

Minutes
Regular Monthly Meeting
In-Person at 27 Pleasant Street
Zoom ID: 935 442 9176 Password: 301715
Wednesday, February 8, 2023 – 7:00 pm

Attendance: Nancy Hatch, Commission Chair; Laura Mulrooney, Commissioner; Geraldine Pauley, Commission Vice-Chair; Randall O'Malley, Commissioner; Carol Nauss, Commissioner; Jeff Conrad, Interim Clerk/Treasurer; Maxine Veinot, Recording Secretary

Regrets: Nil

Public Gallery: Chester Fire Chief Cody Stevens

1.0 Call to Order

Chair Hatch called the February 8, 2023, Regular Monthly meeting of the Village of Chester Commission to order at 7:00 pm.

2.0 Public Forum

Nil

3.0 Review/Approval of Agenda/Additions to Agenda

Motion #23-009: Commissioner Pauley moved; Commissioner O'Malley seconded:
The approval of the agenda as presented.

Unanimously Carried

4.0 Report of the Chief, Chester Volunteer Fire Department

Chief Stevens reported that there were nineteen (19) incidents for the month of January 2023. Twelve (12) members successfully upgraded their medical training to the next level after MFR (Medical First Responder) to EMR (Emergency Medical Responder). Monthly training was held on firefighter CPR – giving 'downed' fire fighters CPR, new tanker training, and cascade system operation (the system that fills SCBA on scene).

The new tanker was delivered, and there will be a public event to welcome it when the weather is better. Budget preparations have been worked on for the upcoming fiscal year. Chief Stevens expressed his gratitude for Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad's willingness to work very closely on the budget preparations.

Commissioner Mulrooney asked if the trucks are loaded with water prior to call outs. Chief Stevens stated all trucks that can carry water, are returned to the station with water on board.

5.0 Review/Approval of Minutes

a) Regular Meeting: Wednesday, January 11, 2023

MOTION #23-010: Commissioner O'Malley moved; Commissioner Pauley seconded:

The approval of the Minutes of January 11, 2023, Regular Monthly meeting as presented.

Unanimously Carried

b) Special Meeting: Thursday, January 19, 2023

MOTION #23-011: Commissioner Nauss moved; Commissioner O'Malley seconded:

The approval of the Minutes of January 11, 2023, Special meeting as presented.

Unanimously Carried

6.0 Business Arising

a) Village Stationery

Discussion was held on the various quotes received. It was stated that the stationery would be used for special occasions, i.e., congratulations, condolences, etc., not for everyday use. Chair Hatch suggested a card with pictures of various areas around the village and perhaps these could also be used at promotion items.

Discussion was held with Chair Hatch stating she will talk with Jim Barkhouse.

MOTION #23-012: Commissioner Nauss moved; Commissioner Pauley seconded:

To table this item until the next meeting.

Unanimously Carried

7.0 Correspondence

Nil

8.0 Reports

a) Clerk Treasurer

- MoDC has advised that they are awaiting final approval of the maintenance service agreement.
- The Village insurance company and lawyer have reviewed the draft abuse prevention policy and they do not see any concerns. The policy has been separated from the associated resources so that the resource information can be updated without requiring a review of the full policy.
- Interim Clerk/Treasurer met with the CVFD and developed a first draft 2023/24 budget.
- The electrical installatiothat controls the lights on Water Street has been repaired and power has been turned on. One light did not work on start-up, and two more have stopped working since. Black and MacDonald will check to see what the issue is; it may just be issues with bulbs that were not lit for over a year.
- A summer grant from the federal government has been applied to for lifeguards and a policy assistant.
- The wreaths have been taken down.
- Meetings and discussions continue with MoDC on implementation of fire agreement.

- The Lido flooded with rain and ocean water in the storm of Jan 26th and was drained January 31st, in anticipation of low temperatures.
- Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad participated in the Association of Nova Scotia Villages (ANSV) video call January 20, 2023, along with several commissioners. The main topic was the upcoming draft of a Code of Conduct for Municipal Units, particularly with regard to penalties and investigations.
- Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad participated in the South Shore Region Association of Nova Scotia Administrators meeting. Primary discussion was on year-end financial requirements, followed by an activity roundtable by participants.
- Interim Clerk/Treasurer, along with Commission Chair Hatch, participated in a video call put on by St. FX University re Asset Based Community Development.
- Commissioner Mulrooney picked up a sympathy card for the family of the Deputy Chief of the Tidnish Fire Department and it was then signed by the Village Commission and the CVFD.
- Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad consulted with the Village lawyer and NS Municipal Affairs regarding the disposal process of the surplus fire truck, to start collecting the information package to accompany the public Request for Proposal.
- The Statement of Work was circulated for recruiting services to four companies and proposals were received from all four. The Interim Clerk/Treasurer also developed scoring grids to assess the proposals.
- Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad was contacted by a law firm representing an individual who was hurt and fell on a sidewalk in the village. Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad is currently working with the Insurance company, adjuster, and the lawyer to manage the process. The insurance company for the Village has notified that the adjuster will be the representative for the Village dealing with the claim.
- A sign was posted on the window of the Village Office regarding an AED being on site and also registered with OHC, who are developing a county-wide map of AED locations.

Commissioner Nauss stated that the Chester Baptist Church is now the Emergency Center, with a generator, for the residents, in case of emergency/no power.

Commissioner Nauss would like to see the flower baskets changed to 'something' that remains on the poles and doesn't need to be watered and tended to daily.

It was stated that the flower baskets have been ordered for this summer, but this can be looked at for budgeting and summer of 2024.

b) Financial

<> Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad reported that December bank statement is reconciled and that the bank balance was \$885,586.49.

<> The Village is in good fiscal position for the time of year, with the final quarterly revenue payment from MoDC expected in early February 2023, and the final year-end reconciliation payment in early March.

<> On-line review shows since December 30th, there have been deposits of \$14,352.49 and expenses of \$745,210.10 for the balance on February 1st, 2023 of \$154,728.88

<> The 2023/2024 preliminary budget is on the agenda for discussion at this meeting.

- c) Committees
Nil

9.0 New/Other Business

- a) Election Debrief

Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad reported on the election process (as states in the MGA) and said that he created the overview and comments more for the next Clerk/Treasurer to show how things were carried out at this Special Meeting/By-Election.

Commissioner Mulrooney felt that Interim Clerk/Treasurer gave a very clear, detailed, explanation of the process to the public, that clearly outlined how the process would happen. All Commissioners agreed that Interim Clerk/Treasurer made the process very clear for attendees.

- b) Abuse Prevention Policy

Interim Clerk/Treasurer reviewed the policy and stated that a 'Resource Guide' was added so that when something needed to change in the resources, the policy did not need to be reviewed, just changes to the resources.

The Intact Insurance company reviewed the policy, as well as the Village Lawyer, with no Issues noted.

Commissioners felt they were not as clearly identified in the policy as were staff and volunteers. Interim Clerk/Treasurer will amend the policy with Commissioners identified.

MOTION #23-013: Commissioner Pauley moved; Commissioner O'Malley seconded:

The approval of the Abuse Prevention Policy with amendment of 'Commissioners', as noted.

Unanimously Carried

- c) 2023/2024 Preliminary Budget Review

Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad stated that in past all monies for Fire Department came through the Village revenue. With the co-shared contract, this changes the budget processes. Interim Clerk/Treasurer reviewed the CVFD budget, while Chief Stevens was present if there were questions from the Commissioners. Commissioners asked for clarification as to the airbag heavy extrication. Chief Stevens stated the airbag would be used to lift truck/trailers to enable firefighters to do needed rescue actions. The airbag has a ten-year life expectancy unless damaged.

Some line items were combined, i.e., tools and equipment.

Patient medical supplies are covered/supplied by EHS, but the department pays for PPE for emergency personnel.

A Project Consultant will be hired to help with the planning/construction of the new Fire Station, as other Fire Stations did, i.e., Mahone Bay. Some changes to the bay door at the present fire station will be made to improve access for the new truck #551, which fits in the hall but with a minimum of clearance.

Interim Clerk/Treasurer stated, that with another truck replacement needed soon, as the age limit is approaching, it would be recommended to place \$200,000.00 in apparatus reserves.

The Fire Boat is separate in the budget as usual, as funded by the islands ratepayers. Chief Stevens expressed his gratitude for the assistance/shared knowledge that Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad gave the department on the budget preparations.

Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad used the estimated assessments to come up with a draft tax rate to complete the budgeting process. Chief Stevens left the meeting at 8:24 pm.

Chair Hatch stated there would be a five-minute break at 8:25 pm. The meeting reconvened at 8:29 pm.

Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad reviewed the remainder of the budget for the Village. Office rent was raised when the new lease was negotiated. In the past, Cleaning/Janitorial was all accounted for in the CVFD budget, but now will be 50% to hall and 50% to Village office.

Salaries are divided for Administrative Assistant 50% to Fire and 50% to Village Administration and Clerk/Treasurer 25% to fire and 75% to Village Administration. Lido repairs and maintenance lines have been grouped under one heading. Insurance – liability, contents of office, pool, washroom, signage, was allowed with a small increase. Celebrations is for the grants the commission gives to organizations. Beautification – 75 baskets of flowers and watering of the baskets daily, picking up and returning when removed. Commissioner Nauss suggested doing something different that the flower baskets, and then daily water/care is not needed. Chair Hatch said that this summer this issue can be discussed as the flower baskets have already been ordered. Compost collection costs will be confirmed next week. Washroom costs be need to be looked at regarding the accessibility policy and what will be done at the Public Washrooms. Commissioner Pauley stated she was looking at some grants what might be available for the Village to apply for to ensure accessibility is achieved at the washrooms. Streetlights had more costs than usual as the power supply post was damaged and in need of repair.

Salaries for Crossing Guards were discussed. The hourly rate has not changed since the program began. With minimum wage raising, the Crossing Guards wages should be reviewed.

MOTION #23-014: Commissioner Nauss moved; Commissioner O'Malley seconded: To consider raising the hourly rate for Crossing Guards, but defer the decision until the Interim Clerk/Treasurer brings back some comparison budget numbers.

Unanimously Carried

Commissioner Nauss asked where tourism would be in the budget. Interim Clerk/Treasurer stated whatever the Commission wishes can be done, however in the past it has been in the celebrations budget. Interim Clerk/Treasurer Conrad stated that issue can be discussed after the remainder of the budget is reviewed.

Emergency Services budget was reviewed. Traditionally the rent minus expenses has been

put into reserves at the end of the fiscal year. It has been talked of having a building assessment completed. Reserves were briefly discussed and can be added to in this 2023/24 budget. Interim Clerk/Treasurer reminded the Commissioners that any sale from the old fire truck to be sold, must go to a reserve. (as stated in the MGA)

Lido Pool major repairs were discussed. Should most of the repairs be done to the outside wall in a large area of work, or in smaller sections, as has been done in the past. Interim Clerk/Treasurer reminded the Commissioners that the budget needs to be approved prior to the Annual Public Meeting.

10.0 Commissioner Roundtable

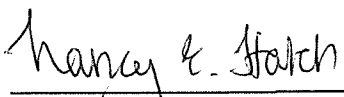
- a) Commissioner Mulrooney stated that there is a fundraising effort in place for a Syrian family to be brought to Nova Scotia and asked if the Village can share the fundraising event. It was agreed to share it on Facebook.
- b) Commissioner Mulrooney is the CBC community contact and February 15, 2023, she will be talking about the new tanker.
- c) Commissioner Nauss stated she did not see where tourism is in the budget. Perhaps a walking tour can be organized. For example, the Fo'c'sle being the first tavern in the area, the grocery store used to deliver by horse and carriage. Commissioner Nauss suggested setting aside money in the budget for tourism.

Chair Hatch stated Commissioners to think about this issue and should a specific amount of money be added to the budget and possibly combine/collaborate with the Municipality and the downtown merchants.

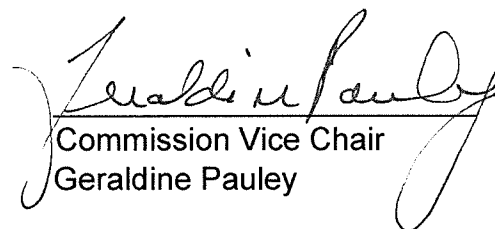
11.0 Adjournment

MOTION #23-015: Commissioner Mulrooney moved the meeting adjourn at 9:31 pm.

Next Regular Meeting – March 8th, 2023 – 7:00 pm



Commission Chair
Nancy Hatch



Commission Vice Chair
Geraldine Pauley