

Staff Report March 12, 2019

CAO – Alain Muise

No update for this meeting as Alain is on vacation.

Finance & Taxation Department – Marsha d'Eon

Our tax sale was held on February 14, 2019. 13 properties were brought to auction. We sold 12 and had no bids on the other 1 property.

The 2019 Exemption application forms will be available in our office and on our website in the near and a copy mailed to applicants that had received the exemption last year. It will be advertised on our web page, in the Vanguard and Lobster Bay Shopper.

Tax reminders have been sent for all outstanding taxes in hopes of getting some payments on the outstanding accounts.

The Finance Department is coming up into busy time with year-end (March 31st) and budget season. Preparations for both have already started.

I am in the process of filing the HST Offset, which is due on March 11, 2019.

All services, including monthly reconciliations, accounts payable, and monthly financial reporting to staff and Council continues and is on schedule.

Community Development – Charlene LeBlanc

1. Assisted with completion of 7 Atlantic Fisheries Fund Applications
2. Hosted an AFF information meeting
3. Organized a Poutine Week for MODA; planning a Burger week
4. Assisted and attended a Farmworks information evening in Hebron
5. Looking at funding for a R&D experimental lease for Glenwood Bay
6. Facebook Live has many booking requests
7. Attended a Doctor recruitment meeting
8. Tourism NS has released a video highlighting our region
9. Conversations with a committee re: assisting with an Eel Grass project
10. Assisting various organizations with grants

Department of Public Works – Hans Pfeill

West Pubnico Sewer Treatment Plant (WPSTP)

Plant Operations

The plant operates at a high level of efficiency and is compliant with NSDoE guidelines. Operations are running smoothly and within budget so far.

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All 12 pumping stations are being monitored on a regular interval and everything seems to work normal. We experienced one power outage over the last few weeks, but Power NS was able to repair the lines quickly and it had no negative impact to our operation.

We are preparing to publish a request for construction for the Dewatering truck Garage at the end of March into April. Detailed drawings and specifications were provided by WSP Canada Inc. and construction should start mid-April. We anticipate having the new garage available for spring/summer 2019. In the meantime, we found storage space for the truck over the winter at Comeau's Seafood in Middle East Pubnico.

We submitted our annual NSDoE report ahead of time this year and are awaiting to hear back from the local office. We are operating far under the NSDoE effluent limits set out in our permit agreement and hope for a good record from NSDoE.

Past Initiatives

We had ordered a new mixer for the SBR2 tank to replace the broken one and the new item was shipped to us within the last week. KRC Controls updated the Computer system at the plant and the system is running better now and increases the operator's safety during bad weather situations.

Future Initiatives

The new mixer will be replaced as soon as the weather gets warmer and allows for safe work within the SBR2 Tank. To further optimize our operation, we may look into testing of different polymers to help with the dewatering process or re-purposing the drainage pads for further sludge holding and aging.

Tusket Sewer Treatment Plant

Plant Operations

The operation of this system continues in a relatively orderly basis, with our permit good until 2024. We are in compliance with NSDoE operating parameters. We submitted our annual NSDoE report and are awaiting to hear back from the local office. According to our records we are operating far under the effluent limits set out in our permit and we are hoping for a good record from the department. Due to the very cold temperatures we came across one frozen sewer tank due to poor installation. No damage to the tank occurred and we were able to fix the issue quickly. Other than that we did not experience any interruptions and the system is running smoothly.

This month we did not receive any connection request.

Past Initiatives

Louis is actively working on improvements on the plant and overall system and operations are getting less expensive.

Future Initiatives

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Staff is preparing to fix the overflow at the plant to avoid future flooding and breakdowns and we will take a more active approach on controlling grease and storm water infiltration. We are also focusing on some minor repairs on some tank manholes to improve the systems and lower the impact of storm water infiltration. This all will help to assure the full life expectancy of the overall system.

Municipal Administration Building

The public works department is available to support the CAO with the next steps of the process. The Architects reviewed the design and proposed significant changes to allow for a second round of tendering in combination with a potential facilitator to activate the competition. The timing and facilitator activities may increase the chance of a better result and more competitive bids that are within our set budget. This process is in alignment within our procurement policy and good practice. With a successful second tender process we still foresee a construction start this year and hope to move into our new building by Summer 2020. A retender process is not putting the FCM grant and loan in danger and we still have enough time to claim this type of funding.

Policy and By-Law Working Group

Due to a high priority on construction projects we postponed the process of registering our By-Laws for the use of SOT's. We are still recommending to review our by-laws in close coordination of an experienced lawyer before starting the registration process. This task is scheduled for summer/fall 2019.

We started preparing a new policy for the dangerous and unsightly by-law to better assist our residents with the clean-up efforts and cost relief considerations. This policy may be the first of its kind in NS and will take a bit of time to complete due to its complexity and new context. The policy is currently under review by the CAO and our legal team to verify wording and intent. We are also reviewing the Tusket Waste Water Management By-law to improve the administration and allow for further development within the community.

Council had approved our new snow removal policy, which provides proper guidelines and protection for our field staff.

East Pubnico Water Utility

System Operations

Staff continues to monitor and make repairs as necessary. Meter readings are performed on a regular basis. This month we came across some leakage around the Middle East Pubnico System and were able to repair the issue within normal cost and within budget. We engaged WSP Canada Inc. from Dartmouth, NS for the repairs of Popes Road Pumping station. Design work and equipment recommendations for the electrical components were provided and we will prepare for a tender to initiate the comprehensive repair work. Budget meetings will be prepared for end of March to receive feedback from the users regarding this year's repair work.

Past Initiatives

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Staff finalized the service agreements in close coordination with the users and our legal team. We met with two users and agreements have been signed. We still need one signature and will be meeting the user separately.

Future Initiatives

We are in the process of finding additional funding for the Willet Road Tank replacement and are looking into a cost proposal from WSP Canada Inc. to help us with preliminary design work to determine a better cost estimate of the anticipated work. This will help us with closing the current funding gap and initiate the project this year. We are hoping to receive funding from ACOA and the users. Once funding is secured, we will be preparing the replacement of the 500,000GAL water tank. Further updates will follow soon.

Wedgeport Sewer Improvement Program

System Operations

This month all 42 systems are operating well. The construction on the last 3 systems were completed and we are awaiting the final drawings to close this phase of the project. Invitations for the Wedgeport Sewer Committee have been sent out to involved residents in order to get the committee activated and we received 3 interested parties. The first meeting should be scheduled for end of March to set the budget for this fiscal year.

Past Initiatives

42 Systems have been installed and are operational.

Future Initiatives

Staff is committed to support the owners of the new systems with the lawn re-instatement and will provide help with over-seeding some sites to ensure even grass growth. These efforts will be performed during spring 2019. We submitted an application to the Province under the ICIP funding stream and ask for support to install another 50 new sewer systems. If funding is approved, we would be able to roll out another phase by spring 2020.

Animal Control

We didn't receive any complaints over the last few weeks and it seems that the residents are keeping good care of their animals. With the loss of the Yarmouth Dispatch center we also lost the service for dog control issues. The SPCA can be directly reached under 902-307-0475 in case of any dog issues.

Garbage Handling

This month all pick ups were preformed as per schedule. We received one complaint but were able to solve the issue asap. Waste Check and PW staff are working on ideas to improve future garbage handling and pick up practices to lower the environmental effects of blown away garbage or

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rodents spreading household garbage. With potential new regulations from the federal government we are monitoring the potential outcome and availability of funding to support our ideas.

Building Inspection Report

To date in this calendar year, 15 building permits and 7 development permits have been issued. There is a good mix of permit interest in residential dwellings and larger commercial/industrial operations. Last year the building season turned out to be very busy with 109 building permits issued and a further 29 Development Permits issued. Note that a Demolition Permit is tallied under the Building Permit numbers.

Last year there was more activity in medium sized commercial and industrial projects than in previous years. This trend is continuing again this year. Several years ago, permit values were skewed by construction of free-standing windmill towers.

Fire Inspections

We are currently working on a shared service solution, for some portions of the NS Fire Code Act, with the Municipality of Barrington.

Sub-Division Activity

To date in this calendar year we have taken in 3 Instrument of Subdivisions and 1 Final Plan of Subdivision, with a few waiting for more information to proceed. We had 21 sub-division files on the go in 2018. The type of subdivision, be it Instrument of Subdivision or Final Plan of Subdivision, is pretty well equal to last year.

Last year we had several multi lot subdivisions with the largest being 40 lots. All of this activity was on or just off Route 308, north of the 103.

Most of the subdivision activity continues to be 2-3 lot subdivisions or consolidation of existing lots.

Note:

The 2018 year end comparisons will be produced at fiscal year end in April.

Unightly or Dangerous

We followed up with the two previous complaints and the resident in Tusket is actively cleaning up and we agreed on a time frame till end of May 2019. The house in Sluice Point will be demolished by a local contractor with agreement of the owner and council. We are trying to minimize cost and are reviewing the option of partially demolishing the front of the house and leave the smaller addition as it is not in disrepair.

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In addition to the existing complaints we received another complaint about an unsightly situation on the Argyle Head Road. This case was reviewed and determined to be a case for Environment Nova Scotia. Wetland is being infilled with unsuitable material which may cause contamination to water courses.

The order of remedy for the property in Pleasant Lake has been expired without actions by the owner. Gary d'Entremont excavating has been awarded the contract to proceed with the cleanup. Most of the other cases have been resolved or are under review due to safety issues. We are working on the dangerous situations first with unsightly complaints receiving attention later.

The new dangerous and unsightly committee is actively involved and is helping with reviewing several cases that need attention and a long-term strategy for full clean up. This includes the property in Glenwood and one in Comeau's Hill.

The dangerous and unsightly committee is working on ideas to help people in need to stay on top of property maintenance or litter clean up to help with community beautifications. A proper policy is in the works.

The new dangerous and unsightly policy is under review and with the approval of the CAO it will be handed over to the committee for review and comments.

Maintenance

Winter season is still upon us and Wayne, Louis and Vaughn are working hard to stay on top of it. Most of our gear for the upcoming spring and summer season is ready to go and we are focusing on getting our OHS work safety procedures in place before the mowing season starts. We didn't come across any major issues this winter and were able to fix some small issues within budget.

Industrial Park

Several lots are pending sales and staff is actively supporting the CAO with the process. 3 lots are under review by the UARB and development on hold for now. There are a few lots left for sale and more interest from developers is existing. More updates will follow once the UARB review is over and a decision is made.

Staff

Kim Rowley is leading the Community Litter Cleanup project. She managed to get an increased budget approved by council and is expanding the program to a broader audience with the goal to attract more groups and clean a larger area this year. Goal is to get groups out earlier this year to avoid flies and ticks. We are still in the sign-up phase and more updates on the program will follow soon.

During our JOHSC meeting we identified several safety training deficiencies and staff will be following up on the missing certificates very soon.

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Louis, Vaughn and Wayne finished their Fall Arrest Course successfully end of February. Wayne will be joining a 2-day confined space training course in early April to help Louis and Vaughn during this work as a spotter and safety person.

Software

All software is up to date and working good for us. The PC to run the SCADA software for our plant was replaced and the system is running more reliable than before and the contractor added a few features at no cost to make the operation even better for Vaughn.

Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee

The Municipality initiated a new Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee at the end of October 2018 as required by Provincial regulations. A special bulletin board has been established in the Kitchen of the Municipal Admin. Building and information about the regulations, local inspectors, committee members, first aid staff, agendas and meeting minutes are being posted on a regular basis. Any safety related issues should be reported immediately to your supervisor or committee member!

We are actively working on our Safety Program and will report back once the program is completed and ready to be rolled out. We are still in process of establishing the last few items and are actively reviewing our work safe procedures. New procedures will be established over the next months to create a high-level standard for a safer work environment. Most of the previously identified safety issues have been resolved. Next goal is to review and improve our workplace violence protection program.

During our last meeting we determined that all staff should have the latest version of WHMIS and we will provide more information about available e-learning programs via email soon.

Miscellaneous

1. Staff is working on the New Administration Building committee as well by providing guidance and explanations to committee members during the project.
2. Staff is also helping out with Project Management work at the Yarmouth International Airport on a case by case basis and is also helping YIAC staff and board with resolving issues and ideas.
3. Staff and CAO attended an Asset Management training course partially funded by FCM to help with the establishment of a local policy and better understanding of assets and operation. The training will continue over the winter/spring 2019 and could have a great outcome to future operation and service providing strategy. We established a new policy and are actively refining our level of service in order to better serve the community and use our resources more effectively. More info's will follow as we progress.

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Court House & Archives – Judy Frotten & Kaitlin Wood

The Argus

We are working on the spring 2019 issue, which should come out in late March/early April. The Argus is our most important program and allows us to maintain the Argyle connection with our members from Canada and the US.

MODA Newsletter

We are working on a spring issue of the municipal newsletter, with expected delivery to residents in April.

Budget time

We have submitted our draft budget request. We need to do a bit of work at the Court House this year, including updating alarm system (replacing all smoke/fire detectors), installing railing (per JOHSC), and resolving water issue (as we run out of water during dry summers).

AMHGS

The Historical Society's next board meeting will take place March 18th at 6:30pm. 2019 marks the Society's 30th anniversary, therefore there will be (more) events planned for the year. An events committee has been formed to assist with the many planned events for the year. A Building Committee has also been formed to assist HDO with managing and addressing building maintenance issues.

Book Launch

Gérald Boudreau launched his new book, "Biography of Cyriac Irénée Boudreau" on Feb. 25th at the Archives at 7:30pm. Gérald writes of his father's career and its impact on the Town of Wedgeport and on the Municipality of the District of Argyle during the 20th Century. The book is written in French and includes sections translated in English. We thank Warden Richard Donaldson and Danny Muise for representing Council at the launch.

Other events

We plan to have a March Break event on the afternoon of Monday, March 18th, a painting activity similar to last year. We will have Austin Saulnier do a presentation on the original properties/families of Abram's River, on March 27th (tentative date). Sandra Phinney will be hosting a "Bring on Spring Memoir Writing Workshop" at the Archives on March 30th. Cost is \$99 and registration is required. **Please note that these events are taking place at the Archives rather than the Court House as the building is more accessible and is heated.

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Professional Development

Judy will attend a WREN Connector Program luncheon in Yarmouth, on March 13th. Judy will also attend a Directors' meeting for the Association of Nova Scotia Museums (ANSM) on March 22nd in Halifax, with a meeting of the Executive to follow after the regular meeting.

Job Fair

ATCHA will participate as an exhibitor at the 2019 Yarmouth Job Fair, held at NSCC Burrige Campus on April 3rd, from 1pm to 6pm. This is a good way for us to reach potential candidates for our summer student positions.

Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee

Judy attended the JOHSC meeting on Feb. 12th. We continue to work through the list of items that need to be addressed, per site inspections conducted in fall 2018. Minutes are posted at the Archives, and the next meeting is scheduled for March 19th.

Argyle Farmers Market

Judy participated in a meeting of market members on Feb. 7th. The group discussed the viability of the market. A survey will be done of the community and vendors to see what changes should be considered. If the market takes place again this summer, there is a chance that it will not be on Court House & Archives property.

Peer Review

Judy and Kaitlin both participated in the Peer Review program for Young Canada Works (YCW). Judy evaluated 38 grant applications for Canadian Museum Association (CMA), and Kaitlin evaluated applications for Canadian Council of Archives (CCA). This represents @20-30 hours of work each, most of which is done outside of office hours. This is a wonderful way of giving back to the program, which is one of our main funders, and also helps us strengthen our grant writing skills and improves our own funding applications.

Forum Acadien 2019

Judy continues to work with a group of individuals/stakeholders, who are organizing a 3-day Acadian conference on Oct. 4, 5 & 6, 2019, in the Municipality of Argyle. The group continues to correspond by email to organize the conference and will plan another meeting in the coming weeks. We will keep you informed as details become available.

Research Requests / Membership Renewals

This continues to be a very busy time of year with membership renewals and research requests. We have also received a fair amount of correspondence from tourists planning on visiting this summer and contacting us to make those arrangements.

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Recreation Programming and Active Living – Ginette d’Entremont

South Shore Active Communities

As part of the committee for SSAC, I assisted with the presentation of Module 2 – The Outdoor Play Philosophy to staff of Little People’s Place in Shelburne on March 27th.

After the Bell

I am that Leader was rescheduled due to a storm from February 21 to February 28 and was a great success with over 30 girls from grades 7-9 in attendance.

March Break Activities

I will be assisting with all of the scheduled March Break activities that have been scheduled through a Facility Access grant. See Natalie’s report for more specific details.

Meetings

I will be attending the Health Promoting School (HPS) meeting at Plymouth School on March 7th.

I will be assisting with the Minor Baseball AGM on March 12th.

I will be attending the YSMRA meeting on March 26th in Shelburne.

I will be assisting with the Argyle Minor Soccer Club AGM on March 28th.

Gender Equity

I will be attending a session on Gender Equity focused on increasing the participation of women and girls in sport, recreation and physical activity on March 25th in Birchtown.

Run into Spring

I will be assisting with the 1st Run into Spring run on March 31st.

Presentation

I will be presenting on the benefits of Physical Activity on behalf of Réseau Santé at a Care Givers sessions on Saturday March 30th at École secondaire de Par-en-Bas.

Winter activities

As part of our Winter Hike Series, we had to cancel the hike planned Thursday February 28th at the Pubnico Point Trails due to icy conditions. This hike will be rescheduled at a later date. On March 7th we have a scheduled hike at La Roche a St. Pierre in Comeau’s Hill.

Municipal and Provincial Volunteer Banquets

I am continuing to work on the specifics of the Municipal Volunteer Banquet. We have chosen Audrey Doucette as the Municipal Volunteer Representative that will be attending the Provincial Volunteer Banquet in Halifax on April 1st.

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Director of Recreation Services – Natalie d’Entremont

Argyle Recreation Commission Strategic Plan

The ARC reviewed the draft Strategic Plan. Comments and recommendations were collected and the draft copy of the ARC Strategic Plan 2019 – 2022 was adopted in principle. The ARC Strategic Plan 2019-22 will be ready for Council’s approval in April.

ARC Terms of Reference

A few minor changes were made to the Argyle Recreation Commission’s terms of reference. The revised Terms of Reference will be added to Council’s agenda for approval in April.

Meetings attended:

- Workplace Wellness – February 4. – Weekday workplace challenge, massage therapy and noontime yoga sessions.
- Facility Access Task Team – March 6. Final report for grant.
- Argyle Recreation Commission – February 21
- Student Advisory Committee Drumlin – February 26
- Great Canadian Trail Western Loop connection meeting – February 6 and March 7

Winter Hike Series

I have been assisting Ginette with Argyle Recreation’s winter hike series. The last of the series will take place March 7 in Comeau’s Hill.

March Break Activities (18-22):

- Monday & Wednesday:
 - 10am to 12 pm - Family Gym time- École Belleville
 - 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm – Sledge Hockey- Mariner’s Centre
- Tuesday & Thursday:
 - 10:00 – 12 noon – Family Gym time at École Belleville
 - 1:00 pm – 2:00pm – Sledge hockey – Mariner’s Centre
 - 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm – Free skate
- Friday:
 - 10:00am – 12 noon – Family Gym Time – École Belleville
 - 12 noon – 4:00pm – Family Bowling Brunswick Lanes.

All these March Break Activities are being funded by Thrive – Facility Access.

Argyle Minor Baseball AGM: March 12 at 6pm at the Municipal Office.

Clinique de Santé

I will be attending the preschool screening day at PEB to promote Argyle Recreation to young families.

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ReSport

Sport Nova Scotia is working with communities to transform the sport system for all. I will be attending a meeting on March 8th in Halifax.