

VILLAGE OF NEW MINAS
REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING

JULY 14, 2014

7:00 p.m.,

Conference Room, Louis Millett Community Complex (LMCC)

The Regular monthly meeting of the Village Commission of New Minas was held on Monday, July 14, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the Conference Room of the LMCC.

In Attendance: Chair Dave Chaulk
Vice-Chair Maynard Stevens
Commissioner Mary Munroe
Commissioner Ken Pineo
Commissioner James Redmond
Clerk Treasurer Terry Silver

Also in Attendance: Mr. John Ansara, Recreation Director
Hantsport Town Deputy Mayor Harold Bulger
Mr. Don Zwicker, Resident
Mr. Mark Redmond, Resident

CALL TO ORDER, Chair Chaulk
Chair Chaulk called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: July 14, 2014

It was moved by Commissioner Pineo, seconded by Commissioner Redmond that the Agenda for the July 14, 2014 Commission meeting be approved with the following addition: Under "Other Added Items" (a) Volunteer Fire Departments. MOTION CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Regular Commission Meeting June 9, 2014

It was moved by Vice-Chair Stevens, seconded by Commissioner Redmond that the minutes of the regular Commission meeting held June 9, 2014 be approved as circulated. MOTION CARRIED

Special Commission Meeting June 17, 2014

It was moved by Vice-Chair Stevens, seconded by Commission Munroe that the minutes of the Special Commission meeting held June 17, 2014 be approved as circulated. MOTION CARRIED

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

a) Sale of Civic Center – Update

T. Silver advised that there is no update on any potential buyers for the former Civic Center.

b) LED Lighting Program – Update

T. Silver stated that most of the LED Lights have been installed, and reports have come back very positive. She said this has been a smooth process, and the contract actually came in a bit under budget.

c) Fire Department Capital – Update

Neither Clerk Silver nor Commissioner Redmond had any update on the Fire Department Capital item.

d) Bylaw 63 – Open Burning – Update

Commissioner Redmond stated that his concerns about *Bylaw 63 – Open Burning*, have been proposed to the County of Kings. He stated, for information, that the Forestry Act should be followed and noted that if a municipal bylaw is more stringent, that bylaw would supersede the less stringent provincial law. This item will be removed from the Commission's Agenda unless it needs to be discussed in the future.

e) Kings Citizens Coalition Governance Study – Village Commission's Discussion

Chair Chaulk stated that the KCC gave a presentation at the June Commission meeting, and the Commissioners wanted to take some time to absorb the information presented before making a decision with regards to their request for the Commission's participation in a Governance Study. Basically, Chair Chaulk reiterated, the Commission could consider being in favour of supporting a study (financially as well as in principle), opposing a study, or make no commitment at all.

Discussion took place at this point. The following points were discussed:

- The presentation to the Commission left many questions unanswered and contained inaccuracies that have caused concerns.
- It could be dangerous for the Village to not take a stand one way or the other;
- Could be an opportunity to be part of the study; if the decision is to not do anything or to oppose, the door could be closed on New Minas' input;
- Not being part of Kings Partnership Steering Committee shouldn't be a deciding factor one way or the other on the Commission's participation in the KCC study.
- Question – who makes the decision on the now non-existent Terms of Reference for the Study? There being no Terms of Reference prior to the request for financial support has been an issue with Commissioners from the beginning.
- Is it a contradiction to explore Town Status possibility while at the same time taking part in a Committee intent on minimizing municipal government? This was countered that the concerns are still there, regardless of New Minas' municipal status.

- Some felt that it is distasteful to belong to a Committee whose obvious mandate is to dissolve the Village, whose Founding Fathers and subsequent Commissioners worked hard over the years to develop it into a very successful Village.
- Generally, some were not against a study if there are better methods, but issues are pending and the Commission needs to be comfortable with supporting a study.
- It's possible if the Village supports a study, there would still be no guarantee a place "at the table".

It was moved by Commissioner Redmond, seconded by Vice-Chair Stevens, that the Commission not respond to the request of Kings Citizens Coalition at this time. MOTION CARRIED

f) Village Status Preliminary Report

Chair Chaulk stated that at the June Commission meeting, the Commission requested the Clerk Treasurer to conduct a preliminary study to determine if it would be feasible for a consultant to be hired to do a Town Status Study. T. Silver stated that she has done this study, as presented to the Commission and as much as possible used data from Towns close in size, population and tax base to New Minas. She stated she was surprised that her findings indicate that the Village could actually survive as a Town, right now, without increasing the tax rate (combination of the current Village rate plus the current County rate). She cautioned the Commission, however, that she did not have the time or resources to accurately make precise calculations, which she was not requested to do.

Chair Chaulk and Vice-Chair Stevens commented that, although questions and comments of interest have been generated from the Commission's motion to consider Town Status, there has been little to no opposition to the possibility. Commissioners Munroe and Pineo stated, indeed, during their recent election campaigns, they were asked many times why New Minas is "not a town".

Commissioner Munroe stated there may be other considerations, other than just dollars.

The Commissioners made a decision to defer their decision to the September, 2014 Commission meeting to give them more time to absorb the contents of the Clerk's study.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Recreation Director's Report – John Ansara

Chair Chaulk asked the Commissioners if they had any questions of John on his report (attached to original minutes).

Vice-Chair Stevens commented that Canada Day was, in his opinion, the best attended in his years as a Commissioner, and congratulated John and events coordinator Nicole Tibbetts on doing such a splendid job. John stated that he had to give the credit to Nicole, and he will pass along the Commission's comments.

It was moved by Commissioner Redmond, seconded by Commissioner Pineo that the Rec Director's report be approved as presented. MOTION CARRIED

Commission Munroe stated how thrilled everyone is to have received \$25,000 from the Millett Trust to go towards the Splash Park project. She wondered if this will change the "game plan" for construction of the park.

John stated that, although this announcement was very welcomed news, it would not make sense to rush the construction of the project. By the time the tender is awarded, it would be late in the season before everything would be in place. The better plan is to do what we had intended to do this year, and complete the project in the late spring of 2015 for all-summer enjoyment.

b) New Minas Water Commission Report – Vice-Chair Stevens

Vice-Chair Stevens read the report of the New Minas Water Commission (report attached to original minutes).

It was moved by Vice-Chair Stevens, seconded by Commissioner Redmond that the report of the New Minas Water Commission be approved as presented. MOTION CARRIED

Vice-Chair Stevens stated that there is a Regional Sewer meeting coming up, and it is his intention to get final clarification of the ACA Capacity. He said it is still not clear how the capacity will be distributed and he will get clarification.

Commissioner Redmond asked when the governance study will be complete. T. Silver stated that nothing has taken place in this regard, especially given there was a change in the process that has caused some confusion. She said most recently it has been reported that there will be Inter-Municipal Agreements, but nothing concrete has been discussed to this end.

c) New Minas Area Advisory Committee

There was no NMAAC meeting; however, there is a meeting scheduled for tomorrow evening to deal with several applications.

NEW BUSINESS

OTHER ADDED ITEMS

a) Volunteer Fire Department

Vice-Chair Stevens stated that, during the recent hurricane, there were 50 alarms coming in to the New Minas Volunteer Fire Department, and on behalf of the Village Commission, he wanted to thank them for exemplary work, going above and beyond, and he especially wanted to thank each and every fire fighter, as well as their auxiliary, for the incredible service they provide to the people of New Minas and beyond.

Chair Chaulk agreed the Fire Department volunteers did a great job, and it is very much appreciated. He went on to say they are often taken for granted, but in this situation, no one takes them for granted, and their volunteerism is appreciated.

It was noted, also, that the Auxiliary worked diligently making meals for the crew during the recent events of Hurricane Arthur. It was a great effort and a wonderful service.

CORRESPONDENCE

PUBLIC DISCUSSION PERIOD

Hantsport Town Deputy Mayor Harold Bulger – stated that Hantsport is having a study conducted to investigate going from Town to Village status, and he wanted to come tonight to get a feel for the Commission’s role in the community. He said he found the meeting very interesting and not unlike a Town Council meeting. He stated that the results from the Clerk’s study was also most interesting, and cautioned the Commission that one of the largest expenses is for road maintenance, and stated that funding formulas for Towns and Municipalities are much different for roads and policing.

Commissioner Redmond stated that New Minas grew very well since its incorporation over 45 years ago, and we have a strong voice.

Deputy Mayor Bulger stated his Council has numerous concerns about dissolving, but with the loss of industry, finances are strained, and noted that the option of going to Village status is being looked at very seriously; in fact, it was in the NSUARB’s recommendation as an option to review. He said once they become part of the County (as a Hamlet), there will be no Village status option available to them. He thanked the Commission for allowing him the opportunity to make comments. The Commission appreciated that Hantsport is showing an interest in investigating Village status, and they wished Deputy Mayor Bulger and his Council good luck.

Mark Redmond , Resident – asked, in the preliminary study on Town Status, if consideration was given to space for extra staff that will be needed. T. Silver stated that, although her direction from the Commission was not to go into this kind of detail, it most definitely has been in the back of her mind. Part of the \$4M borrowing amount would be to upgrade facilities to accommodate extra staff and equipment.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Vice-Chair Stevens, the meeting adjourned.

Dave Chaulk, Chair

Terry Silver, Clerk Treasurer