

August 19, 2024

The Property Services Committee for the Municipality of the County of Pictou met in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Administration Building by videoconference and teleconference on Monday, August 19, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

**PRESENT**

- 1 Clr. Don Butler
- 2 Clr. Deborah Wadden
- 3 Clr. Darla MacKeil
- 4 Clr. Mary Elliott
- 5 Deputy Warden Wayne Murray
- 6 Warden Robert Parker
- 8 Clr. Larry Turner
- 9 Clr. Peter Boyles
- 10 Clr. Randy Palmer
- 11 Clr. Andy Thompson
- 12 Clr. Chester Dewar

**ABSENT**

- 7 Clr. David Parker
- Adam MacInnis, Communications Officer

**IN ATTENDANCE**

- Brian Cullen, CAO, Municipal Clerk-Treasurer
- Sueann Musick, Director of Corporate Services
- Karen Cornish, Deputy Municipal Treasurer
- Logan McDowell, Dir. of Public Works & Development (videoconference)
- Evan Hale, Director of Emergency Services
- Jeramie Lewis, Development Officer
- Shellie Pettipas, Administrative Assistant

**CALL TO ORDER & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Clr. Palmer, Chair of the Property Services Committee called the meeting to order and acknowledged that we are on the ancestral territorial lands of the Mikmaq people.

**AGENDA**

It was moved by Clr. Boyles and seconded by Clr. Turner that the agenda be approved as presented. **Motion Carried**

Clr. Randy Palmer requested an addition to the agenda for a streetlight installation on MacLellan's Brook Road.

## **EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS**

There were no emergency resolutions.

## **MINUTES**

Clr. Palmer asked if there were any errors, omissions, or corrections in the minutes for July 15, 2024. The members of the Committee entered no errors, omissions, or corrections. The Chair proclaimed the minutes of the meeting on July 15, 2024, as the official record of the meeting. **Motion Carried**

Clr. Palmer welcomed Pictou West MLA Marco MacLeod, who attended the meeting.

## **REPORTS**

### **Jeramie Lewis**

Mr. Lewis said that Mill Road has been in for subdivision applications over the last few years. A few applications have proceeded to land creation, and three lots have been created since 2014. Mill Road is a listed provincial roadway but unmaintained and classified as abandoned. Under the MGA, the provincial rule and the municipal bylaw do not allow subdivision of lots on that road. Mr. Lewis said there had been a few enquiries about the land being subdivided on that road.

Warden Parker said that several people reside on Mill Road, and more would like to subdivide the land. The Warden asked what options might be available for people who live on that road. Mr. Lewis said there are three options: the province can upgrade the road to its standard, the county could take ownership and do the same, or the residents can take over the road and upgrade it. Mr. Lewis said that the bylaw speaks to the eight-lot rule and that the road has to be built to a standard when eight lots are created. Currently, there are 17 lots. Mr. Lewis said that any application, regardless of who owns the road, it would have to be upgraded.

The Warden asked if a person purchased the road, would the rest of the residents have access in and out of that road? Mr. Lewis said it would have to be done legally through an easement. The alternative seems to be that somebody purchases the road and works with the county to bring it up to standard, at which point the county could consider taking it over. Once the road was certified and taken up to municipal standards, any lot could be created there.

Clr. MacKeil asked if the eight-lot rule is standard across other municipalities. Mr. Lewis said that it is the policy that was adopted in Pictou County in 2003 and should be enforced according to the bylaw. Clr. MacKeil asked if that is still adequate within the policy. Mr. Lewis said that it is the bylaw, so that is what is enforced. CAO Cullen said that eight lots are relatively standard across the province.

Clr. Dewar asked about the length of Mill Road and the cost of bringing it up to standard. Mr. Lewis said the road is almost 2 km long and does not have a figure for the cost estimate as there would be many different variables if the project were to be undertaken.

Warden Parker said that most of the housing is currently on the Loch Broom end of the road and questioned whether half of it could be brought to standard. Mr. Lewis replied that upgrading the entire road length would be required.

Clr. Dewar said that the people on that road who want improvements could appeal to the province and that more and more roads are not graded and will grow over, and this is happening to many roads throughout the county.

## **MOTION**

It was moved by Clr. Elliott and seconded by Clr. Dewar to put the onus back on the province to take over the Mill Road. **Motion Carried**

## **DEVELOPMENT OFFICER REPORT**

The Development Officer Report for the month of July 2024 was received as presented.

Clr. MacKeil asked Mr. Lewis for clarification on lot size and had always thought 2.3 acres was required to have a building lot.

Mr. Lewis said every application is circulated between the Department of Transportation and the Department of Environment. The 2.2-acre lot size is listed, and this is for the worst-case scenario to accommodate a septic system. For any lot size less than 2 acres, a report is required on the soil to ensure it can accommodate a septic system.

## **EMERGENCY SERVICES**

The Emergency Services Report for the month of July 2024 was received as presented.

Warden Parker said there should be a follow-up meeting from the emergency preparedness session to update the planning for an emergency. Mr. Hale said a lot of

work has been done to prepare the county. Different technologies have been rolled out, and local emergency centres have been built up. Mr. Hale agreed that a follow-up meeting regarding this would be beneficial.

The Warden asked how prepared the county is when the time comes to call an alert and what the procedure is. Warden Parker asked who was responsible for calling for the emergency alert.

Mr. Hale met with the province, and the EMO expressed concern about the notifications the province had put out. An alert is now easier to send; CAO Cullen would be the individual who could sign off on an alert, John Davidson with REMO, and Mr. Hale could also send out the alert. Mr. Hale said there is a lot of work happening on that. The province has made the alert more accessible and now includes Fire Chiefs in calling an alert.

Clr. Turner asked if criteria were being developed for each department to make that call and if there would be training for the departments. Mr. Hale said that training for fire departments would be rolled out with very strict criteria to be able to call an alert. Mr. Hale said that training has already been scheduled on the requirements of when and why an alert would be issued. Clr. Turner

Clr. Turner asked if this would be standardized across the county and if the towns are involved in this conversation. Mr. Hale said this procedure will be standard province-wide. CAO Cullen noted this is a national standard. CAO Cullen said that when a fire department makes a call from the field, it will be assessed by a risk manager, who will determine whether an alert gets issued. When an alert gets sent in from the municipality, it will be automatic.

Clr. Boyles asked if training would be provided for the AEDs. Mr. Hale said this has been brought up a lot from the comfort centres, and three instructors will be rolling out training and answering any questions. The training will be scheduled for the end of August or in September.

Clr. Thompson thanked Mr. Hale for his work on this and said the county is now more prepared than it was a year ago. Clr. Thompson said the Nova Scotia Accessibility Director will have a panel discussion online on Wednesday, August 21, at 1:30. The discussion title is "Are You Ready; Emergency Preparedness for Persons with Disabilities and Older Adults."

Clr. Dewar asked Mr. Hale about the Nova Scotia Fire School being shut down over safety concerns. Mr. Hale said the school is believed to be back very soon. All the local members are trained here in Pictou County. Clr. Turner asked where the fire school is taught in the county, and Mr. Hale said it is held within each department.

Clr. Turner asked Mr. Hale about the Pictou County Fire School, who it is accountable to, and how it is governed. Mr. Hale said the course is offered through an

online program called Resource One. With that comes all the Standard operating procedures and standard operating guidelines for every training evolution that would be done. Clr. Turner said that if something tragic happens regarding liability, how will that be handled? Mr. Hale said the policies and procedures must be followed under each course. All the firefighters are protected under WCB as well as the general liability. This program has been cleared, and all the information has been sent to the liability insurer.

### **FIRE INSPECTOR REPORT**

The Fire Inspector Report for the month of July 2024 was received as presented.

### **BUILDING INSPECTOR REPORT**

The Building Inspector Report for the month of July 2024 was received as presented.

### **BYLAW OFFICER'S REPORT**

The Bylaw Officer's Report for the month of July 2024 was received as presented.

### **BUSINESS ITEMS OR ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION**

#### **STREETLIGHT APPROVAL**

#### **MOTION**

It was moved by Clr. Turner and seconded by Clr. MacKeil to approve the streetlight at 54 Pump House Branch, Granton. **Motion Carried**

#### **MOTION**

It was moved by Clr. MacKeil and seconded by Deputy Warden Murray to approve the streetlight 1179 MacLellan's Brook Road. **Motion Carried**

### **EVAN MACDONALD ROAD WATER**

CAO Cullen said that to service the 61 units on Evan MacDonald Road, 4.5 km of waterline would need to be installed, and the estimated cost would be 5.5 million.

Clr. Boyles has received calls from residents about having no water. One resident has had two wells go dry. Clr. Boyles said something must be done quickly, and cost should not be an issue. The taxpayers should be looked after.

Clr. MacKeil asked if any funding avenues were currently available. CAO Cullen said there is no federal program now, but one could be announced soon. Clr. MacKeil said this project is not currently on the five-year capital plan and asked what Clr. Boyles

was asking for. Clr. Boyles stated that this was previously on the capital plan and is unsure why it was removed.

Warden Parker said that this project would have to work its way through the capital plan and could not jump to the front of the line. The first step should be to survey how many residents want the water.

Clr. Turner asked if the Town of New Glasgow may have an issue supplying the water. CAO Cullen said that is a significant risk, and once the MacLellan's Brook water project is complete, it could be pushing that limit. Mr. Cullen said that will be looked at more closely.

Clr. Thompson said if a survey is going to be conducted in that area, it would be preferable to have one done in Churchville as well. This project was on the capital plan, but it was dropped. Churchville is located next to Forbes Lake, which is the best water source in Nova Scotia, but the residents have some of the worst water supplies. Clr. Thompson said this is a fraction of what other projects would cost and would service 35 homes.

## **MOTION**

It was moved by Clr. Elliott and seconded by Clr. Dewar to conduct a survey of residents to find out how many would be interested in this water project.

**Motion Carried**  
**Nay Votes: Clr. Deborah Wadden**  
**Clr. Andy Thompson**

Clr. Palmer agreed that the residents of Churchville should also be surveyed. Clr. Palmer said the municipality could not afford a project like this until funding is available. This should also be looked at on the five-year capital plan.

Clr. Turner said that if surveys were to be conducted, one of the communities in District 8 should also be considered. Clr. MacKeil noted that these projects are very important, but Clr. Boyles asked for this to be on the agenda and has the information for Council. It should be the one being discussed.

Clr. Wadden said that it is important to have water projects done; however, other projects from the plan haven't been done. A survey would get the residents hoping it was going to be done. Clr. Wadden will not be supporting this motion.

Clr. Elliott said the motion was only to survey to determine the number of residents who wanted water.

## **J CLASS ROADS PRIORITY FOR 2025**

## **MOTION**

It was moved by Deputy Warden Murray and seconded by Clr. MacKeil to submit Greenwood Street and Old Row to the province to be paved through the J Class Road Program.

**Motion Carried**

**BILL STEWART BURNING COMPLAINT**

Clr. Turner received several complaints regarding burning from Stewart's Recycling on Westville Road. These complaints were forwarded to Mr. Hale, who did some investigation. Clr. Turner said the essence of the complaints was that burning was happening there, and people's health was affected. Mr. Hale was asked to examine the environmental impact and the fire regulations.

Mr. Hale and Mr. LeGreca went to the business and spoke to the manager/owner. There was nowhere apparent that consistent burning was being done. Scrap metal was being cut up to be hauled away. The Department of Environment was also there to investigate the same complaint on the same day and had the same findings.

Clr. Turner said the concerns have been going on for a long time, and the residents of Munroe Avenue have been negatively affected by this. Clr. Turner can fully comprehend the complaints and gave the residents a copy of the report so they know this has been investigated and nothing further can be done.

**MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION**

There were no motions of reconsideration.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There was no further business before the meeting, so the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 8:17

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CHAIRPERSON

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MUNICIPAL CLERK