

APPROVED FEBRUARY 25, 2008

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# COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## January 28, 2008 – 5:30 p.m.

### PRESENT

Deputy Mayor Mark Pearl, 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  
Chief Electoral Officer – Al Kingsbury, Deputy Frankie Anderson

CAO Bill Boyd reported that all Council members were present, with the exception of the Mayor, who was on vacation.

### PRESENTATION

#### (a) Intelivote – Mark Pollard (Electronic Voting)

Electronic voting has been recently identified as the ‘wave of the future,’ and therefore, Council asked Chief Electoral Officer Al Kingsbury to join them in hearing how this electronic program would work.

#### Mark Pollard pointed out

- Electronic voting includes telephone and internet voting with a PIN assigned to each voter.
- Participation can be from anywhere in the world, at no cost to the voter – from beginning of advance polls to the end of voting day.
- Voting participation is decreasing and costs for an election are increasing.
- Electronic voting is also environmentally better (reduces automobile use to reach polling stations and the amount of paper)
- Intelivote is a global leader (with excellent references) and HRM is using them for 2008 elections.
- A municipality would decide what level of the program it wished to have (i.e. advance voting only, tallying and analyzing votes, auditing, anywhere voting, and other aspects of technology.) Costs would reflect the choices made, with some services added on and perhaps some services which are embedded, deleted from the program.
- Election Officials and the Chief Electoral Officer would work together to design a program for what works for them, as well as for the public. They would

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also know who has voted and who has not, so follow-up can be made. Voters would be listed by their PIN and can be checked off either when they vote electronically or in person at the polls.

- Intelivote would work with the Chief Electoral Officer, to set up the program. Only a few days would be needed to incorporate the program.
- For the voter, there are several chances to correct any mistakes and to confirm the candidate selection during voting. A voter cannot spoil a ballot. (i.e. power outage, etc.) Online help is also available.
- Costs are based on the number of voters and range of choices made by the municipality. (\$2.70 for eligible voter – mail in ballot - \$1.75) Add on issues, like a plebiscite (questions with yes or no answer) can be included at no extra cost.
- In addition to the candidates listed, this program also has embedded two additional choices – a candidate for the African NS ballot and the French School Board.
- Kentville should go from present 35% participation rate to 50%. Electronic voting would catch shift workers, people away and those who do not have transportation.
- Elderly people like to vote, and are for the most part, computer savvy, and are certainly familiar with push button telephones.
- Chief Electoral Officer has access to system (password and ID) and is the only one who can request the vote count. A CD of the whole electoral list is provided following the election along with a list of those who have voted.
- Security is paramount and this aspect can be discussed in detail with the IT people at the municipality.

*(Note: Council promised to review this information along with the perspective costs, and to make a decision in the near future as to when this program will be implemented.)*

**(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. However, as she was ill this evening, she asked to be placed on the agenda next month.

Following a survey of Council, it was agreed that Ms. Blanchard would be given an opportunity for discussion on the February agenda

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of CAC.

**APPROVAL OF  
AGENDA**

It was moved by Councilor Larry Honey and seconded by Councilor Bernie Cooper

**that the Agenda be approved with no amendments.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**APPROVAL OF  
MINUTES**

It was moved by Councilor Dennis Kehoe and seconded by Councilor Eric Bolland

**that the Minutes of November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2007 be approved**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**BUSINESS ARISING  
FROM MINUTES**

**(a) Policy Statement G-52 – Christmas Closure of Town Hall**  
Town Clerk Carol Harmes reported that at the last meeting of Council, members directed staff to create a policy which would allow for the ongoing closure of the Town Hall during the week between Christmas and New Years. A draft policy was presented for review.

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

***Recommendation to  
Council***

**that a recommendation be made to Town Council that  
Policy Statement G-52- Christmas Closure of Town Hall,  
be approved, as presented.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

Points from Discussion

- The office should be either opened or closed, as the public would be confused knowing some staff were working and others are not.
- Supervision should be available if some staff come to work.
- The option to work allows this relatively quiet time period to be used by staff to complete special projects or to meet imposing deadlines.
- The policy is meant to be flexible.

**(b) Declaration of Racism**

A request for Council to support this Declaration against Racism and Discrimination was introduced at a recent Council meeting and has since been brought forward for discussion at this time.

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Points from Discussion

- There appears to be no benefit to singling out these issues, as they are already supported.
- HRM and the Municipality of Kings have adopted this declaration, and the Town of Kentville may be criticized for not adopting it, as this may be seen by some as not supporting the cause, instead of not supporting the need to make the declaration.
- Signing this declaration would mean that the Town develops and implements its own Plan of Action, along with priorities, actions and timelines; and although resources must be allocated, staff time and/or financial resources are not available.
- The project appears to be “a make work” project and duplicates a service already in place – Charter of Rights and Human Rights.
- There appears to be some flexibility with how much work is undertaken with this project.
- Perhaps staff could try to determine what specifically is required.

It was moved by Councilor Nola Folker-Hill and seconded by Councilor Dennis Kehoe

**that the correspondence be received.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

*(Note: Deputy Mayor Pearl asked to go on the record as supporting this declaration.)*

**(c) Cost Sharing Study – Education Agreement – KPSC**

CAO Boyd gave an update on the positions being taken on this issue from the Councils of Kings County, the Town of Berwick, Town of Wolfville and Town of Hantsport, also reiterating the Town of Kentville’s position. He pointed out that this item has been earmarked for “In Camera” later in the evening.

**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 \$25,200 by year end, although she pointed out that snow removal costs remain unknown at this point. She reiterated various aspects, stating that overall actual revenue is projected to be under budget by \$7,600, and expenditures are anticipated to be under budget by \$32,800.

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Following some questions, it was moved by Councilor Eric Bolland and seconded by Councilor Bernie Cooper

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

**MOTION CARRIED**

**(b) Quarterly Report – Investment Advisory Committee**

Director Debra Crowell reported that the committee last met on January 16<sup>th</sup> and reviewed the Perpetual Investment Fund as of December 31, 2007. She added that income realized to date is \$442,300 (net of fees); projected income is approximately \$570,000; realized capital gains to date are \$248,394; and unrealized capital losses are \$185,021.

Director Crowell reported on other aspects of the attached report and noted that the total fund at cost is \$13.5m and at market is \$13.1m.

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

***Recommendation to Council***

**that a recommendation be made to Town Council that the Quarterly report from the Investment Advisory Committee, be received.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**(c) Insurance Claims Report**

Director Crowell presented the statistics on insurance claims against the Town of Kentville. She reported that there were 6 incidents paid and closed, with \$18,421 self-insured by the Town and \$4,225 paid by insurance.

She added that there were 2 open claims from 2007-2008, with an insurance payment of \$9,472 on one, and the other yet to be settled. Further, two new claims have been received and these have increased the Town's self-insured figure to \$20,919, and the amount paid by insurance to \$13,697.

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

***Recommendation to Council***

**that a recommendation be made to Town Council that the report from the Director of Finance regarding insurance claims, be received.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

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**(d) Insurance Carrier – Reappointment**

Director Crowell pointed out that Frank Cowan Company/Macdonald Chisholm Trask Insurance was appointed as the Town's insurance carrier in March of 2005, based on conditions that they be reappointed each year, providing Council is satisfied with performance, fees and other things. As Council appears to be satisfied with this company, she made a recommendation for reappointment.

Therefore, it was moved by Councilor Dennis Kehoe and seconded by Councilor Nola Folker-Hill

***Recommendation to  
Council***

**that a recommendation be made to Town Council that the firm Frank Cowan/Macdonald Chisholm Task Insurance, be reappointed as the insurance carriers for the Town for the year ended March 31, 2009.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

*(Note: Next year's premium would increase by about 5% - \$900 for the property part of our policy.)*

**(e) Withdrawal – Equipment Reserve – Public Works**

Director Crowell reported that the 2007-2008 capital budget allows for the purchase of equipment for transportation purposes and at this point in time, partial funding from the town's Equipment Reserve is required. She further stated that this reserve has funds of \$27,625, of which \$398 is segregated for the Police Service and \$27,227 for Transportation Services.

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

***Recommendation to  
Council***

**that a recommendation be made to Town Council that the attached resolution be approved for the withdrawal of \$27,000 from the Town's Equipment Reserve, to fund the purchase of transportation equipment.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**(f) Renewal – TBR – Economic Development**

Director Crowell reported that the attached temporary borrowing resolution is near expiration and must be replaced with a current authorization. This TBR has been designated for the purpose of encouragement of economic development, and this particular renewal for \$200,000 relates primarily to the Kentville Futures land.

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

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by Councilor Bernie Cooper

*Recommendation to  
Council*

**that a recommendation be made to Town Council to authorize the temporary borrowing resolution (# TBR 05/06-05) for Economic Development in the amount of \$200,000.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**(g) Blue Cross Rate Increases – 2008-2009**

Director Crowell reported that Morneau Sobeco has identified the need to increase premiums for the Town's Health and Dental plan, effective April 1, 2008. It was noted that costs for health care have increased 37%, while dental care costs have decreased by 16.2%. Although premiums increased last year by \$47,000 (also due to the increase of the drug portion of the plan), an increase in the Extended Health Benefit portion of the plan (for hearing aids) will create an increase of \$25,845. As the plan is shared 50/50 by the Town and the employees, both parties will be affected by these increases.

Director Crowell noted that the Town's share of the net increase of 25.5% will equate to an expenditure increase of \$21,503 for 2008/2009, (representing about 1 cent on the tax rate.), while employees net increase will equate to a monthly increase of \$19.27 (single) and \$51.69 (family). In effect, in cases where staff earns less than \$35,600, the annual cost of living increase is eaten up with this extra cost alone.

Morneau Sobeco proposed several options which would reduce the costs to provide this service, and these, with supporting financial data, have been presented by the Director for consideration by Council at this time. Some of the higher cost items involve hearing aids, and designer drugs for heart conditions, diabetes, arthritis, etc. and in particular, medications consumed by an aging population.

Points from Discussion

- Personal medical information is not available to the Town, so it is unknown if hearing injuries result from workplace hazards.
- To save on the costs of hearing aids, one option might be to cap the costs or increase the co-pay.
- Perhaps some of the reductions could be phased in, as there may be people who need this device.
- Staff should be asked to make some choices which will reduce the coverage and the premium costs.
- The new rates will come into effect by April 1, 2008.
- The Wellness Committee can make a difference in the health

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of employees and in the reduction of the need for some medications.

*(Note: This issue should be on the next CAC in February (following the completion of a staff survey) and any recommendation from this CAC meeting can be sent to March Council for a decision.)*

**(h) Preliminary Tax Rate – 2008-2009**

Director Crowell reported that 3 new positions have been requested, effective April 1, 2008. These represent a part time paymaster for the Finance Department, an Active Living Coordinator for the Recreation Department and a Community Development Coordinator for the Planning Department.

Director Crowell had been asked to determine how these additional costs would affect the tax rates and therefore, presented a preliminary budget based on the inclusion of these individuals. She pointed out that the assessment roll for 2008 is now available and assessments have increased by 8.5% for residential and 8.1% for commercial. Therefore, at last year's tax rates, new revenue from increased assessments would be \$327,300.

Referring to the attached report, she further identified some areas where costs would increase or decrease, and pointed out other areas where revenue would increase or decrease.

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

*Recommendation to  
Council*

**that approval be given to hire a part time Paymaster for the Finance Department, a Community Development Coordinator for the Planning Department and an Active Living Coordinator for the Parks and Recreation Department, and that these positions become effective April 1, 2008.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

Points from Discussion

- It is inappropriate to hire three additional people prior to the approval of the budget.
- The Active Living Coordinator would only be hired if the grant was made available.
- The part time payroll person is required immediately to lessen the pressure of the staff shortage in the Finance Department.
- Continuity is needed for economic development, so that individual should remain in place



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- Payroll administration may be an area where work and costs could be reduced.
- The payrolls for some departments at the Town are very complicated with pay periods differing, and the inclusion of time and a half, double time, stat time, M time, and so on.
- Discussion on hiring a bylaw enforcement officer should be discussed during budget deliberations.
- The affects of the PANS negotiations could alter the bottom line of the budget and the Town's tax rate.
- Other variables that could affect the budget include increases from Valley Waste, the Volunteer Fire Department and Kings Transit.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**(a) Recommendation – Reappointment of Consultant Engineers**

*(Councilor Larry Honey declared a possible conflict of interest and left the Council Chambers at 8:06 p.m.)*

Director Hal Henderson reported that in accordance with the award to Hiltz and Seamone, (to provide consulting services to the Town of Kentville), the Town must review this appointment each year. He added that although this firm was not the lowest tender, it is a local company, employs local people and is in mid-process of several long-term projects for both the Town and the Kentville Water Commission. He added that continuity is particularly important this year, as he (being the director of the department) will be leaving this position soon, and a new individual will assume his duties. As such, Director Henderson recommended that the Town reappoint this firm.

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

*Recommendation to Council*

**that a recommendation be made to Town Council to reappoint Hiltz and Seamone Company Limited, as the Town's Consultant Engineers, with a fee being 10.75%, plus HST of the actual cost of construction, (excluding HST), for the third year of their three-year contract.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

*(Councilor Honey returned to the Council Chambers at 8:10 p.m.)*

**(b) Recommendation – Construction to LEED Certified Bronze Standards**

It was noted that a recommendation was received from both the Planning Advisory Committee and the Environmental Advisory Committee regarding the construction of future Town buildings. It

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was felt that in an effort to promote conservation and to use alternate sources of energy, any newly constructed Town-owned buildings should conform to LEED standards.

Therefore, it was moved by Councilor Nola Folker-Hill and seconded by Councilor Eric Bolland

***Recommendation to Council***

**that a recommendation be made to Town Council that where feasible, all new Town owned buildings be built to LEED Certified Standards.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

Points from Discussion

- A “bronze” level standard, as indicated in the attached report, does not actually exist. (standards are silver, gold and platinum)
- The opening standard is called “certified” and is the minimum level.
- In Alberta, construction is aimed at LEED gold, but accepted at LEED silver.
- Some flexibility should be part of this requirement.
- As this issue is part of the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan, it should be addressed during the creation of that document.
- Some direction should be given as this time to any new construction (i.e. library) to ensure that such standards are met.
- It should be noted that LEED certification should be met (where feasible and this should be encouraged.)
- LEED standard is well established and the Town should maintain it.

**(c) Designation of a Development Officer**

Director of Planning and Development, Bev Gentleman reported that Town Council must appoint a Development Officer to administer the Land Use Bylaw and Subdivision Bylaw. She added that she is the current Development Officer and Frank MacFarlane is the Assistant, although he carries out all functions of the Development Officer. Accordingly, she felt that he should be appointed as the Town’s DO.

Therefore, it was moved by Councilor Dennis Kehoe and seconded by Councilor Bernie Cooper

***Recommendation to Council***

**that a recommendation be made to Town Council that Frank MacFarlane be appointed as the Development Officer for the Town of Kentville, and in his absence, the Director of Planning and Development will act in the**

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**capacity of the Assistant Development Officer.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**(a) Peter Julian – Municipal Support (ban on PBDEs in manufacturing)**

A letter from Mr. Julian, who is the MP representative for the Burnaby – New Westminister, BC area, pointed out the danger to the health of Canadians because of the use of polybrominated diphenyl ethers in the production of many products of household use. As new evidence indicates that this chemical is toxic and is already banned by the United States, he is urging all municipalities to support his effort in having the Federal Government also ban the use of this fire retardant.

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

**that the correspondence be received.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**(b) Jim Lee – International Association of Fire Fighters (support of banned PBDEs)**

A letter from the Assistant to the General President of IAFF Canadian Operations indicated support of the previous letter to ban the use of PBDEs in the production of household articles. He stated that as these chemicals inhibit the formation and spread of flames, they do not completely prevent fires and when burning, release dense fumes and black smoke that reduce visibility and a highly corrosive gas known as hydrogen bromide. Further, the accumulation of these chemicals in the body can create many health problems to citizens and firefighters alike. He urged support of this ban.

**(c) Joyce and David Palmeter**

It was noted that correspondence was received from these residents who requested that the Town continue to pave that portion of West Main Street that passes their home. They pointed out that they are unable to enjoy their property and also have found it necessary to carry out additional maintenance work to their home, because of the amount of dust created by vehicles passing by.

It was moved by Councilor Larry Honey and seconded by Councilor Bernie Cooper

**that the letter from Joyce and David Palmeter be sent to**

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**the Transportation Services Committee for budget considerations and that a response be sent to the Palmeters.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Council Bernie Cooper and seconded by Councilor Nola Folker-Hill

**that the meeting adjourn at 8:35 p.m.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**IN CAMERA**

- (a) Litigation**
- (b) Land Negotiations**
- ( c) Personnel**