



**Joint Council Agenda
Municipality of the District of West Hants &
Town of Windsor
May 25, 2017, 6:00 p.m.
Sanford Council Chambers**



In Attendance:

Municipality of the District of West Hants

A. Zebian, Warden (left at 6:40)
P. Morton, Deputy Warden
R. Jannasch, Councillor (left at 8:05)
K. Monroe, Councillor
D. Keith, Councillor
T. Leopold, Councillor
D. Francis, Councillor
R. Hussey, Councillor
J. Daniels, Councillor
R. Zwicker, Councillor
C. Osborne, CAO
C. Remme, Executive Assistant

Town of Windsor

J. Bregante, Councillor
S. Bibby, Councillor
J. Ivey, Councillor
Doug Armstrong, Acting CAO

Regrets: A. Allen, Mayor, Town of Windsor
L. Murley, Deputy Mayor, Town of Windsor
L. Coutinho, CAO, Town of Windsor

There were 12 members of the public in attendance.

1. Call to order

Warden Zebian called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. The Warden thanked everyone for attending and reviewed the fire evacuation procedures.

2. Approval of Agenda, including additions or deletions

MOVED and SECONDED that the agenda be approved with the following addition:

- **6.b. Hants Community Hospital Golf Tournament (Councillor Francis).**

Motion Carried.

3. Approval of the Joint Council Minutes of March 2, 2017

MOVED and SECONDED that the Joint Council Minutes of March 2, 2017 be approved as circulated.

Motion Carried.

4. Business Arising from Minutes and any Related Correspondence

There was no business arising or related correspondence.

5. Presentation (s)

a. Clean Nova Scotia – HomeWarming Low-Income Program

The Warden welcomed Mike MacKay, Outreach Coordinator for Clean NS, to the meeting.

M. MacKay thanked the Councils for the opportunity to speak on the HomeWarming Program. He went on to say that the service is for lower income home owners in the Province and provides a full home energy assessment where upgrades are paid through the program. The Outreach Coordinator explained that the program encompasses air quality as well as energy efficiency. He noted that energy costs should not exceed more than 6-9% of homeowner's income.

M. MacKay explained that the program is open to everyone in the Province who falls within the income bracket and can provide notice of assessment for the home and proof of ownership. He added that all work is guaranteed for two years.

The Outreach Coordinator expressed that the purpose of the presentation to Joint Council was to ask for assistance in creating awareness of the program to residents in West Hants and the Town of Windsor. He added that other municipalities have distributed the information and applications in their water and or tax bills, placed them in the offices for residents to pick up and have hand delivered the information to residents who they felt could benefit from the program.

Councillor Jannasch questioned if it was possible for a resident to qualify for the program if they were on a low-income program. M. MacKay responded that the only restriction in that regard is that the applicant can only use the program once but would qualify otherwise.

Councillor Bibby questioned if there was a cap on the project. M. MacKay replied that the only foreseen issue would be capacity noting the program had received ten years of funding and is currently in year three.

CAO Osborne spoke of an individual that she knew who had benefitted from the program noting that it had changed their lives. She added that she had had discussions with the Outreach Coordinator on how to distribute the material to residents. M. MacKay expressed that there would be no expectation for the municipal units to incur any costs with distribution of the material.

Councillor Hussey asked for clarification on the eligibility of the program asking if the number of people living in the home could be a single parent with children to which M. MacKay responded yes.

Warden Zebian thanked M. MacKay for his presentation.

b. Nova Scotia Environment – Source Water Protection

Warden Zebian welcomed Watershed Planner, Dawn MacNeill to Joint Council.

The Watershed Planner thanked the Councils for the opportunity to present. She reviewed her presentation bringing to Council's attention the distribution of water supplies in Nova Scotia. She noted that approximately 65% are serviced by municipal water with the remaining being wells and other water sources.

D. MacNeill went on to say that all 76 municipal drinking water supplies require source water protection plans and went on to speak of the steps involved in due diligence. The Watershed Planner then quizzed the Councils on water protection plans.

Discussion ensued surrounding source water protection plans including treatments, training programs, regulations and compliance. The Watershed Planner advised Council that the drinking water strategy in Nova Scotia follows a multiple barrier approach.

The Watershed Planner went on to speak of the roles and responsibilities of the municipal units which require meeting terms and conditions of approvals to operate including water testing guidelines, qualified operators, documentation and other items.

D. MacNeill spoke of the importance of source water protection expressing that water is essential for public health and well being for communities. She added that costs to replace water supplies would far outweigh the cost of protecting them. The Watershed Planner advised the Councils that the municipal units have Source Water Protection Plans in place for the three watersheds adding they had been a requirement since 2003.

D. MacNeill spoke of the Watershed Committees which take on the task of identifying the risks to the water sources and reviewing them often to see if the Source Water Protection Plans should be changed and drew Councils attention to the Municipal Source Water Protection Plan. The Watershed Planner reviewed means by which municipal units can protect water quality including zoning, acquisition of land, contingency plans, education and designation.

Councillor Monroe asked if the Department of Environment performed inspections on watershed areas to which the Watershed Planner responded yes. The Councillor then asked for clarity on the benefits of designating a watershed area. D. MacNeill explained that the designation allows municipal units to regulate the activities on a protected watershed area that the Department of Environment would not normally regulate.

Councillor Jannasch thanked the Watershed Planner for her presentation. He expressed his appreciation for the work being done to protect municipally owned water sources and went on to voice a concern that had been brought to him by a resident regarding private water supplies. The Councillor asked if there were any initiatives in place for those with private wells. The Watershed Planner responded that there are standards and guidelines in place for private water sources but no initiatives.

Councillor Zwicker questioned if there are any cases of a utility with more than one water source asking if it could be looked at to expand a utility or as a contingency plan. D. MacNeill responded that there are cases where a utility has a mix of ground water and surface water. She went on to say the possibility could be looked for expansion or as a contingency keeping withdraws in mind.

Deputy Warden Morton thanked the Watershed Planner for her presentation.

c. Active Transportation

The Deputy Warden welcomed representatives of the Active Transportation Committee Bekah Craik, Active Living Coordinator and Tracy Burgess, Community Volunteer to the meeting.

Active Living Coordinator, B. Craik, spoke of the Active Transportation Plan that had been approved by the Municipality of the District of West Hants, the Town of Windsor and the former Town of Hantsport. She went on to say that the Active Transportation Committee is a collaboration of the three municipal units originally involved in the plan as well as several community members and stake holders adding that the Committee meets monthly.

The Active Living Coordinator went on to speak of the focuses on both the municipal and provincial levels of government, the UNSM and other strategies such as the positive aging and road safety programs.

T. Burgess spoke of the benefits of active transportation such as fiscal and emotional benefits. She added that communities that have active transportation as part of their culture are more vibrant and safer. She went on to speak of the recommended guidelines noting active transportation gives an opportunity for individuals to implement physical activity into their day.

T. Burgess talked of the successes, including the branding, noting the Committee has a very industrious working group. She added that active transportation is most successful when there are connections and spoke of the Riverview and Tregothic trails. She asked the Councillors to consider their respective communities to identify areas that would benefit from connector trails.

T. Burgess advised Council that the Committee has been focusing on education through presentations, displays and events such as bike rodeos.

B. Craik spoke of the development and active alliance that is currently being worked on with other municipal units adding that the relationships will allow for resource sharing and create an Active Transportation toolbox that could be used by all involved. The Active Living Coordinator brought to Council's attention a website which shows where the Active Transportation Plans had been adopted across Canada noting it demonstrated the magnitude of the adoption of being active.

Councillor Hussey asked if there had been areas identified in the area that could be developed to be more active transportation friendly. B. Craik drew Council's attention to the Active Transportation Plan which identified areas as well as a proposed plan and cost estimates. T. Burgess added that the Department of Transportation was a partner in the Plan and remain in close communication with projects they have underway to determine if there are possibilities to incorporate active transportation.

Councillor Bibby asked if schools had been reached out to regarding active transportation noting her frustration with the children taking buses as opposed to walking to events such as the rinks. The Active Living Coordinator voiced that it was her hope to establish safe walking routes for schools such as the ones that will be going into the community of Hantsport.

Councillor Zwicker voiced that, as an avid cyclist, having all three communities linked together would be wonderful. He added that the current condition of the roads is horrible and it would be nice to have quality paving, or to encourage the Department of Transportation to fix the roads that connect the communities. B. Craik advised that the Committee had been working with the Department regarding the Blue Route.

Councillor Leopold asked if the suggestions made by Council for potential sites for Active Transportation had to be owned by the Municipality noting that the rail lines would be ideal to develop. B. Craik responded that there had been many opportunities identified, one of which were the rail lines.

Councillor Leopold asked how it was determined if snowmobiles were allowed on the trail systems. B. Craik informed Council that there was a representative from Hants Snowdusters on the Active Transportation Committee adding that snowmobile use was determined based on the sustainability of the trail.

Councillor Leopold questioned if the Committee considered options to connect the Brooklyn School to the downtown core of the community. B. Craik responded that as the trails are owned by the school the conversations would have to take place with their administration.

Councillor Monroe suggested that the Avondale Peninsula be considered for an active transportation route as it is a natural marathon site noting that the paving would need upgrades.

Councillor Daniels stated that she was proud to see the Active Avon representatives at the Nova Scotia Planning Conference. She added that the group was well showcased, created a lot of conversation surrounding the topic of active transportation and were very receptive to working with the municipalities and communities. CAO Osborne noted that the Committee has become the showcase in Nova Scotia and thanked them for their work.

Deputy Warden Morton thanked B. Craik and T. Burgess for their presentation.

6. New Business

a. Dangerous and Unsightly Complaint Processes

Deputy Warden Morton called on CAO Osborne to speak of the process for dangerous and unsightly complaints.

CAO Osborne addressed Council noting that she and CAO Coutinho felt, considering the recent public discussion surrounding the topic, it would be helpful to explain the process for dangerous and unsightly complaints.

The CAO explained that the Municipal Government Act gives municipalities the authority to deal with dangerous and unsightly properties as it states that every property must be maintained as to not be dangerous or unsightly. She went on to say that CAOs have been appointed as administrators in the town and municipality and make use of by-law officers as well as the knowledge of the building inspectors. CAO Osborne clarified that the administrators can place orders on properties unless it is a case where there is a need for demolition which would come to Council to make the final decision.

The CAO advised Council of the additional roles of the Dangerous and Unsightly Administrator including the power to enter onto a property without a warrant, to order a property vacated if unsafe and the power to order immediate action to be taken if public safety was a concern. She added that the Administrators must report to Council twice a year on the status of properties under order.

CAO Osborne reviewed the complaint process noting the first step taken is investigation into the merits of the complaint then on to the decision of the appropriate action to be taken to remedy the conditions. She added that the municipal units are cognisant of the reasonableness of the timeframe given to remedy the conditions. The CAO advised that the costs associated with the clean up can be done at the expense of the municipal unit and, under an order, can be attached to a property as a lien. She noted that most of the time the property owners comply with the orders adding that the Municipality has issued close to 40 orders.

The CAO spoke on who was considered to be the owner of a property stating it could be the part owner, joint owner, tenant in common or joint tenant of the land or property. She went on to say that if the owner is absent or incapacitated the owner is then considered to be the executor, trustee, guardian or agent of the property or in some cases the financial institution

who holds the mortgage on the property. She added that the bank then can take the matter to court to remove themselves from the responsibility of the property.

Councillor Monroe asked for clarification on how financial institutions could remove themselves from being liable for the costs associated with the dangerous and unsightly properties. The CAO responded that the institutions can give up their interest in the property and spoke of an instance where that occurred.

Councillor Francis asked if instances of hoarding fell under the legislation. The CAO responded that there are many such cases that are brought forward that may appear to fall within this condition. In cases where the occupants are seniors they are referred to the Senior Safety Officer. She added that the municipalities often make referrals to other resources.

CAO Osborne spoke of the balancing act required when dealing with dangerous and unsightly orders. She spoke of a situation where a property owner had made a commitment to remedy the condition of their property but were not able to afford to do so. She stated that the cost of the repairs was placed on their taxes and paid over time.

The CAO spoke of Council's role regarding dangerous and unsightly properties. She voiced that strategic direction from Council regarding complaints as well as timelines and a budget to pay for remedying the properties would be helpful to staff.

Councillor Monroe spoke of the large historic building located off Highway 101 which is no longer secure and voiced her concern stating it would be very dangerous. CAO Osborne stated that the process is complaint driven and, unless staff is made aware of the issue, nothing can be done. She encouraged the Councillor to make a complaint to start the process of having the building secured.

Councillor Leopold asked if the complainant is contacted regarding the progress of any complaint. CAO Osborne responded the municipal unit should be advising the complainant that there is an active file, adding that when the complaint moves to an Order it becomes public information. The Councillor asked when files were reported to Council to which the CAO responded in the CAO report.

The CAO advised Council that under the Municipal Government Act Council had the ability to create a Minimum Standards By-law noting that very few municipal units have done so.

Discussion continued around several properties in the area that could be deemed dangerous and unsightly.

b. Hants Community Hospital Golf Tournament – Councillor Francis

Councillor Francis advised Councils that the Hants Community Hospital would be holding their Annual Golf Tournament on Friday July 7th and were looking for support through the

creation of a team or sponsorship. Councillor Bregante voiced that the Town had been in contact with the Foundation to inform them they were unable to participate this year.

7. Business and Community Updates
a. Town of Windsor

Councillor Bregante passed on regrets from the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the CAO.

Councillor Bregante gave the following updates:

- CAO Coutinho had received the Lieutenant Governor's 2016 Medal of Excellence in Public Administration during a ceremony in Halifax on May 2, 2017;
- Traffic delays taking place in Windsor due to patching of roads and the project on Gerrish Street being underway;
- The Town held their tax rate for 2017-18.

b. Municipality of the District of West Hants

Deputy Warden Morton updated the Councils on the following from the Municipality:

- The Municipality had passed their budget seamlessly and were able to hold the tax rate;
- The sub-station in Garlands Crossing was due to be completed by the end of September;
- Ellershouse Expansion passed;
- Holmes Hill Construction well underway;
- Developments in Forest Lakes are increasing;
- West Hants Council will not be meeting during the month of August;
- Public Consultations will begin later in the summer as part of the strategic planning for the Municipality;
- Grants had been passed and recipients will be receiving notification in the upcoming weeks.

Councillor Leopold noted that Forest Lakes had an activity schedule including an open house with live music and tours of the development.

c. CAO Collaborations

CAO Osborne advised Council of the following topics were currently being worked on and discussed regarding collaboration:

- Regional Fire Service – CAO Coutinho sits as an observer at the meetings
- Windsor Regional Library – cost sharing and funding
- Policing – request has been made to the Department of Justice for a policing study
- Tourism – will be meeting to discuss how to work together to promote the areas
- Regional Planning – discussion on options
- Debt Funding/Debt Affordability Models

- Water Utility – received \$20,000 from the Province for a redundancy study as well as funding to conduct a regional water utility study from Municipal Affairs
- Joint Purchasing – in the process of pre-qualifying vendors for Dangerous and Unsightly
- IT Memorandum of Understanding – agreement should be completed in the upcoming month

Councillor Monroe questioned if discussions were planned on how to bring business to the area. CAO Osborne replied that the Warden had been working with the VRENs noting discussion had taken place surrounding the possibility of a Regional Development role in the future. Councillor Daniels voiced the importance of not creating redundancy in hiring someone to fill the role when the VRENs is currently in that role for the Municipality. Councillor Monroe expressed that she would like to see steps being taken to drive business to the region.

CAO Osborne expressed that the region is in need of someone to fill the role of Economic Development adding that West Hants needs to create a strategy in order to move forward. She went on to speak of the joint efforts of the Town and Municipality noting that work will be done on a tourism strategy for the two units.

Councillor Leopold asked who were the members of the Regional Fire Services Committee. CAO Osborne replied that the Committee consisted of a representative from each fire department serving West Hants and included the Windsor Fire Department, the CAOs of the two municipal units and the Municipal Clerk.

Deputy Warden Morton questioned why building inspection services were not shared between the Town and the Municipality noting that the Town currently utilizes Town of Wolfville staff to fill the role. CAO Osborne replied that the Municipality currently does not have the capacity to fulfill the position for the Town adding that discussions had taken place on options for the future.

8. Future Presentations

- Engage NS (Monroe)
- Pumpkin Festival/Regatta Committee (Hussey)
- EMO (Bregante)

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Joint Council will take place on July 27 at 6:00pm in the Town of Windsor Chambers.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:35pm.