

REGULAR MONTHLY COUNCIL MEETING

March 11, 2015

Approved Minutes

DATE: March 11, 2015
TIME: 7:30 p.m. – 8:43 p.m.
PLACE: Stratford Town Centre, 234 Shakespeare Drive

PRESENT: Councillors Diane Griffin; Gail MacDonald; Keith MacLean; Steve Ogden; and staff members Robert Hughes, CAO; Kim O’Connell, Director of Finance and Technology; Jeremy Crosby, Director of Infrastructure; Joanne Weir, Recreation Director; Kim Dudley, Communications Officer, and Mary McAskill, Recording Clerk

REGRETS: Councillor Gary Clow

CHAIR: Acting Mayor Randy Cooper

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Acting Mayor Cooper called the Regular Monthly Council Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

It was moved by Councillor Diane Griffin and seconded by Councillor Gail MacDonald that the agenda be approved as circulated. Motion Carried.

3. **MINUTES**

It was moved by Councillor Steve Ogden and seconded by Councillor Keith MacLean that the Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes of February 11, 2015 be approved as circulated. Motion Carried.

4. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

Councillor Ogden asked about the plans for the trails on the Hillsborough Bridge. He stated that it is a serious safety issue, especially with spring and summer coming. Acting Mayor Cooper stated that the Town did make contact with the province, but we haven’t heard back from them yet.

5. **PRESENTATIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

Roger Gordon thanked Acting Mayor Cooper and Council for the opportunity to present. He stressed that he and Maureen Kerr are here firstly as citizens of Stratford.

Mr. Gordon explained that that they are in no ways opposed to consultation - if we were talking about something other than health and safety. Gordon then proceeded with his presentation.

At the January 15 meeting of Council, we laid out a detailed case for bringing in a ban on lawn spraying as a matter of urgency. We drew attention to the compelling evidence that cosmetic pesticides pose a significant risk to human and animal health and to the environment. Children's health is of particular concern, as they are more sensitive than adults to these products. We further pointed out that since the province has now amended the Municipalities Act to allow municipalities to enact bylaws to ban the spraying of lawns with pesticides, there is no reason why our Town should not go full steam ahead and bring in the necessary legislation. After all, our Town does proudly declare itself as "Sustainable Stratford," a moniker that would ring hollow if this odious practice of lawn spraying were allowed to continue.

We even offered to help the Town identify "best practices" followed by other jurisdictions that have implemented a ban, thereby saving much needed time and energy. Despite repeated efforts, we have had no luck in our requests to members of the Sustainability Committee, or from our elected Councillors to update us on this issue. This lack of feedback seems at odds with the notion of an "engagement process" that the Town is now espousing, especially given the fact that we raised the whole issue of dangers of lawn pesticide spraying in the first instance.

Imagine our shock and dismay when we discovered at a recent meeting with the CAO's of the three neighbouring municipalities, that Stratford, at a privileged meeting, has decided to embark upon an "engagement process" with its residents, thereby insuring that the 88% of residents who do not spray their lawns with toxic chemicals will be at the mercy of the 12% who do so for yet another year. This is not acceptable.

Charlottetown is, we have been advised, going ahead with a ban because the November 2014 municipal elections gave its Councillors the mandate to do so. Cornwall, with a high influx of new Councillors, is on a learning curve and can be excused for not leading the way. Stratford, with both the knowledge and the mandate, has no excuse to tarry. There has already been considerable debate on this topic within and outside of the Town. In 2013, a forum on cosmetic pesticides was well attended and participants were united in their desire that a ban be brought in. A year ago, a survey of this topic was carried out by the Town. Last summer, the Town launched an education campaign, which included distribution of pamphlets, articles in the Town Talk, even a bus tour of pesticide-free homes. The newspapers were filled with articles last year, heavily weighted in favour of a ban. Yet, Stratford, "Sustainable" Stratford, chooses to talk rather than "do." This is not acceptable.

We strongly urge council to do the following:

- Revoke the idea of an "engagement process."*
- Instead, channel your full efforts into the legal process of preparing a set of bylaws. Place the file in the hands of a lawyer.*
- Until the bylaws are in place, advise the lawn care companies that Bylaws will be brought in. It is only a matter of time.*

- *Advise the lawn care companies that they are not welcome with the Town until the Bylaws are brought in, unless they use environmentally and healthy products such as those being used in Nova Scotia. If it can be done, a moratorium would be the best course to follow until the bylaws can be brought into effect.*
- *As residents of the Town, we are extremely disappointed in the course charted by Council and sincerely hope that Council will do the right thing and take the advice of the legendary Walt Disney: “Things get done when people stop talking and start doing.”*

Roger Gordon and Maureen Kerr

Maureen Kerr noted that she got involved because she had some friends who have children with cancer and she has learned a lot about pesticides. She then proceeded to read from the following article:

Taken from the American Academy of Pediatrics on Pesticides – Pesticides are a collective term for chemicals intended to kill unwanted insects, plants, molds, and rodents. Children encounter pesticides daily and have unique susceptibilities to their potential toxicity. Acute poisoning risks are clear, and understanding of chronic health implications from both acute and chronic exposure are emerging. Epidemiologic evidence demonstrates associations between early life exposure to pesticides and pediatric cancers, decreased cognitive function, and behavioral problems. Related animal toxicology studies provide supportive biological plausibility for these findings. Recognizing and reducing problematic exposures will require attention to current inadequacies in medical training, public health tracking, and regulatory action on pesticides. Ongoing research describing toxicologic vulnerabilities and exposure factors across the life span are needed to inform regulatory needs and appropriate interventions.

Acting Mayor Cooper thanked both Mr. Gordon and Ms. Kerr for keeping Council informed. He then invited each Councillor to give a response if they wished to.

Councillor MacLean stated that he was elected in November of 2014 and this happened in December. He noted that he is not an expert on pesticides and there is information that he and Council need to go through in order to make a proper informed decision. Councillor MacLean added that he does not feel he misrepresented the residents, but that that Pesticide Free PEI is trying to present him as the one who is holding up the process when all he is doing is his due diligence.

Maureen stated that we are not inventing the wheel, and added that it should have been the province doing this.

Councillor MacDonald stated that she and Councillor MacLean are new to the forum and we were just given this authority.

Councillor Griffin stated that we too are concerned with the issue, and we just had this authority dropped in our lap. Two years ago when we met with the Minister, we were told that municipalities did not have the right to regulate pesticides and never would. So we were surprised when we were given this right. Councillor Griffin also noted that we can only enact within a certain narrow scope, but we have started the educational process. She also noted that we want to do what is best for Stratford.

Councillor Ogden thanked Roger and Maureen for coming out and speaking so eloquently, and he thinks some of the viewpoints do change based on new information. We know whatever we do will be challenged, so we want to make sure it will stand.

Resident Pam Hall identified herself noting that she is a breast cancer survivor, and anyone with a weakened immune system is put at risk and it can be fatal. Using pesticides is an infringement on our rights and it is not acceptable. Others have banned cosmetic pesticides, so why can't we? Ken Hall stated that he wants Council to stop stalling and just do it.

Acting Mayor Cooper thanked everyone for their presentations.

At this time another resident spoke and stated that he was pleased that the Town was taking their time and doing their due diligence on the pesticide ban request.

6. CARI REPORT

Included in the package for Council to review.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

A list of all correspondence sent and received since the last Council meeting was included in the meeting package.

8. MAYOR'S REPORT

Included in the package for Council to review. Following is a list of meetings and events attended by the Acting Mayor since the last Council meeting:

- Participated in the T3 Transit Event along with some other Councillors
- Attended a discussion regarding the revenue sharing at City Hall
- Co-chaired and opened the Rodd Hotels and Resorts “Pownal A Tournament”
- Attended the opening of the Stratford Winter Carnival and presented the Senior Volunteer of the Year Award to Leona Gallant
- Hosted the Greater Charlottetown and Area Chamber of Commerce Business Breakfast at the Town Centre
- Attended the Pownal Skating Club Ice show at the Pownal Sports Centre
- Participated in the Red Cross Flag Raising at the Town Centre as March is Red Cross Month.

9. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Report is included in the package for Council to review. Robert gave a brief overview of his report noting that the electronic version of the resident survey has gone out, and the paper copy will be going out in the next few weeks. The survey will close on April 17 with the final report due on May 11.

Robert stated that he attended the FCM Sustainable Communities Conference in London, Ontario. There were some great sessions, including a full day session on Community Energy Planning, and he made some great contacts to assist with the development of our energy plan.

10. INFRASTRUCTURE

Report included in the package for Council to review. In Councillor Clow's absence, Acting Mayor Cooper noted that the department is currently working on the following:

- Preparing for upcoming infrastructure projects
- Collecting rain barrel data for the Insurance Bureau of Canada
- Compiling data for the trial metering program
- Water model
- Preparing the tender for the backup generator to be installed at the Town Centre
- Researching information to prepare for the inflow and infiltration study
- Street lighting
- Finalizing work plans and individual scorecards

Acting Mayor Cooper noted that Jeremy attended the first meeting of the Active Transportation Committee to discuss the mandate of the committee, and to give them some direction with regard to how they can provide help and advice to the Infrastructure Committee.

In addition to the items above, the department has been busy with the following:

- Blue Frog and UV system maintenance
- Pumping station maintenance
- Resolving SCADA communications to several of our water stations
- Interior repairs and painting at the Town Centre
- Dealing with an operational issue with well #2 at Fullerton's Creek
- Scheduled water sampling
- Emergency call outs as they occur

It was noted that there was one after hours call out for a water line issue at 674 Saints Crescent, but the issue was dealt with quickly and with minimal damage. A water line blew off in the basement of the home, and our utility technician Billy Ramsay had a valve in his

truck that he temporarily installed to stop the leak. After further investigation it was revealed that the line was improperly installed by the plumbing contractor and they are going to do the repairs for the homeowner under warranty.

It was noted that just two days after the big storm in February 80% of the sidewalks were cleared.

11. RECREATION CULTURE AND EVENTS

Report included in the package for Council to review. Councillor MacDonald gave a brief overview of her report noting that the committee was pleased with the turnout for the winter carnival. There was a wide host of activities provided and the Stratford Lions Club did a wonderful job serving 535 people at the pancake breakfast. Councillor Griffin agreed and noted that she was impressed with the number of people who came out for the pancake breakfast.

The official opening to the winter carnival included Acting Mayor Cooper presenting Leona Gallant with the Town's MacIntyre – MacDougall Senior Volunteer of the Year Award for 2014. Congratulations Leona!

Councillor MacDonald noted that the youth centre members were a great help with the winter carnival. Seventeen youth volunteered their time to help with many of the different events.

The recreation centre continues to be well used by residents. Along with the many programs offered, we are averaging daily sign in of 190 people for the fitness area. In addition, we continue to receive many requests for meeting rooms for birthdays, special events and many other activities.

The Town of Stratford was pleased to celebrate the 'Pink Shirt Day' on Wednesday, February 25, along with many other communities. East Coast Cresting printed the official 2015 pink shirts and each shirt was sold for \$10 plus hst.

Included in the report is a complete list of events that were held in the month of February.

12. FINANCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Report included in the package for Council to review. Acting Mayor Cooper gave a brief overview of his report. He noted that he hopes that the revenue sharing group get together to start up their discussions again.

Acting Mayor Cooper noted that MRSB offered a service to the Town where they would identify commodity tax credits for the four year period ending in September 2014. After completing the work, the manager of the tax recovery services, Martin Goguen provided a report to Council and it is included in the package.

A letter was received from the acting director of infrastructure advising us that we will again be allocated \$150,000, which will be set aside for the skateboard park – if it moves ahead.

It was noted that a number of mayors and CAO's met with Minister Shea to discuss the direction that things are going with the Build Canada Fund. This fund was announced from Ottawa, but has not yet been signed by the province, partly due to the revenue sharing agreement.

Acting Mayor Cooper noted that there are more than 20 submissions across Canada for new fire stations and three of those are from PEI. Our request for a new Emergency Services Centre (fire hall, police station, EMS) has been turned down for infrastructure funding because it does not qualify under the current rules of Build Canada.

13. PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND HERITAGE

a) No Report

It was noted that because the planning agenda was so light a meeting was not required in February.

b) Permit Summary

The permit summary is included in the package. Councillor Ogden gave a brief overview of the summary.

14. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

a) Resolution CW004-2015 Committee Member Appointments

**Moved by Councillor Steve Ogden
Seconded by Councillor Diane Griffin**

WHEREAS Council has established Special Committees and sub-committees to those Special Committees in Bylaw #33, the Stratford Committee Bylaw, to advise and assist Council in its deliberations; and

WHEREAS the Bylaw provides for the appointment of residents by Council to provide public input to Council in its deliberations.

BE IT RESOLVED that the following resident(s) be appointed to the following Committees for the remainder of the two year term ending November 30, 2016 as follows:

Active Transportation Sub-Committee
• Melanie McCarthy

Infrastructure Committee
• Derek Smith

Discussion: It was noted that this resolution bears the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole.

Question: **CARRIED**

15. SAFETY SERVICES

a) No Report

Councillor Ogden stated that there was a very heavy agenda at the last meeting and the minutes will be included in your next package.

b) Street Light Report

Nil

c) RCMP Report

Included in the agenda package for Council to review.

d) Humane Society Report

No Report

e) Transit Report

Included in the agenda package for Council to review.

f) Fire Company Report

Councillor Ogden noted that there was a general meeting and the committee dealt with some housekeeping issues.

16. SUSTAINABILITY

- a) Report included in the package for Council to review. Acting Mayor Cooper noted that one of the main issues discussed was the pesticide issue. Everyone sitting on the committee has a limited knowledge of cosmetic pesticides, and would like more information to assist them in making a recommendation to Council.

Councillor Ogden stated that he agrees with a comment in the meeting minutes where it states that we need communications with our residents so they know what we are doing; we need to keep them informed.

17. ACCOUNTABILITY AND ENGAGEMENT

- a) Report included in the package for Council to review. Councillor MacLean noted that the committee also discussed the pesticide issue. He stated that the plan is to have a direct question included in the resident survey on whether or not people want a ban or a restriction on cosmetic pesticides. The Sustainability Committee will be tasked with making a recommendation to Council on whether to ban or restrict cosmetic pesticides; however, the Accountability and Engagement Committee's job is to engage the residents because we need good communication with the residents.

The committee also discussed support local, traffic safety, and the community energy plan.

18. HUMAN RESOURCES

b) Resolution HR003-2015 Season Position Extensions

**Moved by Councillor Diane Griffin
Seconded by Councillor Gail MacDonald**

WHEREAS the positions of Recreation Maintenance Worker II and Infrastructure Maintenance Worker II are currently permanent seasonal positions; and

WHEREAS the amount of infrastructure that is owned by the town continues to expand and additional help is required to maintain it during the winter months.

BE IT RESOLVED that the positions of Recreation Maintenance Worker II and Infrastructure Maintenance Worker II be made permanent full time positions when they return to work in 2015 as per the attached job descriptions.

Discussion: It was noted that this resolution bears the recommendation of the Human Resource Committee.

Question: **CARRIED**

19. OTHER COMMITTEES

a) Stratford Seniors Complex

Councillor MacDonald explained that the committee is currently dealing with a smoking issue. There have been attempts made over the past number of years to make the building smoke free, but with very little success, because there are two tenants who were grandfathered in and do smoke in their units. Councillor MacDonald stated that the second hand smoke is causing complaints by some of the residents, so we are researching what can be done, if anything.

It was also noted that there are two vacancies at the complex and they will both be filled once they have been renovated.

20. PROCLAMATIONS

Nil

21. OTHER BUSINESS

Nil

22. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Randy Cooper, Acting Mayor

Robert Hughes, CAO

