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## **Minutes of Council Meeting**

**November 17, 2020 7:00 PM. Via Zoom**

Present:	Mayor	Betty Clarke
	Deputy Mayor	Krista Freake
	Councillors:	Stephen Hollett
		Brian Hooper
		Kenneth Tucker
		Perry Pond
		Derek White
	Town Manager (Acting)	Todd Champion
	Recreation and Tourism Manager	Ashley Ivany
	Town Clerk (Acting)	Jake Turner

### **1. Call to Order**

Mayor Clarke called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

### **2. Approval of Agenda**

20-193 Hollett/Freake

Resolved to adopt the agenda as presented.

In favour: Mayor Clarke, Deputy Mayor Freake, Councillors Hooper, Hollett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Decision: Motion carried.

### **3. Minutes for Approval**

#### **3.1 Regular Council Meeting November 3, 2020**

20-194 White/Hollett

Resolved to adopt the minutes of the regular Council meeting of November 3, 2020, as circulated.

In favour: Mayor Clarke, Deputy Mayor Freake, Councillors Hooper, Hollett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Decision: Motion carried.

### **3.2 Special Council Meeting November 12, 2020**

20-195 Hooper/Hollett

Resolved to adopt the minutes of the Special Council meeting of November 12, 2020, as circulated.

In favour: Mayor Clarke, Deputy Mayor Freake, Councillors Hooper, Hollett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Decision: Motion carried.

## **4. Recreation/Tourism Committee**

### **4.1 Updates by Deputy Mayor Freake**

- Deputy Mayor advised that there was no Committee Meeting held since the last Regular Council Meeting and provided an update on the recreation activities and Special Events.
- The Remembrance Day Ceremony was held on November 11 and due to COVID restrictions was for invited guests only. The Ceremony was available virtually and over 1600 participated. The Deputy Mayor thanked staff for providing another great event.
- The Christmas Tree lighting will take place on December 3 at 7:00 PM and will be a virtual event.
- The Santa Claus Parade will be held on December 5 this year and businesses are requested to enter a float and citizens are requested to view the parade and adhere to the COVID – 19 requirements.
- Students have been hired for ticket taking and sales at the stadium and will be recording participants to comply with COVID requirements.
- The stadium is accepting booking for Birthday Parties and other events, but the events must conform with COVID requirements.
- Woolfrey's Pond campsites are now closed.
- The Bowling Alley is open and is accepting booking for Birthday Parties and other events, but the events must conform with COVID requirements.
- Staff are researching funding opportunities and will be submitting applications in the near future.
- The Committee had issued a Notice of Motion to require wearing of helmets for skating but has decided to defer this motion and to present a more comprehensive policy on all requirements for stadium usage.

## **5. Economic Development Committee**

### **5.1 Updates by Councillor Pond**

- Councillor Pond advised that Economic Development met on November 10, 2020.
- The Committee discussed its Strategic Plan "Where to from Here" which identify the priorities of Council – The Marina, the Commercial Port and Tourism.
- Woolfreys' Pond Park - The design for planned development of Woolfreys' Pond Park has been delayed due to COVID but the Committee has decided to move forward with some of the initiatives but much of the planned development will be completed after the close of the 2021 season. The Committee has decided to recommend proceeding with Wi-Fi upgrades, washroom retrofit, and new basketball court and plans for completion prior to 2021 season opening.
- The Committee has requested that the Town consultant design a plan for the washrooms and basketball court and town staff will do the work.

- The Committee is recommending that Council move forward with the business plan for the Marina. The plan has been developed in partnership with the Marina Association and centers around opportunities for business to provide services and for residents to avail of the services as well as the users of the marina.
- Oil and Gas steering committee is scheduled to meet on November 26 at 6:30, at which time representatives from the Town of Gander will attend to discuss activities surrounding the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of 9/11.
- Councillor Tucker will attend the Virtual Annual Conference of the Newfoundland & Labrador Oil and Gas Association which is being held tomorrow.

## **5.2 Marina Business Plan**

20-196 Pond/Tucker

Resolved that Council move forward with the business plan for servicing of the marina, in partnership with the Marina Association, at a cost of \$14,700 plus HST.

In favour: Mayor Clarke, Deputy Mayor Freake, Councillors Hooper, Hollett, Pond, Tucker and White.  
Decision: Motion carried.

## **5.3 Business Occupancy Permit No. 20-006C/414 Main Street**

20-197 Pond/Tucker

Resolved that Council approve an occupancy permit #20-006C for a business occupancy at 414 Main Street for the operation of a Hearing Aid Dispensary.

In favour: Mayor Clarke, Deputy Mayor Freake, Councillors Hooper, Hollett, Pond, Tucker and White.  
Decision: Motion Carried

## **5.4 Business Occupancy Permit No. 20-005C/13 Stanhope Road**

Councillor Pond declared a conflict and was removed from the virtual meeting through audio and visual disconnection.

20-198 Tucker/Hollett

Resolved that Council approve an occupancy permit #20-005C for a business occupancy of the extension which has been constructed at 13 Stanhope Road.

In favour: Mayor Clarke, Deputy Mayor Freake, Councillors Hooper, Hollett, Tucker and White.  
Decision: Motion carried.

Councillor Pond re-entered the virtual meeting.

## **6. Lands**

### **6.1 Updates by Councillor Tucker**

- The Lands Committee meeting was held on November 10, 2020.

- The Committee met with a developer whose application for a short-term rental at 343 Main Street had been denied. The Developer has submitted a new application which meets the requirements of the Town Regulations. The Development Regulations require that the application be advertised, and the Committee will review the application and consider objections, if any.
- The owner of the property at 11 Pelley Street has indicated that he intends to appeal the Order and if he does it will be a long period of time before Council can act on the Order due to the process involved. In the meantime, he advises that the tenant has vacated the premises. The owner would like to attend the demolition but is unable to do so because he lives in Ontario and travel to our Province is not permitted. The Committee feels it is more beneficial to work with the property owner rather than go through the appeal process and is prepared to grant an extension to the demolition order.
- Options for recourse are being explored in response to the petition received concerning the condition of the property at the corner of Council Road and Spruce Avenue. And the Town Manager will monitor the situation until it is resolved.

## **7. Public Works**

### **7.1 Updates by Councillor Hooper**

- The Public Works Committee held its meeting on November 4, 2020.
- New Salt Shed is nearing completion and is operational and is a much-needed addition to the Town infrastructure.
- Snow clearing Regulations come into effect on December 1, 2020 and will be posted on Facebook or can be obtained at the Town Office.
- The Municipal Capital Works Funding Application for 2021 has been submitted to Municipal Affairs and the projects included in the application are:
  1. Re-capping of asphalt.
  2. Infrastructure upgrades and asphalt for Beaumont Street.
  3. Construction of Kings Street Outfall.
- The ATV Parking Lot at the top of Forward Drive is nearing completion. Primary work is commenced

## **8. Protective Services**

### **8.1 Updates by Councillor White**

- The Protective Services did not meet since the last Council Meeting and Councillor White advised that there will be a meeting this Thursday.
- Councillor White extended congratulation to Fire Fighter Kevin on his receiving the Fire Fighter of the Year Award.
- He also advised that the Emergency Service 911 project is nearing completion and it is very important for all Residents and Businesses to have Street numbers installed on their properties which will assist the Emergency Services personnel in finding the location when responding to an emergency.

## **9. Finance/HR**

### **9.1 Updates by Councillor Hollett**

- The Finance Committee meeting was held on November 17, 2020.

### **9.2 Cheque Register**

20-199            Hollett/Hooper

Resolved to approve cheques 410-449, excluding cheques 415, and 422.

In favour: Mayor Clarke, Deputy Mayor Freake, Councillors Hooper, Hollett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Decision: Motion Carried.

### **9.3        Cheques 415 and 422**

Councillor Pond declared a conflict and was removed from the virtual meeting through audio and visual disconnection.

20-200            Hollett/Hooper

Resolved to approve cheques 415 and 422.

In favour: Mayor Clarke, Deputy Mayor Freake, Councillors Hooper, Hollett, Tucker and White.

Decision: Motion Carried

Councillor Pond re-entered the virtual meeting.

### **9.4        Poll Tax**

- The Committee reviewed a report on the history of the billing and collection of Poll Tax. The report shows that there is approximately a 25% rate of collection and much of the outstanding balance is very old. The Report recommends that the Poll Tax be eliminated.

20-201            Hollett/Hooper

Resolved that the revenue source of Poll Tax be eliminated and that all outstanding Poll Taxes be written off and any payments received since the latest collection efforts were made be refunded.

Councillor Tucker questioned whether or not the Committee had explored other options.

The Town Clerk advised that the Poll Tax is very difficult to administer and if Council is to continue with the tax than it should devote enough resources to follow up with the collection process. The most effective collection method is to demand businesses deduct unpaid balances from their employees and remit to Council which is authorized by the Municipalities Act.

The Committee felt that the tax is viewed as unfair, as those that are billed are usually our young people who live at home or in rental units, and claim that the Municipal Taxes are paid by the owner of the property and it is therefore double taxation.

The Chair questioned the effect that this would have on the Town's Budget and the Town Clerk advised that \$151,000 of the outstanding amount of \$170,865.66 has been recognized as doubtful and has already been recognized as an expense in prior years.

In favour: Mayor Clarke, Deputy Mayor Freake, Councillors Hooper, Hollett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Decision: Motion Carried.

**9.5 Request for Write off**

- A request has been received to write off a balance of a business account receivable amounting to \$295.25 including interest. The owner had paid the full amount of the business tax bill, less the discount, after the deadline for discount and felt entitled to the discount because of COVID – 19. The Committee noted that Council had extended the deadline for paying taxes and availing of the discount and is not prepared to make an exception to this policy. The business will be written advising of the decision.

**9.6 Budget Process**

- The Budget process is about to commence, and it is the goal of the Finance Committee to have it ready for presentation to Council for its consideration at the Council Meeting of December 15, 2020.

**10. Mayor Clarke Update**

- Mayor Clarke advised that the Synergy Project is still moving forward and viable and an announcement is expected within the next couple of months.

**11. Adjournment**

20-202 White/Freake

Resolved that the meeting adjourn.

Time: 7:43 PM

In favour: Mayor Clarke, Deputy Mayor Freake, Councillors Hooper, Hollett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Decision: Motion carried.

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Betty Clarke, Mayor

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Jake Turner, Town Clerk/Treasurer