

MINUTES OF MEETINGGRAND FALLS-WINDSOR TOWN COUNCILHELD IN THE TOWN HALL7:00 P.M., TUESDAY, JANUARY 22ND, 2019

PRESENT: Mayor: Barry Manuel
 Deputy Mayor: Mike Browne
 Councillors: Rod Bennett, Amy Coady-Davis, Shawn Feener,
 Mark Whiffen
 Staff: J. Saunders, Town Manager\Clerk
 N. Chatman, Director of Engineering and Works
 K. Antle, Director of Parks and Recreation
 S. Gosse, Director of Finance and HR
 G. Hennessey, Economic Development Officer

Prior to the start of the Council Meeting the prizes for the “Light-Up for Christmas Contest were presented:-

1st Place - Dr. James & Candice Sheridan, 114 Goodyear Avenue
 2nd Place - Dave Gardner, 39 Snow Crescent
 3rd Place - Paul Inder, 41 Sullivan Street

Best Commercial Property was Roy and Suzette Green of Grand Falls Drug Store Ltd.

Also the Committee for the Santa Claus Parade presented prizes to the winners of this year’s parade:-

Best Overall Float - Bishop’s Falls Correctional Centre
 Best Original Float - Crime Stoppers
 Best Depiction Float - Evangel Pentecostal Tabernacle
 Best Non-Commercial Float - Exploits Hurricanes
 Best Commercial Float - Stan Dawe Limited

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:15 P.M. and asked for any errors or omissions to the Minutes of Meeting #502 of Tuesday, December 18th, 2018. He noted Councillor Finn is absent tonight due to minor surgery, but has participated in normal Council business by phone and email.

Motion

Coady-Davis\Bennett

Be it resolved that the Minutes of Meeting #502 of Tuesday, December 18th, 2018 would be adopted as circulated. This motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

Deputy Mayor Browne wished to clarify any misinformation on Council remuneration. Council did not get a nineteen percent (19%) increase. The Federal Government removed a one-third (1\3) tax credit from all Canadian Municipal Councils, and most across the country reset the salaries with this tax adjustment. Council also decreased Council expenditure that will cover most of the increase. Council is permitted to take two percent (2%) of revenues for Council remuneration, but now only takes one point six percent (1.6%).

Mayor Manuel added to the Deputy Mayor's comments stating the adjustment only re-established Council's take home pay with the exception of the two point five percent (2.5%) that is in line with staff increases. This was adopted by Council last year to prevent any arbitrary increases in the future. If anyone in the community has any issues or questions, please reach out and we will provide the answers.

DISBURSEMENT REPORT

Councillor Coady-Davis presented the disbursement report in the amount of \$141,773.06.

Motion

Coady-Davis\Whiffen

Be it resolved that the disbursement report in the amount of \$141,773.06 would be adopted as presented. This motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Parks, Recreation and Special Events

The following report was presented by Councillor Bennett.

Minor Hockey Correspondence

The Committee discussed correspondence from Minor Hockey requesting assistance to purchase portable rink divider boards for their younger groups. It was noted there is very little storage in the building to store the frames and it takes a fair bit of time to set them up.

The Committee recommends the Director check with Gander, who have similar dividers, to see if they are working for them and report back to the Committee.

Cross Country Ski Hut Update

The Director updated the Committee on the progress at the new Ski Chalet and cross country ski trails. The building should be open this week-end and all the trails are being groomed regularly.

The Committee recommends staff make all the necessary arrangements to get the Chalet open and the trails in great skiing condition. The Director will also look into a date for the official opening later this winter.

Skateboard Park Correspondence

The Committee discussed correspondence from a skateboarding enthusiast requesting an area for winter skateboarding as well as if Council had made any decision on his earlier request to renovate the existing Skateboard Park.

The Committee recommends staff assist in finding a vacant warehouse for his needs as well as look at the cost for a small addition to the existing Skateboard Park. There is no large amount of money in this year's Budget for a major renovation to the Skateboard Park.

Winter Brochure

The Director highlighted the events and activities in this year's Parks and Recreation Winter Brochure which was sent out to all households last week.

Registration for most of the programs and activities will take place online on the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor website starting on January 16th, 2019.

The Committee recommends all citizens register quickly as many of the programs are likely to fill up in the first day or two. It was also recommended for next year to not put the Mid Winter Bivver and the Winter Carnival on the same week-end as many people like to participate in both events as well it is a lot of work for staff with both events happening the same week-end.

Recreation Facility License

The Director informed the Committee the applications for Recreation Facility Licenses for the new Ski Chalet and Windsor Stadium will be completed as soon as the necessary inspections are completed by Fire and Life Safety.

The Committee recommends completing these applications as soon as possible so we are able to utilize the licenses in both buildings this winter.

Goodyear Avenue Facility Renaming

The Committee discussed the renaming of the Clubhouse at the ball fields on Goodyear Avenue.

The Committee recommends staff check with the Executives of both the Minor Baseball Association and the Mixed Softball Executive and report back to the Committee with a recommendation.

Dog Park Correspondence

The Committee discussed correspondence from a resident requesting lighting at the Dog Park. A fire at the Red Cliff Rocks Campground last summer destroyed the lighting panel for the Campground and the Dog Park. The Committee had already approved to repair that service this summer.

The Committee now recommends staff investigate the possibility of repairing the service this winter. If it is possible to install a new pole and get access to the site, then repairs will be made this winter.

Skating Loop at Church Road Park

The Committee discussed the idea of a skating loop at Church Road Park for this winter similar to the one in St. John's.

Due to the cost to install such a facility, the Committee recommends not to go ahead with this idea this winter.

Scouts Correspondence

The Committee discussed correspondence from the Boy Scouts requesting sponsorship for individuals in their group to attend two (2) different Jamborees in West Virginia and the Netherlands.

The Committee recommends the Director check with the Scouting group to obtain more information about this sponsorship and report back to the Committee.

Summer Student Hiring

The Director presented the Committee with the regulations for the Federal Summer Hiring Grants which are different from our Town Student Summer Hiring Regulations. The Committee discussed which regulations we should follow for our summer student hiring's.

The Committee recommends referring this issue to the next Committee of the Whole meeting.

Security Staff

The Committee discussed HR guidelines regarding wage increases for Town Parks and Recreation Security Staff.

The Committee recommends referring this issue to the next Finance and Administration meeting.

Mid Winter Bivver Update

The Director informed the Committee this year's Bivver is sold out and arrangements are being made for a different snowmobile route this year.

The Committee recommends staff work out all the details for parking and grooming for this new route so it does not cause any interruption to traffic or businesses in the start\finish area.

Recreation Software Update

The Director informed the Committee there were a few issues with the most recent gymnastics registration as the Recreation Software had some glitches resulting in some frustrated parents.

The Committee recommends staff work with "TownSuite" to arrange for more training and software updates to ensure all future registrations run smoothly.

I move the recommendations and report of this Committee.

Motion

Bennett\Coady-Davis

Be it resolved that these recommendations and report would be adopted as circulated. This motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

Councillor Whiffen commented on the Ski Chalet and trails. He noted it is a great winter activity and the facility is getting a lot of use.

Mayor Manuel stated the facility is a great addition and equipment rentals are available. The Winter Brochure is out and the Town has been very proactive in providing activities and programs for all ages. Check it out and you can contact the Recreation Department for additional information. Church Road Park Light-up for Christmas was well received this year. The idea of a skating loop was also raised. This is an expensive undertaking so Council won't be entertaining it soon. He noted that Grand Falls-Windsor will be hosting the Newfoundland and Labrador Special Olympics on February 22nd and March 1st. Due to the number of athletes it was necessary to host the event over two (2) week-ends.

Public Works and Planning

Councillor Feener was excused from the meeting at this time due to a perceived conflict of interest.

The following report was presented by Deputy Mayor Browne.

Downtown Snow Clearing

The Committee discussed a concern from some businesses in the downtown area on the snow clearing procedures. Their concern is where snow is stockpiled when snow is removed from High Street and other downtown parking lots. The Public Works Department has a procedure in place to complete this work during the night shift.

The Committee recommends the Public Works Department continue to clear snow as per their operations and to prioritize this area as needed. The Committee also recommends that staff push all snow to the southwest corner of the storage area to ensure majority if the area can be used for parking for all visitors to the downtown area.

I move the recommendation and report of this Committee.

Motion

Browne\Bennett

Be it resolved that this recommendation and report would be adopted as circulated. This motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

The issue was raised due to frustration by downtown businesses because of the snow being piled in the parking lot on High Street. Staff will address this area when the streets are complete and clean-up takes place. Some concerns were raised with residents approaching snow clearing equipment during clean-up operations. It was asked that residents not do this. If you have a complaint, please contact the Public Works Department.

Councillor Feener returned to the meeting at this time.

Public Works and Planning

The following report was also presented by Deputy Mayor Browne.

Rezoning Scott Avenue – Long-Term Care Facility

The Committee reviewed the results of a rezoning request for the new Long-Term Care Facility on Scott Avenue. The area is proposed to be rezoned to Public Use (PU) from Commercial Downtown (CD). A public notice was issued and no objections or concerns were received.

The Committee recommends this move to the next phase of the rezoning process.

Fireworks – Regulations

The Committee discussed concerns from residents on the use of fireworks within the Town. There were some instances where fireworks were ongoing for long durations and throughout the early morning hours during New Year's celebrations. Noise from fireworks tends to cause issues for some pets and residents in the Town.

The Committee recommends a notice be issued to the residents to be mindful of other residents and pets during the use of fireworks. Also, the Committee recommends other jurisdictions be contacted to see if they are having similar concerns and what regulations they may have in place.

21 Sutherland Drive

The Committee reviewed a request from a resident to purchase the dilapidated property at 21 Sutherland Drive and replace with a duplex. The area would need to be rezoned to accommodate this request.

The Committee supports this proposed development as long as the new building complements the neighbourhood. The rezoning process can commence if the interested party wants to proceed.

Cabin Development

The Committee reviewed a request from a developer to construct cottages in Town near the Exploits River. This is a preliminary request to seek areas that can be utilized for the development.

The Committee recommends all areas close to the river be refrained from developments until the Riverfront Development Plan is completed. The Town is currently seeking funding for this work and can incorporate areas for cottages in the Plan.

Main Street Mailboxes

The Committee discussed correspondence from Canada Post requesting co-operation in identifying a new location for the mailboxes that are currently on Main Street near Ruston Avenue. The current location does not meet Canada Post Regulations. Canada Post will not upgrade at their current location despite Council's request.

The Committee recommends staff discuss potential alternatives with Canada Post and bring back to the Committee for review.

Saturday Drop-Off Schedule

The Committee reviewed the proposed 2019 schedule for the Saturday Drop-Off.

The Committee requested a few changes be made and recommends it be posted for residents as soon as possible.

I move the recommendations and report of this Committee.

Motion

Browne\Coady-Davis

Be it resolved that these recommendations and report would be adopted as circulated. This motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

Deputy Mayor Browne advised that the long-term care facility on Scott Avenue is moving along. The plan is to start construction in the spring. 21 Sutherland Drive is dilapidated and Council will discuss the duplex concept with the neighbours. The Saturday Drop-Off Schedule has been modified to add additional dates in the fall to reduce congestion.

Mayor Manuel advised the Saturday Drop-Off costs the municipality \$3,000 each event. The long-term care facility in the downtown area will increase traffic and access to the River by fisherpersons will be maintained.

Councillor Feener advised one point on the use of fireworks is that at times there are bans on forest fires and the use of fireworks should be banned during this period as well. He asked staff to contact Government for advice.

Public Works and Planning

Mayor Manuel was excused from the meeting at this time due to a perceived conflict of interest.

The following report was presented by Councillor Coady-Davis.

Corduroy Brook Enhancement Association - Pedestrian Bridge Replacement

The Committee reviewed a request from the Engineering Department to seek funding to replace the pedestrian bridge on the Corduroy Brook Trail near the CBEA Building. The total funding proposed is \$400k with \$100k being contributed by the Town. A preliminary design has already been completed.

The Committee recommends this be approved and that staff seek funding immediately for this project. The structure is very important to the community and the current structure is beyond repair.

I move the recommendation and report of this Committee.

Motion

Coady-Davis\Bennett

Be it resolved that this recommendation and report would be adopted as circulated. This motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

The Corduroy Brook Trail is used extensively and the bridge in question is in need of replacement. This is a great tourism facility and it is import that we keep it up.

Councillor Coady-Davis advised that the reason we decided to move ahead with this project is because of the Federal and Provincial Governments financial contribution. Final determination will be made when funding agreements are in place.

Deputy Mayor Browne stated these trails are a great asset to the community and is one of the reasons people choose Grand Falls-Windsor as a place to live.

Mayor Manuel returned to the meeting at this time.

Committee of the Whole

The following report was presented by Deputy Mayor Browne.

Job Creation Grants and Student Hiring

The Committee discussed the new criteria for the Federal Job Creation Grants. The age limit has been raised and applicants do not have to be students.

The Committee recommends that if the Town is successful in receiving grants for Job Creation, then these positions will be advertised and filled based on the Federal Government requirements. All other summer student positions will be filled based on the Town's Student Hiring Policy.

Urban Reserve

The Committee discussed an e-mail from Mr. John Davis requesting a meeting to discuss how the QDC operates and the potential business opportunities in addition to the Urban Reserve concept.

The Committee recommends that a meeting with Mr. Davis be arranged.

Queen Street Parking

The Committee discussed concerns raised by residents of Queen Street with respect to on-street parking and emergency vehicle access.

The Committee recommends that staff have both our Fire Chief and Chief Municipal Enforcement Officer to look at this situation and provide feedback. The Committee also recommends that staff speak to the Legion's management to ensure they notify those attending special events of the parking restrictions. The Committee will decide the next action for traffic flow when comments from the Fire Chief and Chief Municipal Enforcement Officer are discussed.

Garbage Collection – 3 Cater Avenue

The Committee discussed the correspondence concerning garbage collection at 3 Cater Avenue. The Committee has asked for assessment clarification for four (4) unit buildings. When this is received the issues will be discussed at the Finance and Administration Committee.

Reclassifications

The Committee reviewed five (5) reclassification requests from staff along with recommendations from management according to the current Job Classification System.

The Committee recommends that the job reclassification request be denied. The Committee also noted that management are currently in discussions regarding a new Job Evaluation System and hope to have this in place before the end of 2019.

I move the recommendations and report of this Committee.

Motion

Browne\Bennett

Be it resolved that these recommendations and report would be adopted as circulated. This motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

Deputy Mayor Browne advised that the Federal Government Grants changed their guidelines this year and any person up to the age of thirty (30) are eligible to apply. He also noted a constant request from residents on Queen Street to improve parking near the Legion. Parking on one side is restrictive for emergency vehicles and residents accessing their driveways.

Finance and Administration

The following report was presented by Councillor Coady-Davis.

Year-End Labour Report

The Committee reviewed the year-end labour costs as of week fifty-two (52). Total labour was \$3,511,702. This was \$23,797 (0.7%) over budget.

The Committee recommends that staff continue to monitor labour costs.

Cash Collections

The Committee reviewed taxation collections for December 31st, 2018. Total taxation receivable as of that date was \$1,210,397 (\$906,833 – 2017) – an increase of \$303,564 (33.48%) from the previous year.

The Committee recommends that staff pursue all outstanding taxes.

Disbursement Report

The Committee reviewed the Disbursement Report in the amount of \$141,773.06 and recommends this be presented at the next Council Meeting.

Grand Falls House CAS Application

The Committee reviewed a request from the Grand Falls House Foundation to provide funds towards a business plan.

The Committee recommends the amount in excess of what CBDC is contributing be approved.

Funding Requests

The Committee reviewed a request from the Kiwanis Club of Grand Falls-Windsor.

The Committee recommends \$5,000 be approved.

The Committee reviewed a request from the Grand Falls-Windsor Fire Department and Muscular Dystrophy Canada to enter a team in the 23rd Annual Curling for Charity Funspiel.

The Committee recommends approval to sponsor a team for \$150.

The Committee reviewed a request from the Exploits Regional Chamber of Commerce to support their Business Awards.

The Committee recommends \$500 be approved.

Trans Canada Highway Upgrade

The Committee discussed an approval letter from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation regarding the Trans Canada Highway Upgrade Study. Total project cost is \$34,224 with the Town's contribution totaling \$8,556.

The Committee recommends signing the acceptance letter and approving the Town's portion of the project, pending ACOA's approval of their portion.

Organization and Operational Review

The Committee reviewed evaluation of proposal and recommends accepting KPMG's bid of \$104,182 (net of HST rebate). The Committee also recommends staff reach out to KPMG to finalize the details.

CAO Job Description

The Committee reviewed the job description for the Chief Administrator Officer and recommends this be approved.

28A Caribou Road Water Rates

The Committee reviewed a request from a resident at 28A Caribou Road to reimburse water and sewer taxes since 2012.

The Committee noted that the policy was properly followed and recommended that this request be denied.

Building Inspector Job Description

The Committee reviewed changes to the Building Inspector position and recommends this be approved.

I move the recommendations and report of this Committee.

Councillor Whiffen requested clarification on whether he should vote on the funding application for the Grand Falls House Foundation. His employer is providing funding.

The Mayor asked for a vote on whether Councillor Whiffen was in a conflict of interest. It was unanimously agreed that Councillor Whiffen was not in a conflict of interest.

Motion

Coady-Davis\Bennett

Be it resolved that these recommendations and report would be adopted as circulated. This motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

Deputy Mayor Browne stated he was pleased that funding was made available to complete the Trans Canada Highway Study on the corridor through Grand Falls-Windsor and access to Grand Falls-Windsor.

Councillor Coady-Davis advised that the Organization and Operational Review was an issue raised during the election. The cost came in at a higher rate than expected. Staff will discuss the budget with KPMG, but all the high points within the RFP must be met.

Mayor Manuel advised that the Organization and Operational Review will hopefully identify savings and also identify what we are doing OK.

Councillor Coady-Davis stated we did make some changes to the CAO job description. That position will be vacant at the end of June. It will be advertised on all major job sites very soon.

Mayor Manuel advised that the Grand Falls House CAS Application for funding is to complete a business plan. It is important that decisions made going forward are based on sound business ideas. The loss of the Mill Managers House has changed the focus. Council will await the results of the plan.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councillor Coady-Davis noted that the weather over the past couple of days has caused our employees some grief and would appreciate if residents would report potholes to the Public Works Depot so it will be recorded and logged appropriately. She also noted that the Exploits Regional Chamber of Commerce Awards are coming up soon and asked that you download the application and nominate businesses for the Awards.

Mayor Manuel stated the recent weather is contributing to the potholes, but also these are very difficult to repair permanently this time of the year.

Councillor Bennett advised that on February 1st and 2nd there will be a Curling Funspiel. This is a fundraiser for Muscular Dystrophy. He noted that Amanda Saunders is in Ottawa awaiting a heart transplant and fundraising is ongoing to raise funds to help the family with the financial demands. He advised that a bank account is set up at the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce and donations can be made at any branch across the country. He advised that last week-end the Bren Fitzgerald Pee Wee Tournament was held at the Joe Byrne Memorial Stadium. He also congratulated the Cataracts on winning the tournament. He noted that the Sparkling Blades Figure Skating Club also participated in a competition in Botwood and won Gold Medals.

Councillor Feener advised that on January 24th the Town will be holding a Salmon Festival Consultation meeting 7:00 P.M. at the new Ski Chalet.

Deputy Mayor Browne congratulated Tina Miller who will be tracking across the Sahara Dessert this fall. All donations raised will be given to a charity in Grand Falls-Windsor. He congratulated Exploits Valley High School who won a Silver Medal in the High School Hockey Tournament recently. He also advised that on January 23rd there will be a vigil at Gorge Park for Chantel John. He noted that the Northcliff Drama Club will be having a fundraiser at the Masonic Lodge on February 2nd.

Mayor Manuel advised that Winterlude and Mid Winter Bivver are coming up soon and that there will be activities for all age groups. He noted that Exploits Valley High will be doing the musical "Rock of Ages" this spring. Details can be found on the Town's facebook page. He also congratulated former Mayor Paul Hennessey on celebrating his 80th birthday.

Motion

Bennett\Feener

Be it resolved that the meeting of the Grand Falls-Windsor Town Council would be adjourned until the next regular scheduled meeting of Tuesday, February 12th, 2019. This motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 P.M.

Barry Manuel
Mayor

J. Saunders
Town Manager\Clerk