

A regular monthly meeting of Middleton Town Council was held at the Town Hall on Monday, March 7, 2011 starting at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Chairing the meeting, Mayor Calvin Eddy; Deputy Mayor Vera Errington; Councillors Lorne Brown, Dan Smith, Darren Boates, Melinda den Haan, and Marc Britney; Chief Administrative Officer, Clayton MacMurtry; Director of Finance, Marianne Daine; and Director of Recreation, Jennifer Coolen.

11.03.01 CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Mayor Eddy advised that he invited Cyrus Taylor to attend tonight's meeting so that Council would have the opportunity to congratulate him on a job well done in winning the silver medal in the boxing competition at the Canada Winter Games in Halifax.

Coach Bruce Harkness advised that Cyrus' upcoming schedule includes a competition at the Greenwood Community Center and the possibility of the World Ringside Tournament in Kansas City in the fall.

The Council congratulated Cyrus on his achievement at the Games and wished him well in his future endeavors.

11.03.02 SOLICITOR

The Solicitor was not present for this meeting.

11.03.03 MINUTES

It was **moved by Britney, seconded by Boates that the minutes of the regular Council meeting of February 7, 2011 be approved as circulated. The motion was carried.**

11.03.04 PRESENTATIONS BY PUBLIC

.01 Annapolis Valley Health – Dave Logie and Janet Knox

Dave Logie, Board Chair, Annapolis Valley Health (AVH), thanked the Council for the opportunity to speak and advised that he is present to respond to Council's recent letter expressing concerns with the closures of the Emergency Department at Soldiers Memorial Hospital.

Mr. Logie noted that he also hears this concern from the Community and advised that Soldiers Memorial Hospital serves a large catchment area, is essential to the services offered by AVH, is a beehive of activity, and has never been considered for closure. He noted that there are challenges, particularly with the Emergency Department, and the prime concern is the recruitment of doctors to staff this service. Mr. Logie commented that he feels the recent John Ross report is excellent and that it supports emergency department services and sees the value of collaborative practices.

Mr. Logie advised that confirmation of approval of the 2010/11 Business Plan has been received, along with targets for 2011/12. He noted that one target is no increase in the budget from 2010/11, and explained that the typical 7% increase will not happen, which will result in a negative budget. Mr. Logie advised that the CEO of Annapolis Valley Health is optimistic that this can be coped with in the short term, however, cannot continue.

Mr. Logie introduced Janet Knox, President and CEO of Annapolis Valley Health. Ms. Knox advised that she is present to address the concerns with the Emergency Department and the budget, and also to answer any questions the Council may have.

Ms. Knox advised that physician recruitment is a challenge, that there is one new doctor in the area this year and one more due to arrive, and that recruitment will continue. She noted that an application has been submitted to the Family Practice Residency Program through Dalhousie University.

Ms. Knox reiterated Mr. Logie's statement that SMH is essential for the area and it will not be closed. She noted that all facilities in Annapolis Valley Health are integral to the district and addressed several budget concerns. Ms. Knox explained that, last year, AVH experienced a \$3 million shortage and balancing the budget this year was very hard work, with various cost cutting measures undertaken to attain a balanced budget.

Ms. Knox advised that the Government does not want to reduce hospital beds and that AVH is continuing to focus on what is needed to keep people healthy and not carrying a budgetary deficit.

Ms. Knox provided an information package for Council, including the 2009/10 Report to the Community, AVH Community Health Profile, and the November 2010 Strategic Plan Update. Ms. Knox introduced Jeanne Saulnier, Site Manager, Soldiers Memorial Hospital, and Wendy Walters, Director of Public Relations, and opened the floor to questions.

Items discussed included the costs involved with the Dalhousie Residency Program, waiting times for services, demand increases due to aging population, at-home palliative care, initiatives for recruitment, and the advantages of the new long term care facilities in the area.

Mayor Eddy thanked the representatives for their information and, on behalf of Council, wished them the best with the challenges facing the health care services.

Mr. Logie advised that Council is welcome to contact him with any questions or concerns that may arise.

11.03.05 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Mayor Eddy noted that Council approved \$40,000 for patching/paving at its last meeting and advised that he thought this would be put out to tender immediately, so that paving projects can be completed earlier than in past years. The Council was in agreement and the CAO advised that he will tender for this right away.

Mayor Eddy questioned the status of the planning study discussed under the draft budget for the Annapolis District Planning Commission at the last Council meeting.

CAO MacMurtry advised that approval has been received from the Province and that a consultant will be hired at the meeting on Wednesday. The CAO advised that all partners have passed motions approving their share of the cost for the consultant.

The question was raised of having the Province pay the total amount for the consultant and the individual municipalities pay the Province. The CAO stated that, to his knowledge, the Province is paying its share of \$14,500 only, however, he will check into this.

11.03.06 NEW BUSINESS

Action Items

.01 Mid Valley Motel Property Tax

It was moved by Britney, seconded by Boates that, on recommendation from the Committee of the Whole, the Council approve to enter into an arrangement with the owner of the Mid Valley Motel to defer the tax sale procedures, contingent upon the payment of tax arrears on the property for 2009/10 on or before September 30, 2011 and, if payment is not received by this date, the tax sale process will proceed. The motion was carried.

.02 Letter of Support – Public Radio Band (REMO)

It was moved by Errington, seconded by Smith that, on recommendation from the Committee of the Whole, the Council approve that a letter of support be sent to Greg Kerr, MP, West Nova, requesting that the 700 MHz band not be made available for auction and that it be preserved for public emergency agency use. The motion was carried.

.03 Funding – Community Centre/Fire Hall

It was moved by Boates, seconded by Brown that, on recommendation from the Committee of the Whole, the Council approve for the Town to provide funding, in a budget amount of \$650,000, for a new Community Centre/Fire Hall, contingent upon a commitment of \$650,000 in funding from private investors, \$1,300,000 in funding from the Federal Government, and \$1,300,000 in funding from the Provincial Governments. The motion was carried.

.04 Approval of Bills

It was moved by Boates, seconded by Errington that, on recommendation from the Committee of the Whole, the Council approve the payment of bills in the amount of \$1,356,892.26. The motion was carried.

.05 Membership Applications – Middleton Fire Department

It was moved by Boates, seconded by Smith that, on recommendation from the membership of the Middleton Fire Department, the Council approve the appointment of Joshua Borden Webb-Brown to the membership of the Middleton Fire Department. The motion was carried.

It was moved by Boates, seconded by Smith that, on recommendation from the membership of the Middleton Fire Department, the Council approve the appointment of Shelby Lewis to the membership of the Middleton Fire Department. The motion was carried.

.06 Funding Request – Playground Equipment Purchase

CAO MacMurtry circulated a memo from Jennifer Coolen, Director of Recreation and Community Services, requesting funding for the purchase of playground equipment for the Rotary Raceway Park.

The Director's memo explained that Council approved \$10,000 for new playground equipment at Rotary Park for 2010/2011, based on a \$5,000 grant approval from the Department of Health and Wellness. The Town was not successful in getting the grant from Health and Wellness and, in an attempt to apply for funding elsewhere, the Director was able to receive a grant of \$1,000 from Active Kids, Healthy Kids, with the stipulation that this money be spent by March 31, 2011.

The Director's memo offered two options for this purchase and recommended option # 2, which is to accept the \$1,000 grant from Active Kids, Healthy Kids and purchase a smaller playground structure for the Park and apply to Health and Wellness for another capital grant project for this year. The CAO also recommended option #2.

On question, the Director advised that the current equipment is getting to the point of being unsafe and that the new equipment would be installed in the spring.

It was moved by den Haan, seconded by Britney that Council approve the purchase of playground equipment for Rotary Park, at a cost of \$9,450 to the Town, together with a grant of \$1,000 from Active Kids, Healthy Kids, for a total cost of \$10,450, per recommendation from the Director of Recreation and Community Services and the Chief Administrative Officer. The motion was carried.

.07 SCADA Water System – Change in Capital Priorities

CAO MacMurtry circulated a memo explaining that the implementation of the SCADA system for monitoring the water system is in the final stages and that the SCADA system at the sewage treatment plant will be coordinated with the water system and both will be monitored at the sewage treatment plant.

The CAO advised that there is \$9,000 in the Water Utility budget for the purchase of water meters, which were to be installed on the wells in Nictaux to monitor pump volumes for each well. He noted that this information will be used when applying for the Town's water

withdrawal permit from the Province and, as well, to monitor the wells for any indication of problems.

The CAO advised that \$9,000 is required to complete the final electrical wiring for the water SCADA system and recommended that the \$9,000, originally budgeted for water meters, be used to complete the water SCADA system.

It was moved by Britney, seconded by Brown that Council approve the reallocation of \$9,000 in the Capital Water budget, originally allocated to purchase water meters for the well field, to cover the costs of the electrical wiring to complete the Capital Water SCADA system.

On question, the CAO advised that the meters are required by the Department of Environment, that each one will cost approximately \$9,000, and that they will be included in this year's budget. The CAO also advised that, should the wells be replaced, or problems arise with the current wells, these meters can be used on any well.

The motion was carried.

Information/Discussion Items

.01 Five-year Capital Budget Review

A copy of the five-year Capital budget was copied to Councillors.

Councillor Britney requested that changes be made to make the budget figures more realistic, noting that he would like a more informative type of budget, in relation to the Town's debt ratio. The Councillor also noted that perhaps a scoring system could be used to determine priorities and timing for projects.

Mayor Eddy questioned whether Council should set a meeting date to discuss the budget.

Councillor Smith questioned whether the new fire truck has been factored into the Town's debt ratio. He also questioned whether the sewer camera has been used to assess any malfunctions with the Town's system, noting that problems could be a determining factor in a five or ten year budget plan.

The CAO advised that the camera, purchased last year, has been used, however, not to determine future problems but rather to deal with existing.

Councillor Smith stated that he feels more information should be gathered before a meeting is held on this budget.

The CAO advised that this type of information would not be available until late fall.

Mayor Eddy noted that, with the question of funding from the Province and, in light of the requests brought up tonight, perhaps there is no point in scheduling a meeting on the five-year Capital budget until regular budget time.

The Council concurred with delaying the Capital budget meeting. Councillor Britney requested that, to minimize discussion time, the CAO investigate the budget format changes suggested.

.02 Fire Rate Proposal

CAO MacMurtry circulated a memo advising that a fire rate could be implemented by the Town of Middleton and the County of Annapolis and that the Town cannot implement a fire rate in the County without the County's permission. The CAO also advised that the County is currently reviewing fire protection and that a fire rate was discussed when the new Bridgetown fire station was to be built and, at that time, the County had no interest in a fire rate. The CAO recommended that the Town not implement a fire rate.

Councillor Brown commented that he feels the CAO is incorrect, advising that the County does levy a fire rate.

The Director of Finance explained that there are Town hydrants in the County, for which the Town bills the County, however, the Town cannot impose a fire rate on County residents.

There was discussion on the formula used by the County for its fire rate, capital versus operating revenue received by the Town from the County, and the process of implementing a Town fire rate. The CAO was requested to investigate these items and obtain a copy of the County's review study.

.03 Pilikan 1 House Design – NS Community College

A copy of the house design for this project was previously copied to Council.

CAO MacMurtry explained that this information has been circulated to update Council on the project, that the house will be built in the spring and, that there is no cost to the Town.

11.03.07 REPORTS

.01 Committee of the Whole

All items from the Committee of the Whole meeting of February 21, 2011 have been dealt with earlier in the meeting.

.02 Mayor

Mayor Eddy tabled his report for the month of February. A copy of the report will be circulated with these minutes.

.03 Managers

The Management reports have been circulated to all members of Council.

.04 Development Officer/Building Inspector/Fire Inspector

The reports for the month of February have been circulated to all Council members.

.05 RCMP

The RCMP report for the month of February was circulated to all Council members.

11.03.08 CORRESPONDENCE

There were no correspondence items for Council's attention for this meeting.

11.03.09 ANYTHING BY MEMBERS

Councillor Brown commented that the yellow lines marking the no parking areas at the crosswalk on Commercial Street are covered with snow and questioned whether no parking signs should be installed to make the area clear.

The CAO is to contact the Traffic Authority on this request.

Councillor Brown also noted that there is an ongoing problem with garbage at the Salvation Army location. He noted that he checked tonight and the garbage has been removed, however, he feels this should be checked from time to time.

Deputy Mayor Errington advised that she has received comments from residents that there has been a reduction in both traffic volume and speed because of the placement of the stop sign at the intersection of Connaught and Maple Avenues.

Councillor Smith advised that the ADEDA members were asked to complete a nominal ranking exercise to assist in setting priorities for the agency for the 2011/12 business plan. The Councillor reviewed the ranking sheet, noting that the top five picks were the Digby to Saint

John Ferry, the Business Retention and Expansion Plan (BRE), the Tidal Hub Engineering Study, Regional Tourism Marketing, and IT Sector Promotion. Councillor Smith advised that the Town's top five or six picks were essentially the consensus of the survey.

Mayor Eddy advised that the ACOA offices in Middleton and Digby are being closed due to cutbacks by the Federal Government.

On question from Councillor Britney, the CAO confirmed that the appeal on the rezoning of the property at 71-73 Main Street has been dropped and that plans are proceeding for the proposed development of the property.

Councillor Britney questioned the status of the Brooklyn Road agreement with the County and the CAO advised that a letter has been sent to the County advising of the Town's stand on the agreement, however, no response has yet been received.

The CAO questioned whether Council wants funding from all partners in place before a consultant is hired for the Planning Review.

It was the consensus of the Council that all monies should be paid before the hiring is undertaken.

Mayor Eddy commented that the Town cannot pay bills for other municipalities and, due to the financial situation of other municipalities, there is a concern for other funding commitments.

Mayor Eddy questioned the status of the kiosk, noting that he understood this has to be completed by the end of March in order for the Town to receive funding.

CAO MacMurtry advised that the \$3,500 funding for the kiosk has to be spent by the end of March and the Public Works Department can do this work. The CAO noted that he has contacted People Worx for possible manpower for this project.

Councillor Britney questioned the design of the kiosk.

Mayor Eddy stated that he understood that Joy O'Neil, ADEDA, advised that the Town was to receive \$12,000 in funding. The CAO is to check with Ms. O'Neil.

Mayor Eddy questioned whether any progress has been made on the hiring of a Public Works Director.

CAO MacMurtry advised that he and the Director of Finance have reviewed all applications and are currently in the same place as last reported. The CAO noted that he looked at the salaries in Kentville, Bridgewater, and Wolfville and noted that the salaries vary but the job requirements also vary.

The Director of Finance advised that towns the size of Middleton have similar salaries and job descriptions.

There was discussion on how to fill the position and Council agreed to leave things as they presently are operating and advertise the position again shortly.

Mayor Eddy advised that the ribbon cutting for the Heart of the Valley Long Term Care Facility is tentatively scheduled for either March 23rd or 24th, noting that a firm date should be announced within the next week.

The Mayor also advised that the annual Fire Department banquet is March 26th.

There being no further business, it was **moved by Britney, seconded by Smith that the Council adjourn at 8:50 p.m. The motion was carried.**

MAYOR

SECRETARY