

# *Rural Municipality of Belfast*

## **COUNCIL MINUTES**

Wednesday, February 20, 2019 at 7:00 PM

In Attendance: Acting Mayor Garth Gillis  
Councillor Virginia Cooke  
Councillor William (Billy) Gamble  
Councillor Audrey Shillabeer  
Councillor Joanne Vessey

Administration: CAO Bob Brooks

Regrets: Councillor Andrew (Andy) Henry  
Mayor Jill Walsh (Resigned February 18, 2019)

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### **Item                      Order of Business**

1.    **Call to Order** – Acting Mayor Garth Gillis called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM and introduced the Council and CAO to the public that were in attendance.
2.    **Declarations of Conflict of Interest** – The Conflict of Interest category was clarified; resulting in no declarations of Conflict of Interest at this time.
3.    **Approval of Agenda** – Items 3.1 and 9.1 were added to the previously provided Agenda.

**Moved** by Councillor Shillabeer, **Seconded** by Councillor Vessey  
**Carried Unanimously**

- 3.1 **Mayor's Resignation** – Acting Mayor Garth Gillis announced that the Municipality had received an email from Mayor Jill Walsh, notifying us of her resignation from the Rural Municipality of Belfast Council. The email was received on February 18, 2019 and gave her personal reasons for the resignation. Mayor Walsh also expressed her gratitude for the work of the Council and CAO, and wished us all the best of luck going forward. The CAO noted that as a result of the resignation, the process moving forward would be noted within today's Agenda and onward in future Agendas.

4.    **Adoption of January 16, 2019 Council Meeting Minutes** – It was noted by the CAO that Council had the opportunity to make additions/corrections to the minutes over the past month, and that all changes were reflected in the minutes presented at this meeting.

**Moved** by Councillor Vessey, **Seconded** by Councillor Cooke  
**Carried Unanimously**

5. **Business arising from the Minutes** – There were a number of items from the January 16<sup>th</sup> meeting that were requested to report back, including:
  - a. Item 7.c – The CAO confirmed with Municipal Affairs that all required Election Bylaws are already in place, and that they had found a 1985 Remuneration Bylaw on file, that is still on the books. It was confirmed that all previous Councils have waived any remuneration and passed the annual budgets without the remuneration since 1988.
  - b. Item 8.b – The CAO did confirm the 2019/20 Assessment Revenues with Municipal Affairs (reflected in the draft budget in today’s Agenda).
  - c. Item 8.c.ii – The CAO completed a new Grants Policy (recommended on today’s Agenda) along with other recommendations for a Committee
  - d. Item 8c.iii – The CAO met with Infrastructure Canada to confirm Gas Tax proceedings and procedures for promotion.
  - e. Item 8.d.v – The signed documents were provided to Infrastructure Canada.
  - f. Item 9 – A vision type exercise is planned, with a facilitator this spring/summer.
  - g. Item 10.a – the new phone does have a speaker capability, and the CAO confirmed the Bylaw approval process with Municipal Affairs (a cheat sheet is provided for tonight’s meeting).
  - h. Item 10.b – regarding Director’s Liability; it is included in the 2019/20 budget proposals.
  - i. Councillors inquired about the progress of website enhancements – The CAO met with the Website provider who has already started on the website changes discussed on January 16<sup>th</sup>. While it will always be a work in progress, the bulk of the enhancements should be complete by spring/summer 2019.
  
6. **Public Input/Presentations regarding the Rural Municipality Financial Plan, Budget and Grants Funding** (five minutes each)
  - a. Monica Ross – Belfast Rec Centre – Had previously submitted a letter and spoke to the points in the letter. Monica confirmed their request was for \$33,125 for the 2019-20 fiscal year. Monica also confirmed that they will be applying for the GPEI Recreation Grant of \$8,500 again this year (which is in addition to the \$33,125 amount).
  - b. John Rousseau – WIADC – Had submitted a revised letter and spoke to the points in the letter. John noted that approximately 20 and 25 jobs are created by the association, and that the rest of the letter speaks for itself. It was confirmed in the letter that while they were requesting \$5,000 for the 2019/20 fiscal year; that Council should consider \$10,000 this fiscal year to help make up for previous years lesser amounts granted.
  
7. **Public Presentations (other)** – There were no additional public presentations.
  
8. **Presentation by the Federation of Prince Edward Island Municipalities** – Councillor Stephen Gould (Vice President – Rural Municipalities) introduced himself and gave a brief history of his involvement with the FPEIM and the benefits he has seen through his involvement. He then introduced Mr. John Dewey (Executive Director). Both noted that they were hoping to have us join the FPEIM. A presentation package was also handed out to Council and CAO.

While highlighting the information in the Presentation from the Executive Director; John also talked about benefits of membership; legal services; lobbying efforts; community planning and zoning (plus funding availability); resources for municipalities; buying power – i.e. purchase of fire-fighting gloves etc.; and more.

Speaking to questions from Council; they spoke regarding the 20 hours that will be required by the new *Municipal Government Act* – they noted that, no input was received from communities at that time, saying they did not like or agree to the new requirement. They did say that they are starting to hear from rural municipalities now, and that there may be an opportunity for change later on. The CAO gave his perspective, based on his time so far, and how he did not consider it to be effective or efficient to move to a bricks and mortar operation from a virtual set-up that the Municipality is operating under now (primarily doing the administration out of his home). The CAO had thought that the Province and Canada for that matter, was trying to move away from the bricks and mortar model where possible. It was agreed that it would cost the Municipality at least \$100,000 additional per year (similar to other municipalities) and that those funds would have to be raised by the local Tax Assessment. FPEIM thanked us for our perspective.

Councillor Shillabeer noted that a community group within the Rural Municipality of Belfast, that is working on a Rural Community Development Model, would concur completely with the CAO about the need to move away from bricks and mortar, in this instance. Adding fuel and rural transportation issues to the CAO's argument. Councillor Shillabeer explained that this is leading-edge thinking; governments - as institutions - are not typically leading-edge. She clarified that she was not at this time speaking on behalf of Council as the new Council had not yet discussed this model (although the model was discussed and supported by the previous Council). The FPEIM representatives felt that this project seemed leading-edge and would be interested in seeing the model. Councillor Shillabeer did confirm that this has yet to come before the current Council, and that the model is ever-evolving. They FPEIM finished their presentation by encouraging the municipality to join, and were thanked by the Council for attending.

9. **Report from CAO:**

- a. Office Set-up – The office is mostly set-up; still waiting for a few pieces, which will be installed by the next meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> of March.
- b. Website improvements – are a work in progress but many enhancements have already been made. The CAO was asked to make a note about not parking in front of Bay Doors at the Firehall.
- c. Meeting with PEI Infrastructure Secretariat regarding Gas Tax – Completed; new signatures provided, and new criteria will be provided to the public for an October application date.
- d. Minister's request for Council Photo – On hold until we have a full Council again.
- e. Belfast Newsletter – A new section has been created in the Newsletter called Council Briefs, which is now a monthly feature for Agendas and Announcements.
- f. Attendance at Municipal Affairs (Financial Information Session) – The CAO found the Session very helpful and adjusted the draft budget accordingly.

9.1 **Housekeeping Resolutions:**

- a) **RES 2019-01 Change of Address:** With the move of the office from the private residence of the previous CAO, to an office at the Belfast Firehall, a resolution to officially change the address was required (Resolution Attached).

**Moved** by Councillor Gamble, **Seconded** by Councillor Vessey to officially change the address. **Carried Unanimously**

- b) **RES 2019-02 Change of Signing Authorities:** With the resignation of Mayor Walsh, new signing authorities are now required for the bank (Resolution Attached).

**Moved** by Councillor Shillabeer, **Seconded** by Councillor Gamble to name Councillor Cooke as the third signing authority. **Carried Unanimously**

10. **Establishment of Community Grants Policy and Committee per Bylaw #2018-02**

- a. Community Grants Program Policy – A draft Community Grants Program Policy was introduced, discussed and adopted as per the Grants Bylaw #2018-02.

**Moved** by Councillor Vessey, **Seconded** by Councillor Cooke to a establish Grants Policy. **Carried Unanimously**

- b. **Establishment of a Community Grants Committee and selection of Committee Members** – Upon approval of the Grants Policy, Council established a Committee, as per Grants Policy #2018-02, and selected its members: three (3) Councillors, the Mayor or Acting Mayor as ex-officio, and the CAO. The three (3) Councillors selected were: Councillor Cooke, Councillor Gamble and Councillor Shillabeer. The Committee will select its Chair at its first meeting of the Committee.

**Moved** by Councillor Cooke, **Seconded** by Councillor Vessey to establish the Community Grants Committee and members. **Carried Unanimously**

- c. **Draft Grant Proposal Scoresheet for 2019/20 Fiscal Year** – after discussion of both pros and cons of having a Scoresheet, similar to the sample provided, Council decided that they would prefer to carry on with the Community Grants process they have already been using for this fiscal year. During the remainder of 2019, the Community Grants Committee will discuss and design a possible new process to be recommended to Council that could be used for the 2020/21 fiscal year community grant applications.

11. **Financial:**

- a. **Variance Report** – The CAO noted that the Chequing Account bank balance at March 31, 2019 is projected to be \$16,631.03.
- b. **Draft Budget for discussion only** – The CAO discussed the individual line items of a draft budget that was presented for discussion purposes only. After hearing comments at today's meeting, a revised draft budget will be provided for consideration at the March 20, 2019 Council Meeting.

The CAO also went over each of the Notes to the budget. Based on discussions and new information, such as the previously unknown requirement for a bi-election; the revised draft budget will be adjusted accordingly.

- c. **Community Grants Funding/Applications to-date** – It was noted that the Municipality has received six (6) requests for Grant funding so far and are expecting at least four (4) more. The CAO will solicit a date from Committee members for a public meeting date in and around the week of March 4-8. As per the Grants Policy, the deadline for submissions is March 7, 2019.

Letters/proposals received to-date include:

- Belfast Rural Fire Department
- Belfast Rec Centre
- Belfast Soccer Association
- Pinette Raceway
- Point Prim Lighthouse and Women’s Institute
- Wood Islands Area Development Corp

- d. **Election** – A bi-election will need to be called within the next six (6) months and cost approximately \$2-3,000. The CAO will work with Municipal Affairs on an Elections Calendar.

12. **Introduction and Reading of Bylaws:**

- a. **2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of Bylaw #2019-01 Procedural Bylaw** – There was no further discussion on this Bylaw.

**Moved** by Councillor Cooke, **Seconded** by Councillor Vessey to give second reading to Bylaw #2019-01. **Carried Unanimously**

**Council agreed that Bylaw #2019-01 Procedural Bylaw has received 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> reading and approved by the majority of Council.**

- b. **2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of Bylaw #2019-02 Code of Conduct Bylaw** – It was noted that the CAO consulted with Municipal Affairs about the concerns raised by Council regarding Section 15 (Support for Charities) and brought forward a proposed amendment. Council agreed.

The following Amendment was presented:

**Section 15. Support for Charities (would now read)**

15.1 Members of Council may lend their support to and encourage community support and donations to registered charitable; not-for-profit; and other community-based groups; however, should any applications or business related to those organizations, that a Member of Council is involved with, be presented to Council or Committee; the Member of Council will declare a conflict of interest, and NOT participate in any discussions or decisions related to that matter.

15.2 (deleted)

**Amendment Moved** by Councillor Shillabeer, **Seconded** by Councillor Gamble  
**Carried Unanimously**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of Bylaw #2019-02 Code of Conduct Bylaw – As Amended**

**Moved** by Councillor Cooke, **Seconded** by Councillor Shillabeer to give  
second reading to Bylaw #2019-02 As Amended. **Carried Unanimously**

**Council agreed that Bylaw #2019-02 Code of Conduct Bylaw has received  
1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> reading and approved by the majority of Council.**

13. **Next Scheduled Council Meeting Date:** March 20, 2019 @ 7:00 PM at the Belfast Firehall
14. **Adjournment (10:20 PM)** – As there was no further business, it was moved by Councillor Vessey that the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.

Minutes Approved on: March 20, 2019

Original Signature/Seal on file  
Acting/Mayor – Garth Gillis

Original Signature/Seal on file  
CAO – Bob Brooks