

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING
9 APRIL 2002

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: Mr. Ken MacPherson, Register
 Mr. Brian Bethune

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: Business Arising: (b) Smoke Free Indoor Public Places Bylaw - 2nd Reading; Correspondence: add Brian Bethune's letter to 7(a); Other Business: (a) Town Promotion. Hearing of no other additions the Chairman approved the Agenda as amended.
3. **Approval of Previous Minutes**
Hearing of no errors or omissions the Chairman approved the minutes of 12 March 2002 as circulated.
4. **Recommendations from Committee of the Whole**

- (a) Equalization Program

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to send a letter to Minister MacIsaac in response to the announced Equalization Program.

Motion Carried

- (b) Sustainable Community

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to approve and adopt the five Guiding Principles and twelve Characteristics of a Sustainable Community.

Motion Carried

(c) Insurance Contract

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to accept the proposal from MacCoy Insurance for the provision of the Town's and Electric Commission's insurance portfolio for a term of four years.

Motion Carried

5. Business Arising

(a) Planning and Development Control Services Contract

Ms. Parker reviewed the information that had been collected as the result of requests made at the March Committee of the Whole meeting. Other similar towns were contacted to determine their costs in providing planning and development control services. Middleton, Bridgetown and Annapolis Royal form a joint planning commission, with Bridgetown paying the least amount of \$26,000 last year. Yarmouth, Barrington and Argyle share a planning director and a planning technician with each municipal unit required to pay \$41,000 per year for the services provided. The Town of Wolfville employs a full time planning person at the cost of \$46,000, and that unit indicated that they are unable to provide those services to the Town of Berwick due to their workload and current staffing levels.

Ms. Parker also met again with The 4Site Group to discuss their proposed rates. At this time, they are not prepared to lower their costs as they feel that they are very competitive and the fees given are required to meet their costs in providing the services within the contract. They are, however, very interested in renting office space in the Annex Building for their satellite office in Berwick. That would greatly enhance the service to our residents as well as bringing new business to town. Staff is still confident in the recommendation brought forward to the Committee of the Whole regarding the cost and length of contract with The 4Site Group in comparison with the other municipal units' costs.

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to approve the contract with The 4Site Group for the provision of Planning and Development Control Services for a term of four years.

Motion Carried

Ms. Parker noted that, due to the increased fees charged by The 4Site Group, it would be prudent to consider similar changes in our own Development Control and Planning Application Fees Bylaw in order to recover those costs through the applicant. A revised Bylaw was circulated with changes to the first pages except those fees for changes to the MPS, LUB and Development Agreement.

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to approve first reading of the amendments of the Development Control and Planning Application Fees Bylaw.

Council requested comparative information regarding the fees in surrounding municipal units, specifically the County of Kings and the Towns of Kentville and Wolfville to be brought forward prior to second reading of the amendments.

Motion Carried

(b) Smoke Free Indoor Public Places Bylaw 2nd Reading

Ms. Parker reviewed the changes, specifically the removal of the reference to the County of Kings and Town of Kentville in Section 8, and the addition of Sections 5 and 6 which puts more onus on the business owner/operator to enforce the Bylaw, as well as giving them the authority to do so under the Bylaw.

Discussion followed regarding community hall rentals, where functions are by invitation only, whether those functions come under the jurisdiction of the Bylaw. After a rounded discussion it was agreed to seek legal advice on this issue and have it brought back to Committee of the Whole.

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to approve second reading of the amendments to the Smoke Free Indoor Public Places Bylaw.

Motion Carried

6. Other Business

(a) Town Promotion

Deputy Mayor Trinacty suggested that it was a good time for the Town to embark on a program to promote the Town, especially in light of the Smoke Free Bylaw, to encourage consumers and businesses to come to this area. It was agreed that staff would prepare a report to generate ideas and discussion for the April Committee of the Whole meeting.

7. Correspondence

- (a) Received letters from Mrs. Sheila Munday and Mr. Brian Bethune indicating their concerns regarding the due date of the interim tax bill being moved from May 31st to April 30th, without adequate notice of the change to ratepayers. Ms. Parker noted that, in implementing a policy to provide guidance for staff regarding issuing and collecting payment for the tax bills, the Town was remiss in providing adequate notification to the public of the changes. Several options were discussed on how best to remedy the situation. It was noted that

other municipality's due dates range from the end of April to the end of June for the interim billing. After further discussion,

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to extend the due date for the interim tax bill to May 31 for this year.

Motion Carried

A lengthy discussion followed regarding the dates outlined in the Tax Billing Policy. Ms. Parker noted that the purpose of the Policy was to outline exactly when the bills would be issued and due for payment for the benefit of staff and the public. From an administrative perspective, the payment period with a longer due date gives a 60 day period for staff to focus on one issue, in addition to those same staff members also completing the fiscal year end and annual audit. After further discussion,

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to amend the Policy to reflect the Interim Bill issued by April 15th and due by May 31st, and the Final Bill issued by September 15th and due by October 31st.

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to amend the motion to include language in the Tax Billing Policy to allow residents a minimum of 30 days to pay each tax bill.

A vote was taken on the amendment.

Motion Carried

A vote was taken on the amended motion.

Motion Carried

Staff was instructed to notify the public of the extended date and policy change.

- (b) Received a letter from the Feed My Lambs Child Advocacy Group thanking Town Council for their support in the campaign against child poverty, and extending an invitation to attend the second Public Rally being held on April 21, 2002 at 2:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Gymnasium. For the information of Council.
- (c) Received a letter from the CNIB requesting financial support for their national campaign for digital library services. It was agreed to refer the request to the budget process.
- (d) Received a letter from Dr. Gunn, Superintendent of Schools for the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board, offering to make a presentation to Council to update Council on the major activities and planning priorities of the AVRSB.

It was noted that the Town's School Board Representative is scheduled for a presentation at the May Council meeting, and would be good timing to have Dr. Gunn as well. Staff will notify the respective parties regarding the presentation.

8. Hearing of no further business the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 8:24 p.m.

John P. Prall
Chairman

Rachel L. Turner
Recording Secretary