

**TOWN OF NEW GLASGOW**  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**  
**TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2020**

A Committee of the Whole meeting of New Glasgow Town Council was held on Tuesday, March 3, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Council Chambers. Present were: Mayor Dicks; Deputy Mayor Lewis; Councillor Guthro; Councillor Fraser; Councillor Dorrington; Councillor MacDonald and Councillor Proudfoot. Also present were: Lisa MacDonald, CAO; Earl MacKenzie, Town Engineer; Corey Smith, Director of Corporate Services; Kelly Sloan, Executive Assistant; Frank DeMont, Solicitor; Mike Malcolm, Pictou County Sports Hall of Fame; Stephen Pothier, Mary Black and Patty Lewis from N. S. Power. Absent from the meeting was Thiv Tharma, Director of Community Development.

Mayor Dicks noted events held over the past few weeks: Deputy Mayor Lewis stated he attended the Pictou County Health Boards' Wellness Fund Announcement held in Scotsburn. The visually impaired group who have an art support program at the NSCAD residency studio were nominated by the Town and were awarded a Wellness Grant for \$700; Mayor Dicks and the CAO made a presentation to the 219 Army Cadets Corps on Municipal Government and made the Council bursary presentation to one of the cadets; she and Councillor Fraser attended the Kinsmen Flag Raising and Proclamation signing for their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary; as a member of the REN Liaison Committee, she attended an event at NSCC regarding the MIT Regional Entrepreneurs Acceleration Program; the Roots for Youth Society Coldest Night of the Year event was held – she thanked the New Glasgow Regional Police for their assistance with this

event, particularly Constable MacDonald; the donation revenue from the parking meters for the month of December was presented to the Pictou County Food Bank and the Pictou County Fuel Fund for \$937 each; she attended a roundtable put on by the Mental Health Working Group of the Community Health Boards where the guest speaker, Dr. Michael Ungar spoke about mental wellness and community resilience; she and Councillor Dorrington attended the African Heritage Month celebration with special performance of the Harriet Rudman Story at the New Glasgow Academy; she attended the Boys Junior Varsity Basketball Provincials at NNEC and she noted that the NNEC Girls Hockey Team won the Provincials.

Councillor Proudfoot stated that Riverview Residential Home Corporation has two new Youth Homes coming through Provincial funding and the grand opening of the Riverrun Café will be held on March 9 at noon. Council is invited to attend this event.

## **AGENDA**

Councillor Fraser requested that Municipal Alcohol Program Update be added to the agenda.

It was regularly moved and seconded that the agenda be approved as amended.

Motion carried.

## **MINUTES**

It was regularly moved and seconded that the minutes of the meetings held on February 18, 2020 be approved as presented.

Motion carried.

## **PETITIONS/DELEGATIONS/PRESENTATIONS**

### **N. S. POWER PRESENTATION – SMART METERS**

Mary Black, Stephen Pothier and Patty Lewis made a presentation to Council on the smart meters N. S. Power is currently installing in Nova Scotia homes and businesses as part of a \$133 million investment. Mr. Pothier explained that the difference with the smart meter is that there is a two-way wireless communication device built into the meter so employees of N. S. Power will not longer have to go out and read the power meters. There are over 500,000 meters in Nova Scotia.

Councillor Proudfoot stated that out west there were issues with fires after the new smart meters were installed.

Mr. Pothier stated that they are not using the same meter manufacturer as Saskatchewan used in 2013-2014 and there have been 75,000 meters installed in Nova Scotia to date with no issues with fire.

Councillor Proudfoot asked if there will be layoffs for the employees who are currently reading the meters.

Mr. Pothier stated that there will be transition opportunities for these employees.

Councillor Guthro stated that currently if there is no power going to a property there is a piece of red tag on the meter showing it is disconnected. He asked how this will be handled with the smart meters.

Mr. Pothier stated that he will have to look into this and get back to the Town.

Councillor Guthro stated that there is a lot of information in the media about the power bills being higher with the smart meters.

Mr. Pothier stated that there is no reason for a power bill to increase with a smart meter.

Councillor Lewis asked about the short period of time when the meter changeover takes place when the power is cut off, is there a claim process for damage to electronics, etc. to the property owner.

Mr. Pothier stated that there is currently a process for claims which would be used in these instances but does not foresee the changeover power interruption causing any damage. Safety checks exist with their process.

Councillor MacDonald asked if there is going to be a rate increase for one-time use meters.

Mr. Pothier stated that they are not looking at rolling out a mandatory rate increase and any change must go through the regulator.

Councillor Dorrington asked how the property owners are notified when the meter will be changed over.

Mr. Pothier stated that there was a special mail outreach and the regular meters are changed in 15 minutes and they don't need to get inside the house – the time of use meter users will receive a letter because the N. S. Power employees have to get into the house to change the meter. He noted that there have been 75,000 meters changed to date with only 30 claims. He noted some of the benefits of a smart meter: Access to daily information on your energy usage and notifications, helping you to make more informed decisions and manage your electricity costs; connecting or disconnecting your electricity will be easier and faster with no on-site appointment required; smart meters

will notify N. S. Power when your power goes out, helping them respond quicker in the event of an outage.

The Town Engineer inquired about the ability to share data for our climate change work. N. S. Power will look into it.

Mayor Dicks thanked Mr. Pother, Ms. Black and Ms. Lewis for their presentation.

## **PRESENTATION PICTOU COUNTY SPORTS HERITAGE HALL OF FAME**

Mr. Mike Malcolm, Curator of the Pictou County Sports Hall of Fame made a presentation to Council on the activities of the Museum. He noted that they will be having another induction ceremony this year and are currently researching the New Glasgow Speed Boys of N. S. Black Hockey League in 1924, 1925 and 1926. They are working on raising awareness of the Museum.

Councillor Fraser presented Mr. Malcolm with a plaque for New Glasgow Grammar School Hockey that had been in his possession that could be displayed at the Sports Heritage Hall of Fame.

Mayor Dicks thanked Mr. Malcolm for his presentation.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **PCWCBAI UPDATE**

Council reviewed a memo from the CAO regarding the Pictou County Wellness Centre Building Authority Inc. meeting held on February 24.

Councillor Proudfoot asked if there was an update on a sidewalk being installed near the Wellness Centre.

The CAO stated that she will see the CAO for the County tomorrow so will ask him for an update.

It was regularly moved and seconded that the report be placed on file.

Motion carried.

## **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS**

### **COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL – MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE/PUBLIC WORKS**

#### **PROJECTS**

Councillor Dorrington suggested that a policy should be prepared setting out the procedures for communications to residents when major infrastructure/Public Works projects are being carried out. She stated that when Phase 1 of the Infrastructure Project near the New Glasgow Academy took place, the residents of the area received notice the Friday before the Monday the work began, which isn't sufficient time for notice.

The Town Engineer stated that he agrees, sometimes there is not a great job of advising the public, but they will need help getting this process completed.

## **PROCLAMATIONS**

### **INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY**

Councillor Proudfoot presented a proclamation proclaiming March 8, 2020 International Women's Day in New Glasgow.

Mayor Dicks proclaimed March 8, 2020 International Women's Day in New Glasgow.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **PICTOU COUNTY VITAL SIGNS 2020**

Council reviewed the Pictou County Vital Signs Report 2020.

It was regularly moved and seconded to place the report on file.

Motion carried.

### **NSFM CODE OF CONDUCT**

Council reviewed a memo from the CAO regarding the updated Code of Conduct template for elected municipal officials.

Mayor Dicks stated that this will be discussed at a future meeting.

Motion carried.

### **ELECTION N.S. – INFORMATION SHARING AGREEMENT**

Council reviewed the Information Sharing Agreement with Elections N. S. The CAO stated that in the past she has received requests for the voter's lists outside of elections but as indicated in this agreement – this is not permitted.

It was regularly moved and seconded that the agreement be received.

Motion carried.

### **GUYSBOROUGH WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITY**

Council reviewed memo from the CAO and a letter from the Municipality of the District of Guysborough regarding an upcoming increase in tipping fees for solid waste going to the Guysborough Waste Management Facility.

It was regularly moved and seconded that the letter be placed on file.

Motion carried.

### **CARMA FUNDING REQUEST**

Council reviewed a letter from CARMA requesting financial assistance for the upcoming budget which was discussed earlier at the grants discussion.

It was regularly moved and seconded that the letter be received.

Motion carried.

## **MUNICIPAL ALCOHOL PROJECT**

Councillor Fraser stated that Sophie Melanson has taken another position with the Nova Scotia Health Authority and has been replaced by Adrienne Hadley and Meghan Bragg. Adrienne and Hadley would like to do a tour to visit the Mayor/CAO's in the area.

