

**Council Meeting Minutes**  
**February 15, 2022**  
**Town Hall**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Elaine Nash, Kevin McDonald, F. David Power, Brenda Young, Ashley Byrne (Virtual), Ian Goudie (Virtual), Brenda Pike

Regrets: Doug Dean

**MEETING CHAIR:**

Elaine Nash, Mayor

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Meeting called to order at 7:13 p.m.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA:**

Motion #2022-02-15-301: Brenda Young; Ian Goudie

Adopt the Agenda of February 15, 2022, with the following adjustments: Add Privileged after Round Table; Under Round Table, add Dept. of Forestry follow-up and Maintenance (Philomena's Report).

All in favor; none opposed

Motion Carried

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES:**

Motion #2022-02-15-302 : F. David Power; Kevin McDonald

Adopt the Minutes of January 25, 2022.

All in favor; none opposed

Motion Carried

**FINANCES:**

**Financial Report**

Motion #2022-02-15-303: Kevin McDonald; F. David Power

Adopt the Financial Report for the month ending January 25, 2022.

All in favor; none opposed

Motion Carried

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**a) Reports**

**1) Policy and Procedures Committee:**

- (i) Public Office Hours and Hall Rentals: The town hall will open for rentals with 50% capacity. Due to the space limitations and lack of ventilation in the lobby of the town office, the office will open for in-office visits by appointment only. Masks are mandatory when visiting the town office. This policy will be subject to monthly review.
- (ii) Back to Work Policy: There was discussion around the parameters around which Council could work to accommodate the Clerk's proposed return to work schedule, while meeting the needs of

the Town. Council will request that the Town Clerk attend the March 15 meeting for discussion around her back to work proposal.

(iii) Finance Committee: Mayor Nash advised that under the new regionalization initiative and new legislation, poll tax will be eliminated and property tax will be introduced in those communities where poll tax is now being used. Councillor Goudie expressed concern with the change from poll tax to property tax based on the considerable uptake in real estate movement in the town. Mayor Nash advised that once this is passed in legislation, it will be mandatory and Council will have no control over its enactment. There was general consensus that it is more prudent for Council to control the change, rather than have it thrust upon them. The Clerk will contact Municipal Affairs to set up a meeting with Council for information purposes and to determine how to best move forward with taxation.

(iv) Rules of Procedure: Mayor Nash introduced the Rules of Procedure and advised Council is required under legislation to have these in place but welcomed input from Council on changes/additions, etc.

(v) Mayor Nash will draft a letter for Council's review to previous Mayor Sorenson and request that he remove himself as administrator of the Facebook page. Council recognizes the value of the page as an important social media platform; however, due to privacy concerns and to ensure the accurate sharing of information posted by Council, that administration of the page should rest with the Town office.

(vi) Important Dates: Council approved the list of Important Dates presented by the Town Clerk, with a change to the March meeting from March 14 to March 15, 2022. Council discussed National Volunteer Week during the week of April 18-24 and will give some thought on how to best recognize volunteers in the Town this year.

## **2) Infrastructure Committee:**

(i) Town Roads: Councillor Power investigated the situation on Walsh's Hill as it relates to ditching. If ditching doesn't occur soon, there is a real possibility of a significant wash-out in the area which could cause property damage. Councillor Power suggested that Council send a letter to residents living on Walsh's Hill informing them that the Town will be proceeding with ditching in the Spring and offering them the option of clearing branches/trees in front of their property before ditching occurs. If they choose not to clean up the trees themselves, Council will take responsibility for clearing.

In relation to an enquiry relating to culvert concerns from a resident on Marrie's Road, Council recognized the need for ditching along the road from #27 to Mosquito Brook. Residents are responsible for replacing their own culverts so Council will provide notice when ditching will occur so that a new culvert can be put in place and filled in during ditching.

Councillor Goudie enquired as to what was being done about the significant amount of fill that has been deposited under/around Marrie's bridge. Mayor Nash advised that she has had several conversations with Transportation and Infrastructure (TI) regarding responsibility for the bridge, as it is outside the Town's boundary. She was informed that the bridge was decommissioned by TI in the 1990's and it was removed from their inventory. There was also discussion re flooding around

a cabin located near the bridge; Council is not sure when the cabin was put there and noted that it is in a flood zone.

McCrate's Bridge is also a concern for Council as there is significant damage to its structure. Repairs had been scheduled by TI for last fall; pegs were put in place but the repairs weren't carried out. Mayor Nash will contact TI (and copy MHA) to provide them with photos outlining the damage with a request for it to be addressed as soon as possible due to the probability of its collapse.

(ii) Emergency Preparedness Plan: Council recognized the need for a new Emergency Preparedness Plan as the existing plan is outdated. Mayor Nash informed Council of the procedures which were put in place to provide emergency services during the recent closure of the road into Mitchell's Brook, including contacting Fire and Emergency Services, TI, RNC and Eastern Health. The local volunteer Fire Department worked with Council to devise a plan to provide emergency services to residents beyond the road closure if necessary. (Transport by Argo and ATV's; portable fire suppression equipment). Recognizing that any emergency is situational and the incident last week could have been much worse, Council agreed to set up a committee of stakeholders who will meet with Fire and Emergency Services to develop an Emergency Preparedness Plan, which would include ensuring the Town Hall is prepared for emergency use.

**3) Fire Department Report:** Nothing to report.

**4) Town Clerk Report:**

- Dishwasher – has been shipped from Omran so delivery is expected any day.
- Mailed invoice to Josie Power for \$500 for Fire Dept.
- Newsletter has been mailed and will be mailed with invoices for out-of-towners.
- Abandoned Wharf: Crown Lands do not have anything on it as there weren't any permits issued for construction. They advised Council to contact present homeowners to see if they purchased the wharf as part of their property. The Clerk also emailed Local Governance and Land Use (Lori Evoy) to determine Council's options for dealing with the wharf if it is considered a safety issue. Lori advised that Council's first step should be to determine ownership. If it is private property and the owner refuses to remove/repair it, Council can impose an Order under Section 404 (which is appealable and owner will need to be made aware of this) of the Municipalities Act; however, she strongly recommends seeking legal counsel before taking any action in this regard.
  - Council instructed the Clerk to contact the owners of the old March property to determine if they purchased the wharf when they purchased the property.
- Adjustments have been made, as requested to letter re abandoned and derelict properties. Council can advise who they wish to send it out to.
- The Clerk sent email to Salmonier Country Manor advising of permit fee; if renovations include more than a door replacement, they will need to submit the plan to Council.
- Those who are interested in Recreation Trail Committee were contacted: Anne Pratt, Nina Goudie, Connie Hickey, Robyn Hickey and Theresa Butland are still interested.
- RBC was contacted re monthly charges on Garden Account. No response has been received to date.
- Community Clean Up – ERSB will allow access to waste disposal site. They will need to be advised 7 days in advance.

- Leo Squires was contacted re stop sign at top of Walsh's Hill.
- Mr. Hammond recommended getting the water tested before removing the restriction on drinking.
- Mr. Rooter contacted Feb. 9; they can't get in until Feb. 18. Will need someone here at 11:30 (Friday).
- Stacey has been helping out with year-end finances.
- The Acting Clerk is working on the audit checklist which is due Feb. 28.
- Eastern Health is holding a Vaccination Clinic in the Town Hall on Feb. 24 (Thursday).

**5) Recreation Committee Report:**

The following people are appointed to the Walking Trail Recreation Committee: Ian Goudie, F. David Power, Kevin McDonald, Anne Pratt, Nina Goudie, Connie Hickey, Robyn Hickey, and Chris ?(pending acceptance). The committee will meet at the Town Hall monthly; appointments will occur annually.

**6) ERSB: Garbage Collection:**

The Clerk will email (copy to Council) ERSB to express Council's safety concerns with the contractor travelling in a zigzag manner across the road while collecting garbage.

**b) Committee Re-Appointments:**

Brenda Pike and Stacey Dean are re-appointed to the Recreation Committee.

Mayor Nash will contact Mr. Sorenson with a request to submit Community Garden Committee member names for 2022.

**c) Child Care Initiative:**

Councillor Byrne has received permission from the Department of Education to post the Needs Assessment for Child Care Survey online, to include day care and before/after school child care services. She will arrange distribution of physical copies through St. Catherine's Academy and Stepping Stones. Flyers will also be placed in local stores, the post office; distributed to Town Clerks from Admiral's Beach to Colinet, as well as Local Service Districts in the area. Information will also be shared through the Town's Facebook page, as well as other local group Facebook pages, the school newsletter and webpage. Mayor Nash stressed the importance of reaching out to all areas from North Harbour to Admiral's Beach and the Salmonier Line through any avenues which may be available. The first week of May has been set as a deadline for returned surveys.

Councillor Byrne advised that the Dept. of Education will cover any costs associated with mail-outs, printing, postage, etc. Once the surveys are completed, Councillor Byrne will be responsible to complete a data analysis. If a need for child care services is demonstrated, the Dept. of Education will come to the Town to discuss a potential childcare space.

**d) Come Home Year:** The Town's request for a \$2,000 grant through the Provincial Government has been approved. Government, in association with MMSB, are now offering a \$5,000 grant for community clean-ups which the Clerk will review and complete with Council's input.

**PRIVILEGED MEETING:**

Council entered into Privileged Meeting at 9:13 p.m. The regular meeting resumed at 9:40

**ROUND TABLE:**

(i) **Maintenance:** Councillor Power dismantled and cleaned the HVAC system downstairs in the Town Hall, and demonstrated to Ms. Nolan how to carry out cleanings in the future. He noted that the dehumidifier in the basement is not working and will need to be replaced. He also advised that Council will need to secure the open well in the basement by purchasing and installing 6 ml plastic around the perimeter under the wooden cover. Once the plastic is obtained, several people will be required to put the cover in place. Councillor Power, with Ms.

Nolan, will look after cleaning the heat pumps in the near future. It was also suggested that the overflow pipe from the well should be tied into the laundry tub drain, rather than into the basement.

With reference to Ms. Nolan's email re replacing the garbage box and the steps on front of the building, Council suggested including the cost in the Come Home Year funding application. Rather than build a new garbage box, Council is in favor of purchasing one.

**(ii) Forestry Plan:** Councillor Goudie referred to the message from MHA Sherry Gambin-Walsh, wherein Forestry indicated they were removing the cut block from planned activities. He has concerns that the cut block is still included in the plan, despite Council's concerns. Councillor Goudie will draft a letter for Council to a representative with Environmental Assessment and advise them of the scenario that the town's recommendations were not addressed.

**(iii) Trail Committee:** The Town Clerk will notify members of the new Trail Committee of the date for their meeting, March 1 at 7:00 pm in the Town Hall. She will get contact information (email addresses/phone numbers) for committee members.

**(iv) Eastern Health:** Ms. Nolan was advised by the new Community Health Nurse that the clinic will no longer be used by Eastern Health; they are in the process of packing up and removing all their supplies and equipment. Mayor Nash has requested that Ms. Nolan tag anything that is owned by the Town so it doesn't get removed by the movers. She expressed frustration with the lack of communication from Eastern Health. If sufficient notice is not supplied when they vacate the property, three months rent will be charged in lieu of notice. In the meantime, Ms. Nolan's position will carry on as usual until notice is received on the clinic.

**NEXT MEETING:**

The next meeting will be March 15, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion #2022-02-15-304: Ian Goudie; Brenda Young

This meeting is adjourned.

All in favor; none opposed

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Motion Carried