



Village of Baddeck

492 Chebucto Street
Unit 5, P.O. Box 63
Baddeck, Nova Scotia B0E 1B0

Monthly Village Commissioner Meeting Wednesday, August 14th, 2024

Village of Baddeck Office 492 Chebucto St, Baddeck.

Participants: Jennifer MacDonald (Chair), Gary Crowder (Vice-Chair), Dan McNeil, Kenneth MacKinnon, Roman Braun-Huettner (VM)

Online:

Regrets: Bonnie Whyte

The meeting was called to order at 6:29 PM by Com. MacDonald.

Com. MacDonald reads the land acknowledgment to the Mi'kmaq People.

1. Approval of/Additions to the Agenda

- a. Agenda was distributed last week:
 - i. Com. MacDonald mistakenly put the wrong date on the agenda: Aug 9th changed to Aug 14th
- b. Com. Crowder has an addition to the agenda at the end of the meeting (added to correspondence)
- c. Com. MacDonald received an email about sidewalk trip hazard removal and would like to add that under new business.
- d. Agenda was approved as distributed.

2. Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

- a. No conflicts of interest

3. Approval of the Minutes from previous Regular Meeting: July 10th, 2024

- a. Minutes from the regular meeting were distributed last week. No corrections, errors, omissions, or additions were stated. The minutes were approved as distributed

4. **Business Arising from Minutes**

a. *Water and Sewer Capacity Considerations:*

- i. The Village Commission initially requested collaboration on funding for the wastewater and water treatment engineering study at the June meeting (municipal meeting). The municipality was asked for \$154, 000, which is 50% of the funding for the study.
- ii. At the Municipality meeting in July, they came back with an offer: \$50, 000 plus \$150, 000 loan over 5 years with a 5% interest rate.
- iii. The Commissioners were taken back from the offer, it was not the response the Village had expected.
- iv. At the June meeting, the motion being considered was \$154, 000 to match for the engineering study plus the \$211, 000 over 3 years. The County had discussed likely approving the 1 year (about \$70 000) and then allowing the next incoming council to vote on the next 2 years (election is upcoming in October).
- v. The Commissioners need to decide what their response is going to be.
- vi. A tender was put out for the engineering study and are ready to award the contract.
- vii. The Village has received a proposal that covers all our bases (within budget). The engineering companies have visited the site, and they are comfortable with the scope of work.
- viii. Great news: the province has agreed to contribute \$100, 000 to support the engineering assessment.
- ix. MLA Keith Bain visited, recognized how important it is, and went to bat for us at the province.
- x. The estimated cost of the project is about \$300, 000. Now, we have secured \$100, 000 of PCAP funding through the province. The money must be used before March 31st, 2025.
- xi. A large concern for the Commissioners is that Baddeck residents who live in the Village pay an area rate (Village taxes) and municipal taxes that are excessively charged compared to other areas.
- xii. For example, the Little Narrows area doesn't pay an area rate; they pay municipal taxes and their water rate (consumption and base rate).
- xiii. If the Municipality is investing in wastewater and water treatment plants (North of Smokey) elsewhere in the county with municipal dollars, the Commissioners believe those municipal dollars should also be spent in Baddeck.
- xiv. County collects around \$1.4 million in municipal taxes from Baddeck.

Com. McNeil added that it seems like a no-brainer that the Municipality would help the Village with the costs. He was wondering if we would be able to go back to the county and have the same question again.

Com. Crowder (Vice Chair) added that it seems like the only thing to do is try again and get more support from the residents of Baddeck. This is not a Commission vs. County issue; it is about the residents of Baddeck being short-chained from a funding standpoint.

Steve Goldthwaite asked if the Municipality is at a point in its budgeting cycle where it wouldn't be possible to give that money to the Village.

- xv. The other piece of this that the Village asked for a meeting. They set it up and provided the County with a list of budgetary items to be discussed before they finalized their budget.
- xvi. The County canceled the meeting and was never rescheduled despite effort on the Commissioners part.
- xvii. This information is not a new to the County, the Village had presented twice about the capacity concerns (at both treatment plants).

Sara Crowder asked what the plan would be if the County holds back with funding and does not help pay for the study

- xviii. The Village does have operating funds that can be accessed if necessary. If the Village were to fully fund the study, it would still be able to fund payroll and pay suppliers.
- xix. The County expressed that they would be reluctant to make a future with new members elected in October.
- xx. The Village doesn't need to accept the loan; it could just take the \$50 000 and then renegotiate from there because we can start to bankroll some of the study with the \$50 000.
- xxi. Roman (Village Manager) received a report from UARB
 - 1. The water utility's responsibility is to protect its current users, which will cause problems.
 - 2. If the capital cost of building capacity is going to be on the current users, that will cause problems.
- xxii. The first step would be getting on the agenda for August 21st, and the Commissioners and Village Manager would come up with a few different options to represent the County.

5. New Business

a. Sidewalk Safe Canada

- i. Com. MacDonald received an email from Sidewalk Safe Canada. They have recently visited Baddeck and Ingonish and have identified some trip hazards on the main roads in Baddeck.
- ii. They would like to come back and fix those hazards. This would cost around \$10,000 and be completed in 2 to 3 days.
- iii. Com. MacDonald is going to find out some more information.

b. Employee Handbook

- i. This employee handbook applies to new hires, not staff currently working with other agreements.
- ii. Would like to post the draft on the Village of Baddeck website.

- iii. Thank you to Monica MacLean, Kerianne McNeil, and the Commissioners who worked on the handbook.
- iv. Com. MacDonald would like to put a motion on the table to pass this as a draft for a new employee (currently hiring).

Com. McNeil moved to pass this copy of the handbook as a draft for new hires.

Seconded by Com. MacKinnon. All in favour – Motion carried.

- c. Draft Audited Statements 2022
 - i. They are not ready for approval.
 - ii. Ended up with a surplus of \$300,000.
 - iii. The statement show a surplus because of a capital grant
 - iv. In September we should have an audited files on the agenda by then.

- d. Victoria Highland Civic Centre (Shawn MacSween and Mitchell Brewer)
 - i. The rink building is going to be destroyed.
 - ii. Outstanding water bills: Shawn has some questions about some of the water bills from 2022, they seem to be a bit high. Roman and Kerianne will investigate it.
 - iii. Wondering if the Village has a policy in place for grant applications?
 - 1. The Village doesn't have a grant policy.
 - iv. The lease: The Village provided the lease, it was signed and then the rink never got a signed copy, Roman is going to forward it to them.
 - v. New building: the new building will be bigger, wondering if it will affect the lease?
 - 1. The answer is no. It shouldn't change the lease or go against it. If problems do pop up, the Commissioners will work with them to make it work for both sides.

- e. Gardens
 - i. To keep up with the gardens every year we contract an outside service to plant and maintain them.
 - ii. The Commissioners think it could be made more of a community event or competition next year. The best garden could win a prize.
 - iii. This would encourage community engagement, help practice good environmental practices, and reducing the Villages cost.
 - iv. Sara Crowder offered the idea of 'gorilla gardening', which is a group of volunteers to redo the gardens
 - v. Could look at adding native plants to the gardens.

f. Washrooms

- i. The Village had a meeting with the Municipality and BABTA about the washrooms at the information centre (second meeting)
- ii. The Municipality committed to install low flow toilets and to install taps that go off immediately.
- iii. The lease for the public washrooms (by the VIC) expires in March 2025. The village's role in the bathrooms needs to be decided because we currently pay the water and sewer bill.
- iv. Barriers might need to be put up around bathrooms so that people will stop trying to dump their waste there (RVs are dumping into the toilets).
- v. Another solution would be to close the washrooms when it is not busy.
- vi. Asked BABTA to put their name on the water account to come into compliance with UARB (we will still pay the bill).

6. Reports

a. Waterfront Baddeck Committee

- i. There is no report for this meeting
- ii. Com. MacDonald (Chair) wanted to note that Baddeck Quest was a giant success! Thank you, Waterfront Baddeck Committee, for organizing the event, and a special thank you to Rhonda.

b. Audit Committee (Com. Gary Crowder)

- i. The last meeting was held on July 17th, 2024, at the Inverary Resort.
- ii. The meeting minutes have not been distributed yet and will be reviewed at next month's meeting.

c. Wharf Manager (Denise Mulley)

- i. The Google calendar has been updated
- ii. Building has been painted, and letters on the building have been removed.
- iii. Meeting with Lyle Donovan. He is trying to arrange a meeting with David Buchanan and Wharf Manager to complete the fire plan.
- iv. A problem on the wharf with Rick Ellerbrook this week with him trying to use the government wharf to operate his sail tours. A refund for the booking was issued.
- v. A common suggestion from tourists and boaters is that there should be some sort of transportation in Baddeck. Electrical bikes were suggested.
- vi. The sunshade structure has handled the wind well, only had to reconnect the roof twice.

d. Public Works (Scott MacLeod)

- i. Scott is away on vacation. The Commission will go over his report outside of meeting.

e. Village Manager (Roman Braun-Huettner)

- i. ANSV AGM (Association of Nova Scotia Village)
 1. Saturday September 21st, 2024, in St. Peters.
- ii. Complaints About Payment Reminder
 1. Five customers called or came into the office last week and complained about the payment reminders for their water bills sent out earlier that week. Their behaviour and language were not acceptable. Staff locked the door when customers left because they left unsafe. Village Manager (Roman) wanted to make Commissioners aware that some customers behaviour is unacceptable and if it happens again, it will be reported to the RCMP.
 2. Facebook post was made to residents that inappropriate language and bullying will not be tolerated at the Village Office.
- iii. Grant Applications
 1. Beautifications Grant: Village of Baddeck received the grant; \$14 875
 2. PCAP Grant: Village also received the PCAP grant for the engineering study \$100 000
- iv. Engineering Study
 1. CBCL Engineering have a proposal to do the study, and they will be assigned to do it.
 2. Official letter will be sent to CBCL this week.
- v. Water Utility – UARB
 1. UARB Letter was received, helps explain the opinion that UARB has regarding our capacity concerns.
- vi. Meeting with NSE (Nova Scotia Environment)
- vii. Insurance Claims
 1. Fraud Claim
 - a. Settled at \$38,397
 2. Wharf Claim
 - a. Work will start in the fall. Due to delay, the NCL invoice will be sent to the insurance and the cheque will be sent to the village. Deduction is \$10,000.00.
- viii. Insurance Policies
 1. Updated files and property list was sent to insurance.
- ix. Village Administration HR
 1. Review of the Employee Handbook
 2. Job posting was updated. 150 applications. Village Manager (Roman) will go through them in the next couple of days.
 3. Sarah Collins student term was up on August 9th but will keep working for another 2 weeks.
- x. Accounts Receivable
 1. For water bills that recently went out we are at \$166, 000 receivable

2. Haven't followed up on the 2021 and 2022 taxes. 2021 is outstanding \$21,000 and 2022 has \$12,000.
 3. Taxes for 2024, the file is ready to go but we must wait on a response from Ross MacDonald about the fire protection rate.
- xi. Public Works Clothing
 1. The clothing has been ordered but has not been received.
 - xii. Audit 2022
 1. 2022 Draft Statement was received and sent to the Audit Committee for review.
 - xiii. Audit 2023
 1. MNP (Meyers Norris Penny) sent a link to the Village with information about the 2023 Audit. The Village admin will start to work on it next week.
 - xiv. Tax Bill 2024
 1. The tax import file for QBO is ready to go. Waiting on a response from Municipal Affairs if tax exempt properties are also exempt from the fire protection rate.
 - xv. Health and Safety Officer
 1. The Village had a visit from Amanda Ley and received a report. Village administration and Public Works will work on the list and their recommendations.
 - xvi. Parking at the Wharf
 1. Observation that people park in the non-parking area and go swimming on the island
 2. Wheelchair parking: Too small for ramps (Alderwood truck/van)
 - xvii. Voyent Alert
 1. Training happened on August 14th and now can issue our own alerts.
 - xviii. Parking at the Wharf
 1. Curb by the Waterfront Baddeck Sign is an accessibility problem and needs to be changed.
 2. Handicap parking by Freight Shed should become bigger to make it more accessible.
 - xix. Crosswalks in Baddeck
 1. A concerned citizen came in to ask about the crosswalks.
 2. Currently, tourists and residents are parking too close to the crosswalks and it makes it very difficult to see when someone is trying to cross the road.
 3. Roman contacts the RCMP wondering what the laws are around parking near crosswalks. They responded saying that you are not allowed to park within 5 meters of the crosswalk (not enforcing it for now)
 4. RCMP is requesting that the curbs start to be painted so people are aware of the rules of the road.
 5. This is a municipality issue and should be sent over to them.

f. Accessibility Committee

- i. The committee is currently on hiatus for the summer and will resume meetings in September.
- ii. Draft plan has been circulated to the Commissioners and reviewed by Lisa Pavelak, Dawn Stegen, and Terri Lynn Almeda from Accessibility Nova Scotia and Ross MacDonald, Municipal Advisor.
- iii. Target date for completion is December 15th.
- iv. The Commission has requested the integration of municipality plan because most opportunities for improvement are out of the scope of the Village.

g. Community Club Committee

- i. The committee hasn't had a meeting since the last Commissioners meeting.
- ii. They were a stop for Baddeck Quest, asked for feed back from the community about what the property should be used for.
- iii. They will have a meeting this month to discuss.

Motion to accept all reports as presented, moved by Com. MacKinnon and seconded by Com. Crowder – All in favour – motion carried

7. Correspondence

- a. Email RCMP – sidewalks and parking
- b. Commissioner Crowder is resigning from the Commission and is going to run for the Municipality as a Counsellor for District 3.
- c. There will be an upcoming election to replace Commissioner Crowder.
- d. Com. MacDonald wanted to say thank you Com. Crowder for your service at the Village. Wish Com. Crowder the best of luck!

8. Budget 2024

- a. Have discussed the budget in full but didn't want to pass it until they knew about the result of the grants that were applied for. (PCAP and Beautification).
- b. The budget has not been changed since the original draft.

Motion put forward to pass budget as presented by Com. MacKinnon and seconded by Com. McNeil – All in favour – Motion carried

9. General Public Input


- Denise Mulley – Wondering if there could be parking signs put up for 3 hours. Parking on the waterfront has been especially bad this summer.
 - o Must check if there it goes against any by-laws
- Talk to EDPC to make sure we have the capacity to put up no over night parking signs or 3-hour parking signs.
- And what would enforcement look like?

10. Adjournment


Adjourn at 7:53, next meeting is September 11th, 2024

Signatures:

Minutes approved


Com. Jennifer MacDonald Sept. 11 / 2024
Date


Minutes approved


Com Daniel McNeil SEPT 11 / 2024
Date

Minutes approved


Com Kenneth MacKinnon SEPT 11 / 2024
Date

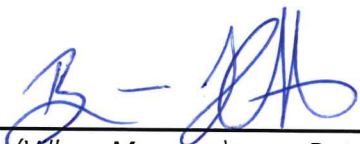
Minutes approved


Com. Bonnie Whyte Sept 11 / 2024
Date

Minutes approved

TBD Date

Certified by


Roman Braun-Huettner (Village Manager) 2024-09-11
Date