
Town of Stewiacke

Minutes – Council 7:00 p.m. Thursday, September 24th, 2020

Stewiacke Community Centre, Stewiacke, NS

1. Call to Order

Mayor Robinson called the Council Meeting to order at 7:00pm.

2. Attendance

Mayor Wendy Robinson

Deputy Mayor Roseanne Chapman, Councillors - Mary Commo, Rebecca Rogers-Laing, Chad Ramsey, Susan Creelman

Staff: Dale Bogle – CAO – via Zoom

Randi-Lynne Buchi – Manager of Finance via Zoom

Erin Richard - Recording Secretary

3. Approval of / Changes to Agenda

On Motion of Deputy Mayor Chapman and Councillor Commo it was move to approve the Agenda for the September 24th, 2020, Council Meeting as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Disclosure of Interest on Agenda Items - Nil

5. Approval of Minutes - Nil

6. Announcements / Proclamations

- Councillor Creelman announced Special Council Meeting on Tuesday, September 29th, 2020 at 7:00 pm at the Stewiacke Community Centre.
- Mayor Robinson announced the Chamber of Commerce is having a Meet & Greet for Election candidates on October 2nd, 2020 at 4:30 – 6:30 pm at the Stewiacke Community Centre.

7. Presentations - Nil

8. Written Petitions and Correspondence – received for information purposes

Stewiacke Library – written communication for information purposes from the library to inform and update that library cards are available to residents.

9. Business

a) Municipal Election Update

CAO informs that an update communication has been mailed out to residents to give overview of the election and the process and procedures that residents can expect. Residents have been requested to return their pin notifications if they are not participating in the municipal election to drop them at the

town hall mail slot - returned pins will be properly disposed of. A minimum of one special poll will be available with Vicki Taylor and a help line is available if residents have any questions. As well, instructions for online polling is included in the communication.

b) Organizational Chart

On Motion of Councillor Creelman and Deputy Mayor Chapman it was moved that the Council of the Town of Stewiacke approve the chart as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

c) Well Water Study – Proposed Budget

On Motion of Councillors Commo and Ramsey it was moved that the Council of the Town of Stewiacke approve the increased budget from \$150k to \$160k for next phase of water exploration.

Motion carried unanimously.

d) Policing Review

CAO informs meeting with Department of Justice and Nova Scotia RCMP has been postponed until September 29th, 2020 at Truro Legion to discuss a pathway to move forward with police services between Colchester County and Stewiacke. Updates will be provided as the review and discussion proceeds.

e) Kelry Update

CAO informs that research is still required with regards to adding the speed bump. Traffic Authority needs to be included in the discussion; the speed radar will be moved down to Kelry to monitor traffic speeds more efficiently. As well, insurance carrier will be consulted to confirm any possible liability for any damages caused by speed bump. Research and consultations are in progress to develop best practice in installing the speed bump.

f) Financial Update

Manager of Finance presents the first report from new software program – Diamond. First draft had an incorrect liability section, the second draft distributed has been corrected. Items of attention: accounts receivable balance is \$1.1M including water; \$62,000 more than last year at this time. Noting that this increase in unpaid accounts is not ideal however not unexpected in the current pandemic economy. Regarding reserve accounts (50-reserve), \$1.4M in the gas tax and operating reserve combined. In the water capital (40), \$300,000 reserves and in general capital \$120,000. Total reserves are \$1.5M with \$380,000 in water.

Also highlighted, in general operating statement in the summary section, reference ‘other revenues from own sources’ if \$40k less than last year. This would be attributed to the current pandemic economy – drastic reduction of revenue in the community center, summer programs, Town Days did not happen and deferred interest on overdue accounts. Fortunately, revenues for community centres they do not attract the usual corresponding expenses, so they are under spent. On the expenditure part, admin expenses are \$40k higher than last year due to additional spending on legal advice, IT

software and severance payments. Fire protection costs are up \$12k due to the water rate increase and lift station purchases and R&M contributed to environmental services spending being \$24k higher than last year.

10. By-laws and Policies - Nil

11. Citizens Comments

Nora Habkirk

I realize that comments can't be made back but I would like to be on the record for this. I am aware of the fact that our long time Animal Control officer was fired due to what was called re-structuring and that the town will be using Colchester County as their animal control, and would like to know has this confirmed and have they begun. And are there any cost savings for the town for this considering we have to contribute our share to the county. Considering the previous officer received approximately \$5,000 per year for being on call 24/7. So, again I realize you can't address this right now but perhaps our CAO could put something on the towns website.

And my second concern, since our previous Animal Control Officer was fired approximately in mid-August, why is the phone number still on the town website. Because I myself have received calls saying that she is either not answering her phone or they are having difficulties getting through to her residence. There have been multiple calls to her from well before 6:00 am so I would ask that perhaps her phone number be changed to whoever is doing it in the meantime, whether the county or someone in town.

12. Mayors Report

Thank you to all the candidates for attending the Dennis Park meet and greet. And thank you to the attendees and organizers.

13. Councillors Reports

Councillor Creelman: Thank you to the committee for the meet & greet at Dennis Park – very well done and a popular event for candidates and residents. Tourism project work continues with Councillor Commo – please reference www.explorecentralns.ca and provide input.

Deputy Mayor: A great turn out for the meet & greet – very well organized and much appreciated. Hope to have as good a turn out at the Chamber event on October 2nd. This afternoon was a ribbon cutting event at Royal Bank ATM at the NSLC building.

Councillor Commo: Heard good things about the meet and greet; although unable to attend, will be at the next meet and greet on October 2nd. Have met with residents recently regarding various topics – all good discussions.

14. In Camera Session - Nil

15. Notice of Motions and Reconsideration - Nil

16. Adjournment

Mayor Robinson adjourned the meeting at 7:31 pm.

Read and approved this _____ day of _____, 2020.

Mayor

CAO