

Present: Deputy Mayor Ereaux
Councillor Elderkin
Councillor Land
Councillor Jonah
Councillor Coates
Councillor Ward-Russell

Staff Present: Linda Sabourin – CAO/Clerk
Jillian Hutchinson – Treasurer
Ian Barrett – Director, Operations
Kim Beers – Director, Community Services

1. Call to Order

Deputy Mayor Ereaux called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. Adoption of Agenda

IT WAS MOVED by Councillor Jonah and **SECONDED** by Councillor Land **THAT** the agenda be adopted with the following amendments:

- The addition of #12 Public Statements; move Closed session to #13

MOTION CARRIED (unanimously)

3. Conflict of Interest Declarations

None

4. Adoption of the Minutes

IT WAS MOVED by Councillor Elderkin **SECONDED** by Councillor Land **THAT** the Minutes of the Special Meeting held November 14, 2024 be approved. **MOTION CARRIED** (unanimously)

IT WAS MOVED by Councillor Land **SECONDED** by Councillor Coates **THAT** the Minutes of the Budget Deliberations Meeting held November 19, 2024 be approved. **MOTION CARRIED** (unanimously)

IT WAS MOVED by Councillor Elderkin **SECONDED** by Councillor Jonah **THAT** the Minutes of the Budget Deliberations Meeting held November 23, 2024 be approved. **MOTION CARRIED** (unanimously)

IT WAS MOVED by Councillor Elderkin **SECONDED** by Councillor Coates **THAT** the Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held December 3, 2024 be approved. **MOTION CARRIED**

(unanimously)

IT WAS MOVED by Councillor Land **SECONDED** by Councillor Elderkin **THAT** the Minutes of the Budget Deliberations Meeting held December 4, 2024 be approved. **MOTION CARRIED** (unanimously)

IT WAS MOVED by Councillor Elderkin **SECONDED** by Councillor Jonah **THAT** the Minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting held December 17, 2024 be approved. **MOTION CARRIED** (unanimously)

IT WAS MOVED by Councillor Elderkin **SECONDED** by Councillor Land **THAT** the Minutes of the Special Meeting held December 23, 2024 be approved. **MOTION CARRIED** (unanimously)

IT WAS MOVED by Councillor Jonah **SECONDED** by Councillor Land **THAT** the Minutes of the Special Meeting held December 27, 2024 be approved. **MOTION CARRIED** (unanimously)

5. Consent Agenda

None

6. Pubic and Administrative Presentations

Mr. Kris Kelly advised he is discouraged about the tax rates that were approved, especially Alma's rates being so much higher compared to the other former Villages, the same goes for the local service districts not being the same. Mr. Kelly stated that there does not seem to be any desire to make it fair and equitable across the board. Mr. Kelly stated this is the second budget created by this Council and at the current rate we will not be equalized until 2035. Mr. Kelly asked Council "where it is we have to be" that Council referred to during budget deliberations.

Councillor Elderkin thanked Mr. Kelly for his presentation and explained it was not easy deciding tax rates in local service districts or any other area. Councillor Elderkin advised we are not there yet in many things. Councillor Elderkin advised that Council is still learning and the need to get our finances where they need to be, and this will predict how we move forward in the future. Councillor Elderkin stated they are making decisions without necessarily having all the information that is needed.

6. Reports & Recommendations from Committees and Private Meetings

Motion related to water and sewer hookup

IT WAS MOVED by Councillor Elderkin and seconded by Councillor Jonah **THAT**

WHEREAS the owner of 94 Legion Street, Hillsborough has requested a water and sewer installation for their serviceable lot;

WHEREAS the municipality has an obligation to provide said service; and

WHEREAS the estimate received for the installation was in the amount of \$17,595; and

WHEREAS there are funds within the Hillsborough Water Supply: Distribution & Transmission – Other (2.4.1.5.9.) budget for said installation.

BE IT RESOLVED that:

- a) the owner of 94 Legion Street, Hillsborough pay the required fee for a service to be installed at his property in accordance with Hillsborough bylaw #30; and
- b) the Administration be instructed to solicit quotes to complete the work at 94 Legion Street.

MOTION CARRIED (unanimously).

Motion related to Helmet Policy

IT WAS MOVED by Councillor Land and seconded by Councillor Coates

THAT the Village of Fundy Albert approve the Fundy Albert Helmet Policy, as presented

MOTION CARRIED (unanimously)

Recreation Committee of Council

IT WAS MOVED by Councillor Jonah and seconded by Councillor Elderkin **THAT**

WHEREAS Fundy Albert By-law No. 2022-03, respecting the Proceedings of Fundy Albert Municipal Council and Committee Meetings provides for the appointment of Council representatives to such committees as required by legislation, agreement or by-law they deem necessary; and

WHEREAS the Council of the Village of Fundy Albert deems it necessary to have a Recreation Committee;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council approves a Recreation Committee for the 2025 Calendar Year;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the following members of Council be appointed to the Recreation Committee:

Chair Councillor Jonah, and
Co-Chair Councillor Land

MOTION CARRIED (unanimously)

EMO COMMITTEE – Councillor Coates advised there will be a Cyber security presentation provided by the Province on Feb 13, 2025. Councillor Coates advised NB EMO that the mayor resigned. Councillor Coates read an update from NB EMO – the SERSC adopted a resolution that will see the hiring of consultants to prepare individual community specific emergency plans.

Deputy Mayor Ereaux asked if anyone from Fundy Albert will be attending this meeting. Ms. Linda Sabourin advised she will be attending.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Nothing to report

WATER AND WASTEWATER CONSOLIDATION COMMITTEE

Deputy Mayor Ereaux advised a draft consolidated bylaw and rate structure was given to administration for comments.

FUNDY ALBERT RURAL PLAN CONSOLIDATION COMMITTEE

Deputy Mayor Ereaux advised the next step is a call for membership. Deputy Mayor Ereaux to provide draft call letter to seek members from the community. Member from each planning area; Alma, Riverside-Albert, Hillsborough, and the Westmorland Albert rural plan area (local service districts).

Deputy Mayor Ereaux advised the terms of reference were included in the resolution that was passed by Council. The committee is to address the issues that were made during the public consultation.

7. Reports from Administration

Motion to appoint a Deputy Mayor – no motion read

Resolution to appoint a temporary second council bank signatory

IT WAS MOVED by Councillor Ward-Russell and seconded by Councillor Coates

THAT WHEREAS, it is necessary to appoint a temporary second signatory for the council's bank accounts to ensure the smooth operation of financial transactions; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Mayor Ereaux is currently serving as the primary signatory; and

WHEREAS, the council has identified Councillor Elderkin as a suitable candidate to temporarily fulfill the role of the second signatory;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of Fundy Albert as follows:

1. The Council hereby appoints Councillor Elderkin as the temporary second signatory for the council's bank accounts, effective immediately.
2. This appointment shall remain in effect until the appointment of a new mayor, or until further action is taken by the council.
3. The Council directs the Treasurer to notify the relevant financial institutions and take all necessary steps to implement this resolution.

MOTION CARRIED (unanimously).

Resolution to appoint the Clerk and Assistant Clerk

Ms. Sabourin advised that the role as CAO and Clerk has become increasingly difficult to manage. The recommendation is to make some internal changes, reallocating existing duties from various other areas to an employee who is already a part of our team. Ms. Sabourin thanked the interim Clerk/Assistant Clerk, Ms. Tammy Rampersaud for her time with Fundy Albert for the great work and help ensuring the municipality moved forward.

Councillor Elderkin exited the meeting at 6:47pm and returned at 6:48 pm.

IT WAS MOVED BY Councillor Land and Seconded by Councillor Coates

WHEREAS the current motion to appoint a Clerk was passed on September 3, 2024, and

WHEREAS the current motion to appoint Deputy Clerk was passed on March 13, 2023, and

WHEREAS, it has been determined that new appointments are necessary for the effective functioning of the municipality of Fundy Albert,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED by the Council of Fundy Albert **THAT:**

1. The motion to appoint Linda Sabourin as Clerk, passed on September 3, 2024, is hereby rescinded.
2. The motion to appoint Tammy Rampersaud as Deputy Clerk, passed on March 12, 2023, is hereby rescinded.
3. Kimberly Beers is hereby appointed as Clerk, effective immediately.
4. Linda Sabourin is hereby appointed as Assistant Clerk, effective immediately.

Discussion on the motion

Councillor Ward Russell preferred if it was an advertisement and to see a job description prior to the motion being passed.

Ms. Sabourin advised she is working on this and will forward it to the Personnel committee once it is completed.

Deputy Mayor Ereaux advised the process should be done by an organizational change proposal per the CAO policy and there is no job description provided for this change. Deputy Mayor expressed concern this change is creating another officer position and it has not gone to a competitive process. Deputy Mayor Ereaux recommends tabling this motion.

Ms. Sabourin advised she has viewed the draft CAO policy yet to see the final CAO policy; it is difficult to be held to the standards of this policy when she is unsure of the approved contents. Ms. Sabourin advised the combined role is too large for one person and needs help. Ms. Sabourin stated every time she reached out for help, she gets put up against a wall. It is increasingly difficult to manage all the work she is trying to do. And trying to find ways with the existing people we have and with the people who have the skill set like Ms. Beers.

Deputy Mayor advised it is concerning that the CAO has not been given the approved CAO policy. Deputy Mayor advised the organization chart shows an Assistant Clerk. In the absence of the Clerk we have the alternate clerk Ms. Rampersaud.

IT WAS MOVED BY Councillor Ereaux and seconded by Councillor Ward-Russell to table the motion to appoint the Clerk and Assistant Clerk to a later date.

Nay – Councillor Land, Councillor Coates, Councillor Jonah, and Councillor Elderkin

Yay – Councillor Ward-Russell and Deputy Mayor Ereaux.

MOTION DEFEATED.

Councillor Elderkin asked the CAO for the timelines of the job description. Ms. Sabourin advised by the end of January.

On the question to appoint Kimberly Beers as Clerk and Linda Sabourin Assistant Clerk effective immediately

Aye – Councillor Land, Councillor Elderkin, Councillor Jonah, Councillor Coates, and Councillor Ward-Russell.

Nay – Deputy Mayor Ereaux.

MOTION CARRIED.

Motion related to a Snow Removal Policy

Mr. Barnett advised there is no formal snow removal policy for Fundy Albert. He explained it is increasingly difficult this to move snow in three separate communities with the resources we currently have. This policy will be beneficial as it includes the level of expectation to communicate with the public.

IT WAS MOVED by Councillor Jonah and seconded by Councillor Elderkin

THAT the Village of Fundy Albert approve the Fundy Albert Snow Removal Policy, as presented.

The Deputy Mayor advised he was surprised this was not included at the Committee of the Whole meeting. Ms. Sabourin advised ideally it should be presented at a Committee of the Whole; however, some things need dealt with sooner than waiting until the next Committee of the Whole meeting.

Councillor Elderkin asked where the list came from determining what's plowed. Mr. Barnett advised the roads are a direct extract from the current contracts that are in place.

Councillor Elderkin asked about the parking area across from the old municipal office in Riverside-Albert as it was not plowed over the Christmas holidays. Mr. Barnett will investigate that.

Councillor Land asked about the different classes of sidewalks (A, B, C). Mr. Barnett advised to the definitions are included in the policy.

Deputy Mayor Ereaux advised we have three communities with sidewalks that the Village is responsible for. Deputy Mayor asked how many pieces of equipment we use to clear sidewalks. Mr. Barrett advised the Villages owns a Bob cat in Alma and one in Hillsborough.

Deputy Mayor Ereaux advised the Alma Fire Dept has not relied on the municipality to clear their parking lot, they have their own contractor. Councillor Elderkin advised the same for the Riverside-Albert fire department. Deputy Mayor Ereaux stated it may be beneficial for the municipality to contract the snow removal for sidewalks.

Councillor Coates stated it is important to approve this policy and to not put it off to Spring.

Councillor Ward-Russell asked about the section on hydrants only being cleared within five working days. Mr. Barrett advised this was a direct extract from a larger City. Councillor Ward-Russell asked about the hydrants in Alma and Riverside-Albert. Mr. Barrett advised Hillsborough is the only community with firefighting hydrant system.

MOTION CARRIED (unanimously)

8. By-Laws

None

9. Mayor and Councillor Statements

Councillor Coates advised the poor phone service with Bell and many people without phone lines for days on numerous occasions and the dangers surrounding senior citizens who rely on land lines. Councillor Coates asked if Council supported him to reach out to Public Safety, the CRTC, Premier, MLA, and MP. Council supports Councillor Coates in pursuing this and report back.

Councillor Jonah – nothing to report

Councillor Ward-Russell advised there are residents requesting streetlights in Ward 5. She asked whether we could issue another survey like we did for Ward 6 last year. She is looking forward to seeing the final approved budget from the province. CAO advised we will be working with NB Power to identify areas where we could use more streetlights.

Councillor Elderkin – nothing to report

Councillor Land advised he is not happy with the work that was done on Pound Hill in Hillsborough as it is a safety issue, he would like for administration to see if it can be fixed. Mr. Barrett will investigate this and reminded Council the scope of work for this project was provided by DTI and was completed per the scope of work. **Deputy Mayor Ereaux** stated the importance of working with the contractors the Village hires and ensuring we get value for the money the Village spends.

Deputy Mayor Ereaux advised that Council approved the General Operating and Utility budgets on Jan 2nd, 2025. Council tried to hold the tax rates as close to last year as possible. Council approved the following:

- All LSDs had rates increase by 0.01 per \$100.00/assessment.
- Former Village of Hillsborough and Riverside-Albert have no increase.
- Former Village of Alma reduced by 0.01 per \$100.00/assessment.

The Non-residential premiums remain unchanged at 1.7. This is the additional funds on the tax rate charged to all non-residential customers. The law allows the municipality to set the premium anywhere between 1.4 and 1.7. Prior to amalgamation it was 1.5 set by the province across the municipality. However, we have never been able to use it.

The Increase in our tax base: new construction and re-assessments of existing properties. On average in Fundy Albert there has been a 11%-12% increase.

Deputy Mayor Ereaux advised the General operating budget for 2025 was approved with a 12% increase. This is far in excess of the cost of living. The details of rates and budget is with the

province for final approval and will be posted on the website as soon as we receive it. **Deputy Mayor Ereaux** stated that Council approved budget without audited financial statements from 2023 which is a legislative requirement.

Deputy Mayor Ereaux advised that the Utility budget has increased. And is paid only by the users of the water and wastewater services. The following increases:

- Hillsborough around 5% increase
- Alma around 11% increase
- Riverside-Albert around 13% increase.

Deputy Mayor Ereaux requested we have an in person briefing from Englobe regarding the Alma water system. Ms. Sabourin advised she reached out Englobe and it is unlikely they will be here the January 21, 2025, meeting. However, they will come to present once they have timelines. **Deputy Mayor Ereaux** would like to receive a briefing from the operator in charge at the next meeting.

Deputy Mayor Ereaux advised he has participated in media events as a result of the resignation of the Mayor.

11. Notices of Motion and Resolutions

None

12. Public Statements

Mrs. Kathy Weir is happy to see things move forward. She is hopeful that a decision will be made soon regarding the request from Forest dale Home Inc and the old municipal office.

Mr. Kris Kelly thanked those who stepped up to chair the recreation council and thanked Deputy Mayor John Ereaux for stepping in as Mayor and all of Council for the work they are doing.

12. Closed Session

IT WAS MOVED by Councillor Elderkin and seconded by Councillor Land to move to a closed session. **MOTION CARRIED** (unanimously).

Councillor Coates exited the meeting at 7:52 pm and returned at 7:58 pm

Councillor Land and Councillor Ward-Russell exited the meeting at 7:53 pm and returned at 7:58 pm.

- a. Local Governance Act, SNB 2017, 68(1)(c) information that could cause financial loss or gain to a person or the local government or could jeopardize negotiations leading to an agreement or contract.

IT WAS MOVED BY Councillor Land and seconded by Councillor Jonah to return in session at 8:47 pm. **MOTION CARRIED** (unanimously).

12. Adjournment

Councillor Coates made a motion to adjourn at 8:47 pm

Deputy Mayor

Clerk