

Rural Municipality of Eastern Kings

Council Meeting Minutes Tuesday, November 10, 2020

In attendance: Mayor Grace Cameron, Deputy Mayor Danelle Elliott, Councillor Anne McPhee, Councillor David Stewart, Councillor Bradley MacDonald, Councillor Arthur Baker and Chief Administrative Officer Sonya Martin.

Regrets: Councillor Bernadette McInnis

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Grace Cameron at 6:18 p.m. A quorum was present so the meeting could proceed.

2. Conflicts of Interest Declaration – Individual Councillors

Mayor Grace Cameron asked if there were any conflicts of interest in regards to the agenda. Mayor Cameron noted that she would recuse herself for the approval of the October 22, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes.

3. Agenda Approval

It was moved by Councillor Anne McPhee and seconded by Councillor Bradley MacDonald that the Agenda be approved as presented. All were in favour and the motion was carried.

4. Approval of Minutes

Mayor Cameron asked council to review the October 13th Minutes for any errors or omissions. Hearing none, it was moved by Deputy Mayor Danelle Elliott and seconded by Councillor Arthur Baker that the Minutes be accepted as presented. All were in favour and the motion was carried.

Mayor Cameron did not participate in the approval of the Minutes of the October 22, 2020 Special Council Meeting. Deputy Mayor Danelle Elliott asked Council to peruse those for any errors or omissions. Hearing none, it was moved by Councillor Bradley MacDonald and seconded by Councillor Anne McPhee that the Minutes be approved as presented. All were in favour and the motion was carried.

Mayor Cameron chaired the remainder of the meeting.

5. Old Business

a) RMEK Workplace Harassment Policy

Mayor Cameron gave a quick update on this Policy, explaining that she had met with Lori MacGregor of the Eastern PEI Chamber of Commerce and with Margaret Gallant of the Community Business Development Corporation (CBDC) and it was determined that a bit more work is required prior to submission to Council for approval. It will have to be determined how exactly to include all volunteers in the Policy and the role that Occupational Health and Safety might play.

There are two additional policies/procedures required which are Working Alone and Workplace Violence; there is potential for Ms. Gallant to be of help on both of these and when all three are ready they can be brought to Council for approval in December. Training for Council, staff and volunteers will be required and there is potential for CBDC to cover part of this cost. Council requested to read draft Policy and provide comments to Grace.

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6. Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Report

- a) **See Appendix “A”:** Banking reports and expense statement review with notes.

7. Mayor’s Report – See Appendix “B”

8. New Business

- a) **Federal Safe Restart Program – Municipal Agreement for Base Funding Support – Resolution.**

Communication from Minister Fox’s office has been received regarding the Safe Restart Agreement which will provide financial assistance for reopening municipal services in PEI to support critical needs for transit, protection of public health and safety, prepare for potential future waves of the COVID-19 virus, and further support the safe reopening of economies across Canada. This is federal required to be spent by March 31, 2021.

A signed agreement to participate reflects the municipality’s understanding on shared objectives and terms established by the Safe Restart Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Province of PEI. A Council resolution is required to participate.

A discussion ensued on how the funding would be spent including upgrades to technology for Council meetings, Point of Sale terminal and Covid-19 supplies. The CAO is to get quotes on tablets, software and supplies for the next meeting.

It was moved by Councillor David Stewart and seconded by Councillor Arthur Baker that the Municipality be authorized to the “Confirmation of Municipal Services and Agreement to Participate”. All were in favour and the resolution was approved.

- b) **Annual Schedule of Meetings - MGA 110(3) – Resolution**

As per the Municipal Government Act, Section 110(3), it was moved by Councillor Bradley MacDonald and seconded by Deputy Mayor Elliott that the following schedule of meetings for 2021 be approved:

- January 12
- February 9
- March 9 (Financial Plan 2021-2022 - Presentation to Community; Formerly Annual General Meeting)
- March 23 (Including Approval of Financial Plan 2021-2022)
- April 13
- May 11
- June 8
- July 13
- August 10
- September 14
- October 12
- November 9
- December 14

All were in favour and the resolution was approved.

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Mayor Cameron noted that Council is now two years into the mandate, with only two years remaining and still work to be done; she felt it would be beneficial to develop a Check List with timelines of what needs to be implemented in the next two years.

c) Annual November 11th Remembrance Day Wreath Laying – Update

Mayor Cameron opened a discussion on the Covid-19 procedure for the Nov 11th wreath laying. It was noted that wreaths could be placed any time after the 11th hour two minutes of silence. Councillor David Stewart volunteered to lay the wreath on behalf of the Council.

In addition to the purchase of the wreath, it was moved by Councillor Arthur Baker and seconded by Councillor Anne McPhee that the Municipality donate \$50 to the Souris Legion; all were in favour and the motion was carried.

d) Candidates for nomination to the Basin Head Marine Protected Area Advisory Board.

After discussion, it was determined that Mayor Cameron should write a letter on behalf of the Municipality committing to consultation with the Board during the review of the Official Plan and Subdivision and Development Bylaw. This letter can be presented at the Advisory Board Meeting on December 1, 2020.

e) Active Transportation Fund

Deputy Mayor Elliott led a discussion on the ATF and what it entailed. A project with this 50/50 funding can be accomplished with several funding partners and can also include Gas Tax Funds if it meets all criteria. An example of a project would be widening the roads in Eastern Kings that will allow safe biking from the "Rail to Trail" to other areas of the municipality and also include bike racks and washrooms. Deputy Mayor Elliott had been in touch with the Souris and Area Branch of the PEI Wildlife Federation who is looking to partner on this opportunity. Councillors David Stewart, Anne McPhee, Deputy Mayor Danelle Elliot and CAO Sonya Martin are to attend this meeting on November 17, 2020.

The CAO is to check with Gas Tax contact for next fiscal installment.

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f) 2020 Souris Lions Club Christmas Boxes – Donation - Resolution

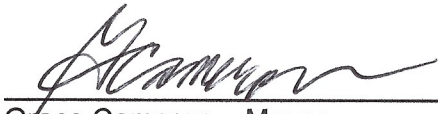
A letter was received from the Souris Lions Club requesting a donation for the Annual Lions Club Christmas Boxes Program. It was moved by Councillor Anne McPhee and seconded by Councillor Bradley MacDonald that the RMEK would donate \$500 in support of this program. All were in favour and the resolution was approved.

9. Adjournment

It was moved by Councillor Arthur Baker and seconded by Councillor David Stewart to adjourn the meeting at 7:53 p.m. All were in favour and the motion was carried.

Signed in accordance

Municipal Government Act S.116(4)



Grace Cameron – Mayor



Date



Sonya Martin – Chief Administrative Officer



Date

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Appendix "A"

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Report:
November 10, 2020

Bank Statement Reports:

CIBC – Souris

1.) CIBC – Cash Account:

Closing Bank Balance on October 31, 2020: **\$48,138.07**

Souris Credit Union

1.) Shares

Business Shares at October 31, 2020: **\$5.00**

Patronage at October 31, 2020 **\$55.76**

2.) Gas Tax (Restricted Funds)

Balance on October 31, 2020 **\$102,095.06**

Interest **\$85.59**

Closing Balance October 31, 2020 **\$102,180.65**

3.) *New Business Strategic Savings Acct 21-3

CIBC transferred Surplus Property Tax Revenues: **\$15,828.79**

Interest **\$11.93**

Closing Balance October 31, 2020 **\$15,840.72**

4. Term Certificates

GIC 2 YEAR TERM: Current Principal Balance 2nd year: **\$15,413.63**

Accrued Interest **197.42** | Closing Value: **\$15,611.05**

Maturity Date: '05/14/2021 | Interest rate 2.75%

GIC 3 YEAR TERM: Current Principal Balance 2nd year: **\$15,428.67**

Accrued Interest **204.80** | Closing Value: **\$15,633.47**

Maturity Date: '05/14/2022 | Interest rate 2.850%

Total Overall Value at October 31, 2020

Principal \$30,842.30 | Accrued Interest 402.22 | Closing Value: \$31,244.52

NOTES:

- Permit Fees – 6,400.00 / DO Wages – 6,935.00
- Prepaid GeoLinc 50.00 – excellent tool for the DO and Planning Committee
- Tenant Insurance for our office – 113.00 annually
- All current Legal Fees will be sent to us for Nov. 2020 – We've budgeted \$9,950.00 for this fiscal year. (We currently have an E & O Insurance Claim open for the Klein Appeal.)
- With the Safe Restart Funding we can track/allocate it all under a Covid-19 Category and put the funds used for the door/lock back into the Emergency Management Plan Contingency funds.

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- FPEIM virtual AGM meeting – I found the PEI Sustainable Communities Initiative & Sustainable Energy in Samso, Denmark very interesting. Our lead is Dean Lund, from TIE (PEI Transportation, Infrastructure & Energy) Small town has a wood chip system, straw burners and solar panels takes care of 100% of their energy needs (200-400 households). Premier King acknowledged the “Eldership” (experience & wisdom) of two recently retired CAO’s with a combined total of 81 years of experience. (Marie Barlow – Tyne Valley & Bev Shaw – Tignish)!

Appendix “B”

Mayor’s Report:

The bulk of my report this month has to do with the 63rd Annual Meeting of the Federation of Prince Edward Island Municipalities which was held via ZOOM on Monday, October 19th and which Sonya and I attended. I’m not going to go through everything in detail as copies of the documents presented can be obtained from Sonya but there are a couple items of note.

Of course, we began with comments from the President, Bruce MacDougall, who is a Councillor for the City of Summerside. His report revolved around the restructuring of municipalities including the latest one in West River, which is a combination of Afton, West River, New Haven-Riverdale, Meadowbank and Bonshaw. One of the items that the Federation is lobbying for is a change in the tax structure for unincorporated areas. “The greatest impediment to province-wide incorporation has been the unfair taxation of properties within municipalities compared to those in unincorporated areas. When properties become part of a municipality through annexation the property owners would benefit from the reduced provincial rate.”

Bruce also spoke on the land use planning issues that we have in the Province making reference to the various reports that have been prepared over the years. I’m certain we will hear more on both of these issues over the coming months.

The standard AGM business was conducted including adoption of the minutes of the last meeting and presentation of the financial statements and budget. However, there were two resolutions that were passed which may have an impact down the road. The first one was that the FPEIM call for a Provincial Forfeiture Law. The Cities of Summerside and Charlottetown have already passed resolutions asking the Province take action on this. It was noted that “under forfeiture legislation property could be seized that is owned by persons who are not involved in or responsible for the criminal activity that is the subject of the seizure.” This action would see innocent parties protected. Civil forfeiture legislation is currently in place in eight provinces, all except NL and PEI. This resolution passed unanimously.

The second resolution called for the Federation to request that the federal government augment the categories of projects that may be supported with the Gas Tax funds to included projects relevant to municipalities that want to work with landowners to protect or restore natural infrastructure that is essential to employment, quality of life and resilience in the face of climate change. It was felt that this resolution aligned with the federal government’s objectives related to climate change mitigation and adaptation. This resolution also passed.

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We also heard from various political party leaders including Sonny Gallant, Peter Bevan-Baker and Dennis King. Of these, the most impactful was Peter Bevan-Baker who spoke to the question of how communities can be strong and resilient and the role that rural internet plays in that. He also spoke to land use planning and protection on PEI and wrapped up with the role of women in politics and government and how to break down the barriers to such participation.

We heard from three ministers, Jamie Fox, Natalie Jameson and Bloyce Thompson and they spoke of the various programs which are available such as Safe Restart, Active Transportation Fund, funds for generators for warming centres (currently reviewing this policy) and help with animal control services. Overall, we were encouraged to be aware of the programs that are available and take advantage of them. Minister Thompson also mentioned the Land Matters Project and it was apparent that land use and protection is on the mind of all who spoke.

The guest speaker was Dean Lund who spoke about sustainable energy in Samso, Denmark. I'm hopeful that his presentation will be made available on the FPEIM website, but it is not there just yet.

It was interesting having a meeting of this nature by Zoom. There were approximately 80 participants and it all went quite smoothly. People were able to participate as they wished. I would certainly anticipate that Zoom is part of "the new normal".

Another topic I wanted to mention tonight is that two years ago, almost to the day, we had an election here in Eastern Kings and all of us were elected to carry out the roles of Mayor and Councillors. We are, therefore, two years into our mandate with only another two years to go! And there is still much to be done. Many of the topics under New Business tonight are things nobody talked about when we put forward our nomination; nobody knew that we'd have to deal with COVID and its fallout. We do still have lots to do in our remaining two years and I expect that they will fly by just like the last two years have. Danelle and I were talking yesterday about how do we make sure they all get done and concluded that we just have to make up a list, put some timelines on them, ask for volunteers both within and outside the Council and move forward down the list. We should have more on that for the December meeting too.

In two years, we will be having another election and I do not think it premature to start talking about that to other people in the community, people who might be interested in running for the positions we now hold. Personally, I am particularly interested in getting younger people to express an interest. This is a challenge for all our volunteer groups, no question, so I think that makes it more important to start the discussion early. One thing I have found out is that there is a lot more work involved than I ever imagined. There are all kinds of events/meetings/opportunities for funding that come up that need to be responded to and when your CAO is only paid for 20 hours per week, it is impossible to deal with it all; mayor and councillors play such an important role in getting it all done.

I thank you all for the hard work that you have put in for the last two years; they haven't been easy or simple. I'm hoping that the next two years will at least be a bit more fun than 2020 has been.