

Minutes

Committee of the Whole Meeting
W. H. Steeves House Museum, 40 Mill Street, Hillsborough
May 16, 2023, at 4:30 PM.

PRESENT:

Robert Rochon – Mayor	John Ereaux – Councillor, Ward 1
Loretta Elderkin – Councillor, Ward 2	Jeff Land – Councillor, Ward 3
Jeff Jonah – Councillor, Ward 4	James Coates – Councillor, Ward 5
Heather Ward Russell – Councillor, Ward	Hanna Downey – CAO/Clerk
Jillian Hutchinson – Treasurer	Scott Reid – Director of Operations

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rochon called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

IT WAS MOVED by *Councillor Land* and seconded by *Councillor Coates* **THAT** the amended agenda be approved as circulated. **MOTION CARRIED** (unanimously).

Amendments: Addition of Report from Director of Operations, Funding Request, NB Railway Museum, Service Level Concerns, and Public Comments/Statements

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

No conflict declared at this time.

PUBLIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENTATIONS

- (a) **ACTA – Kris Kelly, Advocacy Committee Chair, Phyllis Sutherland, President.** Ms. Sutherland introduced Mr. Kelly as the Advocacy Committee Chair for Albert County Tourism Association (ACTA). Mr. Kelly stated that he sees reform as an opportunistic time for the communities. He reviewed some of the recent work done by ACTA and discussed and stated they are working on initiatives for winter tourism. ACTA launched a survey to collect data on local priorities, and the findings were: Infrastructure, Communications, and Environment/Beautification. Mr. Kelly said ACTA will keep Council informed on initiatives and events. Council thanked Mr. Kelly and Ms. Sutherland for attending the meeting and for the excellent work of ACTA.
- (b) **Treasurer’s Report** – Ms. Hutchinson reviewed the financial report for the first quarter 2023 (attached to minutes). Ms. Hutchinson asked for an update on the status of the draft credit card policy and the hiring of an assistant for her. Mayor Rochon asked if there has been a draft provided; Ms. Hutchinson stated that she provided the CAO with a draft policy two months ago. *Councillor Elderkin* stated that she and the CAO would discuss the policy. The Mayor and Council thanked Ms. Hutchinson for attending and for her thorough report.
- (c) **CAO Report** – The CAO reviewed the following:
The CAO attended a meeting with the principals of Hillsborough Elementary School, Caledonia Regional High School, Riverside Consolidated School, and Anglophone East School District’s director of Finance Aubrey Kirkpatrick. The purpose of the meeting was to

discuss implementing an updated reciprocal agreement to include the greater community of Fundy Albert. The CAO advised that a draft agreement will be shared with the Council once it has been received. The CAO attended a career fair at CRHS on May 15. The CAO attended an Administrators' meeting at ECO360 on May 16 where the new mandated services were discussed, along with other matters. The Alma Recreation Council inquired about the municipality covering the annual cost of liability insurance, as the village of Alma previously did. The CAO advised this is already covered through the municipality's liability coverage. The Hillsborough Women's Institute would like to place posts along the Grey Brook Trail with laminated pages from a book for a Trail Book Walk to promote children to be more active and increase reading opportunities. The CAO stated that volunteers have been working in the garden at the village square in Alma and have been making significant progress; the pollinator gardens will be done on the Day of Caring, organized by Friends of Fundy. The CAO asked Council if the \$5000 grant funds for ParticipACTION could be reallocated to the Footloose 2023 program, and stated she feels they would comply with the grant regulations. The Council have no concerns as long as it is permitted by the grant. The CAO will check with ParticipACTION to see if that is permitted. The Mobile Eco-Depot will be in Alma on May 17-18 from 12 Noon- 8 pm. There is a large garbage collection scheduled for Riverside-Albert on May 23.

- (d) **Director of Operations** – Mr. Scott Reid. Mr. Reid reviewed his concerns surrounding the Committee of the Whole Meetings, having received little communication on expectations, and concerns with the changes affecting the Public Works Department due to the reform. Mr. Reid indicated that he had asked questions and continues to receive no answers. The Council members each expressed their appreciation to the Public Works Department. The Council thanked Mr. Reid for attending and for bringing his concerns forward.

NEW BUSINESS

- (a) Terms of Reference for Committees of Council
- a. Public Works Committee
 - b. Emergency Measures Committee
 - c. Personnel Committee

Mayor Rochon stated that the draft Terms of Reference were not circulated prior to the meeting, therefore he recommends this be deferred to the Regular Meeting.

- (b) Draft CAO Policy – **Mayor Rochon** stated that the draft CAO Policy was not circulated prior to the next meeting, therefore he recommends this be deferred to the Regular Meeting.
- (c) Draft Fundy Albert Employee Policy – **Mayor Rochon** stated the draft Fundy Albert Employee Policy was not circulated prior to the meeting, therefore he recommends this be deferred to the next Regular Meeting. **Mayor Rochon** said he is hopeful that all of these documents will be made available prior to the next meeting so Council can have an informed discussion.
- (d) Snow removal contracts for 2023/2024. **Mayor Rochon** stated the reason he wanted this on the agenda was to ensure arrangements were made in a timely manner. **Mayor Rochon** asked the CAO for comment or updates. The CAO stated that the contractor for Snow Removal Services for Alma has been renewed for 2023/2024. **Mayor Rochon** stated his concern is born more of the Hillsborough services.

- (e) Solid waste collection for 2024. The CAO stated that she will attend a meeting on May 29 with other Administrators and the Local Service District Manager to discuss waste collection.
- (f) Budget for 2024. The Council had a brief conversation related to when budget deliberations should begin.
- (g) Credit Line Request – for interim financing for an infrastructure project. The CAO stated that the Treasurer would require a motion for Council to approve interim financing for the Riverside-Albert and Alma water projects.
- (h) Revised wastewater rate for Hillsborough – The CAO stated that a motion would be required at the next regular council meeting.
- (i) Building By-law. **Mayor Rochon** asked the CAO to contact other municipalities to ask for their rates.
- (j) Riverside-Albert Water Main Project. The CAO stated that the stop drawings are waiting for approval. The materials should be ordered by now, and they are hoping to start on May 23. There will be a construction start-up meeting with EXP with the Director of Operations, the Mayor and myself. **Councillor Elderkin** asked that the residents be made aware of the project before it started.
- (k) Alma Water Exploration Project Update. The CAO has no updates to provide at this time.
- (l) Alma Activity Centre Electrical Upgrade. The CAO had requested that Englobe conduct a site visit to review existing electrical distribution within the two buildings and provide a report summarizing the findings, recommendations for changes, and a high-level opinion of probable costs for associated work. This assessment also includes inspecting the existing generator and providing options for replacement.
- (m) Canada Day Celebrations. Council instructed the CAO to order fireworks for Alma and Hillsborough, with a budget of \$3500 and \$6000, respectively. **Councillor Jonah** advised that he needs answers on the budget allowance for Canada Day so he can take the next steps for securing a band for the Hillsborough event.
- (n) Funding Request – The council agrees that **Mayor Rochon** should send a letter to Minister Allain requesting the necessary funding to assist with a strategic plan, technology needs, furniture, web page development, branding, etc.
- (o) NB Railway Museum Request – **Mayor Rochon** stated that members of the Council met with Minister Holland and NB Railway Museum Board members on April 26. The NB Railway Museum has approached the Fundy Albert Council to request to discharge a mortgage that the former village of Hillsborough has had in place for a 3.41-hectare parcel of land that the NB Railway Museum station sits on. The NB Railway Museum is asking the village of Fundy Albert to transfer ownership of the replica train station located on a leased piece of land. **Mayor Rochon** stated that the NB Railway Board of Directors are pursuing funding from the province. **Mayor Rochon** stated that ownership of the building does not hinge on the funding of the replica train station. The train station has been home to a program called Literacy Express. There is some concern in the community that the Literacy Express may be displaced in favor of developing the second floor to further tourism plans. **Mayor Rochon** stated at the April 26 meeting, this was raised by Council as a concern and assurances were provided that this would not be a problem. **Mayor Rochon** stated that this could easily be formalized in a written agreement. **Mayor Rochon** stated there are two documents: One is a ninety-nine-year lease, and a mortgage that accrues interest annually and is now worth more than one-million dollars. The former village of

Hillsborough had confirmed with a lawyer that those two documents can be discharged. Council members had the opportunity to provide their input. Following a lengthy conversation with input from members, **Mayor Rochon** stated that the Council is not in a position to make a decision and suggested that the Council prepare to put forward a motion at the June 6 meeting to hold a public consultation.

- (p) Service Level Concerns – **Mayor Rochon** stated that concerns had been brought forward to Council members. The concerns include that the Public Works Department employees are not as visible in the communities of Alma as they had been prior to amalgamation. **Mayor Rochon** stated that residents are looking for assurances that regular services (mowing, garbage collection, public washrooms) in Alma will not be overlooked. Mr. Reid noted that he has been developing the best and most cost-effective practices for his department. Mr. Reid stated that he is in Alma five days per week for water/wastewater duties. Still, he continues to work on a plan, so all three communities have the regular services they had prior to amalgamation.

MAYOR & COUNCILLOR STATEMENTS & INQUIRIES

Councillor Coates stated he would like to see future meetings held in Ward 5 and Ward 6.

Councillor Land stated that he was approached to see if a streetlight could be installed at the basketball court on School Street. Councillor Land checked with nearby residents, who indicated have no concerns as long as the light is set on a timer to shut off at 10 PM. **Councillor Land** stated he will contact the DECH to request to have a light installed, in exchange of the public works department mowing a portion of the school property near the pool. **Councillor Land** was approached by a resident requesting that a donation she previously made to the Hillsborough Arena be returned. **Mayor Rochon** stated that if an income tax receipt was issued, we would not be able to return the funds.

Councillor Ereaux asked Mr. Reid if the hanging baskets would go back up on Main Street in Alma; Mr. Reid stated he could not locate the baskets.

Councillor Elderkin asked Mr. Reid when flowers would be arriving for volunteers to plant in front of the Riverside-Albert office; Mr. Reid will look into it. Councillor Elderkin mentioned a drop-off that still needs fixed in front of the Ambulance NB building on Bicentennial Road; Mr. Reid has been in contact with DTI to have that road graded. If Councillor Elderkin runs into her contact with the private contractor, she will try to get an update as well.

Councillor Ward Russell wanted to thank DTI for patching roads in Lower Coverdale.

Mayor Rochon stated that the municipal policing costs under the Municipal Police Services Agreement, including Fundy Albert, will not have to pay the retroactive portion of the increases.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Residents were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the Mayor and Council.

CLOSED SESSION

IT WAS MOVED by *Councillor Land* and seconded by *Councillor Eldekin* that the meeting enters Closed Session at 7:53 PM per the NB *Local Governance Act*, SNB 2017, 68 (1)(j) labour and employment matters. **MOTION CARRIED** (unanimously).

IT WAS MOVED by *Councillor Jonah* and seconded by *Councillor Land* **THAT** the Closed Session ceases at 8:01 PM. **MOTION CARRIED** (unanimously).

Council returned to regular session at 8:01 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

IT WAS MOVED by *Councillor Ereaux* **THAT** the meeting be adjourned at 8:02 PM.

Robert Rochon, Mayor

Hanna Downey, Clerk