

APPROVED – MARCH 31, 2008

COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

February 25, 2008 – 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Mayor David Corkum, Councilor Dennis Kehoe, Councilor Nola Folker-Hill, Councilor Bernie Cooper, Councilor Larry Honey, Councilor Eric Bolland, CAO Bill Boyd, Solicitor Peter Muttart, Town Clerk Carol Harmes.

Director Debra Crowell, Director Hal Henderson

CAO Bill Boyd reported that all Council members were present, with the exception of Deputy Mayor Pearl, who is out of the province.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Councilor Nola Folker-Hill and seconded by Councilor Larry Honey

that the Agenda be approved with the addition of
7 (b) Adopt a Library
7 (c) Centre Stage

MOTION CARRIED

(a) Friends of the Library – update - (Frances Schagen)

Frances Schagen thanked the Town for the \$10,000 contribution last year, and updated Council on some of work taking place. She noted that new libraries are being built in Halifax, Truro, Bridgewater and now, in Kentville; a Business Case has been prepared (a copy sent to Council); a successful book sale was held during Library Week; and an architect (MacKay Lyons) was hired. This firm is world class and both partners are professors of architecture at local universities. The firm has won awards for professional design and Mr. MacKay is willing to work with the Friends of the Library for a reasonable fee.

She added that an art gallery has been proposed as part of this facility, along with a coffee/tea lounge, a nice restaurant, a meeting space for Valley Community Learning Association, community rooms, a genealogy lab, and so on. These add-ons depend upon fund-raising. The Friends of the Library would like to raise these funds locally, with half from the community, with the town and county paying 20% each. This payment could also be in-lieu of cash (i.e. land, equipment, etc.) and it is hoped that the opening of this new facility will coincide with the Town's 125th anniversary. The working budget is still \$2.5 million.

Ms. Schagen asked the Town to contribute another \$10,000 this year,

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as this helps with items like insurance, the architectural design drawings, the costs of hiring a professional fund-raiser and costs associated with training volunteers.

In closing, she added that on March 25th from 7:00 pm until 9:30 p.m., there will be a public presentation of this project at Kingstec, and an opportunity for public feedback. A reception from 6:00 until 7:00 p.m. will give council members a chance to discuss the project with the architects.

Points from Discussion

- Financial commitment cannot be made until June, following the budgetary process.
- As a joint project with the new school, this would not appear to be a good match because of security, censorship issues, and location.
- A study has been conducted on the combination of schools and library (Dr. David Witherley) and a copy of that report will be sent for Council's consideration.
- The Deputy Minister of Education, Dennis Cochrane feels that the school-library match would be a good one and that this option should be considered.
- It might be possible to build both structures side by-side.
- Patrons of the library indicate that they prefer this facility in the downtown core, and it seems unlikely that the new school will be built in the downtown.
- The public workshop will seek information on site location.
- The \$500,000 is a lot of money from a small community and it would be preferred to stretch these payments over several years (as was done with the soccer dome).
- It has been proven that about 75% of the users of the facilities here in Town are from the County, and these percentages should be considered with the amount expected from each municipal unit.
- Usage rate statistics indicate that 30% of library patrons are from the county, although some people in North Kentville indicate a Town address.

(b) Kings Para Transit – Naomi Blanchard (discussion)

Naomi Blanchard of Kings Para Transit asked to meet with Council for a discussion regarding funding for this service. She introduced Helen Woodworth, the Operations Manager of Kings Para Transit.

As the Town did not see fit to support Kings Para Transit last year, Ms. Blanchard hoped that some changes would be made this year. Kentville's share is based on the current budget for this organization,

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with a conservative 95 cents per capita, translating at 20% to \$9100. This organization provides a needed service and 20% of the users are Town residents. Ms Blanchard clarified some aspects of the budget and of driver training and costs.

Points from Discussion

- The Town provides a broad transit service and these costs continue to rise. Funding of Kings Transit will probably continue.
- The Town maintains its own infrastructure (roads, highways, sidewalks, etc) from tax dollars paid by Kentville citizens, whereas, the county receives road construction and repair through income tax dollars, which are also paid by Town citizens.
- If the municipal units fund the service, than there will never be change from the Provincial level.
- Health care services should not be paid through property tax dollars, as the Province is responsible for the health care service and must also support the costs for patient traveling.
- Community Services assists if a low income family is on social assistance, however, there appears to be no dollars available for most people.
- Social Services pay only for those eligible and Kings Para Transit invoices them each month.
- Many people fall between the cracks because they have limited income (old age pension, etc.).
- Travel costs can be claimed on personal income tax.
- The Kings Para Transit does not compete with private enterprise (i.e. taxis).
- The service responds to medical travel, shopping and work transportation and is available 7 days per week.
- Although the special contracts with the School Board, Evergreen, etc. provide revenue, this shifts the responsibility for providing this service, which belongs with those organizations.
- The Atlantic Caravan has a minimum rate (\$95) compared to Kings Para Transit's \$5 fee, however, they provide trained paramedics in their vehicles.
- Council agrees that this service is needed and that Kings Para Transit does a good job.
- Many people are unable to get to the Kings Transit bus stops or on and off the busses themselves.
- Kings Para Transit offers a complementary service to Kings Transit and both services should be joined together.

(Note: Ms. Blanchard asked if a councilor could be appointed to sit

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on the Board of Kings Para Transit, and to be a liaison between their organization and Kings Transit.)

**APPROVAL OF
MINUTES**

It was moved by Councilor Dennis Kehoe and seconded by Councilor Larry Honey

that the Minutes of January 28, 2008 be approved.

MOTION CARRIED

**BUSINESS ARISING
FROM MINUTES**

(a) Resolution: Replacement of Elizabeth Avenue Water Main
Director Henderson reported that as part of the funding application through the Building Canada Fund, it was necessary to provide a Resolution of Council identifying the replacement of the water main on Elizabeth Avenue as a number one priority. Total costs for this project would be \$87,000, with one third cost-sharing by each level of government.

Therefore, it was moved by Councilor Larry Honey and seconded by Councilor Bernie Cooper

*Recommendation to
Town Council*

that a recommendation be made to Town Council that a Resolution be passed confirming that the replacement of the Elizabeth Avenue Water Main, at a total cost of \$87,000, would be the number one priority for the Town.

MOTION CARRIED

(b) Resolution: Replacement of Belcher Street Water Reservoir

Director Henderson reported that as part of the funding application through the Building Canada Fund, it was necessary to provide a Resolution of Council identifying replacement of the water reservoir on Belcher Street as the number two priority. The total cost for this would be for approximately \$715,000, with one third cost-sharing by each level of government.

Therefore, it was moved by Councilor Eric Bolland and seconded by Councilor Dennis Kehoe

*Recommendation to
Town Council*

that a recommendation be made to Town Council that a Resolution be passed confirming that the replacement of the Belcher Street Water Reservoir, at a total cost of \$715,290, would be the number two priority for the Town.

MOTION CARRIED

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Points from Discussion

- The sewer on Elizabeth Avenue is in bad shape and needs replacement, and although the reservoir is also in need of replacement, it might last for another 5 years.
- More funds may be available under this Federal program in future years.

(c) Electronic Voting

At the last meeting of CAC, Intelivote presented information on their electronic voting system and asked that Council considers this option for the upcoming fall election. In addition, CAO Boyd noted that Votetex (providers of an electronic polling device) was also contacted and gave a demonstration. The Chief Electoral Officer felt that his own system could handle this election and further, he would like to see some other municipality “work out the kinks” first. He suggested that there may be delays at the polling stations in determining who may have voted on-line. Therefore, he is not recommending any changes this year. (Costs would be another \$6,000 to \$7,000 in addition to the regular election costs of \$12,000.)

(d) Blue Cross Survey

Following the presentation by the Director of Finance at the last meeting of Town Council, it was suggested that a survey be prepared for staff and Council, outlining some options to offset the increase in premiums for the coverage. However, Director Crowell was unable to secure and tabulate the information and rate options prior to this meeting, and therefore, this item will be discussed at a future meeting.

FINANCE

(a) Projections

Director Crowell stated that the projections to the year ended March 31, 2008, indicate that the Town could realize a surplus of \$61,800, although she pointed out that snow removal costs and the PANS settlement both remain unknown at this point. She reiterated various aspects of her report, stating that overall actual revenue is projected to be over budget by \$38,000, and that overall expenditures are anticipated to be under budget by \$23,800.

Following some questions, it was moved by Councilor Dennis Kehoe and seconded by Councilor Bernie Cooper

that the report by the Director of Finance regarding projections be received.

MOTION CARRIED

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(b) Resolution – Withdrawal – Town Capital Reserve - Various

Director Crowell submitted a report, noting that as part of the 2007-08 budget, several construction projects will require funding. She listed these, pointing out that the budgeted amount was for \$121,700 and the actual amount was for \$71,197.82.

Therefore, it was moved by Councilor Bernie Cooper and seconded by Councilor Eric Bolland

*Recommendation to
Town Council*

that a recommendation be made to Town Council that the attached Resolution be approved for the withdrawal of \$71,197.82 from the Town of Kentville Capital Reserve, to partially fund budgeted capital construction costs for 2007-2008, as per the Town's Capital Budget.

MOTION CARRIED

(c) Resolution – Withdrawal – Town Capital Reserve-Over Runs

Director Crowell noted that the final costs for various 2007-2008 capital projects ran over the projected costs, as outlined in the Capital Budget. In addition, one project will not be completed in 2007-2008. Subsequently, she requested a change in funding (construction to date).

Therefore, it was moved by Councilor Larry Honey and seconded by Councilor Bernie Cooper

*Recommendation to
Town Council*

that a recommendation be made to Town Council that the attached Resolution for the withdrawal of \$17,025.79 from the Town's Capital Reserve – General Allocation to fund various project over runs for 2007-2008.

MOTION CARRIED

(d) Recommendation – Tax Write-Offs

Director Crowell reported that two tax accounts for business occupancy remain unpaid following many attempts to collect these funds by the Town's Collection Officer and a collection agency. As it seems unlikely at this point that the funds will be collected, she recommended that they be written off.

Therefore, it was moved by Councilor Larry Honey and seconded by Councilor Bernie Cooper

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***Recommendation to
Town Council***

that a recommendation be made to Town Council that the attached list of business occupancy tax accounts, in the amount of \$3,613.89 be written off.

MOTION CARRIED

(e) Recommendation – Utility Account Write-Offs (Sewer Portion)

Director Crowell noted that several utility accounts (sewer portion) remain unpaid in spite of many attempts by the Town's Collection Office and the collection agency to collect these funds. As it seems unlikely at this point that the funds will be collected, she recommended that they be written off.

Therefore, it was moved by Councilor Bernie Cooper and seconded by Councilor Eric Bolland

***Recommendation to
Town Council***

that a recommendation be made to Town Council that the attached list of utility accounts (sewer portion), in the amount of \$247.07 be written off.

MOTION CARRIED

(f) Recommendation – Sundry Account Write-off

Director Crowell noted that a sundry account remains unpaid in spite of many attempts by the Town's Collection Office and the collection agency. As it seems unlikely at this point that the funds will be collected, she recommended that they be written off.

Therefore, it was moved by Councilor Nola Folker-Hill and seconded by Councilor Bernie Cooper

***Recommendation to
Town Council***

that a recommendation be made to Town Council that the attached sundry account, in the amount of \$105.37 be written off.

MOTION CARRIED

(g) Resolution – Tax Exemption – Section 69 MGA -2008/2009

Director Crowell noted that each year Council provides a partial tax exemption to individual property owners who meet certain requirements. However, Council must also pass a resolution each year to set out the maximum exemption, income ceiling and other conditions.

Therefore it was moved by Councilor Bernie Cooper and seconded by Councilor Eric Bolland

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***Recommendation to
Town Council***

that a recommendation be made to Town Council that an exemption from taxes for the period April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009 be granted pursuant to Section 69 of the MGA in the amount of \$200; and

that the exemption be granted to persons whose total income from all sources (including the income of other persons in the same family residing in the same household as the applicant ratepayer) for the year 2007 is equal to or less than \$21,826. (an allowance paid pursuant to the War Veteran's Act – Canada – and the Pension Act – Canada – is excluded, as is a tax rebate provide by the province.); and

that the property must be occupied by the applicant ratepayer; and

that where a property is assessed to more than one person, any of them who is entitled to an exemption may receive only the portion of the exemption equal to that person's share of the total assessment for the property, but where different interests are not separate, then to that portion determined by the treasurer, whose determination is final; and

that no application for an exemption will be considered unless made on or before the 30th day of June 2008.

MOTION CARRIED

(Note: CAO Boyd stated that there is a new initiative through UNSM regarding low income exemption, which deals with the capping of assessments, and this should not be confused with this item.)

6(h) Interest Charges for Outstanding Accounts – 2008-2009

Director Crowell noted that in accordance with the Policy Statement regarding the authority granted by the MGA to apply interest to outstanding accounts, the Town's rate on outstanding accounts is 2% per month (26.8% per annum). She recommended that he Town maintains this rate, as it acts as a deterrent for late payments.

Therefore, it was moved by Councilor Bernie Cooper and seconded by Councilor Larry Honey

Recommendation to

that a recommendation be made to Town Council that the

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Town Council

interest rate on outstanding accounts remains at 2% per month (26.8% per annum) for the year April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009.

MOTION CARRIED

7 (a) Recommendations from Chief Electoral Officer

Al Kingsbury, the Town of Kentville's Returning Officer for the upcoming election, made several recommendations regarding the procedure for this event.

Therefore, it was moved by Councilor Larry Honey and seconded by Councilor Eric Bolland

*Recommendation to
Town Council*

that a recommendation be made to Town Council that the permanent register of electors established and maintained by Elections Nova Scotia, be used as the basis for the preliminary list of electors for the Town of Kentville in the October 18, 2008 municipal election; and

that notification be made by postcard, mailed on or about July 21, 2008 to all electors; and

that the final list of electors be prepared on August 29, 2008; and

that Council considers not authorizing alternate voting methods (mail, etc.); and

that Advance Polls be held on Thursday, October 9, 2008 and Tuesday, October 14, 2008

MOTION CARRIED

(b) Adopt a Library Program

Mayor David Corkum stated that he recently heard a great presentation by the RCMP about this program. The concept is that police officers go into the schools and help with the reading programs. The belief that there is a direct link between literacy and crime. Mayor Corkum quoted that it has been noted that 65% of criminals have difficulty reading and this project is intended to address this problem.

Therefore, the Town was recently challenged to support the police service when they enter the schools for these programs, with members of Council also helping, if asked to do so.

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(c) Centre Stage Theatre

Mayor David Corkum noted that Centre Stage Theatre plans to purchase the building on River Street which it currently occupies, and will be asking the Town of Kentville to financially support this expansion of their organization. A business plan has been prepared and passed along to the Director of Parks and Recreation, and they will be in contact to discuss this in further detail.

8 (a) Valley Voices (A Chapter of Harmony, Inc.)

A letter from this organization asked the Town of Kentville for \$500 to sponsor a Competition and Convention in Wolfville from June 5-8.

Therefore, it was moved by Councilor Dennis Kehoe and seconded by Councilor Eric Bolland

*Recommendation to
Town Council*

that a recommendation be made to Town Council that this item be sent to the budgetary process.

MOTION CARRIED

8 (b) Municipality of Annapolis County – Re: VWRM

A letter from Warden Newton (County of Annapolis) outlined the position taken by this municipality regarding the disposal of electronic equipment through Valley Waste Resource Management. Their Council feels that the present drop-off locations and the costs being proposed should not be the responsibility of citizens. They are therefore advocating that these materials continue to be picked up during spring and fall clean-up collections (as a separate stream) and then should be redirected to the appropriate disposal sites.

During discussion, it was also noted that there are not enough drop off locations for electronic equipment and that more sites should be designated (one of which should be the Valley Waste Resource Centre). These should also be made more easily accessible to residents.

Therefore, it was moved by Councilor Dennis Kehoe and seconded by Councilor Eric Bolland

*Recommendation to
Town Council*

that a recommendation be made to Town Council that a letter be sent to the Chairman of VWRM stating that the Town of Kentville feels that more locations, including their own Collection Centre, should be designated for the purpose of receiving electronic equipment.

MOTION CARRIED

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(Note: A copy of this letter should also be sent to the Warden of the Municipality of Annapolis County.)

8 (c) Jocelyn and Scott Nicholson

A letter was reviewed from these residents of West Main Street, in which their concerns were outlined regarding the flooding conditions on February 18 and 19th. They made reference to the flood of 2003 and the subsequent report prepared by the Town's Consulting Engineers, to address some of these problems. They reiterated that the issue of the bottleneck situation in the Cornwallis River must be addressed, especially if a new bridge is built.

It was moved by Councilor Dennis Kehoe and seconded by Councilor Larry Honey

*Recommendation to
Town Council*

that a recommendation be made to Town Council that the letter from the Nicholsons be sent to the Transportation Services Committee and that any correspondence between these residents also be copied to Council.

MOTION CARRIED

8 (d) Minister of Justice Re: Youth Criminal Justice Act

A letter from Justice Minister Clarke introduced the Federal Government's new *Bill C-25: An Act to Amend the Youth Criminal Justice Act*. He added that the results of the Nunn Commission saw seven recommendations made to strengthen the YCJA and is asking the Town of Kentville to support these recommendations at the Federal level by signing the attached petition.

It was moved by Councilor Larry Honey and seconded by Councilor Eric Bolland

*Recommendation to
Town Council*

that a recommendation be made to Town Council that the proposed petition be considered at the next meeting of Town Council.

MOTION CARRIED

8 (e) UNSM – Women in Local Government Bursary Program

A letter from President Robert Wrye and Mayor Anna Allen, the Chair of the Women in Local Government Committee, asked the Town of Kentville to help fund this bursary program, and provide a letter of participation, based on the population of the Town, prior to April 30, 2008. The amount requested from Kentville would be \$300 annually or a three-year contribution of \$900.

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Therefore, it was moved by Councilor Eric Bolland and seconded by Councilor Bernie Cooper

*Recommendation to
Town Council*

that a recommendation be made to Town Council that the Women in Local Government Bursary Program be supported for \$300.

MOTION CARRIED

8 (f) The Alliance of Kings Artists

Councilor Folker-Hill noted that the AKA is restructuring its organization in order to provide a permanent home and administrative staff, and is therefore, seeking financial aid from the Town for \$1,500.

Following discussion, it was moved by Councilor Nola Folker-Hill and seconded by Councilor Larry Honey

*Recommendation to
Town Council*

that a recommendation be made to Town Council that this item be sent to the budgetary process.

MOTION CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.