

**MINUTES OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL MEETING**  
**11 JANUARY 2005**

Present:           Chairman       Mayor John P. Prall  
  Deputy Mayor Michael E. Trinacty  
  Councillor Donald E. Clarke  
  Councillor Gary W. Whittier  
  Councillor J. Richard Horsburgh  
  Councillor Beth Easson  
  Councillor Anna Ashford-Morton  
  Mr. Craig Burgess, Recreation Director (left the meeting at  
  7:05)  
  Ms. Linda Parker, Chief Administrative Officer  
  Ms. Michelle Millett, Recording Secretary

In attendance:                   Ms. Judy Kelly, Berwick Register  
  Ms. Jennifer Taylor, ETTA (left the meeting at 7:10 p.m.)  
  MP Robert Thibault (arrived at 7:10 p.m. and left the  
  meeting at 7:50 p.m.)  
  Ms. Terry Little (arrived at 7:10 p.m. and left the  
  meeting at 7:50 p.m.)

1.   The Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

2.   **Presentations**

(a) Award of Appreciation – Corporal Don Allen, RCMP

Mayor Prall thanked Corporal Allen for his service to the Town of Berwick and presented him with a gift from the Town of Berwick. Corporal Allen thanked Council and said that he had enjoyed his time serving the Town of Berwick.

(b) Evangeline Tourism Trail Association (ETTA) – Ms. Jennifer Taylor

Ms. Taylor distributed a folder containing her presentation, the Evangeline Trail 2004 Guide, and other information about ETTA. She relayed that ETTA was a not-for-profit organization targeted at the visitor to the area. She reported that ETTA provided marketing and advertising support specifically for tourists and tour groups, but noted that there were commercial economic spin-offs from the tourist revenue. Product development provided by ETTA included tours, marketing, itineraries, advertising, and production of the 2004 Evangeline Trail Guide. Ms. Taylor relayed that ETTA provides direct financial support for Visitor Information Centres staffing and provides training for municipal VIC staff.

Ms. Taylor reported 2004 as a challenging year for the tourism industry overall with occupancy rates decreasing across the Province. She noted that the current financial crisis at ETTA was due to a number of factors. Ms. Taylor relayed that

provincial and municipal financial support to tourism associations had dropped in recent years.

Deputy Mayor Trinacty asked how the organization had arrived at the current financial crisis. Ms. Taylor reported that the Trail Guide had generated revenue in the past due to the use of NSCC students to work on the design of the annual Evangeline Trail Guide and that this year the Annapolis NSCC was unable to provide the graphic support leaving ETTA to contract the project to a commercial entity. She also relayed that grants utilized in the past either no longer existed or had changes in criteria that left ETTA unable to qualify. Deputy Mayor Trinacty asked if a budget had been prepared for the next fiscal year and suggested this information would be useful to municipal councils in their decisions to support the organization.

Councillor Easson asked if another community college could be utilized for technical support for the guide and Ms. Taylor replied that Cape Breton NSCC had expressed an interest.

**3. Approval of the Agenda**

Additions to the Agenda included Crows and M.P. Robert Thibault under New Business and the deletion of a Report from the Housing Authority under Presentations. Ms. Redden would present her Housing Authority Report at the February Council meeting. Councillor Ashford relayed a greeting from Mr. Mike Payne, who was the previous Corporal at the Berwick RCMP office. The Agenda was approved as amended.

**4. Approval of the Previous Minutes**

The Chairman approved the minutes of December 14, 2004, as circulated.

**5. New Business**

**(a) Member of Parliament Robert Thibault**

Mayor Prall welcomed MP Thibault who relayed that following the last election he had been meeting with municipal Councils to “get a handle” on the pulse of communities within his riding. He discussed the importance of the Apple Dome and was hopeful that federal infrastructure funding would be forthcoming. He relayed that the offer for the renewed Federal Infrastructure Grant was not yet signed, but was hopeful that the province would sign the agreement in the near future and provide support for projects like the Apple Dome .

In reply to Ms. Parker’s question on renewal of the Nova Scotia Infrastructure Program, MP Thibault relayed that the federal government would not consider specific applications without the renewal agreement signatories. He relayed that with the provision of community fiscal commitment, as was the case with the Apple Dome, federal support would be at a more attainable level for approval.

Mayor Prall asked MP Thibault about the distribution of the gas tax and relayed the UNSM, Town Caucus concern that the funds should not be considered a replacement for the infrastructure program. MP Thibault relayed his commitment to have the gas tax above and beyond existing infrastructure funding.

Discussion took place regarding the current controversy of the distribution between municipal units of the impending gas tax rebate. Ms. Parker relayed that a special committee had been formed to propose a formula for distribution of the gas tax. MP Thibault relayed that the federal government would provide funding, but the municipal units should unite to put a position forward for distribution. He relayed that the federal government would look to the FCM for a formula for distribution.

Ms. Parker spoke regarding her concerns that the “Big Cities” agenda may drive the allocation of the 25% public transit funding. Mayor Prall noted that the Town’s would lose out if the current formula discussed was implemented. Councillor Clarke noted that Towns are treated unfairly by bearing the full responsibility for roads. Ms. Parker asked MP Thibault to pass on to the federal government that a release of funding without too many strings may reduce the chance of provincial clawbacks. Mayor Prall reiterated his desire for a fair and equitable distribution system.

Councillor Whittier relayed that the Town needed not only an Arena, but a New Fire Hall. MP Thibault relayed the Town should prioritize its need for one or the other of the pieces of community infrastructure. Ms. Parker reported the existence of safety issues within the Fire Hall that needed to be addressed.

(b) ETTA Request for Emergency Funding

Ms. Parker relayed that support provided by ETTA decreased the workload for the Recreation Department, increased tourist traffic in the area, and promoted events such as Berwick Gala Days. She reported that ETTA is currently provided \$500 as part of the annual membership fees and that an additional amount is provided for Berwick’s participation in the annual guide. Ms. Parker relayed that it is a legitimate concern that the organization is experiencing financial difficulties and relayed the Town’s disadvantage without an organization such as ETTA. It was her recommendation to provide ETTA with the emergency funding.

Ms. Parker noted the inclusion of the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Heritage’s endorsement of ETTA in the package of information provided by Ms. Taylor. She suggested a letter be written to the Minister reminding him of his letter requesting municipal support and the need for the Province to provide the same fiscal support in times of crisis.

Discussion took place regarding the provision of funds to ETТА and budgeted funds available. Ms. Parker noted that Council could provide funding to the organization now and once again in the new fiscal year, beginning April 1, 2005. Mayor Prall directed staff to reply to ETТА that the Town would provide funding upon review of financial projections for year end at February Council.

**IT WAS MOVED and seconded** that Council request Mayor Prall correspond with Minister Rodney MacDonald of the Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage to request emergency financial support for ETТА in 2004/05 and consider a greater level of provincial financial contribution for the fiscal year 2005/06.

**Motion Carried**

(c) Crows

Councillor Ashford-Morton brought the item forward for inclusion on the agenda and noted that residents had expressed frustration with the number of crows in the Main Street portion of Town. Ms. Parker relayed her request to Public Works for the movement of the Phoenix Wailer to the area on Main Street where the crows are currently roosting. She relayed that Public Works are moving the Wailer in response to complaints. Councillor Ashford-Morton reported that the path to the school from Berwick Acres is littered with bird droppings and this presents a health risk.

(d) Update on RCMP

Ms. Parker relayed that Corporal Merrill Buglar had confirmed his acceptance as Corporal of the Berwick RCMP. She reported that he was currently posted in the North West Territories according to information provided by Inspector Dave Brown. Ms. Parker relayed that Corporal Buglar may be coming to Berwick to house-hunt and she suggested the PSAC invite him for introductions during his visit. Ms. Parker relayed that Constable Fedema has been transferred from the Berwick RCMP office and has been replaced by Constable Scott MacLeod.

**6. Correspondence**

(a) Canadian Federation of Independent Business

For the information of Council.

(b) Federation of Canadian Municipalities

For the information of Council.

7. **Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting of Council would be held February 8, 2005.

8. Hearing of no further business the Chairman adjourned the Council meeting at 8:15 p.m.

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John P. Prall  
Chairman

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Michelle Millett  
Recording Secretary