

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
11 DECEMBER 2001

Present: Chairman Mayor John P. Prall
 Deputy Mayor Michael E. Trinacty
 Councillor Gary W. Whittier
 Councillor Donald E. Clarke
 Councillor Thomas S. Banks
 Councillor J. Richard Horsburgh
 Councillor Bruce H. Morse
 Ms. Linda Parker, Chief Administrative Officer
 Mrs. Rachel Turner, Recording Secretary

In attendance: Ms. Sara Keddy, Register
 Ms. Mary Madison, Berwick Inn

1. The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Approval of Agenda**
 The following additions were made to the Agenda: 4(c) Mary Madison, Berwick Arts Council; 5(b) Sewer Update; (c) STP Testing Program; (d) Union Street Intersection; 6(b) Equalization Program; (c) Town Caucus; (d) Natural Gas. Hearing of no further changes,

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to approve the Agenda as amended.

Motion Carried

3. **Approval of Previous Minutes**
 Hearing of no errors or omissions the Chairman approved the minutes of 13 November 2001 as circulated.
4. **Presentation**
 - (a) **Regional Housing Report**
 Mrs. Redden was unable to attend the meeting but provided a brief written report which was circulated to the Council. Mayor Prall expressed Council's thanks for the time Mrs. Redden has dedicated to representing the Town of Berwick on the Regional Housing Authority.
 - (b) **Annapolis Valley Regional Library Report**
 Councillor Banks provided a brief report on the Regional Library operations, noting that it would be beneficial to maintain an elected official as the Town's representative on the Board.
 - (c) **Berwick Arts Council: Mary Madison**
 Ms. Madison provided a brief outline of her history and her interest in working with the Town to improve the appearance of vacant buildings in the Town as well as promote the work of local artists and the formation of the Berwick Arts Council. It is the intention of the Arts Council to develop various mobile window displays and

eventually obtain a permanent place for an art gallery to display local works of art. It was agreed to show Ms. Madison the first floor of the Annex Building as a possible storage facility for the group. With respect to a request for a grant of \$980, it was agreed to defer the issue to the budget process for 2002/03.

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

(i) Holiday Policy

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to amend the Town of Berwick's Holiday Policy to include Easter Monday as a recognized holiday, to be observed with pay.

Motion Carried

(ii) Public Appointees

It was noted that an applicant has expressed a desire to serve on two of the Town's committees simultaneously. Council agreed that, due to the insufficient applicants to fill all available positions, this practice would be acceptable. Therefore,

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to appoint Matthew Redden, Kevin Roscoe and Allan Shay to the Planning Advisory Committee; Allan Shay, Brad Burstall, Jim Keith, Al Howard and Pierce Kelly to the Police Services Advisory Committee; and John Rainforth and Ron Reeves to the Berwick Electric Commission for a term of four years ending November 2005.

Motion Carried

It was noted that Pierce Kelly, as the youth appointment, will serve a term on one year only.

(b) Sewer Update

Mayor Prall reported that recent samples analyzed from the effluent of the STP have passed the Environment Canada tests for all phases and the plant is operating well above standard.

(c) Lab Sample Testing Program

Ms. Parker reported that two laboratories had been contacted to submit quotes for providing testing services for the samples taken from the STP, Larsen's and Avon Foods. From the responses, it appears that the QEII lab is more cost effective. Letters have been sent to both industries and a meeting will be set up to discuss the final selection. The new testing procedure is scheduled to begin on January 1, 2002.

Testing procedures will be changing slightly due to budgetary constraints, however, results are now showing that both industries are complying with the Town's Bylaw and there will be sufficient testing done to satisfy both the provincial and federal Department of Environment.

(d) Union Street Intersection

Ms. Parker reported that a letter had been received from Hiltz and Seamone with the most recent cost estimates to complete the conduit work at the Union Street intersection. It was earlier anticipated that the work would cost the Town \$6,000, however, it appears that that information was incorrect. The letter contained prices for both the Town to complete the work, as well as Mid Valley Construction. After further discussion, including the amount required to fund MTT to include their cables in this work, it was determined that the Town would be saving \$4,100 but only if the work was completed on schedule, not including the cost of labour.

**IT WAS MOVED and seconded to accept the quotation from
Mid Valley Construction to complete the work as specified in the
letter from Hiltz and Seamone (copy attached).**

Motion Carried

6. New Business

(a) Strategy Session

After a brief discussion it was agreed to schedule the next Strategy Session for January 24, 2002 from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

(b) Equalization Proposal

Ms. Parker noted the correspondence that has been circulated between Minister MacIsaac and UNSM President Blumenthal. The UNSM is disappointed with the response from the Province, specifically with the decreased amount of the foundation grant to towns from \$75,000 to \$50,000, as well as wanting to see a cap on the education contribution and full taxation of NSPI. Under the current provincial proposal, the Town of Berwick would see approximately \$45-50,000. This issue is a high priority for both the UNSM and the Province and everyone wants to see it resolved fairly soon. It was agreed to forward a letter to Minister MacIsaac, copied to Councillor Blumenthal, expressing the Town of Berwick's disappointment with the proposed reduction of the foundation grant.

Mayor Prall noted that the Province's proposal will reduce their expenditure from \$900,000 to \$200,000, but on the backs of the Towns, and not the rural municipal units. Ms. Parker noted that the other issue is how this Program will be funded. The UNSM had requested that the Province levy a uniform deed transfer tax across the province, however the Provincial Government is not prepared to put that in place. The municipalities have the authority to put it in place for themselves to assist in raising revenues to fund their operations, or put it in the general tax rate.

(c) Town Caucus

Mayor Prall reported that the group had met in November and is preparing a draft paper in order to reorganize the group and bring all the Towns together as a united voice. The paper was distributed to Councillors for their information and comment. It is the intention of the Town Caucus to work together with the UNSM. They are a

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strong lobbyist for the municipal units but the Towns would like to have their own voice as well.

(e) Natural Gas

Councillor Clarke reported that several municipal units, along with Berwick, are still attempting to cooperate on some type of strategy and application for a distribution franchise. The Petroleum Directorate and the UARB are attempting to draft a new set of regulations in response to the withdrawal of Sempra Atlantic as a provincial distributor of natural gas. The Energy Strategy Paper is being released tomorrow with a local presentation being made on the 14th. A number of options are being considered and everyone is still waiting for the government to come out with a new set of regulations for the process.

(f) RCMP Staffing

Mayor Prall reported that Corporal Payne has received a new posting to St. John's to begin in approximately three months. It is a promotion for him, and the Town wishes him very well. He has done a tremendous job for the Town and will be missed a great deal. He has expressed his appreciation and has noted that Berwick has been a good place for his family and career.

7. Correspondence

- (a) Received correspondence from Mr. Dwight Johnson regarding the Town of Berwick's Smoke Free Bylaw. The issue will be revisited at a future Council meeting. For the information of Council.

The meeting took a short break at 8:50 p.m. and went into an In Camera session at 8:55 p.m. Regular Council reconvened at 9:10 p.m.

8. Staff Christmas Party

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to hold a Christmas party for staff and Councillors at a cost of no more than \$150.

Motion Carried

9. Hearing of no further business the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:11 p.m.

John P. Prall
Chairman

Rachel L. Turner
Recording Secretary