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**Minutes of Council Meeting**

**December 17, 2024 7:00 PM**

Present: Mayor Krista Freake

Deputy Mayor Brian Hooper

Councillors Roxanne Haliburton

John Mullett

Perry Pond

Ken Tucker

Derek White

Town Manager Todd Champion

Recreation and Tourism Manager Ashley Ivany

Superintendent of Public Works Bruce Roberts

Regrets: Town Clerk Coreen Colbourne

Mayor Freake brought greetings to those in Chambers and to those watching on Facebook.

1. **Call to Order – 7:03 pm**

Mayor Freake brought forward a land acknowledgement.

1. **Approval of Agenda**

**24-149** **Pond/White**

**Resolved to adopt the agenda, as presented.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

**3. Minutes for Approval -** **Regular Council Meeting November 19, 2024**

**24-150 Mullett/Hooper**

**Resolved to adopt the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of November 19, 2024.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

1. **Recreation/Tourism Committee**

**Update by Deputy Mayor Hooper**

Deputy Mayor Hooper spoke on the **annual tree lighting** that took place at the Town Hall on December 5th, as well as the **Santa Claus Parade** on December 7th, both events were well attended. He was also pleased to see the number of floats in the parade this year, from businesses, organizations, and families. The **Train Park Trail** officially opened this past evening. Deputy Mayor Hooper thanked Canadian Tire for being such a big sponsor of the event. He went on to thank the Lion’s Club members for distributing the food and drinks at the end of the parade.

Deputy Mayor Hooper reported that the Town plans on installing an **electrical service at the Train Park** to enhance various events that take place there. The recreation committee has had the electrical aspect assessed and are currently reaching out with other questions surrounding that undertaking. It will then be reviewed by the members so costs can be budgeted for long term.

He reported that the **Mike Austin Arena** has been busy recently with tournaments, there was a tournament held this past weekend, as well as the upcoming Ben Spracklin Memorial Tournament and The Christmas Cup.

The recreation committee has completed their review of the proposed installation of heat pumps at the **Bowling Alley** and are satisfied with the information received, so a decision will be made soon, regarding the installation.

Deputy Mayor Hooper mentioned a **$500.00 Central Wellness Grant** that was received. These funds will be used to install bowling ramps at the Bowling Alley.

Deputy Mayor Hooper thanked the public for coming out to support the three events the Town has initiated to start the Holiday Season. He also thanked those involved in the preparations and holding these events.

Mayor Freake said that the murals painted on the Town’s float were very well done. She announced the winners of the different float categories. Keith Budden and Friends & Family for the family category; A & B Construction for the business category, and Lewisporte Collegiate for the service group category. She congratulated the winners and thanked all those who participated.

1. **Economic Development**

**Update by Councillor Pond**

5.1 Occupancy Permit - 24-008C (Commercial); The Paint Shop – to occupy 278 Main Street.

**24-151 Pond/Tucker**

**I so move to accept the permit application, as presented.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

5.2 Occupancy Permit - 24-009HHB (Home-Based Business); Thelma’s Designs - to occupy 35 Second Avenue.

**24-152 Pond/Tucker**

**I so move to accept the permit application, as presented.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

5.3 Vendor Permit - 24-004V Monthly Vendor Permit for JPJC Holdings Inc. - to occupy 405-413 Main Street.

**24-153 Pond/Tucker**

**I so move to accept the permit application, as presented.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

Councillor Pond reported that the Town is close to having the funding package in place for the **ATV Trail.** He said if everything goes as anticipated; the Town should have the green light in January to proceed with the design and tender. He’s hoping to see the project start in the spring or early summer.

Consultants are continuing work on the **Dinner Theatre,** there is a meeting scheduled for Thursday to receive further updates and continued discussion on the project. Councillor Pond said he is hopeful that the dinner theatre will be on schedule to open for its next season.

The **Marina Consultant** is continuing with his work; a steering committee will be developed with members of Council, Lewisporte Marina Administrative Authority, Yacht Club, Chamber of Commerce and Committee at Large, that is scheduled for tomorrow.

With regards to the **Commercial Port**, the Town is waiting to hear back from MHA Bennett with an update from his meeting with the Minister of Transportation and the Premier, once it takes place, regarding what the Town has proposed to move that piece of infrastructure forward.

Mayor Freake provided an update on the **Family Care Team**, she said the Town has been working closely with the MHA, Minister Hogan has been apprised of the file as well. She said the manager’s position, despite being advertised for several months, remains unfilled, which is delaying staffing. She also reported that an RFP will be presented shortly, to satisfy the location for the Family Care Team. Despite the many meetings Council has had with Central Health/NL Health Services, the person(s) heading the departments have changed over the years, and the file has to be presented again and again. MHA Bennett has requested a meeting with those involved to further the last conversation and discuss any inroads made.

1. **Lands Committee**

**Update by Councillor White**

At the Public Council Meeting held on October 22, 2024, a stop work order was issued to the resident of 187-191 Road to the Isles, relating to works being conducted without a Town permit. Several times since the issuance of the stop work order, town staff have attempted to encourage the resident to comply with this stop work order and obtain a valid permit. Having no success, and as per the Town’s fee structure, considering the resident is a repeat offender:

**24-154 White/Hooper**

**I hereby motion to issue, a non-conformity fine, in the amount of $1000.00 to the resident of 187-191 Road to the Isles.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

**7. Public Works**

**Update by Councillor Mullett**

The Town received a call in the afternoon, from Mr. Ken Turner, a dispute resolution specialist, regarding meeting to review the impending **arbitration** between the Town and NAPE representatives. Councillor Mullett intended to bring forward a **snow clearing policy**, but after receiving the phone call from Mr. Turner, is asking Council’s position on whether they would like to meet with Mr. Turner or move ahead with the snow clearing policy. Mayor Freake spoke for Council reiterating the decision to move forward with the meeting. She also said that Council felt they needed to have additional commentary regarding the policy collectively, to seek clarification on parts of the policy before deciding and bringing forward a motion. Councillor Tucker wanted clarification on the intent of Ken Turner and what his purpose is for the arbitration process. Councillor Mullett explained that as a dispute resolution specialist, Mr. Turner wanted to see if there was leeway back and forth between the Town and its unionized employees, so that it doesn’t have to go to arbitration. The Town Manager said there is a hope to resolve the grievance process. The Town Manager explained that it is standard practice, once a grievance is filed, that NAPE will reach out to get all parties to the table in hopes of a resolution prior to arbitration. Council agreed to a meeting with Mr. Turner, no motion was brought forward. There was further commentary by Council, but it was agreed that all Council would meet with Mr. Turner.

1. **Protective Services**

**Update by Councillor Tucker**

The Town was successful in obtaining funding from the Provincial Government to assist with the purchase of four (4) Self Contained Breathing Apparatus’ (SCBA), the Lewisporte Fire Rescue has since recognized that there is still a shortfall in SCBA’s, to cover the operational and safety concerns for the fire department. Currently there is Government pricing on these units, and it is the hope of Council that a 5th unit can be purchased under this pricing.

**24-155 Tucker/Haliburton**

**I move, that the Town of Lewisporte will purchase one self-contained breathing apparatus for the Lewisporte Fire Department at a cost of approximately $9600.00.**

Councillor White asked if the Town was going to piggyback off the original tender, Councillor Tucker explained that we could avail of the tender price, not the tender. Councillor Tucker went on to explain that the fire department would now have a total of fourteen (14) units, which is required for all operational purposes of the fire department.

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

Councillor Tucker mentioned the Town is waiting for some responses to the invitations sent out to some of the surrounding communities around policing. The intent is for Council to meet with representatives of other Municipalities and Local Service Districts in the new year to discuss **common policing issues**. Mayor Freake said she heard from Staff Sargent Larry Turner, he reiterated to her the perspective around collectively having conversations about the services of the RCMP, particularly during this time of review. Data and public pressure will play a role in decision making.

Councillor Tucker reminded the public of the importance for ensuring your Christmas lights are in good working order.

**9. Finance/HR**

**Update by Councillor Haliburton**

**9.1 Cheque Register- Scotiabank (Operating Account)**

**24-156 Haliburton/Pond**

**I motion to approve the cheque register as presented, for cheque numbers 04282 to 04327, with the exception of cheque 04288, 04308, 04311, 04312 and 04317 for a total of $151,609.28.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried

Deputy Mayor Hooper was in conflict and left Chambers at 7:29:23.

**24-157 Haliburton/Pond**

**Motion to approve cheque number 04288.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

Deputy Mayor Hooper re-entered Chambers at 7:29:43.

Councillor Tucker was in conflict and left Chambers at 7:29:47.

**24-158 Haliburton/Pond**

**Motion to approve cheque numbers 04308 and 04311.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

Councillor Tucker re-entered Chambers at 7:30:18.

Councillors Haliburton and Pond were in conflict and left Chambers at 7:30:25.

**24-159 Mullett/Hooper**

**Motion to approve cheque numbers 04312 and 04317.**

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

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

Councillors Haliburton and Pond re-entered Chambers at 7:30:57.

**9.2 Budget Adoption**

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Budget Speech 2024

Presented by Councillor Roxanne Haliburton, Chair of Finance and Human Resources

Honorable Mayor, esteemed council members, and respected citizens, I present to you today the proposed municipal budget for the upcoming fiscal year. This budget reflects our collective priorities: strengthening our communities, enhancing public services, and ensuring fiscal responsibility for future generations. It is a blueprint not just for managing resources, but for investing in the well-being and growth of our town. As we navigate the challenges and opportunities ahead, this budget lays the foundation for a prosperous, sustainable, and vibrant future for all.

**OPERATING BUDGET**

It is anticipated that the total operating funds required to operate our Town in 2025 will total $6,198,605, it is a decrease of $433,242 from last year.

**The 2025 Estimated Budget is presented as follows:**

**OPERATING BUDGET**

**REVENUE**

Taxes $ 4,327,218

Sale of Goods and Services 482,938

Other Revenue from Own Sources 238,220

Federal and Provincial Grants and Subsidies 513,257

Reserve Surplus from Prior Year 636,972

**Total Revenue** $ 6,198,605

**EXPENDITURES**

General Government (salaries, employee benefits) $ 1,660,143

Protective Services (fire protection and emergency response) 190,050

Transportation Services (vehicle repair, street and sidewalk maintenance, snow removal) 727,826

Environmental Health (water supply, sewage, garbage collection) 698,116

Planning and Development (zoning, municipal plan review) 194,800

Recreation and Cultural Services (stadium, parks, events), 946,063

Fiscal Services (loans, interest, discounts, bank charges). 1,781,607

**Total Expenditures** $ 6,198,605

**Surplus/Deficit** \_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_$0

**RATES AND FEES**

During the budget process, Council carefully reviewed the schedules of rates and fees. With a strong focus on fiscal responsibility and supporting the well-being of our community, the Town Council has decided to maintain the current property mil rate at 8.5 mils, while keeping all other rates and fees unchanged for the upcoming fiscal year. This decision reflects our ongoing commitment to minimizing financial pressures on both residents and businesses, ensuring stability and affordability for all.

In January 2025, the Town will be switching arrears interest from compounded too simple. With simple interest, debt accrues more slowly, making it easier for residents to catch up on payments and avoid escalating financial stress.

**CAPITAL BUDGET**

As part of the capital budget, the Town is making substantial investments in our recreational facilities. Council is proud to announce that the long-anticipated splash pad, has been ordered, with a scheduled opening date of summer 2025; there will also be improvements in the washroom facilities at the recreation complex; the Town will be making enhancements in other recreational structures, making them more comfortable by adding heat pumps.

The Town has decided to borrow the amount of $256,655.00, for capital works projects completed in 2024, these include the King Street outfall extension and phase II of the outfall consolidation. Borrowing allows a Municipality to fund large-scale infrastructure improvements that can't be covered by current revenue, it allows the Town to spread the cost of these long-term investments over time, ensuring that future generations benefit from the projects while maintaining essential services and growth.

**CONCLUSION**

In closing, I would like to take a moment to sincerely thank management and the finance department for their unwavering commitment in developing a budget that truly reflects the needs and ambitions of our community. As we move forward, let us collaborate in implementing these financial priorities, working toward a brighter, more prosperous future for our municipality. I appreciate your attention, involvement, and ongoing support as we continue to strengthen our community for everyone. Thank you.

**ENABLING MOTIONS**

**24-160 Haliburton/Pond**

**Be it resolved that Council shall adopt the 2025 Schedules of Rates and Fees established within this budget, as attached.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

**24-161 Haliburton/Pond**

**Be it resolved that Council shall adopt, that June 2, 2025, be established as the due date for payment of annual taxes and fees.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

**24-162 Haliburton/Pond**

**Be it resolved that Council shall adopt, that a 3% discount will be applied to annual tax & fees payments received on or before March 31, 2025.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

**24-163 Haliburton/Pond**

**Be it resolved that Council shall adopt, that a 15% discount will be applied to seniors receiving the Guaranteed Income Supplement (showing in Box 21 on the T4A OAS) providing his/her/their account is paid in full by the due date of June 2, 2025, this discount is for his/her/their principal residence only. Any adjustment for the current year can be applied for until December 31, 2025. There will no adjustments for prior years missed.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

**24-164 Haliburton/Pond**

**Be it resolved that Council shall adopt that all annual taxes and fees in arrears after June 2, 2025, will be charged a simple interest rate of 15% per annum and will be charged at the first day of each month on the outstanding principal. All other invoices, including those issued because of supplementary property assessments, are due 30 days from the date of issue. All invoices in arrears at the end of the month following issuance will be subject to simple interest charges of 15% per annum.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

**24-165 Haliburton/Pond**

**Be it resolved that Council shall approve payment of annual taxes and fees by credit card, but anyone wanting to pay by credit card will have a 2% fee applied to the payment amount.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

**2025 TAX EXEMPTIONS**

**24-166 Haliburton/Pond**

**Be it resolved that Council shall adopt, that pursuant to Section 111 of the Municipalities Act 1999, the property owned by the Kinsmen Club of Notre Dame located at 47 Centennial Drive be exempt from property tax for 2025.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

**24-167 Haliburton/Pond**

**Be it resolved that Council shall adopt, that pursuant to Section 111 of the Municipalities Act 1999, the property owned by the Loyal Orange Lodge located at 230-232 Main Street be exempt from property tax for 2025.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

Deputy Mayor Hooper was in conflict and left Chambers at 7:41:44 pm.

**24-168 Haliburton/Pond**

**Be it resolved that Council shall adopt, that pursuant to Section 111 of the Municipalities Act 1999, the property owned by the Lions Club located at 18 Bowater Avenue be exempt from property tax for 2025.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

Deputy Mayor Hooper re-entered Chambers at 7:42:11 pm.

**24-169 Haliburton/Pond**

**Be it resolved that Council shall adopt, that pursuant to Section 111 of the Municipalities Act 1999, the property owned by the Calypso Foundation located at 45 Centennial Drive be exempt from property tax and business tax for 2025.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

**24-170 Haliburton/Pond**

**Be it resolved that Council shall adopt, that pursuant to Section 111 of the Municipalities Act 1999, the Interfaith Goodwill Centre be exempt from the payment of 2025 business tax.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

Council Tucker was in conflict and left Chambers at 7:43:12 pm.

**24-171 Haliburton/Pond**

**Be it resolved that Council shall adopt, that pursuant to Section 111 of the Municipalities Act 1999, the property owned by the Masonic Lodge located at 12 Tizzard Street be exempt from property tax for 2025.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

Council Tucker re-entered Chambers at 7:43:47 pm.

**ADOPTION OF BUDGET**

**24-172 Haliburton/Pond**

**Be it resolved that Council shall adopt the 2025 Operating & Capital Budgets, as presented.**

Councillor Tucker while supporting the budget thought going forward the expenses of the Town be more detailed, and more planning and accountability be put into expenditures of various departments. Councillor Pond called the process Councillor Tucker spoke of zero-based budgeting.

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

As we approach the holiday season, I would like to extend my warmest wishes to my fellow Council members, our management and staff, and the residents of our community. May this holiday season be filled with joy, warmth, and treasured moments with your loved ones. I also wish you all a new year brimming with happiness, success, and exciting new opportunities.

**10. Other Committees and/or Business**

Councillor White said that the meeting scheduled for the **Community Advisory Committee** indicated by him at the last Public Council Meeting did not go ahead because of the number not available to attend. A meeting is planned for some time in January. He also advised that the committee is looking for new members.

Councillor White asked if the Town was ready to motion the new Municipal Plan, he was advised that there needs to be a public consultation, but the Town is currently waiting for the finalization of the documents. Council said that there was indication from the consultants that it would be February before they are available to meet with the Town.

On behalf of Council, management and staff, Mayor Freake wished the residents of Lewisporte and surrounding communities, a Merry Christmas, and a healthy and happy New Year.

**11.**  **Adjournment**

**24-173** **Pond/Haliburton**

**Resolved that the meeting adjourn.**

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion Carried

Time of adjournment: 7:52 PM.

Next Public Council Meeting to be held on January 14, 2025.

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Krista Freake, Mayor Bruce Roberts, Recording Secretary