



**Village of New Minas**  
Minutes of Regular Commission Meeting  
Monday April 12, 2021 @ 7:00 PM  
Spencer Room, Louis Millett Community Centre  
New Minas, Nova Scotia

**Commissioners Present:**

- Dave Chaulk, Chair
- James Redmond, Vice Chair
- Cheryl Manzer, Commissioner
- Mary Munroe, Commissioner
- Quentin Hill, Commissioner

**Staff Present:**

- John Ansara, Director of Recreation & Community Development
- Gerard Hamilton, Operations Manager
- Ian Morrison, Clerk Treasurer/CAO

**Others Present:**

- Jim Winsor, Councillor, District #8
- Maynard Stevens

**Call to Order:**

Chair Dave Chaulk called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, welcoming those in attendance.

**Approval of the Agenda:**

THAT the Agenda for the April 12, 2021 regular Commission meeting be approved, as presented.

**M/James Redmond**

**S/Quentin Hill**

**Motion Carried**

**Approval of the Minutes from Prior Meetings:**

THAT the Minutes for the March 8, 2021 regular Commission meeting be approved, with an amendment to correct the spelling of Quentin Hill.

**M/James Redmond**

**S/Quentin Hill**

**Motion Carried**

**Business Arising from Minutes:**

None

**Presentations:**

Winter Maintenance Presentation

Gerard Hamilton, Operations Manager, presented an overview of the Winter Maintenance Program which is administered and enacted by his department. The overview consisted of a review of the equipment, logistics of snow removal, service expectations, staffing levels, and work logs associated with the service. Snow clearing service is provided to approximately 20 km of sidewalks in New Minas and Greenwich, Jones Road service building, LMCC, Lockhart-Ryan Park, New Minas Volunteer Fire Department, stations, and wells.

Mr. Hamilton also reviewed the challenges with providing the service which includes condition of the snowfall, coordination with Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, equipment malfunctions, private snow plow operators, and resolving public complaints.

Discussion ensued from the presentation. Ms. Manzer opined that residents and businesses may benefit from more public education around the standards and challenges associated with snow removal. The Chair expressed concern over the condition of Milne Avenue sidewalk which, upon observation, was a consistent challenge during the winter. Mr. Hamilton noted the concern.

**Committee Reports:**

- Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee – verbal report
- Beautification Group – report included in package
- Finance – report included in package
- New Minas Water Commission – report included in package
- Operations – report included in package
- Recreation & Community Development – report included in package
- Recreation & Community Development Advisory Committee – report included in package
- Regional Sewer Committee – report and draft Operating Budget included in package

Cheryl Manzer provided a verbal update for the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee. The Committee is tasked with ensuring the Municipality and the Village meet accessibility obligations by 2030. Ms. Manzer reported that the Committee has six areas of focus and that all new sidewalk construction will need to conform to new standards.

THAT the report for the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee be accepted as presented.

**M/Cheryl Manzer**

**S/James Redmond**

**Motion Carried**

THAT the report for the Beautification Group be accepted as presented.

**M/Mary Munroe**

**S/Quentin Hill**

**Motion Carried**

THAT the reports for Clerk Treasurer/CAO, Finance, Operations, Recreation & Community Development, and Recreation & Community Development Advisory Committee be accepted as presented.

**M/James Redmond**

**S/Quentin Hill**

**Motion Carried**

THAT the report for the New Minas Water Commission be accepted as presented.

**M/James Redmond**

**S/Quentin Hill**

**Motion Carried**

THAT the report for the Regional Sewer Committee be accepted as presented.

**M/James Redmond**

**S/Quentin Hill**

**Motion Carried**

**New Business:**

Appointments to Finance & Audit Committee

The Clerk Treasurer/CAO presented the Finance & Audit Committee Policy, specifically Section 2, which calls for two Commissioners to be appointed to the Committee for a one-year period, one of whom shall serve as Chair. The Commission was asked to appoint two members to the Committee.

THAT Dave Chaulk and Quentin Hill be appointed to the Finance & Audit Committee for a one-year term, with Mr. Chaulk serving as Chair of the Committee.

**M/James Redmond**

**S/Cheryl Manzer**

**Motion Carried**

Operating Budget

The Operating Budget for the fiscal year April 1, 2021 - March 31, 2022 was formally presented. The budget details had previously been reviewed by the Commission at information meetings held on March 4 & 5.

No change in the Property Tax Rates for ratepayers was proposed in the draft budget, however, the Village Commission wanted to consider the matter of a rate change, specifically if the implementation of the Sewer Rate change might present the opportunity to lower Property Tax Rates. Discussion on the tax rate ensued, which resulted in the presentation of two Motions.

The first proposed a reduction in the residential tax rate in an effort to supply tax relief at the same time as sewer rates would be planned to increase.

THAT the Commission of the Village of New Minas approve the proposed 2021-2022 Operating Budget for the Village of New Minas, with the tax rates being set as:

- 0.402/\$100 for Residential Assessments
- 0.592/\$100 for Commercial Assessments
- 0.402 for Resource Assessments

**M/James Redmond**

**S/Cheryl Manzer**

**Motion Defeated**

Discussion then focused on maintaining the existing tax rate to guard against prospective future increases.

THAT the Commission of the Village of New Minas approve the proposed 2021-2022 Operating Budget for the Village of New Minas, as presented, with the tax rates being set as:

- 0.430/\$100 for Residential Assessments
- 0.592/\$100 for Commercial Assessments
- 0.430/\$100 for Resource Assessments

**M/Quentin Hill**

**S/Cheryl Manzer**

**Motion Carried**

**Regional Sewer Operating Budget**

The following Motion was presented as a follow-up to the report of the Regional Sewer Committee, specifically Village Commission was asked to review and, if in agreement, approve the Operating Budget of the Regional Sewer Committee. A Motion to approve the budget of the Regional Sewer Committee was, therefore, presented. The budget that was accepted by Commission at the March 8 meeting was not ratified by all of the partners that comprise the Regional Sewer Committee. The Town of Kentville and PepsiCo did not agree with the establishment of an operating reserve in the amount of \$8,800. Therefore, this has necessitated the need for acceptance of a revised budget, one which does not include an operating reserve. The contribution being asked of the Village of New Minas is \$335,300 for the year, which represents an increase from \$325,800 in the contribution over last year.

THAT the Commission of the Village of New Minas approve the proposed 2021-2022 Operating Budget for the Regional Sewer Committee, as presented.

**M/James Redmond**

**S/Quentin Hill**

**Motion Carried**

#### Sewer Rate Study & By-law Amendment

The Sewer Rate Study and an amendment to the by-law was presented for Second Reading. The study, which was commissioned by the Village to review its sewer rates, provides a rate analysis for the next ten years which will enable the service to be fully funded by the collected rates and implement a capital renewal program on an annual basis. The analysis calls for an increase of 65% in rates, effective April 1, 2021 and then inflationary increases of 2.25% to 2.50% each year thereafter. First Reading of the by-law was approved at the March 9 meeting of Village Commission.

The Clerk Treasurer/CAO reported that Notice of Second Reading was provided in the Valley Wire on March 17, advertised on the social media platforms of the Village, and communicated on the Water & Sewer invoices that were circulated in early April. No submissions, either written or verbal, were received.

THAT the Commission gives Second and Final Reading to amendments to the Sewer By-law of the Village of New Minas.

**M/James Redmond**

**S/Quentin Hill**

**Motion Carried**

#### New Minas Secondary Plan Working Group

The Clerk Treasurer/CAO provided an update on the activities of the New Minas Secondary Plan Working Group. Specifically, the Market Demand Study, prepared by Fowler Bauld & Mitchell in conjunction with Turner Drake & Partners Limited, was discussed.

Discussion at the recent Working Group, which is a public meeting, included review of the study and also some anecdotal information, including commentary from two area developers. Comments made by the two developers would suggest that the market is robust and that demand for residential housing, which was estimated by the authors of the study to be between 270 and 321 units over the next decade, will be achieved in relatively short order.

The study also estimates demand for office space to be limited to 18,000-20,000 square feet over the next decade. The study also recommends that commercial development in the growth zone be limited in scope to no more than 50,000 square feet for retail floor space per development. There is a sense among some members of the Working Group that the study may not be reflective of the market.

#### Terms of Reference – Beautification Committee

The Clerk Treasurer/CAO presented the draft Terms of Reference for the Beautification Committee, which were recommended by the Beautification Group at its meeting on March 17. The draft was presented for approval.

THAT the Terms of Reference of the Beautification Committee be accepted as presented.

**M/James Redmond**  
**S/Quentin Hill**  
**Motion Carried**

**Correspondence:**

Food Vendor Requests

By-law #90 (Vendors By-law) requires roadside food vendors to obtain a permit, on an annual basis, from the Municipality in order to operate. Existing permits expired on March 31. As part of the application process, Section 6 (h) of the By-law specifies that vendors seeking to operate within the Village must obtain “written response from the Village concerning the proposed operation”. The Village is in receipt of requests from three roadside vendors seeking commentary from the Village. The Clerk Treasurer/CAO asked for instruction from the Commission on how to proceed and enquired whether input from the community should be solicited as part of forming the written response from the Village.

After discussing, the Commission advised that seeking input of the community was not necessary and that there was no reason to oppose the presence of the food vendors in the Village, as long as the applicants were compliant with all other by-laws, regulations, and rules,

Noise By-law Exemption Request

A second letter was received from Stephen Gillis, on behalf of the Thunder in the Valley Off Road Event, requesting an exemption to the Municipality’s Noise Control By-law (By-law #84). Subject to Section #9 of the aforementioned By-law, the Village shall issue a report and recommendation regarding the request. The details of the event are:

October 9 & 10, 2021  
7:00 am- 7:00 pm, each day  
Pit Area, North End of Jones Road, New Minas

The Clerk Treasurer/CAO advised that input from the community is ongoing until April 30, 2021. The input received can then be considered by Commission as part of the decision-making process.

Letter from Lieutenant Governor

The Chair received a letter from the Honorable Arthur J. LeBlanc, Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Nova Scotia, thanking the Village for its efforts during the pandemic and presenting the Village with a community spirit plaque for providing aid to residents during the pandemic. The plaque has been mounted in the lobby of the Village Offices.

**Public Discussion Period:**

Mr. Winsor commented on the Market Demand Study as prepared by Fowler Bauld & Mitchell in conjunction with Turner Drake & Partners Limited. He feels that the study is flawed. Mr. Winsor also provided an update on the Cornwallis River project and advised the concept is a consideration as a future project within the Municipality’s strategic plan. Mr. Winsor also congratulated the Village on its approval of the budget and for maintaining the tax rates at the

same level, especially with the prospect of development south of the 101 Highway, which may require infrastructure commitments.

**Adjournment:**

**M/James Redmond**

THAT the meeting be adjourned at 9:13 pm.