

MEETING #530

MINUTES OF MEETING

GRAND FALLS-WINDSOR TOWN COUNCIL

HELD IN THE TOWN HALL

7:00 P.M., TUESDAY, AUGUST 11TH, 2020

PRESENT: Mayor: Barry Manuel
Deputy Mayor: Mike Browne
Councillors: Rod Bennett, Amy Coady-Davis,
Holly Dwyer, Shawn Feener, Mark Whiffen
Staff: D. Finn, Chief Administrative Officer
K. Antle, Director of Community Services
S. Gosse, Director of Corporate Services\Clerk
K. Hutchinson, Executive Assistant

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. and asked for any errors or omissions to the Minutes of Meeting #529 of July 7th, 2020.

Motion

Bennett\Coady-Davis

Be it resolved that the Minutes of Meeting #529 of July 7th, 2020 would be adopted as circulated. This motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

None

DISBURSEMENT REPORT

Councillor Bennett presented the Disbursement Report in the amount of \$3,162,684.31.

Motion

Bennett\Browne

Be it resolved that the Disbursement Report in the amount of \$3,162,684.31 would be adopted as presented. This motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Corporate Services

The following report was presented by Councillor Bennett.

Labour Report

The Committee reviewed the labour costs as of week thirty-one (31). Total labour was \$2,137,745. This was \$93,763 (4.2%) under budget.

The Committee recommends that staff continue to monitor labour costs.

Cash Collections

The Committee reviewed taxation collection for July 31st, 2020. Total taxation receivable as of that date was \$6,319,198 (\$3,979,324 – 2019) an increase of \$2,339,874 (58.8%) from the previous year.

The Committee recommends that staff continue its efforts to collect all outstanding taxes, and to increase promotion of the due date for 2020 which is August 31st, 2020. Residents are reminded that interest will be applied to their accounts if their tax balances are not paid in full by the due date.

Disbursement Report

The Committee reviewed the Disbursement Report in the amount of \$3,162,684.31 and recommends this be presented at the next Council Meeting.

Zip Line Lease

The Director of Corporate Services summarized a draft lease of lands with a resident looking to start a zip line operation in Grand Falls-Windsor.

The Committee is supportive of the idea and recommends staff to continue to negotiate the terms of the lease as per Town policy.

Abitibi Mill Lands

The Chief Administrative Officer led a discussion relating to correspondence from Nalcor regarding fencing in specific areas of the Abitibi lands.

The Committee has no concerns with the areas identified on the northern portion of the map. The Committee will defer to the Environment Resources Management Association for comment on the southern section of the map. The Committee also continues to have some concerns regarding fencing along other sections of the river, and recommends remaining in contact with Nalcor prior to any future fencing is completed.

Tender – Pumper Truck

The Committee reviewed the tender summary for a new 1050 Pumper Truck.

The Committee recommends that the tender be awarded to Camions Carl Thibault Inc. in the amount of \$618,824 plus HST. Total funding from the Provincial Government for this purchase is \$252,000.

Tender – Sanitary Sewer Upgrades – Scott Avenue

The Committee reviewed the tender summary for Sanitary Sewer Upgrades for Scott Avenue.

The Committee recommends that the tender be awarded to Adams Construction Ltd. in the amount of \$76,386.50 plus HST.

Request to Purchase – Tag Along

The Committee discussed a request from the Public Works and Development Department to purchase a new tag along trailer as the current one is no longer in a usable condition.

The Committee recommends approving this purchase within the current Town Funded Capital amounts. The Committee also recommends selling the current tag along in an auction to recoup as much cost as possible.

King Street Rezoning

The Committee reviewed correspondence from the Consultant regarding the rezoning process for 19 King Street.

The Committee recommends adopting the recommendations as per the Consultant and to proceed to the next stage of the rezoning process.

Discretionary Use – 27 Ryan Street

The Committee reviewed a request for a home based business at 27 Ryan Street. The proposed business “Inside Out Detailing” is for car detailing. This type of business is identified as a Discretionary Use for this zone in the Town’s Development Regulations. A notice was mailed to adjacent property owners and it was advertised on the Town’s Facebook page. No objections or concerns were received.

The Committee recommends this be approved pending approval from Service NL and other Government Agencies as required.

Discretionary Use – 14 Shallow Street

The Committee reviewed a request for a home based business at 14 Shallow Street. The proposed business “Dead Ends” is for a hair salon. This type of business is identified as a Discretionary Use for this zone in the Town’s Development Regulations. A notice was mailed to adjacent property owners and it was advertised on the Town’s Facebook page. No objections or concerns were received.

The Committee recommends this be approved pending approval from Service NL and other Government Agencies as required.

Capital Investment Plan Amendment

The Committee reviewed a request to increase allocated funding to Project #99-2018-6549 – WTP Supply Dam Repair by an amount of \$44,618.55 net of HST rebate.

The Committee recommends this be approved.

Millcrest Academy Property

The Chief Administrative Officer discussed correspondence from the School Board regarding the Millcrest property and a request from the Presentation Sisters to demolish the building.

The Committee recommends that staff enter discussions with the School Board and the Presentation Sisters to try to find a way to save the gymnasium of the school for future use by the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor.

I move the recommendations and report of this Committee.

Motion

Bennett\Feener

Be it resolved that these recommendations and report would be adopted as circulated. This motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

Councillor Bennett would like to remind residents that August 31st, 2020 is the deadline for taxes to be paid, after that date interest will be charged on outstanding balances. He also advised our last pumper was purchased twenty (20) years ago and the life for a fire truck of a community of this size is twenty (20) years. So that twenty (20) year old fire truck will move back as our second pumper is very much needed as our Town is growing and we have been having some issues with the old truck.

Mayor Manuel stated with regards to tax collection citizens should be reminded that there is an option for automatic withdrawals, so if you want to set that up and have the payments come out of your bank account on a monthly basis, please contact the Finance Department. Another point of note, although the Town Hall has been closed to individuals coming in to physically meet with people, there is an opportunity to pay your taxes at the Joe Byrne Memorial Stadium Box Office and you can phone any of our numbers and get the same service as you normally would.

Councillor Whiffen noted he wanted to reiterate his concerns regarding the Abitibi Mill lands and the proposed fencing that Nalcor had provided us for along the river. If we do get access to that land their proposed long-term fence plan is going to restrict access along much of the river and he is not supportive of that and thinks it could impact some of the development down there. He is also concerned about what that fence is going to look like because we certainly do not want an unattractive chain link fence that is going to fall to disrepair quit quickly and we also do not want people to be barred from the river when the whole point of the Riverfront Development is for people to have access. So this is certainly a concern

we have and we are working with Nalcor to minimize their imprint on the river, but is certainly something to keep on the radar for the future and fencing off the river is not something he will be supportive of. He also noted that Discretionary Use for Home Based Businesses are not new to Council and we are looking at reviewing those Home Based Business Regulations right now. But again, we are experiencing a situation where we have an operation that was once in a commercial area and now moving back into residential zone. When this keeps happening it will start impacting businesses in our commercial district and we do not want that, but it is difficult to vote against the movement when it is put to discretionary use and there are no objections.

Mayor Manuel stated we also need to recognize that the COVID-19 situation has made it extremely difficult on local businesses and may very well have an impact on their finances and ability to stay in those commercial areas which we do want them to. In terms of your comments on Nalcor, as you are aware all Council shares your concern with the fencing and we have made those concerns known to Nalcor and have asked that they minimize the impact on the river. Nalcor explained to us that they need to take measures in order to abide by the Canadian Dam Regulations that were brought in two (2) or three (3) years ago, meaning all corporations of the like would have to put up signs, fencing and whatever else was necessary to make sure their liabilities is limited and that their access is limited for liability potentially. Our message to Nalcor has been that if you can manage to abide by the Regulations without having to put up fencing, we would rather that you did not put up fencing. If we do get the Mill lands which we suspect will happen sometime in the future, we do anticipate that there will be some park land down there and the idea is to open up access to the river. We have also made the comment to Nalcor about the esthetics of the fence and that if they are to put up a fence, then it should be esthetically pleasing. In the short term, the fencing that is proposed for this year are in two (2) areas that have low impact on access and our residents. We need to stay communicating with Nalcor to make sure our voice is heard because as we know corporations likes Nalcor tend to bulldoze forward with what they want regardless of what impact it has on communities or residents. We want to avoid any kind of fencing that we have to look at for years down the road, but at the same time we understand the position they are in. Millcrest Academy was once again in the Minutes and we have been talking to the School Board, the R. C. Diocese and Government about accessing that gymnasium since Millcrest closed a few years ago. There appears to be a new development where the Presentation Sisters are willing to take the building back, demolish it and once again we are saying that the gymnasium has a future life. As most people in the community knows we are very limited on gymnasium space and would love to get

that gymnasium to run some of our programs. As a correction, Councillor Bennett had read the Minutes for the Capital Investment Plan to be the Wastewater Treatment Plant, but it is actually the Water Treatment Plant Dam. Our Wastewater Treatment Plant, however, is having a lot of work done on Scott Avenue. We have also posted some drone pictures on our Facebook page that are quite impressive. Our Water Treatment Plant is at our New Bay Road location and we are replacing the dam down there and they have built a coffer dam to be able to complete the work which will be a major upgrade to our water distribution system.

Chief Administrative Officer Darren Finn advised with respect to Millcrest, we do not actually have a request for demolition, we have just been told that it is coming. With respect to Nalcor and fencing of the property, we have already made a formal request to Nalcor that Council is interested in having discussions with them before they move forward with tenders to install any new fencing. With respect to the Wastewater Treatment Plant we did post a lot of attractive pictures that showed the work being done on the plant and it is a \$10.7 million dollar investment by the community and the other levels of Government that partnered on it. There was some comments on our Facebook post that were in the negative genre asking why we would put such a facility next to a river. The comments were from some members of public that were not very well educated as to why it is there because sewer treatment plants are always on the lowest point of a community and we are just adding on to what was there. This will make a big improvement with the quality of the outtake onto the river because our wastewater facility empties out into a fresh water body and this will improve the quality of what will spill into the river and is necessary to meet the Wastewater Effluent Regulations. We could not possibly have a wastewater facility in another location, it would have to be in that location. This facility has three (3) lagoons and a UV building, and we will be one of the few communities that will meet the Wastewater Regulations and that is the reason we are in that location.

Councillor Feener advised that a little over a year ago Nalcor came in and did a presentation to Council showing us that they were going to put a floating boom across the top of their dam in Grand Falls-Windsor which was going to stop any boats or floats going down the river. So my question is why now are they going to put a fence on both sides of the river, when a year ago they were going to put a boom across to alleviate the problems with safety concerns on a dam.

Mayor Manuel stated that this is a question that we could directly pose to Nalcor and ask what the rationale was and why their plans have changed. It goes back to whether or not the fencing is required and if it is not required then do not put it there.

Resolution

The following Resolution was presented by Councillor Bennett:-

RESOLUTION GF-W 2020-301

FEDERAL GAS TAX FUND

PROVINCIAL WATER AND WASTEWATER INITIATIVE

WHEREAS: the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor qualifies for additional funding under the Provincial Water and Wastewater Initiative Fund;

WHEREAS: all spending under this Agreement must be used for the Exploits Regional Water Supply upgrades;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor approves the application of additional funding under the Federal Gas Tax Fund – Provincial Water and Wastewater Initiative in the amount of \$44,619 (net HST Rebate) required to dewater the entire area so the timbers and surrounding material can be removed and disposed of properly. This additional \$44,619 is required to complete Project #99-2018-6549 for a total project cost of \$654,012.

Motion

Bennett\Dwyer

Be it resolved that Resolution GF-W 2020-301 would be adopted as circulated. This motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

NOTICE OF MOTION

None

OTHER BUSINESS

Councillor Dwyer advised Margaret O'Neil was awarded the Special Olympics Newfoundland and Labrador 2020 Gina Blunden Award and that recognized her for her leadership and dedication. So congratulations to Margaret. The Town of Grand Falls-Windsor was also recognized as being the Champion of Inclusions, so we are very proud of that.

Councillor Whiffen noted UI would like to advise residents of the next two (2) performances of the Queen Street Dinner Theatre, as you all know with COVID-19 restrictions the Dinner Theatre did not operate this year as it normally would at the Legion, but what they did do was put off a virtual show. He went to watch them yesterday and he spent some time watching them rehearse and he was quite impressed by the level of talent of these students that range from ages 15-19. He encouraged everybody to watch the next two (2) shows and show their support for them as he thinks this goes to show that this talent is a product of the School Music Programs and a commitment that a lot of the teachers have put into the music programming in developing the talent of our youth.

Deputy Mayor Browne wanted to remind the residents of Union Street, Circular Road, East Street, West Street and Third Avenue that flushing will be happening this evening so they may experience low pressure and discoloration.

Councillor Coady-Davis congratulated the Third Place Café located at 164 Main Street in Grand Falls-Windsor. They were a winner of the Travelers Choice for 2020. Winners for Travelers Choice are chosen based on customer reviews and ratings. They were ranked in the top 10 of restaurants worldwide, so congratulations to them.

Councillor Bennett wanted to wish Happy Anniversary to Win and Bernie Higgins celebrating thirty (30) years. And also Andre and Melissa Beson who got married the same day. He also advised that we lost one of our big volunteers in Town yesterday, Ms. Viola Moores, who volunteered on many different organizations and was voted Citizen of the Year in Grand Falls-Windsor. So condolences to the family during this sad time.

Motion

Bennett\Browne

Be it resolved that the meeting of the Grand Falls-Windsor Town Council would be adjourned until the next regular scheduled meeting of Tuesday, September 1st, 2020. This motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

The meeting adjourned at 7:31 P.M.

Barry Manuel
Mayor

Darren Finn
Chief Administrative Officer