



## **TOWN OF KENTVILLE COUNCIL MEETING**

### **Meeting Minutes: April 29, 2024**

Town Hall, 354 Main Street, Kentville Nova Scotia

This meeting was held in Town Hall and was livestreamed on YouTube.

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Mayor Sandra Snow called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and noted that all members of Council were present: Mayor Sandra Snow, Councillor Craig Gerrard, Councillor Paula Huntley, Councillor Cathy Maxwell, Deputy Mayor Cate Savage and Councillor Gillian Yorke and Councillor Andrew Zebian.

Staff in attendance included Chief Administrative Officer Jeff Lawrence, Solicitor Geoff Muttart, and Recording Secretary Jennifer West.

#### **REGRETS**

None.

#### **DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None.

#### **2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

It was moved by Councillor Andrew Zebian and Councillor Gillian Yorke

**That the agenda of April 29, 2024 be approved as amended.**

#### **MOTION CARRIED**

*Councillors who voted in favour of this motion:  
Gerrard, Huntley, Maxwell, Savage, Snow, Yorke and Zebian*

#### **3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

(a) Council meeting held on March 25, 2024

**It was moved that the minutes of the Council meeting on March 25, 2024 be approved as distributed.**

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## **MOTION CARRIED**

(b) Special Council meeting held on March 25, 2024

**It was moved that the minutes of the Special Council meeting on March 25, 2024 be approved as distributed.**

## **MOTION CARRIED**

### **4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

#### **(a) Deed Transfer Tax, Second Reading**

At the March 25 2024 meeting of Council, the motion to give first reading to the Deed Transfer Tax Bylaw was passed. This bylaw would apply a tax to property transactions in the town, and would provide significant revenue to the town. Kentville is the only town in the province not using this revenue tool.

Correspondence from the public was reviewed on this matter.

*Report available for more information.*

#### Discussion

- Question about the different challenges faced by Counties and Towns for the implementation of this tax.
- Question about annual deposit of funds into the capital reserve.
- Support for using the tax to upgrade aging infrastructure.
- Clarification that persons moving into Kentville or within Kentville would all be subject to the tax equally.
- Clarification that there are capital reserves dedicated for infrastructure and that this is connected to the town's asset management plan.
- Suggestion that Council review the operating budget before reviewing and approving the deed transfer tax.
- Clarification that the deed transfer rate must be set by bylaw and not by policy.
- Suggestion that the town should have been increasing taxes during many years of inflation and cost of living increases.
  
- Concern about the tax influencing home purchases between the town and the county and about overspending in both operating and capital budgets.
- Concern about additional tax burden on residents and new residents.
- Concern about planning for the future of the town, to stay vibrant and viable.
- Concern about a town-wide tax increase, compared to a dedicated deed transfer tax.
- Concern about sustainability of services and assets and reserves not keeping pace with asset management.

It was moved by Councillor Paula Huntley and Councillor Cathy Maxwell

**That Council give second reading to the Deed Transfer Tax Bylaw.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

*Councillors who voted in favour of this motion:*

*Huntley, Maxwell, Savage, Snow and Yorke*

*Councillors who voted against this motion:*

*Gerrard and Zebian*

Policies supporting this bylaw will be brought to Council in May.

**(b) Spring Debenture Issuance**

CAO Jeff Lawrence reviewed the finance report that outlined the need for approval of debentures.

*Report available for more information.*

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Cate Savage and Councillor Andrew Zebian

**That Council approve the 2024 Spring Debenture Issuance as follows**

**TBR-08-23-0055-01 Various for \$868,700**

**And TBR 08-23-0056-01 Sanitary Sewer for \$180,000**

**For a total debenture of \$1,048,700**

**MOTION CARRIED**

*Councillors who voted in favour of this motion:*

*Gerrard, Huntley, Maxwell, Savage, Snow, Yorke and Zebian*

**5. RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS**

**(a) Council Advisory Committee Reports**

**(1) None.**

**(b) Councillors' and Mayor's Reports**

Reports were received and are part of the meeting record.

**(1) Councillor Craig Gerrard**

Highlights included a meeting of the Board of Police Commissioners.

*No report available.*

**(2) Councillor Paula Huntley**

Highlights included the apprenticeship program through the Valley Regional Enterprise Network, Kentville Home Show, Day of Mourning, Michelin Cities

conference in Anderson South Carolina. She gave a report on the cost and impact of the conference.

*Report available for more information.*

Discussion

- Clarification questions about the apprenticeship program, the climate caucus hiring process and activities with Divert Nova Scotia.
- Clarification of cost and participants of the Michelin conference.
- Clarification of the local participants from the Valley REN bringing back value from these conferences.

**(3) Councillor Cathy Maxwell**

Highlights included meetings the Heritage Committee, support for seniors through a meeting with Minister John Lohr, and attending of the Kentville Home Show.

**(4) Deputy Mayor Cate Savage**

Highlights included meetings of the Kentville Regional Fire Department area rate, Regional Sewer Committee, Investment Advisory Committee, Intermunicipal Services Agreement, Regional Emergency Management Organization, and the Kentville Business Community.

*Report available for more information.*

There was a break in the meeting to give the sign language interpreter a rest, as she was signing for 90 minutes.

**(5) Councillor Gillian Yorke**

Highlights included the Board of Police Commissioners with a focus on Chrysalis House and domestic violence, a budget meeting will be held in May for the Police Commission, and Shrek Junior the Musical.

*Report available for more information.*

Discussion

- Clarification on the regional recreation facility proceedings, with update information and decision points being released to council in the coming weeks.

**(6) Councillor Andrew Zebian**

Highlights included the Heritage Committee Heritage Bylaw being sent to the CAO and solicitor. He also reported concerns about the travel expenses of Kentville Council for conferences and workshops.

*Report available for more information.*

CAO Jeff Lawrence reported that he has been spending time working on the Deed Transfer Tax bylaw and policies. He also completed the Emergency Management Organization Incident Command System level 200 training. Staff have been working on the Apple Blossom Festival to ensure it is a smooth event. He attended his first labour management meeting with staff and managers.

Discussion

- Question about the timeframe for the completion of the operating budget- aiming for the end of May.

**(c) Mayor Sandra Snow**

Mayor Snow reported on her activities this month with highlights including the Intermunicipal Services Agreement Audit Committee, Kentville fire ratepayers meeting, Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities discussions on office space, emergency management by Mayors and Wardens on the Nova Scotia Guard, and a presentation by Holly Carr.

*Report available for more information.*

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

**(a) Kentville Inclusion and Access Advisory Committee Member Appointment**

Mayor Snow outlined the process for appointing new members to committees of Council, and introduced Saheed Akande as a candidate for the Inclusion and Access Advisory Committee.

*Reports available*

It was moved by Councillor Paula Huntley and Councillor Andrew Zebian

**That Council appoint Saheed Akande to be a voting member on the Inclusion and Access Advisory Committee for a 2-year term.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

*Councillors who voted in favour of this motion:*

*Gerrard, Huntley, Maxwell, Savage, Snow, Yorke and Zebian*

**7. CORRESPONDENCE**

- (a) None.**

**8. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**(a) Ron Cousins**

Concern about the new deed transfer tax and increased taxes.

**(b) Dennis Kehoe**

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Opposition to the deed transfer tax, the ten-year debenture process, renewing and upgrading assets and exploring other revenue streams.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Councillor Andrew Zebian

**That the April 29, 2024 meeting of Council adjourn at 6:30 p.m.**

**MOTION CARRIED**



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Approved by CAO Jeff Lawrence