



Rural Municipality of Belfast (RMB)

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

COUNCIL MEETING - MINUTES

Wednesday, April 19, 2023 at 7:00 PM

Upstairs Hall, Wood Islands Market

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|-----------------|---|--|
| Council: | Mayor Garth Gillis (Chair) | Deputy Mayor Lynn Docherty |
| | Councillor Katherine Bryson | Councillor Trisha Carter |
| | Councillor James Kinnee | Councillor Charley McGivern |
| | Councillor Billy Gamble (<i>regrets</i>) | |
| Administration: | CAO Bob Brooks | Ashley Feschuk |
| Guest Speakers: | John Rousseau (Chair of WIADC) | Todd St. Clair (Administration WIADC) |
| | Harvey Sawler (Consultant/WIADC Board Member) | |
| Public: | One Person (BAWG) | Online: 234 Livestream Views (at time of drafting Minutes) |

Please Be Aware: RMB Council Meetings are Livestreamed to [facebook.com/belfastpei](https://www.facebook.com/belfastpei)

Item Order of Business

1. **Call to Order** – Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Gillis at 7:00 PM.
2. **Declarations of Conflict of Interest** – No conflicts of interest with any items on today's Agenda were declared.
3. **Approval of Agenda** – Any other suggested Agenda Items for today's meeting? (*Four additional items were added to the agenda and placed under Item 12*)

Moved by Councillor Carter and seconded by Councillor McGivern to adopt the agenda as amended.

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

4. **Wood Islands Rejuvenation Project Presentation** – A presentation was given by the Wood Islands and Area Development Corporation (WIADC), to talk about the exciting Multi-Organizational and Multi-Governmental project that will see a large area of the Wood Islands Waterfront Rejuvenated to past and future glory/prominence. Mr. John Rousseau (Chair of WIADC) introduced his team: Mr. Todd St. Clair (Administrator for WIADC) and Mr. Harvey Sawler (Consultant and Ex-Officio Board Member of WIADC).

Mr. Sawler gave an (extremely shortened) Slide presentation to Council, to refresh past Council Members, and to introduce the new Council Members to this exciting project. After the Wood Islands project presentation, the WIADC team answered and clarified the Council questions. CAO Bob Brooks, also reminded Council that RMB is already onboard with this project; and that through the Infrastructure Secretariat, contributed over \$50,000. That \$50,000+ contribution leveraged over \$500,000 toward that project alone. WIADC committed to send RMB the presentation deck, so that RMB could post the presentation on its website for public access.

5. **Public Presentations** – There was one public presentation made by Sherry Pelkey, Representative from the Belfast and Area Watershed Group (BAWG), and announced that there will be a community presentation on Thursday, April 20, 2023 at 7:00 PM at the Wood Islands Market. **Topic:** Understanding Invasive Plants Workshop – Guest Speaker Kassidy Matheson from the PEI Invasive Species Council. Everyone welcome.

6. **Adoption of the March 22, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes** (*previously distributed; all changes incorporated*).

Moved by Deputy Mayor Docherty and seconded by Councillor Carter to approve the Minutes of the March 22, 2023 Council Meeting as presented.

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

7. **Business arising from the March 22, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes**

- a. **2023/2024 Community Grants** – the payments to recipients have already started for this cycle and as per the new program criteria; recipients not only receive a Congratulations and Indemnification Letter from the Mayor, along with an Auditor Funding Acknowledgement Letter; recipients also receive a request and sample Summary Report template; so, they can provide RMB with a summary of how their funding was used.
- b. **2023 Tax Certificate** – per the approval of the 2023/2024 RMB Budget and Financial Plan, RMB has submitted the 2023 Tax Certificate into the Department of Finance, to confirm a **(0) % tax increase** for the 2023/2024 fiscal year.
- c. **Approved 2023/2024 Budget and Financial Plan** – will now be sent to the Department of Finance, and Municipal Affairs (**as required by the Municipal Government Act**), with the approval of the March 22, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes.
- d. **Official Leave for Councillor Katherine Bryson now over** – with the official results for the recent Provincial Election now confirmed; the Official Leave for Councillor Katherine Bryson came to an end on April 3, 2023. Councillor Bryson was reinstated into the Council of RMB as of April 4, 2023. Welcome back Councillor Bryson!
- e. **Pinette Park Boat Launch** – the CAO continues to follow-up on the conditions of the Boat Launch. We're still waiting to hear back from the Province.
- f. **Birthday** – Mayor Gillis congratulated CAO Bob Brooks on his recent birthday – how old??? No singing was involved 😞

8. **CAO Report** (*presented by CAO Bob Brooks*)

a) **Financial/Variance/Planning Report**

i. **Provincial Credit Union Account Balances at April 15, 2023:**

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|---|-------------|
| a. Share Acct 001 | \$5.35 |
| b. Chequing Acct 010 | \$84,785.13 |
| c. Gas Tax (CCBF) Acct 011 (<i>for approved projects</i>) | \$44,549.74 |
| d. Reserve Savings Acct 020 | \$36.83 |
| e. Gas Tax (CCBF) GIC Acct 040 (<i>for approved projects</i>) | \$50,501.20 |
| f. Reserve Savings GICs: Acct 041 & 042 | \$65,438.49 |

(for RMB project(s) – to be determined during Strategic Planning Session)

With the 2023/2024 Budget and Financial Plan now approved, the CAO is currently working with the Auditor for RMB's 2022/2023 Year-end.

9. **Saltwire Flyer Distribution** (presented by Ashley Feschuk - Administration) – the Saltwire Flyer issue continues to evolve: while some that have wished the service to stop - did; some that did not ask to stop - also got stopped; others have yet to see a resolution; and the logistics of a Flyer Tree and where they might be located is still being discussed. RMB continues to follow-up on the issue, and will have another update for Council, next month.
10. **Facebook Livestreaming Trial** (presented by Ashley Feschuk - Administration) – RMB’s Facebook Livestreaming 3-month Trial is now at an end. All-in-all, this Livestreaming Trial was very successful for RMB and the residents of the RMB area. Ashley Feschuk provided a summary report of how the trial went, feedback received, lessons learned, and recommendations for proceeding (*attachment provided*).

Following discussion, Council was presented with three options for moving, in regards to Livestreaming:

1. Stop the Council Meeting livestreaming;
2. Continue on (as is); or
3. Continue on and find way to enhance the audio and visual quality.

Because of the success of the trial and the buy-in from the public, Council decided to continue with the Facebook Livestreaming of Council Meetings, and continually find ways to make ongoing improvements, within the RMB Budget Structure.

Moved by **Councillor Carter** and seconded by **Deputy Mayor Docherty** to continue the Facebook Livestream of RMB Council Meetings and look for ways to improve the audio and visual quality.

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

11. **Website Updates/Improvements** (presented by Ashley Feschuk - Administration) – as an ongoing practice to continually improve the reach and effectiveness of RMB’s Website; the latest areas that RMB is trying to improve include:
 - a. **Photo Gallery** – RMB is looking to revitalize the Photo Gallery on the RMB Website, with photos of activities and events taking place within RMB’s municipal boundaries. Councillors and Residents are invited to submit photos into RMB, so that we might highlight some of the municipality activity participation. Submissions can be made to ruralmunicipalityofbelfast@gmail.com and should contain: the name of the photographer, the subject of the photo, and when it was taken.
 - b. **Events Calendar** – RMB is also looking to highlight some of the public events around our municipality, in an effort to bring more awareness to the events, and to further help with community spirit and participation. Councillors and Residents are invited to submit any events that they feel should be posted to RMB’s Events Calendar. Submissions can be made to ruralmunicipalityofbelfast@gmail.com and should contain: the Event, When, Where, A Contact; and if possible – a URL link.
12. **New Business for the Agenda** (*as discussed in Approval of Agenda, Item 3 above*)
 - a) **Federation of PEI Municipalities (FPEIM) and Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Annual General Meetings (AGMs) – Attendance.** The CAO was asked to clarify the Council practice on Council Members attending the FPEIM and FCM AGMs. The CAO clarified that since joining both organizations, Council has allocated funds equivalent for two members to attend the AGMs, but to-date, none have taken advantage of the learning opportunity.

The CAO, who had attended these events in his past career, noted how valuable these AGMs could be for any member of Council to better learn their trade. That participants will also report back to Council on their experience; thereby passing on what was learned to all of Council. As part of the discussion, it was noted that the participation in these forums, also allowed participants to learn about and address their particular areas of concern, i.e. Rural Issues. Discussion was followed up with the following two motions:

Moved by **Councillor Carter** and seconded by **Deputy Mayor Docherty** to allow one person to attend the Federation of PEI Municipalities AGM April 24, 2023, hosted by the Town of Souris.
Votes for: 5 Votes against: 0 Result: **Carried Unanimously**

Moved by **Councillor McGivern** and seconded by **Councillor Carter** to allow one person to attend the Federation of Canadian Municipalities AGM May 25, 2023, hosted by the City of Toronto.
Votes for: 4 Votes against: 1 Result: **Carried**

- b) **Dark Sky Reserve** – Issue emailed to RMB office by Resident Maggie Morrison. *“Would the community be interested in developing a dark sky reserve, if possible, or even just promoting actions to reduce light pollution? For example: Many people want lighting for security etc. however, if you use motion sensor lights, then they don't have to be on all of the time. Or, often covers can be added to a light fixture to direct the light downwards”*. After some discussion, Council decided to add this topic to their upcoming Strategic Plan discussions (June? TBD).
- c) **Meet and Greet** – This topic was also sent in by Resident Maggie Morrison to RMB: *“Now that Covid restrictions are coming to an end, might it be possible to organize a community meet-and-greet? We've gained so many new people and families over these past few years; it would be great to finally welcome everyone”*. After some discussion, Council decided to also add this topic to their upcoming Strategic Plan discussions (June? TBD).
- d) **Community Pantry Update** – Councillor Bryson noted that the use of this program is steadily increasing and now over 20 families/individuals use it on a daily basis. There has been no abuse of the system and it has been running smoothly to date. There is now a Pantry Coordinator to help assist with the operations – Bonnie Shave-Hillier. The Pantry is continually looking to improve its operations and are now looking into avenues for providing official tax receipts (TBD).

13. **Next Meetings:**

- a. **Regular Meeting of Council** – scheduled for Wednesday, May 17, 2023 at 7:00 PM in the Upstairs Hall at Wood Islands Market.
- b. **RMB Strategic Planning Session** – To Be Announced. (June?) (*open to the public*).
- c. **Resumption of RMB Official Plan and Development Bylaw Discussions** – To Be Announced (*July/August – December*) (*open to the public*).

14. **Adjournment** – As there is no further business...

Moved by **Councillor McGivern** to adjourn the meeting at: 8:44 PM

Ashley/Bob