

VILLAGE OF NEW MINAS
REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING
SEPTEMBER 12, 2005
7:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Village Commission of New Minas was held in the Civic Centre on September 12, 2005 at 7:00 p.m..

In Attendance:

Chair Dave Chaulk
Vice-Chair Linda Lockhart
Commissioner Sherry Swanburg
Commissioner Dale Pineo
Commissioner Les Barrett
Clerk Treasurer Terry Silver

Also in Attendance:

Carlton Davison, Resident
Leo Davison, Resident
Gwyn Phillips, Resident
David Etter, Resident
Dean Hatt, Resident
Marvin Messom, Resident
Barbara Messom, Resident
Don Zwicker, Resident
Mark Redmond, Resident
Blake Curry, Resident
Blair Coldwell, Resident
Arthur Redden, Resident
Scott A. Callaghan, Resident
Rod MacInnis, Resident
Allie Craswell, Resident
Paulette Hersey, Resident
Audrey Herron, Resident
Wayne Merrill, Resident
Sam Milne, Resident
Peter Pothier, Superintendent of Public Works

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dave Chaulk called the meeting to order. He welcomed everyone, and recognized former Commissioners Rod MacInnis, Marvin Messom and Wayne Merrill.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: August 8, 2005

It was moved by Vice-Chair Lockhart, seconded by Commissioner Barrett, that the Minutes of August 8, 2005 be approved as circulated. MOTION CARRIED unanimously

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: September 12, 2005

It was moved by Vice-Chair Lockhart, seconded by Commissioner Swanburg, that the Agenda be approved with the following additions:

- **Sidewalk Construction, Aalders Avenue – Vice-Chair Lockhart**
- **Seasonal Staff – Commissioner Swanburg**
- **Meeting with Fire Chief – Chair Chaulk**
- **Rotary Club Offer – Chair Chaulk**

MOTION CARRIED unanimously

PRESENTATION: Representative - Traffic Disruption Aalders Avenue

Mr. Gwyn Philips and Mr. David Etter addressed the Commission and audience regarding their concerns with traffic speed on Aalders Avenue. Mr. Philips stated that the street is being used as an alternate route to Commercial Street, and the area is not conducive to such heavy traffic. He further stated that several years ago the RCMP investigated complaints, but were not able to do anything about the problems.

Mr. Philips went on to complain about the annual Thanksgiving ATV rally behind his property. He stated that he has made a habit of leaving his property for that week-end; however some people are not able to do that, and some of his neighbours have expressed to him that they are frightened to say anything.

Mr. Etter also expressed great concern with regard to the excessive traffic and the speed of this traffic. He stated that he has spoken with Department of Transportation, the RCMP, and although the RCMP have set up radar checks, they have been unable to catch speeders. Mr. Etter emphasized that if something is not done about the excessive speed of the increasing number of vehicles on Aalders Avenue, someone will be seriously injured. Mr. Etter also complained about the noise, dust and activity during the Thanksgiving ATV Rally.

Mrs. Carlon Davison advised that she is also concerned about Aalders Avenue being used as a thoroughfare. She feels that the issue could be dealt with on the local level, and urged the Commission to consider making some waves.

Chair Chaulk thanked everyone for expressing their concerns. He stated that there have been other complaints with regard to Aalders Avenue traffic. The Commission has a newly formed Transportation Advisory Committee which has been set up to deal with

issues such as this, and will be setting the date of the next meeting tonight. He invited them and any other concerned citizen to attend.

Commissioner Barrett asked Mr. Philips if he knows who organizes the ATV Rally. Commissioner Barrett suggested that the event is called “Thunder in the Valley” and is organized by the Kings Off-road Four Wheeler Club. He went on to say that he has spoken with Mr. Brian Ward, of the New Minas DOT office, and was advised that DOT owns land (a gravel pit), and that an application must be made to DOT with proof of insurance.

Commissioner Pineo stated that he understands that the ATV Rally is organized by the Club, and is also a fundraiser for the Fire Department, who provides supervision, and curfew compliances. Mr. Philips stated that there is a problem with the noise, and suggested that the curfews could be better monitored.

Mr. Etter stated emphatically that he is aware that this rally is a fundraiser for the Fire Department, and his problem is **not** with the Fire Department. He suggested that the Fire Department, in co-operation with the Village, could seek alternate locations which would be less disruptive to the residents.

Chair Chaulk thanked the residents of Aalders Avenue for their presentation.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES :

(a) Historic Property – “old New Minas Schoolhouse” – Update

Clerk Treasurer Terry Silver advised that she had sent an inquiry along to personnel at the Nova Scotia Museum, and they have been playing “phone tag” since. She will keep the Commission updated as information arrives.

(b) In Camera Sessions request to Minister – Update

Chair Chaulk brought the Commissioners’ attention to correspondence which was provided to them in their boxes earlier. He stated that the response from the Minister is the same information which the Clerk had received from the Municipal Advisor with regard to the Commission’s ability to hold In Camera Sessions.

Commissioner Barrett recommended that the Commission adopt a policy to form ad hoc committees when required.

(c) Aalders Avenue 3-Way Stop – Commissioner Pineo

Commissioner Pineo stated that he had received complaints from residents of Aalders Avenue regarding speed and excessive traffic and the danger to pedestrians. He stated he had passed these concerns on to the Commission at its August meeting and had spoken with the Clerk. He stated that T. Silver had advised him that a meeting had taken place with the Department of Transportation, and Mr. Brian Ward of DOT has promised to address the concerns with regard to hidden signs, etc..

COMMITTEE REPORTS

(a) Water Commission – Vice Chair Linda Lockhart

Vice-Chair Lockhart stated that the Water Commission did not meet in August and will meet on September 28th, 2005.

(b) Area Advisory Committee

Commissioner Pineo stated that there was no Area Advisory Committee meeting therefore no report was available.

NEW BUSINESS

(c) Recreation Director's Report

The Commissioners read the Recreation Director's Report.

It was moved by Commissioner Barrett, seconded by Commissioner Pineo, that the Recreation Director's Report be accepted as submitted. MOTION CARRIED unanimously

(d) Association of Nova Scotia Villages (ANSV) – First Annual Conference

The Clerk reminded the Commissioners that the First Annual Meeting of the Association of Nova Scotia Villages (ANSV) is being held in the New Minas Civic Centre on Saturday, September 17, 2005. She asked who would be attending and stated that a voting delegate is to be appointed from the Commission for New Minas.

It was moved by Commissioner Barrett, seconded by Commissioner Pineo, that Chair Dave Chaulk be appointed as New Minas' voting delegate. MOTION CARRIED unanimously

All Commissioners stated they would be in attendance

(e) Letter from Mark's Work Warehouse re Fire Department Honorarium – Commissioner Barrett

Commissioner Barrett brought the Commissioners' attention to a letter sent to them from Mark's Work Warehouse. He stated the letter complained about the Commission reducing the honoraria of the Fire Fighters and included a cheque as a donation to the Fire Department. He asked why the Village is getting involved in collecting donations for the Fire Department.

The Clerk Treasurer reiterated what she had responded in her response to Commissioner Barrett's question previously by email. She stated that the staff has historically offered a service to local organizations that require a convenient drop off location when the recipient does not hold regular office hours. She said that the cheques are not made out to the Village, nor are they deposited; staff simply offers to keep them for pick up. She mentioned that the Village staff on behalf of the Lion's Club sells the civic numbers, and staff just takes the applications and payments on behalf of the Lion's Club.

(a) **Appointments – Newly formed Recreation Advisory Committee**

It was moved by Commissioner Barrett, seconded by Vice-Chair Lockhart, that Mr. Les Sequeira and Mr. Jack Hershey be appointed to the Recreation Advisory Committee as citizen members, for a two-year term. MOTION CARRIED unanimously

(b) **Appointments – Newly formed Transportation Advisory Committee**

It was moved by Vice-Chair Lockhart, seconded by Commissioner Swanburg, that Mr. Gordon Silver and Mr. Pat Saulnier be appointed to the Transportation Advisory Committee as citizen members, for a two-year term. MOTION CARRIED unanimously

It was agreed that the Chair will appoint the Commission members to these two Committees, as has been the procedure in the past. The meetings will be held as follows:

Recreation Advisory Committee – 1st Tuesday of each month
Transportation Advisory Committee – 2nd Tuesday of each month

It was decided that since tomorrow night is the second Tuesday of September, the first Transportation Committee meeting should be postponed for one week to give the Clerk time to notify the new members.

(c) **UNSM Conference – October 5 – 7, 2005**

Chair Chaulk asked the Commissioners if anyone had any intention of attending the UNSM Conference on October 5 – 7. None of the Commissioners will attend. Chair Chaulk stated that he has a problem with anyone from the Commission attending this conference, since Villages are not permitted to vote on municipal issues.

OTHER ITEMS

(a) **New Sidewalk Construction – Vice-Chair Lockhart**

Vice-Chair Lockhart asked for an update on the new sidewalk construction project on Aalders Avenue. Peter Pothier advised that there was a problem with approval from the Department of Highways. DOT is requiring a five-foot grass median be installed, which necessitates the purchase of land. Once this is settled, the tenders will be re-called and the project will begin shortly.

(b) **Seasonal Staff- Commissioner Swanburg**

Commissioner Swanburg stated that the Commission discussed seasonal staffing issues four to six weeks ago, and it was her opinion that the Commission did not follow through with these discussions. The Clerk Treasurer stated that the seasonal workers (public works/parks) are hired in April and leave in October or November, depending on the workload. Commissioner Swanburg asked about the Foreman's position, and stated there was concern as to whether there was enough work to keep that position as a full-time position. The Clerk Treasurer stated that there are four seasonal positions, and the Maintenance Foreman's position is full-time not seasonal. She and the Superintendent of

Public Works had stated in earlier discussions that, although the duties change in the parks off-season, there are many other maintenance-oriented duties required to be fulfilled by the Maintenance Foreman during the winter months.

Commissioner Swanburg asked if there is ample budget to carry the seasonal employees if we need to extend their season, and the Clerk stated that the estimates for the budgets are calculated based on the expected work term.

(c) **Meeting with New Minas Fire Chief – Chair Chaulk**

Chair Chaulk stated that some time ago the Clerk had written a letter to the Fire Chief requesting a meeting to “enhance the relationship between the Village Commission and the Fire Department”. He stated that the Chief had responded to that letter, but the Commission had not followed up. Chair Chaulk felt it would be prudent to make contact with the Chief to have an informal discussion, and asked for input from the Commission.

It was agreed that the Clerk Treasurer will contact Chief Redmond to offer to talk with him informally about how the relationship can be enhanced between the Village Commission and the Fire Department.

CORRESPONDENCE

(a) **Rotary Club Request to Install Granite Bench and Flowers – Chair Chaulk**

Chair Chaulk advised he has received a letter from the New Minas Sunrise Rotary Club requesting permission to install a granite bench and flowers on Village property.

It was moved by Vice-Chair Lockhart, seconded by Commissioner Swanburg to accept the generous offer of the New Minas Sunrise Rotary Club, to use a portion of Village property to place a granite bench and flowers, with thanks. MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION PERIOD

Mr. Blake Curry

Mr. Curry stated that he felt it was a bit “one-sided” to expect the Fire Chief to meet by himself with a Commission of five people, and suggested that the offer be made to Chief Redmond to bring some of his people with him. He also stated that the Chair of that meeting should be someone other than a Commissioner.

Mr. Dave Etter

Mr. Etter thanked the Village Commission for listening to him, Mr. Philips, and Mrs. Davison. He asked if the Commission is committed to working towards a safer Aalders Avenue. Chair Chaulk reiterated his earlier statements that the Transportation will be meeting in a week’s time and will be discussing this issue, and invited them to attend.

The Clerk Treasurer stated that during their meeting with Mr. Ward, he explained certain DOT procedures, which clarified some things. Also he assured those present that his department would carry out necessary maintenance on signs, streets, etc.. There are still many issues to be resolved, and the Transportation Advisory Committee will be addressing those issues in the months to come.

Mr. Sam Milne

Mr. Sam Milne commented on the item on the Agenda regarding Mark's Work Warehouse and the fact that staff has to explain why they would be willing to offer to act as a drop off point for donations. He said that it seems this item was dealt with prior to the Commission meeting, and it still appeared on the agenda to be discussed again. He suggested that if the Commission is serious about "enhancing the relationship between the Commission and the Fire Department", they need to stop this "rubbing salt in the wounds".

Mr. Rod MacInnis

Mr. MacInnis spoke on the derelict condition of the Esso Property on the corner of Commercial and Prospect. Clerk Treasurer Silver advised that the Commission has been working for a year and a half trying to make something happen with this abandoned property. She stated that she was last advised that the property was turned over to a subsidiary of Esso, Devon Estates, to deal with the property. The representative from Devon Estates informed her that the property has to be assessed environmentally, which can take up to two years, and then decisions will be made on the disposal of the structure. She also advised that the County of Kings is actively involved in the process in trying to improve the aesthetics and disposition of the property.

Commissioner Swanburg stated that this might be an opportunity to do something recreationally with the property, similar to the vacant Irving property in Wolfville. She stated after the skateboard park project is complete, the Commission may have an opportunity to discuss this possibility with Esso.

Mr. Blair Coldwell

Mr. Coldwell stated that it is difficult to hear the Commission, and it was suggested that everyone sit closer to the front of the gallery.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Commissioner Barrett, the meeting adjourned.

Dave Chaulk, Chair

Terry Silver, Clerk Treasurer