

Minutes

Committee of the Whole Meeting for the Village of Fundy Albert

W.H. Steeves House Museum

September 19, 2023, at 4:30 PM

PRESENT

Robert Rochon- Mayor

John Ereaux- Councillor, Ward 1

Loretta Elderkin- Councillor, Ward 2

Jeff Land- Councillor, Ward 3

Ward Jeff Jonah- Councillor, Ward 4

James Coates- Councillor, Ward 5

Heather Ward Russell- Councillor, Ward 6

Tammy Rampersaud- Assistant Clerk

Councillor Elderkin and Councillor Ereaux joined the meeting at 4:34 PM

Tammy Rampersaud attended virtually

CALL TO ORDER

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

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

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

Additions: Public Comments and Statements as item #7, Closed Session would then become Item #8 and the Adjournment would become item #9.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

No conflict was declared at this time.

Mayor Rochon expressed thanks to the residents of Fundy Albert who, over the past weekend, heeded our advice to be prepared for the effects of Hurricane Lee, which went through our area on Saturday as a post tropical storm.

Mayor Rochon then thanked public works employees for the work they did on Saturday. They were available to clear debris around catch basins and ensure roadways were clear for emergency vehicles. Also, he thanked the Emergency Measures Committee Chairperson, **Councillor Jim Coates**, committee member **Councillor John Ereaux**, and volunteer Emergency Measures Coordinator Jim Lindsay. They actively monitored the passing storm and took part in periodic video calls to assess the situation.

Fortunately, for most New Brunswickers including Fundy Albert residents, there were minimal impacts other than some sporadic power outages. **Mayor Rochon** noted that the goal is to learn from this experience and to build on our ability to respond.

PUBLIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENTATIONS

Public Presentation

- A) Mrs. Rhonda McKinley with the Albert Vocation Training Centre spoke on the Social Enterprise project- they have been a non-profit organization since 1987 funded by Social Development. They work with intellectually challenged adults to help them live their fullest lives.

They joined a member of the community with a great fitting social enterprise project. The plan is with aquaponics- aquiculture and hydroponics. Working with local community members to embark on this year-round project incorporating fresh fish and produce. They have received \$9,000 from the United Way Recovery Fund and now are looking for a space to house project.

- B) Michael McBurnie- stated he is disappointed with the lack of response from the Council. He has been looking for answers since April and has contacted DTI and Eco 360 himself.

Councillor Ereaux explained to Mr. McBurnie that the Village is comprised of the 3 former Villages as well as LSD Areas. All combined- 8 entities. He is sympathetic to his concerns.

Mayor Rochon responded that he has corresponded previously and is in the process of providing him with more information.

- C) Director of Operations- Director Scott Reid provided council with an overview of projects and their status: Alma is continuing to maintain 2 water systems. **Councillor Ereaux** inquired as to any updates. Director Reid spoke about the possibility of the water line from Fundy being used again next year. There is an agreement between parks and the village that will be better detailed going forward.

Public Works is continuing to clean the lagoon. The work being done to plan for the water reservoir in Riverside is hindered by difficult access to the site. They are recommending the village look at acquiring land to gain better access. **Councillor Ereaux** asked for better details to be brought to council in terms of access to land.

There has been a leak found in the water line on Forestdale. It was confirmed to **Councillor Coates** that it is in the new line.

The waterline and dehumidifier have been replaced at the Hillsborough Arena. Public Works has submitted Glyphosate samples for testing.

Public Works is asking council to put together a policy for tendering work to allow the various former communities to sync how tasks are completed.

Director Reid stated that they should look at getting rid of some of the larger trucks in the village to be more cost-effective travelling throughout the municipality. Councillor Ereaux inquired exactly what that would look like and asked him to provide more details.

Mayor Rochon asked if the water connection could be maintained from Fundy until after Thanksgiving. The request will be made.

- D) Treasurer Report- a report was prepared by Jillian and sent to council prior to the meeting. Line items were highlighted that were not on target or below/above budget. There was discussion around breaking down the budget into the former communities. **Mayor Rochon** noted that it would be wise to see what other municipalities are doing. He also stated that the province was rescheduling a meeting to help navigate this subject.

Mayor Rochon thanked Jillian for preparing such a detailed overview. He also requested that in the interest of keeping the meeting moving what is presented should be top level information with a possible information session provided to council.

It was noted that there are a large amount of water and sewer bills outstanding. Jillian is looking to complete a Canada Community Building Fund for projects in the village. It will need to be submitted shortly.

Councillor Ereaux asked for clarification on the projects that had been previously approved for funding. **Mayor Rochon** explained that funds could be rolled over and proceeded with if they have a resolution passed.

Councillor Elderkin noted her disappointment with the roadwork on Water Street.

Jillian requested a computer to be purchased for her assistant. **Mayor Rochon** asked if she could provide a quote for the October meeting.

- E) Director, Community Services Report- Ms. Beers highlighted that it was Municipality Week. There will be a BBQ, drawing contests for children and other fun activities including a photo contest.

Colour NB Pink – pumpkin decorating will be on display.
\$1250 had been received for a Trans Canada Trail cleanup.
2022 water and wastewater reports are being submitted.

Ms. Beers noted the EV charger spreadsheet was distributed to council.
The village will ensure there are public washrooms open for the Rising Tides Festival.

Councillor Ereaux asked for clarification- does the water audit that is done by the province occur yearly? No- it rotates.

Councillor Ereaux made mention of upcoming Remembrance Day ceremonies.

Councillor Jonah noted the great job being done with the Village's Facebook page.

Mayor Rochon mentioned a request that had come in to use the Alma Multicultural Centre. This local group is asking for use of the space to be donated- no opposition.

F) Report from the Interim Administrator- **Mayor Rochon** delivered the update.
There is a tender closing at 2PM on September 26th from the NB Opportunities website. All tenders submitted will be opened at that time.
It appears as though the LSD manager is still managing contracts with waste collection contactors. They are looking at launching a PPP program throughout the province.

NEW BUSINESS

Municipalities Week Declaration

Read declaration

Solid waste collection - Hillsborough

The current contract for solid waste collection in the community of Hillsborough expires on December 31st. Our interim administrator has contacted the existing contractor and they have agreed to a one-year extension of the current agreement, with a 9.7% increase in costs.

Of interest to note is that the budget for solid waste collection in the community of Hillsborough for 2023 is \$67,300. The contract amount that was signed by the former Village of Hillsborough in September of 2022 was \$76,701 plus HST. A 9.7% increase in this amount would require a budget of \$84,141 plus HST. This also means that costs in 2023 for the community of Hillsborough will result in a deficit of approximately \$9,400.

Given that the local service manager for the former LSDs is negotiating a one-year extension of the previous arrangements in the former local service districts and it would be advisable to issue a tender for the entire community for 2025, we are recommending that the Village of Fundy Albert enter into an agreement for a one-year extension of the current agreement for the community of Hillsborough for 2024 at a cost of \$84,141 plus HST, as opposed to a multi-year arrangement.

This also means that our public works will continue to collect solid waste in the communities of Alma and Riverside-Albert in 2024.

It was decided that more discussion and information will follow at the next council meeting.

Veterans' banners- a discussion occurred around the history of the banners in both Hillsborough and Riverside-Albert. It was stated that there are requests to see this expanded to possibly Alma. It was determined that all of council are in favour of the banners being posted throughout the village, noting the cost of the hardware with families purchasing the banners. It was decided that the request would be put out to constituents for feedback.

Culvert Repair - Alma

This matter has been brought up on several occasions. This was first raised during the winter/spring of 2022/2023. Initially, estimates for the repairs ranged from \$30,000 for a temporary repair, to \$100,000 for the permanent replacement of the culvert.

Since then, our engineering partner Englobe Engineering has revised the estimate and reported that the spot repair to the culvert, which would involve excavation around the storm drain and replacing a portion of the pipe, is now estimated to cost \$95,000 plus HST. This estimate includes engineering fees of \$20,000. A full replacement of the culvert would be significantly more expensive.

In terms of funding available, the community of Alma's budget for road maintenance is approximately \$60,000. This allocation is for all road maintenance, including paving, ditching and culverts. The Department of Transportation and Infrastructure had previously indicated a willingness to fund \$30,000 of the costs. We have reached out to them to confirm if this is still available.

Mayor Rochon spoke with a representative of DTI. The \$30,000 in funding for the repair is still available. We discussed the possibility of accessing additional funding. I have reached out to Englobe Engineering to determine if the spot repair can still be completed this year. He will contact the representative of DTI for further consideration.

Mayor Rochon added that the representative at DTI indicated that work on Route 915 is, in fact planned for 2024; including resurfacing of the roadway and chip sealing from the

Village limits to Bucket Hill, as well as approximately 300 meters (about 984.25 ft) of ditching work on Bucket Hill.

Pothole repairs - Alma

The Director of Operations had obtained a quote from Brown's paving for repairs on certain streets in the community of Alma. The estimate from Brown's Paving amounts to \$33,975.60 including HST. It was noted that the end of September is their cut off for taking paving jobs in 2023.

The village is actively trying to obtain 3 quotes for this work and a Special Meeting may be called to award the work prior to the end of September.

Snow removal tender process - Hillsborough

A request for tenders has been posted on the New Brunswick Opportunities Network website for snow removal for the community of Hillsborough. Closing date is September 26th at 2:00pm. Tenders will be opened on that date, immediately after closing.

Provincial-Municipal Highway Partnership submission

The village has received a request from the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure to submit a Provincial-Municipal Highway Partnership submission for 2025-2026. Submissions are to be in by September 30th. **Mayor Rochon** stated he applied for an extension and was granted until October 13th.

Street lighting installation Smithfield Road and Bellfield Road

There is a request to install a streetlight at the intersection of Smithfield and Bellfield Roads in Lower Coverdale. A resident highlights the area as a safety concern for children waiting to be picked up by the bus.

Councillor Ward Russell shared that there were other areas of concern as well. She also made note that there were some residents not wanting lights. **Councillor Ward Russell** made mention of the importance of calling in speeding with the RCMP.

It was decided that both the RCMP and DTI would be contacted for feedback as well as a public ask about lights in the area.

Livestreaming of Council Meetings

There have been ongoing issues with the livestreaming of council meetings. There is an issue of internet stability within all the municipal offices in the village. Discussions took place around types of livestreams that could be offered to residents as well as internet options.

Councillor Ward Russell reported on livestreaming options through Zoom Pro- \$200/yr. plus webinar purchase- one way broadcast \$1,400/yr. Possible internet extenders or sticks would be necessary. It was agreed by all that it needs to be a priority, as well as providing additional microphones to ensure the public can hear clearly.

Advertising request from the Canadian Mental Health Association

The village received a request from the Canadian Mental Health Association to advertise in their community support publication. Advertising opportunities range in price from \$215 for a 1/8th page business card size to \$1,755 for a full color front, or back-page advertisement. They distribute approximately 5,000 copies.

Council decided to decline support at this time.

MAYOR AND COUNCILLOR STATEMENTS & INQUIRIES

Councillor Coates- spoke about the EMO referencing reports. Noted that there should be regular inspections on the generator.

Mayor Rochon noted that a 2-way radio was available and that the chiefs should have one to communicate issues. **Mayor Rochon** suggested the committee should present to council with recommendations from EMO.

Councillor Land spoke about the difficult conditions to access the property around the water reservoir.

Councillor Ereaux- spoke about the community of Alma preparing for the hurricane. He brought up the new garbage cans that were purchased blowing over and inquired if they should be bolted as well as if they will be out during winter- some will be bolted and left out.

Councillor Ereaux noted that he is continuing to receive complaints of parking violations on Main Street with zero enforcement. This led to a discussion of enforcement costs, the possibility of having someone locally take on the role or contracting a firm. A statement of work could be released with a policy to guide officers. Interim CAO could investigate it.

Councillor Ereaux cited complaints about the appearance of Alma as well as asked about sidewalk clearing in Alma throughout winter.

Councillor Ward Russell- Zone 2 UMNB meeting has been postponed due to weather.

Noted speeding in Lower Coverdale- urges residents to contact RCMP to file reports. This could lead to better presence and enforcement.

Councillor Ward Russell noted she was happy to see a BBQ taking place for Municipalities Week. She is sorry she cannot attend and asked for more notice ahead of time provided for such events.

Councillor Elderkin- Riverside-Albert fire department has acquired a mini-split and will have it installed.

Spoke about the Veteran's Banners. **Councillor Elderkin** is working with Peter Jubb for the upcoming ceremony.

Councillor Elderkin noted that the Water Street project was not done well. She was looking for an update and possible ways to move forward noting that last year was done by DTI. Public Works are looking into patching pricing.

Shout out to the Albert Co. Exhibition for working through the hurricane. 110 years strong!

Mayor Rochon- Noted the Forestdale Road water line- chief concerned there hasn't been water in building for 8 weeks now. Public Works is currently looking into what fixes are available.

Mayor Rochon raised the fact that he volunteered his personal time to assist Literacy Express with their move. Public Works showed up to also help and unfortunately **Mayor Rochon** did not ask them to leave as it was done on work for the village time. Mayor Rochon noted that the Code of Conduct prohibits the use of public assets. **Mayor Rochon** acknowledged that his actions were inappropriate and asked council to determine consequences.

Director of Public Works noted that his team has assisted many groups in the village throughout the years.

Councillor Land noted that he gave direction to employees to arrive and assist with the move. He did reference that fact that it was brought up in the past. He also noted that he would do it again.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND STATEMENTS

Mr. Kelly noted that he had some items he was going to bring forward but is presently irritated with Councillor Land's last comment. He feels it was an abuse of public assets.

Closed Session

IT WAS MOVED by **Councillor Coates** and seconded by **Councillor Jonah** to enter closed session.

MOTION CARRIED (unanimously) at 7:06 PM

- a. Local Governance Act, SNB 2017, 68 (1)(j) labour and employment matters
- b. Local Governance Act, SNB 2017, 68 (1)(d) proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land

ADJOURNMENT

IT WAS MOVED by **Councillor Land**

Mayor

Clerk