



Rural Municipality of Belfast

Mayor: Garth Gillis; Chief Administrative Officer: Bob Brooks; *Incorporated 1972*

COUNCIL MEETING - MINUTES

Wednesday, August 17, 2022 at 7:00 PM
Upstairs Hall, Wood Islands Market

In Attendance:

Council:	Mayor Garth Gillis (Chair)	Deputy Mayor Virginia Cooke *
	Councillor Lynn Docherty *	Councillor Billy Gamble *
	Councillor Andy Henry *	Councillor Joanne Vessey *

** Five voting members; Mayor votes in the event of a tie*

Administration:	CAO Bob Brooks	Ashley Feschuk,	Jill Harris
Public:	Five members of the public		

Item **Order of Business**

1. **Call to Order** – Mayor Gillis called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM
2. **Covid-19 Restrictions** – no capacity limits; 6-foot distancing and masking optional
3. **Declarations of Conflict of Interest** – No members of Council declared a conflict of interest with any items on today’s Agenda.
4. **Approval of Agenda** – There were five additional items placed under Item 15.

 Moved by Councillor Henry and seconded by Deputy Mayor Cooke to adopt the agenda as amended.
 Votes for: 5 Votes against: 0 Result: **Carried Unanimously**
5. **Adoption of June 15, 2022 Council Meeting Minutes** (*previously distributed – all changes received to-date by Council have been incorporated*).

 Moved by Councillor Vessey and seconded by Councillor Gamble to approve the Minutes of the June 15, 2022 Council Meeting as presented.
 Votes for: 5 Votes against: 0 Result: **Carried Unanimously**
6. **Business arising from the June 15, 2022 Council Meeting**
 - a. **Health Wellness Steering Committee Matter** (a standing Agenda Item) – Belfast Community Development Corporation (BCDC) is now announcing in the Belfast Newsletter, that they are currently moving toward the development of a Wellness Ctr for Belfast. Mayor Gillis continues to represent RMB on the Committee and Ashley Feschuk (through RMB) continues to assist the Committee with its Administration. There was no Committee Meeting in the month of July.
 - b. **Official Plan and Development Bylaw Update** – On July 30, 2022 Council and Administration supplied our Planners (Fotenn) with some initial comments on the Draft Official Plan and Draft Development Bylaw before making the documents public.
 - Fotenn has now updated those documents, and are now ready for public viewing.

- Those Public Drafts have been placed on RMB’s website, and hard-copies are located in the Office; along with the appropriate announcements and advertising.
- The Public Meeting on these draft documents is scheduled for Mon. Sept. 12th (6:30 – 9:00) in the Wood Islands Upstairs Meeting Hall. The public can also provide comments to RMB anytime through our email system, or in person.

The CAO continues to work with Fotenn, the Province and other Municipalities to better understand the new resources that will be required once the Official Plan and Development Bylaw are in place for the Municipality.

7. **Public Input/Presentations regarding any items on today’s Agenda?** (*None*)

8. **CAO Financial/Variance Report** (*presented by CAO Bob Brooks*)

i. **Provincial Credit Union Account Balances per the July 31, 2022 Statement:**

a. Share 001	\$5.30
b. Chequing 010	\$59,993.79
c. Savings 020 (Reserve)	\$36.48
d. Savings Reserve GIC/Interest (<i>project to be determined</i>)	\$45,262.05
e. Gas Tax Acct 00011	\$64,240.04
f. Gas Tax GIC/Interest (<i>for previously-approved GT projects</i>)	\$50,483.56

- Expenditures and Revenues are on track to-date.
- Additional \$20,000 will be moved from our General Account to our Reserve Account to generate additional interest.
- Though the Project for the Reserve Fund has yet to be determined, it is expected that an expansion of our RMB Office will be required in the foreseeable future; once the new Official Plan and Development Bylaw **Comes-Into-Force**.

9. **Municipal Election Update** – The General Municipal Election for RMB for the election of Mayor and Council is scheduled for **Monday, November 7, 2022**. In preparation for this Election, an Election Office, a Municipal Election Officer, a Deputy Election Officer, and a Returning Officer, were identified and appointed.

- First Phase Training has been booked for the main Election Workers.
- Second Phase Training will only go ahead, if there is not an Acclamation.
- Nomination/Information Packages (electronic or hard-copy) will be available for anyone wishing to run for Mayor or Council in September/October.

10. **BCDC Promotional Videos** – BCDC recently launched five new commercials and promotional videos on CBC and social media. These videos highlight, not only the Golf Course and Lord Selkirk Campground, but also other local businesses in our area. RMB are including these promos on our own RMB Facebook site.

11. **Wood Islands Area Development Corporation (WIADC) Library Kiosk** (*Little Dory – Full of Stories*) – RMB has agreed to participate with WIADC on a new share Library for the public, located within the Wood Islands Market (*Poster attached*). Jill Harris mentioned that the Little Dory Kiosk could hold approximately 100 books; that there was an APP being developed to highlight the library and its location; and that Ashley Feschuk has volunteered to be the First Stewart of this new Library Kiosk – Thank you Ashley. It was also discussed that magazines could also be included; that a local artist could paint something unique on the doors; and the main location would be the Sign Plaza area.

12. **2021/2022 RMB Audited Financial Statements** (presented by CAO Bob Brooks) – Per the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA), the Rural Municipality of Belfast (RMB) has its annual Financial Statements audited. As in the past, the audit firm was MRSB. I am very pleased to report, that not only did our Auditors present us with a clean Audit for our 2021/2022 Financial Statements (*attached*), but that RMB continues to be in a healthy financial position and remain on track for the completion of Council’s plan for this “Transition Term” (2018-2022).

Financial Statement Highlights:

- **Revenues = \$299,504**
 - **Note:** Revenues came in appropriately \$100,000 below budget due to Gas Tax Funds and Projects delayed due to Covid Restrictions (In/Out Transactions).
- **Expenditures = \$299,610**
 - **Note:** Expenditures came in appropriately \$100,000 below budget due to Gas Tax Funds and Projects delayed due to Covid Restrictions (In/Out Transactions).
- **Bottom Line = (\$106)**
- **Accumulated Surplus @ March 31, 2022 = \$136,786**
 - **Note:** for cash flow purposes, RMB typically requires a surplus in the General Fund of approx. \$100,000; primarily to pay out the large number of Community Grants at a time when those organizations require the funds. As this Surplus is now more than \$100,000, an additional \$20,000 will be moved to the Reserve Fund (currently sitting at \$45,262.05) for a future RMB project. It is expected that RMB will require significant funds in the near future toward RMB Office Expansion, expected from the passing of the New Official Plan and Development Bylaw.

Council was very happy with the results of the Audit – Congratulations all around.

Moved by **Councillor Docherty** and seconded by **Councillor Gamble** to adopt the Audited RMB Financial Statements for 2021/2022 as presented.

Votes for: 5 Votes against: 0 Result: **Carried Unanimously**

13. **MEMP Situation Report** (provided by Jill Harris – *attached*) – Jill highlighted the Situation Report and noted that this first-ever test of our Municipal Emergency Management Plan, not only worked very well, but was an excellent example of all the emergency agencies and volunteers working superbly together. Jill also reminded all Council and Staff about the ongoing MEMP Training, and that she has now registered everyone for their first course. Note from RMB Council and Staff *“Fabulous job Jill!”*
14. **BCDC Activity at South Pinette Park** (requested by Councillor Gamble) – RMB residents have noticed considerable activity at the South Pinette Park and have been asking “what’s going on?” RMB Council will remember that in 2021, representatives from BCDC informed Council of a possible project at the Park and a possible arrangement with the Province of PEI for use of the adjacent Park area. Council provided its initial comments and concerns to BCDC and the Province, and awaited a follow-up or a confirmed proposal – Council did not receive a follow-up. Earlier this Spring/Summer, Council and Administration were surprised to see the activity in the area. Representatives of BCDC were invited to this Council meeting to speak about the Project, but were unable to attend. (*A transcript of a CBC interview with a BCDC representative on the issue that took place on August 5, 2022 is attached*).

Ashley read out loud the response from BCDC: *“Unfortunately, we are not ready to make a presentation to the Council. We are still gathering information. Once we have everything in place, we would be happy to make time to meet and discuss the potential of the project. There are still some pieces of information to be provided by the interested company. As I said in the interview, this is something we are exploring; so, nothing is carved in stone and we plan to consult the community of course.”* Barry Galloway (BCDC)

The CAO gave some additional background on the earlier consultation meeting with BCDC, then Council and members of the public discussed their perceptions and their concerns. As a result of the discussion, the following actions will now take place:

- A letter will go to BCDC, noting Council concerns: expressing our interest in meeting with them; wanting this project in front of the public – prior to any decision; and an invitation for a reciprocal public meeting arrangement (we would attend BCDCs’ Board Meetings as a non-voting guest, and a BCDC representative would attend RMBs’ Council Meetings as a non-voting guest). Councillors Joanne Vessey and Andy Henry have already volunteered to be RMBs’ representatives at the BCDC Board Meetings;
- A letter will go to the Government of PEI, noting Council concerns: expressing our interest in ensuring that no decision is made on the South Pinette Park until RMB and the Public have seen a Proposal and provided comments on the Project; and that RMB would like to meet; and
- RMB will start a discussion board on Facebook regarding the South Pinette Park issue.

15. **New Business for the Agenda (as per Item 4 above)?**

- a. **Belfast Rural Fire Department (Annual Budget Documents)** – Mayor Gillis has requested that Council be provided a copy of the Firehalls’ latest Budget document. Councillor Vessey confirmed that she has already provided the latest budget. The CAO will find it and send it out to Council Members. Councillor Vessey also updated the Council on the Fire Department activities.
- b. **Extension Letter from Govt. re: Official Plan and Development Bylaw** – the CAO reported that he recently received an email/letter from Minister Jamie Fox, officially extending the requirement for the Plan and Bylaw for two years. As RMB is already ahead of schedule in completing the Plan and Bylaw; the strategy at this point, is to complete the Plan and Bylaw, but discuss in the next few months, when the best time might be to have those documents ‘Come-Into-Force’.
- c. **Shed/Expansion** – Earlier the CAO asked permission to go out for quotes to build a shed for extra storage; however, through the work RMB is doing toward an Official Plan and Development Bylaw, recent discussions about a Post Office in Wood Islands, the possibility of an expansion project for RMB, and many other changes that are happening in Wood Islands – the shed is on hold. The CAO will bring back all the issues noted above as they develop.
- d. **Kilted Pace** – a heads up that RMB is once again sponsoring a horse blanket for the upcoming ‘Kilted Pace’ at the Pinette Raceway. Councillor Vessey provided an update, and committed to ensure that someone would take some pictures of the event, and invited all of RMB Council and Staff to attend. Sunday, August 21, 2022 at 2:00 pm.

- e. **Belfast Days** – Councillor Docherty provided Council with an update on the very successful ‘Belfast Days’ that took place this summer. After giving an overview of the activities, Lynn thanked Council for its continued support of the event. Council in turn thanked Lynn Docherty for hard work on this event, and congratulated her on the events success.
 - f. **Congratulations** – Jill Harris wanted to publicly thank CAO Bob Brooks, for the quality of the public documents and reports that are provided to Council and the Public on a regular basis. Council also expressed their appreciation, and the CAO in turn thanked Council, Ashley and Jill (as a team effort). Congratulations to everyone on how much has been accomplished this term.
16. **Next Meeting:**
- a. **Grants Committee Meeting** – scheduled for Wednesday, September 7, 2022 at 7:00 PM in the Upstairs Hall at Wood Islands Market. This meeting will discuss possible changes to RMB’s Grants Criteria and RMB’s Grants Policy.
 - b. **Public Meeting on Official Plan and Development Bylaw** – scheduled for Monday, September 12, 2022 at 6:30 PM in the Upstairs Hall at Wood Islands Market.
 - c. **Regular Meeting of Council** – scheduled for Wednesday, September 21, 2022 at 7:00 PM in the Upstairs Hall at Wood Islands Market.
17. **Office Hours** – The CAO reminded everyone that as part of the *Municipal Government Act*, and as part of the RMB Council - Transition term (2018 – 2022), the RMB Municipal Office will move to a five days per week/four hours per day operation (8:00 am – 12:00 noon). The accessible Municipal Office will start its new schedule on September 2nd. Congratulations to Council for now meeting its 2nd last milestone! The final milestone will be the passing of the Official Plan and Development Bylaw, slated for September/October.
18. **Adjournment** – As there is no further business...

Moved by Councillor Henry to adjourn the meeting at: 8:52 PM.

Minutes Approved on: _____

Mayor - Garth Gillis

CAO - Bob Brooks

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