

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING**  
**14 DECEMBER 1999**

Present:           Chairman     Mayor John P. Prall  
  Deputy Mayor Michael J. Munday  
  Councillor Gary W. Whittier  
  Councillor Donald E. Clarke  
  Councillor Michael E. Trinacty  
  Councillor Thomas S. Banks  
  Councillor Bruce H. Morse  
  Ms. Rachel L. Jones, Recording Secretary

In attendance:                   Mr. Bob Stewart, Town Solicitor  
  Ms. Sarah Keddy, Berwick Register  
  Mr. Preston Ilsley  
  Mr. Danny Leckie  
  Mr. Gordon Rafuse  
  Mr. Avarid Brydon

1.    The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

2.    **Approval of Agenda**

Mayor Prall requested an addition under Item #6, Recommendations from Finance Committee - Request for Funding from the Berwick & District Volunteer Fire Department and Municipal Auditor Selection, and under Item #7, Rumble Strips on Commercial/Main Streets.

**IT WAS MOVED by Councillor Whittier and seconded by  
Councillor Banks to approve the Agenda as amended.**

**Motion Carried**

3.    **Approval of Previous Minutes**

Hearing of no errors or omissions the Chairman approved the previous minutes of Council held November 9<sup>th</sup>, 1999.

4.    **VSWA Bylaw**

The revised Bylaw was discussed. Mr. Stewart noted his concern with Section 7 and also noted that in response to inquiries regarding fine revenues, the Authority has not provided a budget line due to the fact that they are not anticipating a large amount of revenue from this area and are not budgeting for it. If fines are collected the feeling is that the Authority should keep the revenue due to the fact that their Bylaw Enforcement Officer and solicitor will most likely be doing the majority of work in collecting and prosecuting offenders.

Mayor Prall noted that the second reading of the Bylaw is scheduled for January Council meeting.

5. **Recommendations from Committee of the Whole**

a) Size of Council Survey Report

**IT WAS MOVED** by Councillor Clarke and seconded by Councillor Banks to complete form C to confirm the number of Councillors currently representing the Town of Berwick and submit the report to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board.

**Motion Carried**

b) Town Offices Closing

**IT WAS MOVED** by Councillor Clarke and seconded by Councillor Whittier to close the Town Office, Public Works Department and the Berwick Electric Commission an additional day in lieu of working Christmas Eve as thanks to the staff for their hard work during the year. Therefore, all operations will be closed from December 23<sup>rd</sup> closing to opening of business on Wednesday, December 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Motion Carried**

It was noted that emergency services would continue to be available through the holiday closure.

6. **Recommendations from Other Committees**

a) Personnel – Sick Leave Policy Amendment

Councillor Trinacty reviewed the memo for the benefit of Council. After a brief discussion,

**IT WAS MOVED** by Councillor Trinacty and seconded by Councillor Clarke to amend the Sick Leave Policy to change twenty (20) days per year to eighteen (18) days per year.

**Motion Carried**

b) Finance – Municipal Auditor

The Finance Committee met earlier this evening to finalize the selection of the Municipal Auditor. Therefore, upon recommendation of the Finance Committee,

**IT WAS MOVED** by Councillor Trinacty and seconded by Councillor Morse to award the Municipal Auditing Service Contract to MacKenzie, Morse and Brewster, as submitted in their proposal, pending successful performance from the first year.

**Motion Carried**

Fire Department Funding Request

Also discussed at the Finance Committee was the request from the Fire Department for funding to complete an architectural study of the Fire Hall.

**IT WAS MOVED by Councillor Trinacty and seconded by Councillor Whittier to allocate \$1,500 to the Berwick and District Volunteer Fire Department for hiring an architectural consultant to consider renovations to the current Fire Hall.**

**Motion Carried**

7. New Business

a) Rumble Strips

Council discussed the new rumble strips installed on Commercial and Main Streets, approaching the intersection. There have been many complaints received by Councillors regarding noise and vibrations in the houses close to the intersection and damage to vehicles going over the ridges. The safety of the crosswalk has been the main issue of concern, and an attempt to slow traffic going to and coming from the Highway 101 interchange. All agreed that the strips were not accomplishing the job they were created to do and that other alternatives needed to be found to address this safety issue

**IT WAS MOVED by Councillor Whittier and seconded by Councillor Clarke to fill in the rumble strips located on Commercial and Main Streets.**

**Motion Carried**

It was agreed to speak to the RCMP to increase their supervision of the intersection to deter speeding and to continue to consider alternative methods to signify the intersection to oncoming motorists. Other crosswalks within town also need to be considered for upgrading.

Mr. Ilsley asked to make a comment to Council, noting that the crosswalk by Wilson's Pharmasave could be upgraded, as well as when Council was ready to consider other alternatives that a public meeting could be called to ask the residents for input on the issue.

Mr. Rafuse noted his preference that the southern crosswalk at the corner of Commercial and Main Streets not be eliminated, as this was the one that connected crosswalks. Council agreed to take these suggestions into consideration in the future.

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8. Hearing of no further business the Chairman adjourned regular Council at 7:35 p.m. for a short break prior to going into an in-camera session to discuss matters of a confidential nature.
9. Regular Council reconvened at 8:03 p.m. to discuss the meeting held with Ms. Linda Parker, Municipal Advisor, held on Monday, December 13<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of the meeting was to lay the groundwork for the meeting between Council and the Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs on Friday, December 17<sup>th</sup>.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the issues to be brought forward with the Minister, as discussed with Ms. Parker. The main issues are:

- equalization grants;
- budget of the Housing and Municipal Affairs Department (which additional cuts are being suggested);
- freeze the educational funding provided by municipal units;
- honour the existing legal contract with social services (between the UNSM and Provincial Government);
- no further cuts to service levels in health care and should, in fact, be improved;
- promotion of recreation as an increasingly important part of the community;
- encourage the possibility of a new infrastructure program next year;
- thank the Minister for the assistance provided regarding the STP Upgrade Project;
- discuss some of the inequities between rural and urban communities and how this may be used as initiative to amalgamate;
- discuss the gas pipeline/franchise issue;
- discuss the possibility of the HST credit being withdrawn from municipal units;
- discuss the tax rebate from the purchase of fire vehicles (rebate up to a limit of \$185,000 purchase price);
- funding for road construction, new overpass being proposed to get to the Michelin plant.

The Mayor will format a list of questions and discussion items to be distributed to Councillors the morning of the meeting prior to the Minister's arrival. Ms. Jones was instructed to contact Ms. Parker to notify her that a continental breakfast will be provided for the Minister's visit.

10. Hearing of no further business the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 8:38 p.m.

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John P. Prall  
Chairman

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Rachel L. Jones  
Recording Secretary