



Village of New Minas
Commission Meeting
July 8, 2024 @ 7:00 PM
Commission Room, LMCC
New Minas, Nova Scotia
DRAFT MINUTES

Commissioners Present:

- Dave Chaulk, Chair
- James Redmond, Vice Chair
- Mary Munroe
- Quentin Hill
- Debra Windle-Smith

Commissioners Absent:

- None

Staff Present:

- Tim Bouter, Clerk Treasurer/CAO

Others Present:

- Maynard Stevens
- Christina Sappington
- Tim Warmington
- Jason Haughn, Municipal Advisor

1. Call to Order:

The Clerk Treasurer/CAO called the meeting to order at 7:00pm, welcoming those in attendance.

2. Oaths of Office for 2024 Election

The Clerk Treasurer/CAO advised the Commission that he is an appointed Commissioner of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia pursuant to the *Notaries and Commissions Act* of the Province of Nova Scotia. As such, he has the authority to administer the Oaths of Office, either by swearing or affirmation, for the 2024 election.

Acting as a Commissioner under the *Act*, the Clerk Treasurer/CAO administered the Oath of Office for Dave Chaulk and Quentin Hill, in accordance with Section #407 (1) and (1A) of the *Municipal Government Act* and Section #147 of the *Municipal Elections Act*. The signed Oath of Office certificates have been attached to the Minutes of the Meeting.

3. Election of Village Commission Chair and Vice-Chair

The Clerk Treasurer/CAO administered the election process for Village Commission Chair, for a term to commence immediately and lasting until the 2025 AGM. A new Chair and Vice-Chair will be elected at the July 2025 Commission meeting, following the 2025 election. The Clerk Treasurer/CAO issued a First Call for nominations for the position of Chair of the New Minas Village Commission. A nomination was received for Dave Chaulk, who confirmed his acceptance of the nomination. The Clerk Treasurer/CAO issued a Second Call for nominations for the position of Chair of the New Minas Village Commission, followed by a Third and Final Call. No additional nominations were received.

Motion:

THAT Dave Chaulk be appointed Chair of the New Minas Village Commission.

M/James Redmond**S/Debra Windle-Smith****Motion Carried**

The newly elected Chair issued a First Call for nominations for the position of Vice Chair of the New Minas Village Commission. A nomination was received for James Redmond, who confirmed his acceptance of the nomination. The Chair issued a Second Call for nominations for the position of Vice Chair of the New Minas Village Commission, followed by a Third and Final Call. No additional nominations were received.

Motion:

THAT James Redmond be appointed Vice-Chair of the New Minas Village Commission.

M/Quentin Hill**S/Debra Windle-Smith****Motion Carried****4. Approval of the Agenda:****Motion:**

THAT the Agenda for the July 8, 2024 Commission Meeting be approved as circulated.

M/James Redmond**S/Quentin Hill****Motion Carried****5. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest:**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

6. Approval of Minutes:

a. June 10, 2024 Village Commission Meeting

Motion:

THAT the Minutes for the June 10, 2024 Village Commission Meeting be approved as circulated.

M/James Redmond

S/Mary Munroe

Motion Carried

7. Business Arising from Minutes:

- a. June 10, 2024 Village Commission Meeting

There was no business arising from the June 10, 2024 minutes.

8. Comments from the Chair:

The Chair had no comments.

9. Public Input Specific to Agenda Topics:

There was no public input.

10. Committee Reports:

- c. Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee

Quentin Hill provided a verbal summary of the draft minutes included in the July 8, 2024 Commission agenda package.

Motion:

THAT the draft minutes for the Joint Accessibility Committee be received as included in the July 8, 2024 Commission agenda package and as verbally summarized by Quentin Hill.

M/Quentin Hill

S/James Redmond

Motion Carried

11. Staff Reports:

The Clerk Treasurer/CAO provided a verbal summary of the following written reports included in the July 8, 2024 Commission agenda package:

- a. Clerk Treasurer/CAO — Report included in package
b. Manager of Municipal Operations — Report included in package
c. Manager of Finance — Report included in package

Motion:

THAT the Staff Reports be received as included in the July 8, 2024 Commission agenda package and as verbally summarized by the Clerk Treasurer/CAO.

M/James Redmond

S/Quentin Hill

Motion Carried

12. New Business:

a. Accessibility Presentation

Katie MacArthur, the Accessibility Coordinator with the Municipality of the County of Kings, gave a presentation on accessibility requirements focusing on the Provincial Standards and the Village of New Minas built environment.

An important goal in the upcoming year is for individual villages to begin preparing their own accessibility work plans. The Commission by consensus directed the Clerk Treasurer/CAO to form an informal Accessibility Working Group comprised of the Village's representative at the County JAAC and staff as appropriate. Katie will be able to provide support for the Working Group in developing the Village's accessibility work plan. Initiatives and priorities that are identified will be incorporated in the Village's budget deliberation process.

b. Proposed Change to New Minas Growth Centre Boundary

The Clerk Treasurer/CAO provided an update on the report to King's County Committee of the Whole included in the July 8, 2024 Commission agenda package. The County is considering an alternative approach to enabling moderate density development through a limited expansion of the eastern boundary of the New Minas Growth Centre. The process of changing the boundary is in the early stages. Next steps include a Public Information Meeting, followed by a report to the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC). PAC could decide to convene a Public Participation Meeting with the results being brought back to PAC. PAC then tables a recommendation to Council. Council may then decline or approve and consider a First Reading, a Public Hearing, and Second Reading. Approval by the Minister is also required since the matter involves an MPS amendment.

The Commission expressed concern over the lack of consultation and communication from the County to date. An expansion of the New Minas Growth Centre would likely have a negative impact on the Village, as it would attract development just outside the Village's boundary. The Commission would rather work with the County on initiatives that support growth and development within the existing New Minas Growth Centre. The naming convention is also seen as problematic by the Commission.

The Commission also expressed concerns about the lack of an Area Advisory Committee since the completion of the New Minas Secondary Plan. Communication with the Municipality's Planning Department over the last year has not led to any action to date.

Motion:

THAT the Clerk Treasurer/CAO submit a request to the CAO of the Municipality of the County of Kings for the New Minas Area Advisory Committee be reinstated.

M/James Redmond

S/Quentin Hill

Motion Carried

c. Water Commission Appointments

The Clerk Treasurer/CAO presented the request for decision included in the July 8, 2024 Commission agenda package.

Motion #1:

THAT Dave Chaulk be appointed to the Water Commission as a Commissioner member for the term ending on May 31, 2027.

M/James Redmond

S/Quentin Hill

Motion Carried

Motion #2:

THAT Bruce MacArthur and Maynard Stevens be appointed to the Water Commission as citizen members for the term ending on May 31, 2027.

M/ Quentin Hill

S/James Redmond

Motion Carried

d. Finance & Audit Committee Appointments

The Clerk Treasurer/CAO presented the request for decision included in the July 8, 2024 Commission agenda package.

Motion #1:

THAT Dave Chaulk and Quentin Hill be appointed to the Finance & Audit Committee as Commissioner members for the term ending on March 31, 2025.

M/Debra Windle-Smith

S/James Redmond

Motion Carried

Motion #2:

THAT Bruce MacArthur and Valerie Kneen-Teed be appointed to the Finance & Audit Committee as a citizen members for the term ending on March 31, 2025.

M/Debra Windle-Smith
S/James Redmond
Motion Carried

e. JAAC Appointment

The Clerk Treasurer/CAO presented the request for decision included in the July 8, 2024 Commission agenda package.

Motion:

THAT Quentin Hill be appointed as the Village representative on the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee for a three-year term ending on May 31, 2027.

M/Debra Windle-Smith
S/James Redmond
Motion Carried

f. Village Tax Collection

The Clerk Treasurer/CAO summarized the email from Scott MacKay included in the July 8, 2024 Commission agenda package. Although the benefits in having the County administer the tax collection service described are valid, the cost to the Village would be significant (over \$40,000). Tax collection does not add a significant administrative burden to the Village, as staffing is already in place for utility billings. The Finance Department has the appropriate amount of staffing for workload and accountability, and would therefore not be in a position to alter or reduce a position to offset this cost. The Commission also noted a desire to maintain autonomy through the administration of the Village's tax collection.

Motion:

THAT the Village of New Minas decline the tax collection offer from the Municipality of the County of Kings.

M/James Redmond
S/Quentin Hill
Motion Carried

On a related note, the Clerk Treasurer/CAO indicated that there are 16 accounts that are in arrears by three or more years, totalling \$19,980.87 in outstanding taxes. Four of the outstanding accounts are for fragment parcels with marginal amounts in arrears (total of \$88.17). According to consultation with the Village Auditor and the Municipality of the County of Kings, the Clerk Treasurer/CAO recommended that these accounts be written off.

Motion:

THAT the outstanding taxes for AAN 08128464, 08128413, 10553466 & 09305734 be written off.

M/James Redmond

S/Quentin Hill

Motion Carried

The Clerk Treasurer/CAO also described the requirements around tax sale. Section 134 (2) of the MGA states that "Property shall be put up for tax sale if taxes are in arrears for the preceding three fiscal years." The Village Solicitor has outlined the following steps for properties that qualify for tax sale:

1. Send out a preliminary notice which states that if taxes aren't paid within 14 days, then the tax sale processes will commence. The letter would also provide the property owner with an opportunity to negotiate an arrears payment schedule to avoid the property tax processes.
2. If they do not pay, complete title searches so that notice can be given to anyone who may have an interest in the property that it will be sold for taxes. The cost of the title search (around \$400) will be added to the tax account as a lien.
3. Serve notice of the date the sale will take place.
4. Hold a public auction.

Most of the fees occasioned by the Village are passed on to the property owner. The majority of the time, the taxes are paid well in advance of a public auction. The Clerk Treasurer/CAO stated that this process will begin in mid July, to align with the August 1 payment deadline. Lastly, the Clerk Treasurer/CAO indicated that interest charges will be applied to overdue accounts for this year's tax bills beginning on September 1st, rather than November 1st, also to align with the August 1 payment deadline.

13. Correspondence:

There was no correspondence.

14. Other Business:

There was no other business.

15. General Public Input:

Comments from the public were as follows:

Maynard Stevens:

- Canada Day was great, including the educational snake encounter.

- Will be meeting with the Beautification Committee to discuss implementation of features at Founding Fathers Park to acknowledge other people groups important to the history of New Minas.
- Asked about the Village's relationship with the Kings County Councillor (Kevin Davison). Dave Chaulk mentioned that his attendance at Village meetings is sporadic, and the Clerk Treasurer/CAO mentioned that he meets with Kevin informally on a monthly basis.

Christina Sappington:

- Great job with Canada Day, including social media updates related to weather updates!
- Asked if there is a cooling center in New Minas for public relief from heat waves. The Louis Millett Community Complex is open to the public, and designated as a Comfort Center for emergencies. The Clerk Treasurer/CAO to look further into this.

16. Adjournment:

There being no further business, Dave Chaulk called for a motion to adjourn at 8:50pm.

Motion:

THAT the meeting be adjourned.

**M/James Redmond
S/Debra Windle-Smith
Motion Carried**