Whynot-Lohnes, Municipal Clerk

1. Call to Order

Deputy Mayor Hubley called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and began by acknowledging that the meeting was held in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

2. Announcements/Acknowledgements/Recognition

Councillor Bell recognized a group of community volunteers who organized a co-op association to establish the South Shore's newest radio station - Coastal Villages Community Radio (CVCR), broadcasting from LaHave, NS.

Councillor Greek attended a meeting at the Parkdale Maplewood Community Hall on January 16th where volunteers offered their sincere gratitude to MODL Council and acknowledged the kindness and knowledge of MODL staff.

3. Public Input - Nil

4. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Haysom, seconded by Councillor Moore that the Agenda be approved as circulated. Carried unanimously.

5. Approval of Minutes – November 15, 2022

Moved by Councillor Whynot, seconded by Mayor Bolivar-Getson that the Minutes of the November 15, 2022, Policy & Strategy meeting be approved as circulated. Carried unanimously.

6. Business Arising from Minutes - Nil

7. Presentations/Scheduled Times

7.1 Bacteria in the LaHave River Estuary, Shanna Fredericks, Assistant Director, Coastal Action

Shanna Fredericks, Assistant Director, Coastal Action made a presentation to discuss “Bacteria in the LaHave River Estuary 2007 - Today”.

The following was discussed:

- History of bacteria testing in the LaHave River - 1993 to present
- Potential bacteria sources in aquatic systems
- Overall improvement in water quality over the past five years
- Results of the MODL-funded estuary monitoring 2017/2018
- Ongoing LaHave River water quality monitoring program

Council discussed two locations in the upper estuary where bacteria levels exceed Health Canada guidelines and it was concluded that frequent long-term testing would be required to determine if the exceedances are weather-related or from another source.

Further ongoing testing will be required to determine the outcome of the LaHave River Straight Pipe initiative and funds for further testing will be included in the 2023/24 budget.

Ms. Fredericks left the meeting.

Council recessed at 9:56 a.m. and resumed at 10:05 a.m.

7.2 Nova Scotia Innovation Hub (NSIH), Rod Badcock

Rod Badcock, Executive Director, Nova Scotia Innovation Hub; George Ernst, CFO Freeman Lumber; and Bill Freeman, Business Development Manager, Freeman Lumber, made a presentation to discuss Nova Scotia’s Bio-Circular Economy and; in particular, the Southwestern Nova Scotia BDO Zone.

The following was discussed:

- Overview and benefits of a Bio-Circular Economy
- Uses of wood by-products, i.e. producing fuel, electricity and commercially useful chemicals
- How ecological forestry has evolved in Southwestern Nova Scotia
- The substantial supply of forestry residuals available in Southwestern Nova Scotia for processing biological materials

Messrs. Badcock, Ernst, and Freeman left the meeting.

8. Referral from Council - Nil

9. Staff Reports

9.1 Finance Department

9.1.1 Capital Status & CCBF Investment Report 2022/23 - 3rd Quarter

Elana Wentzell, Director of Finance, reviewed the “Capital Status & CCBF Investment Report 2022/23 - 3rd Quarter” circulated at the meeting.

The following was discussed:

- Cancellation of MARC Dugout Upgrades - deemed unnecessary at this time
- Municipal Services Building Final Costs - represents the cost of the HVAC retrofit which will be reimbursed by the contractor’s insurance company upon completion in March 2023
- Solar Panels - Municipal Building - equipment delays have pushed the installation completion date to spring 2023
- Osprey Village AT Connection (Pedestrian Bridge) - design presently underway, with tender scheduled for spring 2023 and construction to start by September 2023.
- Osprey Village Trail Connector - tender package (including Pickleball Court) to be ready by March 2023
- J Class Roads (NSTIR) partnership - \$146,069 variance - waiting for invoices
- Speed Radar Signs – potential locations at all arteries entering from the Municipality into the Town of Bridgewater.

9.1.2 2023 Property Tax Sale

Elana Wentzell, Director of Finance, provided an update on the 2023 property tax sale procedure.

The following was discussed:

- The advantages/disadvantages of a Tender Call process versus a Public Auction.
- The success of the Tender Call process over the past two years.
- The number of properties for sale this year at 23 is down from 50+ in past years.

Moved by Councillor Veinotte, seconded by Councillor Whynot that the Policy & Strategy Committee recommend to Council that Municipal Council approve the tender call for March 6, 2023, and further, approve the use of tender call for all future tax sale proceedings.

The Motion on the floor was voted on and carried. Those opposed: Councillor Haysom.

9.2 Recreation Department

9.2.1 Visitor Information Centre, Lease

As requested during the November 8, 2022, Municipal Council Meeting, Ruth Wawin, Tourism & Event Development Officer, presented options for the 2023 tourist season, including visitor numbers and cost implications of extending the lease at the current Visitor Information Centre in Blockhouse.

The options and respective costs are outlined below:

- Option 1: Extend the VIC lease for an additional seven-months - Cost: \$56,830
- Option 2: Mahone Bay Tourism and Chamber of Commerce Partnership - Cost: \$15,980
- Option 3: Lunenburg Board of Trade Partnership - Cost: \$27,820
- Option 4: Partnerships with both the Mahone Bay Tourism and Chamber of Commerce and the Lunenburg Board of Trade - Cost: \$38,800

The following was discussed:

- Changes in how the travelling public access information - online versus brick and mortar.
- Exploring a new model of providing visitor services; including an improved digital presence, updated brochure design, tourism brand refresh and increased use of mobile kiosks.

Moved by Councillor Bell, seconded by Mayor Bolivar-Getson that the Policy & Strategy Committee recommend to Municipal Council to provide written notice that the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg will not be renewing the lease on the Visitor Information Centre located at 125 Cornwall Road, Blockhouse, N.S., when it expires on April 30, 2023. Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor DeLong, seconded by Councillor Moore that the Policy & Strategy Committee recommend to Municipal Council to provide direction to staff to prepare a budget accordingly for the upcoming fiscal year to create improvements to the Municipality's online and mobile tourism presence. Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Haysom, seconded by Councillor DeLong that the Policy & Strategy Committee recommend to Municipal Council to develop partnerships with the Mahone Bay Tourism and Chamber of Commerce (MBTCC) and Lunenburg Board of Trade (LBOT) to include the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg within their tourism operations.

The motion on the floor was voted on and defeated. Those opposed: Mayor Bolivar-Getson, Deputy Mayor Hubley, Councillors Bell, Oickle, Moore, Veinotte, Whynot, DeLong and Statton.

10. Mayor's/Deputy Mayor's/Councillors' Matters - Nil

11. Added Items – Nil

12. In Camera - Nil

13. Next Meeting - February 21, 2023.

14. Adjournment

There being no further business, at 12:02 p.m., it was moved by Councillor Whynot, seconded by Councillor Bell that the meeting be adjourned. Carried.