

**MINUTES OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL MEETING**  
**8 JUNE 2004**

Present:           Chairman       Mayor John P. Prall  
  Deputy Mayor Don Clarke  
  Councillor Gary W. Whittier  
  Councillor J. Richard Horsburgh  
  Councillor Danny Lecky  
  Councillor Murray Bezanson  
  Ms. Linda Parker, Chief Administrative Officer  
  Ms. Michelle Millett, Recording Secretary

In attendance:                   Ms. Sara Keddy, Berwick Register

Absent with Regrets:           Councillor Michael E. Trinacty

1.   The Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

2.   **Approval of the Agenda**

The Agenda was approved as circulated with the addition of letters and e-mails from Viking Ventures, Senior Citizens' Secretariat, Economic Development and ETTA as items 7. (a), (b), (c) and (d) respectively.

3.   **Approval of the Previous Minutes**

Hearing of no errors or omissions the Chairman approved the previous minutes of 11 May 2004.

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

(a) **Naming of Road to Avon Foods from Main Street**

Ms. Parker read the motion.

**IT WAS MOVED** and seconded to approve the name Morse Lane for the road leading from Main Street to Avon Foods and authorize staff to carry out the necessary requirements as set out the Town of Berwick Policy #5.013.

**Motion Carried**

(b) **Council Remuneration**

Ms. Parker read the motion.

**IT WAS MOVED** and seconded that a committee of three citizens and three Councillors consisting of Councillor Horsburgh, Councillor Trinacty and Councillor Clarke is created to review Council Remuneration during a meeting to be held July 7, 2004 at 6:30 p.m..

**Motion Carried**

5. **Recommendations from Other Committees**

(a) **Recommendation from Police Services Advisory Committee**

Ms. Parker read the motion.

**IT WAS MOVED** and seconded that consideration be given to amending the Dog By-law to include a ban on restricted breeds of dogs, specifically Pit Bull Terriers.

Discussion ensued as to why the issue came forward to the Police Services Advisory Committee. Mayor Prall suggested that there are many by-laws that are unenforceable and noted the Town should be very careful in passing these types of by-laws. Ms. Parker noted that the Town of Truro had defeated a similar motion and agreed to investigate their reasoning. Councillor Whittier suggested that the motion be tabled until after more research was done regarding the issue.

A copy of an e-mail sent to Councillors from Goodpooch.com was discussed (attached). The e-mail from Marjorie Darby was in defense of pit bulls and against the motion brought to Council. Her correspondence noted mainly that there are no bad dogs or breeds, only bad owners. Ms. Parker suggested that a copy of an e-mail from Marjorie Darby be forwarded to the PSAC and agreed to forward the e-mail.

6. **New Business**

(a) **Approval of 2004/05 Operating & Capital Budgets**

Councillor Horsburgh noted that he was disappointed to have to raise rates in order to make up for the loss of Avon Foods. Discussion ensued and Councillors were in agreement that they were disappointed with having to raise tax and sewer rates, but realize that rates must increase in order to give citizens the services that are required.

**IT WAS MOVED** and seconded that the 2004 – 05 Operating Budget totaling \$2,860,700 be passed.

**Motion Carried**

Ms. Parker noted that assuming there are no decreases in taxes by other municipalities, Berwick has the fifth lowest residential tax rate. Councillor Whittier noted that in his past experience citizens would not be as concerned with an increase in tax rates as they would be with a loss of services.

**IT WAS MOVED** and seconded that the 2004-07 Capital Budget totaling \$1,921,970 be approved.

**Motion Carried**

**IT WAS MOVED** and seconded that the 2004 –05 Residential tax rate of \$1.635 (property tax 1.485 + sewer tax \$.15) and the 2004-05 Commercial tax rate of \$2.805 (property and Business Occupancy tax \$2.655 + sewer tax \$.15) be approved.

**Motion Carried**

It was noted that Antigonish has the lowest tax rate of any town in Nova Scotia. Deputy Mayor Clarke requested that Ms. Parker contact the Town of Antigonish to find out how the Town is able to keep tax rates so low. Ms. Parker agreed to investigate the issue.

**(b) Business Directional Signs Policy**

Ms. Parker reviewed her report. Ms. Parker noted that the Policy is silent as to who is responsible for signage and the issue of \$150.00 annual fee had been called into question by some business owners. Ms. Parker recommended that the \$150.00 annual fee be deleted from the policy.

Mayor Prall noted that the purpose of the signpost on the #1 Highway was to direct people into Berwick for business purposes. Deputy Mayor Clarke felt there shouldn't be a fee. Councillors discussed seasonal, tourist related and arts and crafts businesses as those that should be included as candidates for signage. Councillor Bezanson noted the importance of having the sign filled with the five available spots.

Discussion continued and Ms. Parker was directed to amend the policy to allow signage placed to remain on the Highway #1 Business Directional Sign until it was in disrepair or the company was no longer in business.

**IT WAS MOVED** and seconded that Council delete Section 5 from the Business Directional Signs Policy.

**Motion Carried**

**IT WAS MOVED** and seconded that Council amends the Business Directional Signs Policy to include signage advertisements for the following types of businesses: restaurants, crafts, and seasonal or tourist related businesses.

**Motion Carried**

Council directed staff to inform businesses with signage on the Business Directional Sign know that there would be no longer be a \$150.00 annual payment required as the policy had been amended. These business owners would include Polly Scott and Joan Balcolm. In addition, staff were also asked to revisit Section 7 of the policy to include tourist, seasonal, crafts, and related businesses.

**IT WAS MOVED** and seconded to add a Section 8 to the policy stating that “The Town is not responsible for any stolen or damaged business signage erected in accordance with the Policy.

**Motion Carried**

(c) Project Eco Kings Summary

Deputy Mayor Clarke noted that the municipalities of Kings County had been involved in this initiative by Kings CED. Deputy Mayor Clarke relayed that during a meeting he attended, he told the committee that the Town of Berwick may provide “in kind” support to the project. Mayor Prall noted that some of these initiatives had been unsuccessful in the past and that we should support the initiative in principle, but could not commit any funding this year.

(d) Apple Blossom Update

Mayor Prall complimented Princess Berwick, Catherine Tweedy on her excellent representation of Berwick at the Apple Blossom Opening Ceremony at the Legion during this year’s festival. He also commented on the end of the Royal Tour supper that was held at the church with former princesses and a former Queen Annapolisa serving current princesses. Councillor Bezanson suggested that he Mayor should write a letter to the Berwick Princess thanking whoever held the position yearly. Mayor Prall agreed to this arrangement.

(e) Town Caucus Update on Spring UNSM Conference

Councillor Bezanson complimented Mayor Prall on his abilities as Chair of the UNSM Town Caucus. Deputy Mayor Clarke relayed that the new UNSM format of Towns, Regionals and Rurals was a much better system than had been in place formerly. Mayor Prall relayed that the Town Caucus has found expenditures for roads to be extremely high compared to other groups of municipalities and the item was discussed during the Town Caucus Meeting at the UNSM Spring Conference. Mayor Prall and Ms. Parker noted that education on the issue may provide future solutions.

**7. Correspondence**

(a) Viking Ventures Signage Request

Viking Ventures had sent a letter that requested signage for the Condon Park Subdivision be placed on Town property. Ms. Parker recommended that the Town use the same process as was used by 4Site to reach an agreement on the erection of a sign at the entrance of Condon Park. Councillors agreed that other subdivision signs by Viking Ventures in other locations were esthetically pleasing and had no issue with the signage being erected. Council directed Ms. Parker to further investigate the signage with Mr. Holland of Viking Ventures.

(b) Avon Foods Facility Study Letter

The letter from Economic Development advised Council that funding had been secured for a Consultant to do a Facility Study for Avon Foods. Ms. Parker related that the tenders for the Consultant would be opened this week and the qualified candidate chosen at the next meeting of the Avon Foods Closure Committee meeting on 21 June 2004.

(c) Senior Citizens Week

For the information of Council.

(d) Evangeline Tourism Association Newsletter

The letter thanked the Town of Berwick for their contribution to the Association during the past year.

**8. Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting of Council would be held the 13 July 2004.

**9.** Hearing of no further business the Chairman adjourned the Council meeting at 8:04 p.m..

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John P. Prall  
Chairman

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Michelle Millett  
Recording Secretary