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Minutes of Council Meeting

March 12, 2024 7:00 PM

Present:	Mayor	Krista Freake
	Deputy Mayor	Brian Hooper
	Councillors	Roxanne Haliburton
		Perry Pond
		John Mullett
		Ken Tucker
		Derek White
	Town Clerk	Coreen Colbourne
	Superintendent of Public Works	Bruce Roberts
Regrets:	Town Manager	Todd Champion
	Recreation and Tourism Manager	Ashley Ivany

Mayor Freake brought greetings to those watching on Facebook, fellow Councillors and Staff.

1. Call to Order – 7:02 pm

Mayor Freake brought forward a land acknowledgement.

2. Approval of Agenda

24-031 Hooper/Haliburton

Resolved to adopt the agenda, as presented.

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

3.1 Minutes for Approval - Regular Council Meeting February 13, 2024

24-032 White/Tucker

Resolved to adopt the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of February 13, 2024.

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

Mayor's Update:

Mayor Freake thanked the organizers of the Roy Curlew Memorial Hockey Tournament for the invitation to address the public at the event.

She congratulated the Town of Gander on a successful Winter Games. She had the opportunity to participate in the closing ceremonies and at the figure skating competition that was held at the Mike Austin Arena in Lewisporte. She noted that there were very positive comments regarding the Town's initiatives, set-up, and staff, she thanked the Town's staff.

4. Recreation/Tourism Committee

Update by Deputy Mayor Hooper

Winter Carnival

It was felt that the Winter Carnival was successful with all events being well attended, there have been positive comments heard from the residents of the community.

Mike Austin Arena

The NL Winter Games Figure Skating Competition was held at the Mike Austin Arena on March 1st, 2024, it went over extremely well. It was well attended; many attendees were impressed with Lewisporte's hospitality. Deputy Mayor Hooper thanked the recreation and outside staff, as well as the special events coordinator for the preparations and set-up for the event and for helping during the event. He said the organizing committee of the event from Gander were very excited about what they saw. Deputy Mayor Hooper also congratulated the Town of Gander on hosting such a tremendous event.

Deputy Mayor Hooper congratulated the Senior Seahawks on winning gold in their hockey league.

He also congratulated the U11-2, U13 and U15 on their triple home tournament this past weekend. The U11-2 and U13 teams won gold on home ice.

Other Recreation

Preparations are under way for the Easter Egg-stravaganza on March 24, the public was encouraged to check the Town's Facebook page for details.

Applications for various grant opportunities have been submitted by the recreation director, which include, the Accessibility Grant, the Green Team Grant, Provincial and Federal Summer Student Grants, The Community Garden Grant, and a Multi-Cultural Funding Grant. It is the Town's hope that we will be successful in obtaining some or all those grants.

Mussel Bed Soiree

Deputy Mayor Hooper announced the Mussel Bed Soiree date as August 8th – 12th. The recreation committee as well as Council has met to discuss the event package, details of the Soiree will be finalized soon, at which time, some aspects of it, it will be made public.

Mayor Freake thanked all the volunteers that helped with the Winter Carnival and the Winter Games, she said without people willing to donate their time, it would be difficult to put off such events.

5. Economic Development

Update by Councillor Pond

Councillor Pond indicated that most of the files that the economic development committee have, are working their way through certain processes, for example, RFP's, waiting on Government and/or consultants. He does feel that the items that fall under economic development are moving ahead.

Councillor Pond spoke of the meeting Council had with Minister Osbourne. It was prompted by the exclusion of Lewisporte in the Collaborative Care Clinics that were announced recently when it was thought that Lewisporte was on the list. Council expressed their disappointment and frustration on the announcement. Council is hopeful that the March 20th Provincial Budget will bring some positive news. The clinic is still on Council's agenda and holding people accountable for it.

Councillor Pond received an email from one of the town's residents, in response to it, he took some time to share with the public, the types of communication that should be directed to Council versus the Town Office. He said that the more administrative types of complaints, such as potholes, should be directed to the Town Office. He said, if it's ideas or policies that the public would like the Town to consider, then the Council are the right people to talk to. He said that he felt that he spoke for all Council when he said that a phone call or email is welcome from the public. Council appreciates the public's engagement in Town matters, they want the public to provide input, whether it's bringing forward any suggestions or even criticism, in where they think the Town should or should not be going.

From that email Councillor Pond shared updates on the subjects brought forward:

1. Collaborative Care Clinic - was addressed earlier.
2. Paving of Main Street – Representatives of Council met with MHA Bennett and expressed the frustrations over the condition of Main Street, Council is hoping that the March 20th Provincial Budget will have Main Street and/or Premier Drive included in its road program.
3. While the Town has worked through a sewage treatment proposal and has taken some steps to prepare for the future, it will take time. To alleviate some of the sewage that the outfall creates around the Marina, the Town is currently in the process of tendering a project to extend the outfall into deeper water.

Mayor Freake reiterated Councillor Pond's words, and said that during the meeting with MHA Bennett, he said that paving in Lewisporte was identified as a priority and submitted by him. She also said that the Marina is a project that has been discussed by Council for several years, Councillor Pond interjected and said that it was a project that was submitted and rejected previously but resubmitted as a priority the next year under funding opportunities. Mayor Freake said she understands the frustrations of the public, and that Council finds it equally as challenging.

6. Lands Committee

Update by Councillor White

Councillor White expressed once again that when the snow goes, hopefully in April, the Town will be appealing to property owners to clean them up. If Town staff deems it necessary to request a property to be cleaned up, the owner will be issued either a verbal or written warning for the clean-up, with a time frame to have it completed. If it is not completed by the allowed time, the Town will look at some other course of action. Councillor White also reminded property owners that if they want to complete any outside repairs and add any structures or additions to their property, a permit is required.

7. Public Works

Update by Councillor Mullett

The Town has received inquiries into rats being seen in various places around town. Councillor Mullett took some time to address the problem. He said that rats are attracted to food sources, he advised any resident that has the wooden box style garage container to ensure that it is cleaned out regularly. He also mentioned if a person has a pet that is being fed outside to clean up any food that may be wasted, as well as making sure to clean up any pet feces as rats are attracted to that. He added that Lewisporte is not the only community that is facing the issue.

Councillor Mullett also addressed the complaints being taken about potholes. He wanted to remind the public that Main Street and Premier Drive are not owned or maintained by the Town, it is the Provincial Government's responsibility. He said if a resident or business owner has an issue with a pothole on any of the other streets, to call down to the Town Hall to register your complaint/issue and it will be taken care of. He added that it may not be taken care of as quickly as one would hope, there are many factors that can hamper the repair, such as weather conditions, but it will be repaired.

Mayor Freake brought forward a concern that she has heard from residents of the town around the Town's water, more specifically, the color of the water. She stated that it is tested daily, monthly, and quarterly according to regulations and it is safe according to those guidelines. She did say that it is on Council's agenda, and at a committee level the Town Manager and the Superintendent of Public Works are looking at options at addressing the water's color. She reiterated that the water is safe and regulated through Government. She assured the public that their concerns have been heard. Councillor Mullett added, with Councillor White's knowledge of the subject, that there are approximately 275 communities in Newfoundland and Labrador that have boil orders in place, Lewisporte does not have a boil order and has not for some time. Councillor Pond added that aesthetics is not included in the guidelines of acceptability, but Council has been considering taking water treatment to the next level. Councillor Mullett said that the public works committee is looking at several options of water treatment, but they all come at a cost. He is hoping to have some recommendations to present to Council in the next few weeks.

There was further commentary by Council and the Superintendent of Public Works on what can be done to deescalate the rat problem. Councillor White said that when the Central Newfoundland Waste Management started garbage collection in Lewisporte, there would be a specific kind a garbage container to be used, it was suggested that residents look into buying the required containers to help aid in the rat problem.

8. Protective Services

Update by Councillor Tucker

Regional Fire Service

Councillor Tucker spoke of the upcoming 75th Anniversary of the Lewisporte Fire Department on April 11th. The Lewisporte Regional Fire Rescue does have an event planned for that time; the public was advised to stay tuned for details. He also mentioned that the Fire Rescue was posting pictures of incidents that the fire department were involved in over the years on their Facebook Page.

Emergency Plan

Councillor Tucker advised Council that the protective services committee has reviewed the Town's emergency plan, it has been approved by members and is now with the Town Manager to submit to Fire Emergency Services.

RCMP

A meeting was held on February 21st, 2024, with the new Corporal, John Collins, along with Staff Sargent Larry Turner, the District Commander, and Sargent David Foster. It was an opportunity for the Council to meet the new Corporal, to hear his history and his plans moving forward as the supervisor of the Lewisporte Detachment. The Council in attendance had the chance to highlight the past concerns and issues that the Town has brought forward to the RCMP and brought up new items involving community-based policing. As a result of the conversation, it was felt that Corporal Collins was a community-oriented person which would be a great asset to the Town.

Another item that came out of the meeting is that there are four active members currently at the detachment. One is being transferred, but another member, who will be female, will be taking that officers place. The Council was also informed that the town is number one on the list for a recruit, that will bring the detachment up to full capacity.

The Mayor added that she felt that the Town and the new Corporal shared the same vision moving forward.

During the meeting, incidents occurring in the community were discussed. It was said that the RCMP responds based on the number of incidences that is reported to the RCMP. Councillor Mullett reminded the public, regardless of the type of crime, big or small, to report it to the RCMP. He said that the Corporal told Council, if a message was left on the detachment's answering service, the call would be followed up on. Mayor Freake read a report of the February statistics that the detachment responded to. Councillor Tucker added that the Council requested that the local members get more involved with traffic enforcement. Councillor Tucker also said that the Detachment laid charges regarding one of the break and enters that occurred in Lewisporte this past fall, as well as charges to be laid in another incident.

9. Finance/HR

Update by Councillor Haliburton

Councillor Haliburton wanted to let the public know that due to the discount date of March 31st falling on a Sunday this year, the Town will accept payment on taxes to the end of business day on April 1st to receive the early payment discount.

Motions

The Annual Expenditure Report for the Canada Community Building Fund (formerly the Gas Tax Funding Agreement) as of December 31, 2023, has been carried out, I bring forward the following motion to accept the report.

24-033 Haliburton/Pond

Be it resolved that the Town Council of Lewisporte accept the 2023 Ultimate Recipient Annual Expenditure Report for the Canada Community Building Fund for the year ended December 31, 2023, as presented.

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

Cheque Register- Scotiabank (Operating Account)

24-034 Haliburton/Pond

I motion to approve the cheque register as presented, from cheque numbers 003549 to 003620, with the exception of cheques 003556, 003564, 003578 and 003597 for a total of \$287,550.16.

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried

Councillor Tucker was in conflict and left Chambers at 7:43:35.

24-035 Haliburton/Pond

Motion to approve cheque numbers 003556 and 003564.

In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

Councillor Tucker re-entered Chambers at 7:44:04.

Deputy Mayor Hooper was in conflict and left Chambers at 7:44:16.

24-036 Haliburton/Pond

Motion to approve cheque numbers 003578 and 003597.

In favour: Mayor Freake, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion carried.

Deputy Mayor Hooper re-entered Chambers at 7:44:44.

10. Other Committees and/or Business

DieTrac Technical Institute

Councillor Pond, as the Chair of the Board at DieTrac, gave an update on the Institute – DieTrac’s year end was July 31, 2023, the auditors have prepared the financial statements. The Institute showed a small operating deficit for the last year, which will be addressed going forward with the addition to block training in certain courses. Councillor Pond went on to give some stats since the Town pursued the acquisition of the College through the non-for-profit group of the Lewisporte Community College Inc., established in 2012. From that time until the end of 2023, there has been \$14,705,000.00 in revenue, \$8.2 million paid out in salaries in that time. \$6 million in supplies, and goods and services disbursed in expenses, which have been spent mostly locally. He also noted that inroads have been made in relationship building that hopefully will benefit the Institute going forward. It was also noted that the rental market has done very well with the College being here.

Scotiabank

The Mayor provided an update on Scotiabank around having an ATM in the community – Scotiabank is in the process of finalizing an agreement with a merchant for an ATM. She also noted that Scotiabank will get back to the Town when details are known regarding the sale or potential sale of the building and property.

Lewisporte Marina Authoritative Authority

Deputy Mayor Hooper gave an update on the LMAA, a chair of the board – He said the budget for the upcoming boating season has been finalized, which he felt looked really healthy. He said that all indications point to an early start to the boating season. He also said that there were some encouraging things on the horizon for the Marina, he felt that owning the Marina versus paying a lease for the property was an asset.

Councillor Pond mentioned the meeting with Minister Parsons had to be rescheduled but hoping to have one in the next couple of weeks.

11. Adjournment

24-037 White/Hooper

Resolved that the meeting adjourn.


In favour: Mayor Freake, Deputy Mayor Hooper, Councillors Haliburton, Mullett, Pond, Tucker and White.

Opposed: None

Decision: Motion Carried

Time of adjournment: 7:50 PM.

Next Public Council Meeting to be held on April 9, 2024.



Krista Freake, Mayor



Coreen Colbourne, Town Clerk/Treasurer