



# Rural Municipality of Belfast (RMB)

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

## COUNCIL MEETING - MINUTES

Wednesday, October 18, 2023 at 7:00 PM  
*Upstairs Hall, Wood Islands Market*

### ***In Attendance:***

Council: Mayor Garth Gillis (Chair) Deputy Mayor Lynn Docherty  
Councillor Katherine Bryson Councillor Trisha Carter  
Councillor James Kinnee Councillor Charley McGivern

Absent: Councillor Billy Gamble

Administration: CAO Bob Brooks Ashley Feschuk

Guest Speaker(s): Monique McClean – Manager of Early Learning & Childcare  
Robert MacDonald – Resident/Farmer of Belfast

Public: Sherry Pelkey BAWG

Facebook Livestream: (12) on-line (242) views 12 hours after the meeting

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***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 members of Council declared a conflict of interest with any items on today's Agenda.
3. **Approval of Agenda** – Several other suggested Agenda Items for today's meeting were added to today's meeting under Item 10.

**Moved by Councillor Carter and seconded by Deputy Mayor Lynn Docherty to adopt the agenda as amended.**

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

#### 4. **Public Presentations:**

- a) **Robert MacDonald** – MacDonald wanted to express his concerns about traffic during two events within RMB. The high volumes of vehicular traffic, especially from the Ferry and pedestrians, make this challenging and pose a risk to public safety. However, RMB has already expressed these shared concerns with our RCMP liaison Staff Sergeant Robinson and RMB has also introduced him to Wood Islands Area and Development Corporation (WIADC) Management so that going forward the addition of more safety elements (notice of the event itself, highway signage, appropriate clothing, patrol officers, etc.) to planned events in Belfast can be incorporated. RMB will also forward these latest concerns to both the RCMP and WIADC for their information.
- b) **Monique McClean** (Manager of Early Learning and Childcare) – Establishing a Day-home, licensing requirements, grants and support to get you started. A full copy of this presentation along with a Family Home Centre Licence Application Form can be found on the RMB website at: [www.ruralmunicipalityofbelfast@gmail.com](mailto:www.ruralmunicipalityofbelfast@gmail.com) or visit the Department of Education and Early Years for addition information.

5. **Adoption of the September 20, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes** (*previously distributed; all changes incorporated*).

Moved by **Councillor Carter** and seconded by **Deputy Mayor Docherty** to approve the Minutes of the September 20, 2023 Council Meeting as presented.

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

6. **Business arising from the September 20, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes** (*already addressed in today's agenda – no other items*).

7. **CAO Report** (*presented by CAO - Bob Brooks*)

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

- i. **Provincial Credit Union Account Balances at October 6, 2023:**

a. Share Acct 001	\$5.35
b. Chequing Acct 010	\$26,123.16
c. Gas Tax (CCBF) Acct 011 ( <i>for approved projects</i> )	\$97,138.74
d. Reserve Savings Acct 020	\$37.15
e. Gas Tax (CCBF) GIC Acct 040 ( <i>for approved projects</i> )	\$52,016.24
f. Reserve Savings GICs; Acct 041 & 042	\$65,438.49

(Breakdown as approved)

1. RMB Expansion Reserve	\$25,000.00
2. Emergency Preparedness Reserve	\$5,000.00
3. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Warming Ctr Generator Reserve	\$5,000.00
4. Remaining*	\$30,438.49

*(\*to be considered during Annual Budget Deliberations)*

5. Remaining Funds in ShopBelfastPEI Program	\$523.01
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*(There are also 12 T-shirts left to be sold or gifted)*

**CAO – Other Matters dealt with/involving the CAO:**

- b) **Wellness Centre** – This is an ongoing issue with no further update at this time. The CAO will continue to follow up.
- c) **Warming Centre and Other MOUs** – This is also an ongoing issue with no further update at this time. RMB is working to create MOUs for the Warming Centre and all the volunteer groups that would be involved in an emergency. The CAO will continue to follow up. When questioned about the possibility of a second Warming Centre for RMB; the CAO confirmed that he his working with WIADC on an assessment for generator needs and costs for a second Warming Centre, this one to be located in Wood Islands. The CAO also confirmed with both the Red Cross and PEI Emergency Measures Organization, that while the Municipality may have access to two Emergency Warming Centres; only one would be sponsored in and emergency, depending on the location of the emergency and the operation RMB selects.

8. **2022/2023 RMB Audited Financial Statements** (*presented by CAO Bob Brooks*) (*attached*) – 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. The CAO present the Draft Audited Financial Statements for consideration.

The CAO noted that the Auditors (MRSB) confirmed that the accounting practices were in accordance with Canadian Accounting Standards for the Public Sector. MRSB also noted that RMB maintains a system of internal controls designed to provide reasonable assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions are properly authorized and recorded in compliance with legislation and regulatory requirements; and through its opinion provided RMB with a clean audit for the 2022/2023 fiscal year.

The CAO also went into some detail about the contents of the statements and answered questions raised by Council. The 2022/2023 Audited RMB Financial Statements were then voted on for acceptance/adoption by Council.

**Moved** by **Councillor Carter** and **seconded** by **Deputy Mayor Docherty** to adopt the Audited RMB Financial Statements for 2022/2023 as presented.  
Votes for: 5 Votes against: 0 Result: **Carried Unanimously**

The approved financial statements will be signed off by the Mayor and CAO, and officially filed with the Government of PEI. The approved documents will also be posted to the RMB Website for public availability.

9. **Upcoming Events Calendar for RMB – (Oct. Nov. Dec.) (presented by Admin - Ashley Feschuk)**
  - a. **Halloween** (WIADC Event – October 21<sup>st</sup> 10: am – 4: pm) – RMB will participate in a first-ever Down East Comic Expo with: comic books collectibles, posters, a special effects make-up artist, and so, so, much more! RMB has prepared 78 Halloween Treat Bags to give to children/adults at the event along with \$50 for the first prize winner of the Costume Contest!
  - b. **Remembrance Day** – Wreath Laying (November 11, 2023) – RMB participates annually at two wreath-laying events, put on by the Royal Canadian Legion within the RMB area. Mayor Garth Gillis will lay an RMB sponsored wreath at Belfast and Councillor Katherine Bryson will lay another RMB sponsored wreath at Iona.
  - c. **Holiday Tree-Lighting Event** (December 2<sup>nd</sup> starting at 6:pm) – RMB intends to light up the Wood Islands Market Courtyard with special guest MC Jolee Patkai singing Christmas carols, a Snowflake Decorating Competition in the RMB office, Photo Booth, a visit from jolly St. Nick, Belfast Fire Department and more – everyone welcome! (**Official Poster Attached**).
  
10. **New Business for the Agenda (as discussed in Approval of Agenda, Item 3 above)**
  - a. **Community Pantry Update (for Information Only)** – Presented by Councillor Bryson. Thanksgiving was a success with lots of much needed monetary donations which enabled the Pantry to buy multiple turkeys and fixings for families in need this year. Special Acknowledgement is needed to Chelsea Van Tol who raised \$1,000 at a BBQ during the 70 Mile Coastal Yard Sale. The BBQ had multiple sponsors including Canadyne Navigation – owned by the Jenkins Family, The Bannerman Family, Kylea Jackson, Phil Homburg, Matthew & Courtney Mitchell, Andrew Cormier, Sharlene Kelly, Adam MacIassac, Laura Jess and Daniel Hirtle. A special thank-you to them for all their time and effort to help the Pantry support locals in need.
  - b. **Semi-Annual FPEIM AGM Report (for Information Only)** – Councillor Bryson presented her report (**attached**) from the recent semi-annual meeting of the Federation of PEI Municipalities (FPEIM) and went into detail about the meeting and some of the conclusions and action items for RMB to follow up on – i.e.:
    - I. **New Regulations are now complete for Code of Conduct** – Council now has six months to complete the Code of Conduct course (required);
    - II. **Complete Official Plan for RMB**; and
    - III. **Create a Sub-Committee** to deal with possible amalgamation issues that will result from the PEI Government new Land-Use Plan currently in development.
  - c. **Stopping Rural Sprawl (FPEIM Statement) (for discussion) (3 attachments)** – Presented by Councillor Kinnee. This item carried on from the previous discussion item, before moving to any motions. Councillor Kinnee expressed his concerns about the finding of the FPEIM Report and felt, the report did not take into account the concerns or the needs of Rural PEI. After considerable discussion, Council agreed, which caused two motions out of items b. and c. as follows:

Moved by Councillor Bryson and seconded by Councillor McGivern to continue the process to **completion of the RMB Official Plan and Development Bylaw**.  
Votes for: 5 Votes against: 0 Result: **Carried Unanimously**

Moved by Councillor Bryson and seconded by Councillor McGivern to create an **Amalgamation Sub-Committee** to identify surrounding sites in the RMB area for “acceptable” amalgamation areas; “unacceptable” sites; and propose a recommendation for Council consideration for moving forward. Three members proposed for this Sub-Committee (plus administrative assistance):

- Councillor Katherine Bryson (voting);
- Councillor Billy Gamble (voting);
- Mayor Garth Gillis (Ex-officio) (voting); and
- CAO Bob Brooks (Administrative support) (non-voting)

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

- d. **Street Lighting within the RMB municipality and Pinette Park particularly (for discussion)** – As Councillor Gamble, who proposed this agenda item, was not able to make tonight’s meeting due to illness – this item is **“deferred”** until the next Council Meeting.
  - e. **Pinette Wharf Update (for Information Only)** – Deputy Mayor Lynn Docherty has been in touch with Minister Ernie Hudson and shared the concerns of residents along with photographs detailing the specific problems and concerns around safety at this location. The Minister advised that he would be sending out a team to survey the project and would follow-up with the Deputy Mayor as soon as possible as to possible remediation measures.
  - f. **Acknowledgement of Truth & Reconciliation Day** – Presented by Councillor Bryson. It was suggested that RMB also acknowledge the land upon which our community is located at the beginning of the RMB Council Meetings. Council agreed. Three options for recognition statements will be sent to Council for consideration. The most popular statement amongst Council will be selected and presented at the next Council Meeting (November 15, 2023). Council and Administration are encouraged to wear an orange shirt on that day in commemoration of the event. Council members and RMB staff all wore orange shirts at this meeting out of respect and support for the Indigenous Mi’kmaq People who have occupied this Island for over 12,000 years; past, present and future.
  - g. **RCMP Monthly Report (for information only)** – Staff Sergeant Michael Robinson – District Commander, graciously agreed to provide Council with a monthly RCMP report for our area, to help keep Council and the public abreast of the RCMP activities. This report (*attached*) will also be placed on the RMB Website.
  - h. **Mandatory Code of Conduct Training Information Sheet (attached)** – On October 16<sup>th</sup>, Municipal Affairs released the notice that confirmed that the Provincial Government has completed the New Regulations for the Code of Conduct legislation. All Council members have until March 31, 2024 to complete the mandatory training. The CAO confirmed that all RMB staff will also complete the training.
11. **Next Meetings:**
- a. **Regular Meeting of Council** - scheduled for Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 7:00 PM in the Upstairs Hall at Wood Islands Market.
  - b. **Tree-Lighting Event** - This years’ RMB Holiday Tree-Lighting Event will take place in the Courtyard in the Wood Islands Market starting at 6:00 PM on Saturday, December 2, 2023. (*Official Program Attached*).

- c. **Reminder - There is No Regular Meeting of Council, scheduled for December 2023** (per the MGA Council Calendar); and the RMB Office closes over the Christmas Break from December 18<sup>th</sup> through to January 2<sup>nd</sup>.

As the last item on today's Agenda is a Confidential In-Camera item; the public was asked to leave the room, the Facebook followers were bid goodnight from the Facebook Livestream, and Council entertained a motion to move In-Camera for a Confidential HR Matter.

12. **Motion to Move In-Camera for a Confidential HR Matter –** (*No minutes are taken, and no decisions are made during In-Camera Sessions*)

**Moved** by **Councillor Carter** and **seconded** by **Deputy Mayor Docherty** to move into In-Camera for a Confidential HR Matter.

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

**Moved** by **Councillor McGivern** and **seconded** by **Councillor Carter** to move out of In-Camera from the Confidential HR Matter.

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

***A decision is required out of this In-Camera item.***

**Moved** by **Councillor McGivern** and **seconded** by **Councillor Carter** to accept the new 2024 Employment Contract for CAO Bob Brooks as amended.

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

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

**Moved** by **Councillor McGivern** to adjourn the meeting at: **10:48 PM**.

*Ashley/Bob*

Minutes Approved on: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor – Garth Gillis

\_\_\_\_\_  
CAO – Bob Brooks