

VILLAGE OF NEW MINAS
REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING

November 20, 2006

7:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Village Commission of New Minas was held in the Civic Centre on November 20, 2006 at 7:00 p.m..

In Attendance:

Dave Chaulk, Chair
Dale Pineo, Vice-Chair
Les Barrett, Commissioner
Dean Hatt, Commissioner
Linda Lockhart, Commissioner
Terry Silver, Clerk Treasurer

Also in Attendance:

Marvin Messom, Resident
John Mroz, Resident
Murray Herron, Resident
Audrey Herron, Resident
Vince Forrestall, Recreation Director

CALL TO ORDER – Chair Chaulk

Chair Chaulk called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. He thanked those in attendance for coming.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Regular Meeting October 16, 2006

On Motion of Commissioner Lockhart, seconded by Vice Chair Pineo, the minutes of the regular Commission meeting of October 16, 2006 were approved as circulated. MOTION CARRIED

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: November 20, 2006

It was moved by Commissioner Barrett, seconded by Commissioner Hatt, that the Agenda for the regular meeting of November 20, 2006 be approved as presented. MOTION CARRIED

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:

- (a) Strategic Planning Process – Strike Economic Development Committee

Chair Chaulk reminded the Commissioners that one of the recommendations that came out of the Strategic Planning process was to strike an Economic Development Committee. At the October meeting, when it was brought forward on the Agenda as an update, the Commission decided to await the arrival of the new Recreation Director, and

now that that process is complete, the Chair asked how the Commission wished to proceed. Vice Chair Pineo recommended handing it over to the Clerk and Rec Director to investigate the feasibility of striking this Committee. The Chair asked Rec Director Vince Forrestall if he has had any experience with this type of Committee. Vince stated that he has had experience with Economic Development Committees and certainly sees the benefits, and cited such things as connecting with Valley professionals regarding sport and event hosting, there is currently an active committee to utilize the enormous data bank developed when this area was bidding on the 2011 Winter Games, etc.. Vince stated there is a potential for economic spin-offs for these and other things highlighted in this area, and a committee such as this would provide a good fit between the businesses and the community.

The Clerk stated that she and Vince could gather information (through AMA List Serve, etc.), and the Commission directed her to organize this and report to the December meeting.

(b) New Recreation Director – Welcome Vincent Forrestall

Chair Chaulk stated this was a good lead-in to the next item, and that is to welcome the Village's new Recreation Director, Vincent Forrestall. Chair Chaulk stated that Vince comes via Yarmouth and PEI and has a vast array of knowledge and experience. He stated the Commission is looking forward to having him here, and knows he has been very busy in the couple of weeks he has been working with the Village, and everyone is confident he will do an excellent job for us.

Chair Chaulk welcomed Vince and his wife Carolyn to New Minas.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

(a) Water Commission - Commissioner Linda Lockhart

Commissioner Lockhart gave a report of the New Minas Water Commission, and highlighted the following items:

- County Planner presented revisions to the draft Development Agreement for Jerry's RV to seek the Water Commission's approval on the development. Several items were of concern to the Water Commission members at the September meeting and these were addressed in the revisions.
- Scott Lister and Bob Rowe from Department of Environment and Labour were present at the meeting to go over compliance items which had been adhered to by the Water Commission, and those still outstanding.
- The Clerk is still awaiting the final approval from the Legislature for the Water Bylaw amendments
- The Superintendent's report was approved
- The Commission agreed to proceed to small claims court for an unpaid bill for sewer services

- A Source Water Protection Committee was struck, and an ad will be placed for membership on this committee.

It was moved by Commissioner Lockhart, seconded by Commissioner Barrett, that the report of the Water Commission be approved as presented. MOTION CARRIED

(b) Area Advisory Committee – Commissioner Dean Hatt

Commissioner Hatt stated that there was no meeting prior to this Commission meeting, therefore no report is available. He stated that the next AAC meeting will be held on November 12th, 2006.

(c) Recreation Advisory Committee – Vice-Chair Dale Pineo

Vice-Chair Pineo stated that the RAC meeting was held on November 7th, and the Committee members welcomed Mr. Vincent Forrestall as the new Recreation Director.

Vice Chair Pineo highlighted the following items from the minutes:

- The Rec Director and member Les Sequeria will attend the Kieran Pathways Society Symposium on trail development this week.
- The list of goals and objectives for the RAC were presented to the Committee and will be discussed at the next meeting.
- The Rec Director's report was read, and the items were listed
- A request has come from the New Minas Elementary School to the Village to provide a grant for the replacement of vandalized playground equipment.

It was moved by Vice-Chair Pineo, seconded by Commissioner Lockhart that a grant of \$2,000 be provided to the New Minas Elementary School to assist in the replacement of vandalized playground equipment. MOTION CARRIED

It was moved by Vice-Chair Pineo, seconded by Commissioner Barrett, that a letter be forwarded to the County Fair Mall expressing the Village's thanks and gratitude for the kind donation of Christmas decorations. MOTION CARRIED

It was moved by Vice-Chair Pineo, seconded by Commissioner Lockhart, that the report of the Recreation Advisory Committee be approved as presented. MOTION CARRIED

(d) Transportation Advisory Committee – Commissioner Dean Hatt

Commissioner Hatt gave the report of the Transportation Advisory Committee. The following items were highlighted:

- The final draft of the Transportation Study will be forthcoming in December

- Letter received from Mr. David Etter apologizing for his disruptive behaviour at the September 19 TAC meeting.
- TAC members agreed to place construction on sidewalks on their Agenda as a regular topic of discussion
- Committee will recommend to Commission to request that sewer issues be dealt with by the Water Commission.

It was moved by Commissioner Hatt, seconded by Commissioner Lockhart that the Village Commission of New Minas give authority to the New Minas Water Commission to deal with sewage collection and treatment issues. MOTION CARRIED

It was moved by Commissioner Hatt, seconded by Vice-Chair Pineo, that the report of the Transportation Advisory Committee be adopted as presented. MOTION CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS

- (a) Request – Mr. John Mroz – Policy for Commissioners Circulating Information to Public

A letter was read from Mr. John Mroz, resident of New Minas. Mr. Mroz requested the Commission to consider adopting a policy to provide guidelines for Commissioners to use their office as Commissioners when sending out information circulars to the general public. A copy of Mr. Mroz's letter is attached to original minutes.

Chair Chaulk stated he is not in favour of censorship, but he is all for exercising responsibility for how Commissioners relay information to the public. Commissioner Lockhart suggested that the Clerk contact other municipalities to get feedback on policies in other places. Commissioner Barrett suggested that any policy the Commission would have would most certainly be superseded by the MGA, and could be challenged.

The Clerk Treasurer was directed to research this and report to the Commission in December.

- (b) 2006 LED Holiday Light Program

The Clerk Treasurer stated that the Village applied to Nova Scotia Power to take part in the LED Holiday Light exchange Program this year; however, were a bit late in making the list of drop off locations. She stated that, thanks to Rec Director Vince Forrestall, the Village has received approval to receive 50% funding on the purchase of new LED lights for the outside Christmas tree.

Chair Chaulk stated that some municipalities are embarking on extensive programs to become more "green". He stated he would like to look at this in the future. Such programs as no vehicle idling, etc., could be incorporated into our Village's policies. Chair Chaulk stated the Village should move forward in this area.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION PERIOD

Mr. Marvin Messom, Resident

Mr. Messom expressed a “thanks” to the Clerk Treasurer and staff of the Village of New Minas for all the hard work they put into the Santa Claus Parade and the floats. He said Terry, Lynn, Vince and their spouses put in many long hours to make sure the Village was well represented in the parade.

Mr. John Mroz, Resident

Mr. Mroz wanted to clarify that he has absolutely no intention of suggesting the Commission should be censored, and that was not the thrust of his letter. He stated he simply wants the Commission to make sure that any Commissioner who sends out information where that Commissioner would use his or her office as a Commissioner when penning information circulars should first clear it through the Commission as a whole. He said that matters that have the potential of “embroiling the Village in possible litigation”, as fully explained in his letter, and possibly a disclaimer from the Commission as a whole would help. Chair Chaulk stated that a disclaimer might provide some distance, but it would not necessarily preclude the Commissioners.

Mr. Mroz agreed that this is true, but a policy could provide a soft approach, and this would open the dialogue for Commissioners to realize they have to exercise caution. Chair Chaulk stated that he knows Mr. Mroz has the best interests of the Village at heart, but there is definitely a fine line between censorship and due diligence.

Commissioner Barrett asked Mr. Mroz if he was not involved in the “Did you Know” letter that was circulated before the last Commissioner Election. Mr. Mroz stated he was involved as a concerned taxpayer, and was made aware of its contents. He stated that he feels the Village Commission should be privy to any circulation that is perceived by the public to be sanctioned by the Commission before it is sent out so that any further problems can be prevented.

Mr. Murray Herron

Mr. Herron asked that, since borrowing money for new sidewalk construction was turned down last month, has the Commission given any further consideration to applying for grants or “going it yourselves” to make it happen?

Chair Chaulk stated that the item is still in the forefront of the Commission’s to do list; the Commissioners still want new sidewalks. He stated that the item has been placed on the Transportation Advisory Committee’s agenda and it will be discussed over the next while, with recommendations hopefully coming to the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

On Motion of Commissioner Lockhart, the meeting adjourned.

Dave Chaulk, Chair

Terry Silver, Clerk Treasurer