

MINUTES OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL MEETING
13 APRIL 2004

Present: Chairman Mayor John P. Prall
 Deputy Mayor Donald E. Clarke
 Councillor Gary W. Whittier
 Councillor Michael E. Trinacty (arrived at 7:04 p.m.)
 Councillor J. Richard Horsburgh
 Councillor Murray Bezanson
 Councillor Danny Lecky
 Ms. Linda Parker, Chief Administrative Officer
 Ms. Michelle Millett, Recording Secretary

In attendance: Mrs. Sara Keddy, Berwick Register
 Mr. Andrew Patterson, Kings Transit (left at 7:00 p.m.)
 Ms. Naomi Blanchard, KCATSS (left at 7:24 p.m.)
 Ms. Nancy Saunders, Registry 2000 (arrived at 6:44 p.m.
 and left at 8:10)

1. The Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m and welcomed Mrs. Keddy, Mr. Patterson, and Mrs. Blanchard.
2. **Approval of the Agenda**
The Agenda was approved as circulated.
3. **Approval of the Previous Minutes**
Hearing of no errors or omissions the Chairman approved the previous minutes of 9 March 2004 and 23 March 2004.
4. **Presentations**
 - (a) **Kings Transit Authority (KTA)**
Mr. Patterson discussed the rationale behind each item for the 2004/05 KTA budget process (attached). He relayed that bus pass ratios are increasing with 60% of fares purchasing bus passes as opposed to a cash basis ridership. He noted that there have been no major accidents with buses or people and that has kept insurance rates down to a reasonable level when a comment regarding low insurance premiums was brought up. Mr. Patterson also told Council that he has notified the Kings Transit Authority of his retirement and thus a new manager would be required. He offered his services during the transition for an interim fee that had been included in the Wages budget figure. He relayed that a Strategic Plan was being considered by the Kings Transit Authority in addition to a transfer of operating reserves to surplus. Ms. Parker relayed that Chief Administrative Officers of participating municipalities have drafted the Terms of Reference for the Strategic Plan to present to the Authority.

Ms. Parker asked Mr. Patterson about the requested extension of service to Illsley's Store at the intersection of Commercial and Main Streets in Berwick. He reported that the route extension had traffic problems in the parking lot with the amount of snow and that after discussions with Mr. Illsley it was agreed to try the route extension once again in the summer. Ms. Parker noted that there is a cost share on the deficit from last year and asked Mr. Patterson the plan for bus replacement. Mr. Patterson replied that he would be meeting with the Kings Transit Authority to propose a study by a consultant to suggest alternatives for bus replacement.

Mayor Prall thanked Mr. Patterson and wished him the best in his impending retirement.

(b) Kings County Alternative Transportation Society (KCATSS)

Ms. Blanchard thanked Council for the opportunity to speak. She prefaced the presentation by discussing discrepancies discovered in the accounting and administrative aspects of the organization recently. She reported that staff had been reduced significantly and that the organization is not stable at this time with the dismissal of the Executive Director. She said she would be amendable to some sort of amalgamation with Kings Transit in order to provide wheelchair accessible buses for the disabled and elderly population served by Kings County Alternative Transportation Society Services (KCATSS) and noted that the service was complementary to Kings Transit. Ms. Blanchard did note that the issue of riders using the KCATSS service that do not live on the Kings Transit bus route would arise even with access to wheelchair accessible buses.

Ms. Blanchard noted that the right to accessible transportation was the right of all citizens. Disabled, seniors and ambulatory care patients were all included as members of this service. However, she reported that her board would welcome the integration of KCATSS with Kings Transit. Ms. Blanchard reported that Nova Scotia has a higher number of disabled persons than other provinces.

She requested a contribution of \$1,000 to \$1,200 for this fiscal year from the Town of Berwick. Discussion ensued regarding membership fees, integration of administration and accounting with Kings Transit, and budget practices and figures from the previous years. Ms. Blanchard noted that this year's significant projected deficit was in the process of being addressed and negotiated by Board members. Mayor Prall noted to Ms. Blanchard that the 5% figure attributed to Berwick citizens had been called into question during the last budget presentation given by Ms. Vogler, past Executive Director of KCATSS and Ms. Blanchard replied that she would look into this discrepancy.

Mayor Prall thanked Ms. Blanchard for her presentation and noted that the request for funding would be brought forward during the budget process.

(c) Registry 2000

Ms. Saunders introduced herself and noted her long history with Assessment Services. She reported that ½ of the province has implemented the new Registry 2000 system at this time and that by 2005 all of the province would be using the new system. The purpose of the initiative was to stop storing and creating paper documents and to be more productive and efficient with the move to an electronic system in the Registry of Deeds.

Ms. Saunders presentation (attached) noted that the land registration system is an operating group and Registry 2000 is more of a working group to implement the changes during the move to the electronic system that will allow title searches to be done electronically. She reported that there are three types of agreements to use the On-line system (lawyers, surveyors, and query users) and that only eligible lawyers would be able to update the registry system. The current trend has been for the seller to pay for the conversion cost to a certified land parcel and attempting to recover the cost of that function in the sale price. Ms. Saunders reported that she had heard of fees in the range of \$300 to \$1,400 for land conversion by legal firms in the Valley area.

Mayor Prall thanked Ms. Saunders for her presentation and noted the steep learning curve that would ensue with the new system by users.

5. Recommendations from Committee of the Whole

(a) Operating Reserves Transfer

Ms. Parker read the recommendation.

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to transfer \$20,000 to Operating Reserves for the year ended March 31, 2004.

MOTION CARRIED

6. Business Arising

(a) Kings Partnership Steering Committee

Ms. Parker noted that this item had been discussed at the March Council meeting, and that members that would sit on the committee had not been selected. She reported that confirmed meeting dates for the first meetings of the group would be May 5, 2004 at 7 p.m., and May 19th at 7:00 p.m. in Kentville. The actual workshop will be held the evening of 8 June 04 and all day on June 9th, 2004 which would necessitate the rescheduling of the Council meeting for the month of June.

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to appoint Deputy Mayor Clarke and Councillor Lecky as additional representatives to sit as members of the Kings Partnership Steering committee along with Mayor Prall and Chief Administrative Officer, Ms. Parker.

Motion Carried

7. **New Business**

(a) **Policing ~ Expanded Jurisdiction Pilot**

Ms. Parker reported that at a recent joint meeting of RCMP, Department of Justice and municipal leaders and officials that Inspector Brown of the RCMP had made it clear that any form of regionalized policing service would be to the benefit of the Town and Counties, but would leave him less an officer that was required by the force. Those involved in the meeting had agreed to request an extension of the Regional Policing Pilot for an additional year if Councils were in agreement. The largest outstanding issue was the funding of one shared RCMP member between the Town of Berwick and the County of Kings. She relayed that a regional approach to policing provides the best police service to the Municipality of the County of Kings and that during this extension the need for the extra RCMP position would be investigated. Ms. Parker also relayed that the timing of this request would be crucial to the municipal budgeting process.

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to approve a joint request with the County of Kings to extend the Expanded RCMP Policing Jurisdiction Pilot to March 31, 2005.

Motion Carried

(b) **2004 Municipal Elections ~ Preliminary List of Electors**

Ms. Parker reviewed her report and noted that the preliminary list of electors must be completed by 15 April, 2004. She noted that portions of the lists would need to be updated with corrections from the last election. Ms. Parker had consulted with provincial representatives and had confirmed our List of Electors from November 2003 was acceptable.

In addition, Ms. Parker reported that the Preliminary List of Electors is not required to be publicly posted during the 2004 election and that an advertisement noting the location and availability of the list is required instead of a public posting. The Municipal Elections Act also stated that no further revisions would take place after July 31, 2004.

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to approve the use of the List of Electors for the Town of Berwick Special Election held on November 22, 2003 to be used as the Preliminary List of Electors for the 2004 general municipal elections.

Motion Carried

(c) Valley Communications Contract

Ms. Parker reviewed her report and noted that the Valley Communications contract had expired March 31, 2004. She reviewed with Councillors that the fee would increase slightly from 1999 to 2006 and then would increase 3% in each year from 2007 to 2009. Ms. Parker reported that all three municipal units in Kings County use Valley Communications for 9-1-1 secondary and fire dispatch service. Deputy Mayor Clarke requested that Ms. Parker discuss any issues that the BDVFD may have with the service.

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to approve the Mayor and Chief Administrative Officer sign the Agreement to contract Valley Communications Inc. to provide 9-1-1 Emergency Service and Fire Dispatch for the Town of Berwick for the five-year period from April 1, 2004 to March 31, 2009.

8. Correspondence

(a) N.S. Department of Justice ~ DNA Analysis

Ms. Parker reported that an update regarding the cost sharing of DNA analysis had previously been provided by Mayor Prall to Councillors at an earlier meeting. The cost for DNA analysis has decreased due to the Town of Berwick's low usage of DNA testing, at this time. It was noted that this was a costly service for municipalities that had to utilize the service.

(b) Municipality of Annapolis County ~ Municipal Public Works

The attached letter had been received inviting key municipal Public Works employees to the conference and requesting financial support from the municipal units. Ms. Parker reported that Mr. Gould and Mr. McClellan usually attend the conference.

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to approve \$200 to be donated for funding towards the conference in Middleton of Public Works employees.

Some Councillors opposed the motion and thought that registration fees should cover funding of events.

IT WAS MOVED and seconded to amend the original motion that \$100 be donated for funding towards the conference in Middleton of Public Works employees.

Motion Defeated

The vote on the original motion was taken.

Motion Defeated

Councillors expressed their support of the Superintendent of Public Works and the STP Operator attending the conference.

6. Business Arising (con't)

(b) Information Bulletins

Ms. Parker distributed draft information bulletins for Councillors to review for use during a door-to-door canvas as part of the Town's Communication Strategy. The various bulletin topics included Town Staff – Who We Are and What We Do, Groundwater Resource Management information and Council Committee Structure information. The bulletins were left with Councillors for review and input.

(c) Last Avon Foods Steering Committee Meeting Update

Mayor Prall updated Councillors on the last meeting of the Avon Foods Steering Committee. He reported that the plant had been toured by 17 members of the Steering Committee followed by a luncheon and meeting. Mayor Prall relayed that there were a number of business uses that the buildings would house including a machine shop, opportunities to label and package material for shipping, and warehousing. A brainstorming session took place and a decision was made to procure plans for the facility. Ms. MacKinnon would attempt to get the plans from Roscoe Construction (who had built the facility). Mayor Prall reported that the Committee will next undertake investigating what other municipal units have done when a large industry closure took place.

Ms. Parker reported that HRDC had notified the Town regarding a grant that would provide resources for the Town to hire someone for two to three years to work on a project of this nature and staff has applied for that grant to employ someone in this function.

Ms. Parker noted that the next step would be employing someone of expertise to complete a marketing and feasibility study for the facility. She noted that the facility is a good structure with the availability of water, sewer, and other required amenities and was well sectioned for a number of different businesses to share under the same roof. The Nova Scotia Department of Economic Development had indicated that they could provide some funding towards a study of this type. Mr. Craswell would be discussing with Carriere Foods what uses and future plans they had for the building.

9. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of Council would be held May 11, 2004.

10. Hearing of no further business the Chairman adjourned the Council meeting at 9:10 p.m.

John P. Prall
Chairman

Michelle Millett
Recording Secretary