

## **Staff Report January 12, 2021**

### **CAO and Municipal Clerk– Alain Muise & Lori Murphy**

#### **Municipal Administration Building \*Council Priority (multiyear)**

The building is advancing mostly on schedule, with payments being made out of our capital reserve for progress payments. Hans and I participate in all meetings, and we collectively agree on change orders. The project remains within budget parameters. Most of the external work is completed. While the bridge funding is available to us, at this point we are not borrowing to pay the bills, using internal funds instead.

#### **Affordable and Alternative Housing \*Council Priority (multiyear)**

The Request for expression of interest is posted publicly. The deadline for expression of interest is in early February 2021, but that will depend on interest. Our planners will be engaged to offer further advice on long term planning.

#### **Strategic priorities sessions**

See agenda for more information. The time is right for a priorities and strategy update, which will provide further focus and direction to both staff and council. The process will be informed by public engagement and research.

#### **Rural Internet – WREN \*Council Priority (multiyear)**

No significant update since the announcement of the project.

#### **COVID**

Nothing significant to update.

#### **Fishing dispute**

There will be a second meeting with Minister Jordan. Nothing significant to report outside of that.

#### **Mariners Center expansion \*Council Priority 2019-20**

Further planning work is happening with Exp, to determine what options we have for expansion at that location. Aquatic and fitness are clearly part of the project, with other services to be finalized.

#### **Bridge to aquatic service**

Council was invited to participate in a meeting with Y-caps volunteers who made a presentation of the value and need of a local aquatic solution. The detail of the presentation was shared with the rest of Council. No update from the committee

responsible for the restoration. COVID continues to be a factor in the ability to restore local services

### **Solid waste facility**

I attended the January solid waste facility meeting, and prepared a detailed financial assessment of the new recycling services delivered, offering needed support to the manager. I will likely support the work to amend our existing contract with Scotia Recycling.

### **Yarmouth International Airport Corporation \*Council Priority 2019-20**

Nothing significant to report, with a board meeting expected later this month.

### **Yarmouth Area Industrial Commission (YAIC)**

No meeting since the last report.

### **Other projects**

MLA LeBlanc has received a response from the Department of Lands and Forests regarding the mosquito issues in Hubbard's Point/Amirault's Hill. The initial response indicated the most likely culprit is a saltwater mosquito infestation. This particular breed can travel long distances for its prey. The solution for this particular infestation could be very costly, and we have been referred to Environment for further information. We are certainly not in a position to afford a solution municipally.

Our fire ponds project is now focused on properties that are owned by the departments or in the right of way of the Department of Transportation. We have received some pushback from some of the property owners on our project and will not proceed with any improvements in those locations without a more detailed review.

Policy work is ongoing, with ongoing changes that will first go to staff then to Council.

Posted two positions in early January, and considering additional HR adjustments for the organization.

### **Finance Department- Marsha d'Eon**

- With 9 months of the fiscal year over, I will be comparing budget to actuals and figures, making sure all is in order prior to March 31<sup>st</sup> year end and beginning preparation work for the upcoming 2021-2022 budget season.
- Bonnie is continually working on our annual Tax Sale which will be held on February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021. First ad will be published in the January 6<sup>th</sup> Vanguard.
- The 2021 Tax Assessment Roll has been completed by PVSC and will be downloaded and available on our Townsuite system as soon as possible.

- Sheila is working on payroll year end and will be issuing T4's in the near future.
- All other services, including monthly reconciliations, accounts payable, and monthly financial reporting to staff and Council continues and is on schedule.

## **Council Report Public Works and Development (Hans, Louis, John)**

### **West Pubnico Sewer Treatment Plant (WPSTP)**

#### **Plant Operations**

The plant is operating at high efficiency after having higher outfall sample numbers due to this summer's low water flows although we remain in compliance with NSDoE guidelines. Staff is still waiting, due to Covid travel restrictions on the replacement of the LEL (Lower Explosive Limit) gas detectors which are a requirement in any treatment facility. This should be installed as soon as restrictions ease for travel between provinces. Staff has also finished with the installation of the new hydraulic mixer and the plant is now back to normal operations. All 12 lift stations are running with very little interruptions and no major breakdowns.

This month we didn't come across any sewer connections.

#### **Capital Project Initiatives**

We are working actively with Trident Processes to get the MD Press dewatering machine details sorted out in order to make it fit within our existing Sewer Plant. During the process of sourcing the conveyor for transporting dewatered sludge we made the experience that we need a bit more complex unit to keep it clean and easy to use. We are waiting on a few quotes to complete this task, but we are still anticipating to have the unit ready by early April 2021. More details will follow soon.

The lateral upgrade on Franks Road has been completed by Amiro and Surette and is ready for the proposed development at this location.

We received a comprehensive report on the Red Cap pump station issue and are working through the report to make adjustments in the future with the goal to reduce the overflow risk at this location.

### **Tusket Sewer Treatment Plant**

#### **Plant Operations**

The plant is operating at high efficiency and is in compliance with NSDoE. Our outfall samples have returned to normal values after a very dry summer and lower than normal flows for an extended period of time. We are still awaiting on the report from CBCL as to their findings why our PH level is so low and so many solids end up in the treatment plant filters. Pumps and filters need more careful observation and more frequent cleaning due to these solids. This in turn increases the durability of our pumps which are at a high cost to replace. All 112 septic systems have been maintained for the

season and no major issues to report. The lift station is operating without any issues to report.

The brewery's field bed and treatment is still giving us issues even after tightening the side streaming, close monitoring, more frequent pumping efforts of the tank and doing repairs to the field bed. There will be a trial done to see if lower dosing can or will resolve some of these issues in the new year and the engineer has been notified and is aware of this issue.

We did not received any new connection request.

### **Capital Project Initiatives**

The Mission Communication Module is working well for us and we are collecting valuable data each day and noticed reduced overtime on monitoring and troubleshooting of the plant and pump station already.

### **East Pubnico Water Utility**

#### **System Operations**

Staff continues to monitor and repair as needed and meter reading are done on a regular basis. Water has been running at full capacity since the pump repair at civic #432 Willet Road.

### **Capital Project Initiatives**

We are working on releasing a tender soon with the goal to attract a qualified contractor to proceed with the well and manhole upgrades using ACOA funding in addition to capital reserve funds. These upgrades were long overdue and we are finally able to catch up with the age of the system and make valuable repairs and improvements.

### **Wedgeport Sewer Improvement Program**

#### **System Operations**

All 42 systems are in full operation with no major issues. Some of the BIO PRO systems needed minor adjustments since these are smaller versions of treatment plants but all are working without any issues to report.

### **Capital Project Initiatives**

We submitted 42 new locations to the consultant with the goal to get the conceptual design going and are making progress on receiving a couple more applications for the program. Depending on the COVID outbreak results from December 2020 we are looking forward to the individual site inspections by the engineer in February 2021 and proceed with installations this summer to complete the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of this project.

### **Municipal Administration Building**

We are actively engaged in the project and are supporting all involved parties with material selection, site clarifications, financial project claims and other upcoming questions. Garian Construction is the lead contractor and they are managing the project

well to stay on schedule to move into the new building by June 2021. We appreciate staff's engagement during the project with all kinds of material and color selection questions.

The outside of the building will be fully completed within the next week or two and the contractor will focus entirely on the inside of the building. Electrical and Mechanical work is still a priority for the next 3-4 weeks. The last few kinks for insulation are being addressed and then the focus will shift towards dry wall installation as soon as electrical and mechanical are completed, inspected and approved by our consultants.

Final touch ups on the landscaping and parking areas will be performed in the Spring.

### **Tusket New Road Development**

The new road in Tusket is substantially completed and the final touch will be done in the spring 2021. It is now known as Rue JE Hatfield Court. NS Power is working on the installation of the power lines and things are starting to come together.

The stormwater pond was successfully installed and proved to be working well. Further planting improvements will be performed by our own staff next year.

### **Policy and By-Law Working Group**

We are further developing our SOT schedule with the support of a legal team and hope to have provincial concerns addressed and our By-Laws registered for the use of Summary Offence Tickets. This process will most likely require a series of By-Law changes and we will present the affected By-Laws in the coming months. This could help us with the enforcement of several by-laws and increase our options on how to respond to certain situations in a more effective way.

We also successfully updated Overtime policy to better assist staff with clarification on this topic. Any questions on this policy can be directed to the Director of Public Works (Hans).

The municipal clerk is working on several staff policies regarding code of conduct, progressive discipline and other guiding rules to better guide and protect staff and the organization in case of any questions or concerns.

### **Planning Department / GIS Work**

Alix is actively working on the following projects and initiatives:

- Helped film a Christmas Message from Warden Danny Muise
- Created spreadsheets of civic addresses for all MoDA fire departments for them to check their civic signs (for Kim)
- Newsletter Meetings
- ADA Data Committee Meeting on Dec 4
- Presented to Council about ADA on Dec 8 with Charlene
- Completed maps on affected residents for drought issue (for Janine)
- Created housing stock map and dwelling age graph for WREN/Alain
- Created coordinates for buoy locations for Raymond d'Entremont's oyster lease

- Created a spreadsheet dividing civic addresses in Pubnico/Argyle area by postal code for Canada Post
- Met with Charlene via Zoom with a group from Gabarus, CBI, to talk about aquaculture
- ADA Steering Committee meeting on Dec 18
- Zoom with Charlene and Wendy Vissers of Dept. of Fisheries and Aquaculture about marine plants

The new Land Use By-Law was adopted by council in July of 2020 and went into effect (effective date) November 2020. MODA has engaged WSP to handle all our planning issues on a contract basis for the immediate future. The adoption of the new LUB is the trigger for mapping updates and renaming of existing development zones, which is being handled by Alix.

### **Animal Control**

SPCA is handling all of our domestic animal complaints and they had a few calls without major issues. 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.

No other animal complaints were filed.

### **Garbage Handling**

We successfully renewed our Solid Waste Collection contract and operation continues without major changes. We are working with Wastecheck on a few garbage complaints and optimized the Fall and Spring clean up routes with the Pick up contractor.

After recent discussion with the current contractor we started to receive all rejection notifications and are keeping track of residents that are not properly disposing their waste. WasteCheck and the Collection contractor have increased their activities in checking green bins for plastics due to severe issues at the composting facility. This will avoid cost increases due to fines.

All other collection activities are running as per schedule and weather permitted delays are being handled on time.

### **Building Inspection Report**

In the 2020 building season, staff have issued 131 Building Permits. Staff has also issued 112 development permits. Note: a Demolition Permit is tallied under the Building Permit numbers and the adoption of the new LUB require all development within the municipality to start with a Development Permit. We have provided background information for several possible rezoning inquiries. 9 letters for Zoning Confirmations have also been issued.

### **Fire Inspections**

All my assignments for the Fire Inspector Level 1 - Home Study Program are now complete; with the final exam being scheduled for mid-January. As part of the continuing

education of the Fire Inspector Level 1 Certification Program, nine additional courses are available. These courses are offered at conferences held bi-annually throughout the province. To date I have successfully completed: Building Classification, Basic Electrical, and Hazmat Awareness.

In preparation of performing Fire Safety Inspections, I have been reviewing files, creating a new electronic filing system, and a detailed database.

### **Sub-Division Activity**

We had a total of 19 sub-division files in 2020. The type of subdivision, be it Instrument of Subdivision or Final Plan of Subdivision, is pretty well equal. There are no large multi lot subdivisions on the books, as the majority of activity, is 2-3 lot subdivisions or consolidation of existing lots. One large subdivision created over the past two calendar year has been expanding, both in lot count and building development activity. Substantial economic gains for the municipality have been generated by this development.

### **Unsightly or Dangerous**

Over the last month, we were dealing with a serious noise complaint issue and were responding to further incidents before and over the holidays. Further legal actions will be taken in order to restore the peace of the neighborhood and we hope to have this issue resolved soon.

We are also working on a series of new garbage related complaints and are still trying to resolve ongoing issues. We are focusing on the severe situations first and then handling the remaining situations on a case by case basis.

We are also trying to identify areas of training and PPE that would be needed to improve our operations and procedures to make it safer for staff and residents.

### **Maintenance**

Staff has been busy with finishing up last minute summer projects. Equipment maintenance has been ongoing in preparation for next season. All projects are looking very good and maintenance is being done at a high level of excellence.

### **Industrial Park**

We continue to receive requests from interested buyers for the remaining lots. It appears that the medicinal processing plant will proceed and we are available to support the owner with the sewer connection requirements. The Tuskett Falls Brewery is reviewing their chances on re-zoning their lot and are looking into a possible food serving use. We still have 2 lots available for sale.

### **Staff**

Staff made it good through the holidays with very little emergency incidents and everyone seems refreshed and ready for 2021.

Tara is focusing on completing her Fire Inspector training and become a certified Inspector for our Community.

We are still working through the internal responsibility changes and the teams are adjusting well to the change.

### **Software**

At present all software used in the Public Works and Inspection office is up to date and working well. In the winter months of 2021 software functions will be reviewed and updated for the building permit, fire inspection and development permit functions. Changes to applicable Nova Scotia Codes make these software changes necessary.

### **Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee**

The Municipality Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee had paused shortly with the outbreak of the pandemic but resumed very quickly after and released a series of work safe procedures and guidelines to ensure the safety of all staff. We are meeting on a monthly basis and renewed our program as required on an annual basis. We are welcoming a new member to the team and Alix d'Entremont joined the Committee as a new staff representative. We are glad to have him on the team and are looking forward to his engagement in this important role.

Staff is moving along good with the establishment of certain work safe procedures that are needed for a variety of special tasks and that are not covered by national standards. We are also making immediate changes and improvements to tasks that create a high risk or have resulted in injuries.

Any safety related issues should be reported immediately to your supervisor or committee member!

### **Miscellaneous**

1. Staff is working on the improvement of the Comeau's Hill Rd Wharf. The window of opportunity has closed on this project until spring 2021. The pavement plant is shut down and weight restrictions will come into effect until late May. I was in contact with Aberdeen Paving Ltd and they have assured us the quoted price will stand for next spring.
2. We are also looking into the opportunity to introduce alternative heating systems to the community with the goal to offer more affordable heating options in a more economic viable and environmental friendly way. We are working with Torchlight Bioresources to explore the option of pellet heating and how it could create a positive change to the region and open potential doors for the local forestry sector. We are in the Chicken and Egg situation and are trying to review ways to foster biomass heating solutions.

### **Deputy Clerk - Kim Rowley**

- Accessibility Advisory Committee
  - Creating a survey to put out in January for feedback from the public
  - Went around to all areas in the Municipality with Ginette to take pictures of mostly recreational assets to assess with the committee



- Meeting with Ginette & Lori – Dec 7<sup>th</sup>
  - Meeting with Lori, Alain & Ginette – Dec 15<sup>th</sup>
- REMO
  - Assist Janine with tasks
  - Set training schedule for all councilors with Rhonda Matthews from EMO NS – Jan 6<sup>th</sup>
  - Met with Janine to complete Municipal EMO Assessment Tool – Dec 16<sup>th</sup>
  - Planning Committee Meeting – Dec 9<sup>th</sup> & Dec 17<sup>th</sup>
  - REMO Executive meeting – Dec 1<sup>st</sup>
- Grants to Organizations
  - Sent out letters to the final grants for 2020, as well as the partial payments
  - Completed the online applications for 2020
  - Set up a meeting with Gary from Filo to update the online process. As well as possible policy changes to the Grants to Orgs in the New Year. Jan 11<sup>th</sup>
- Recreation
  - After the Bell – Dec 8 & Dec 15<sup>th</sup>
  - SAR Rappie Pie Seniors Lunch – Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Fire Departments
  - Working on getting all residents a blue civic sign. Alix worked on spreadsheets with the civic sign numbers & the Fire Departments will be working on completing the spreadsheets. (which residents need a sign)
  - Requested Accessibility information from each chief
- Newsletter
  - Created a committee to develop a new digital newsletter which we met several times & our plan is to have it launch the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of January
- Workplace Wellness
  - McDonalds Breakfast – Dec 10<sup>th</sup>

### **Community Development Officer Report-Charlene LeBlanc**

Dec 4, 2020 – Jan 7, 2021

- Alix and I did a presentation on Aquaculture Dev for council meeting on Dec 8<sup>th</sup>.
- Alix and I repeated the presentation for people in the Gabarus Bay region of Cape Breton and then again for a larger group including Cape Breton Regional Enterprise.
- I hosted a small workshop for oyster farmers on the topic of the Oyster Industry in NS.
- Conversation with Quebec based Merinov re: R & D projects that could benefit the ADA (Aquaculture Development Area).
- Alix and I met with the Marine Resource Advisor- Marine Plants in the ADA

- Sent our aquaculture Area of Analysis Map to both Brazil Rock Association and Cold Water Association.
- I have accepted to be part of the TMAC 2022 Southwest Nova Scotia host committee. (Travel Media Association of Canada)
- Received market prices for lots behind new Municipal building.
- Shared with businesses Canada jobs funding application and provided assistance to some.
- Assured the Covid tax rebate application was being used of by qualifying businesses
- Attended ADA steering and Data committee meetings.
- Assisted some AFF clients with claim forms.
- Dalhousie's MWB teams (Management without Borders) have submitted their report on Drought and EMO has a copy as do I.
- Attended the Dr recruitment meeting
- Attended a couple Tourism meetings with neighbouring EDO's and WREN

#### **Court House & Archives – HDO & Archivist Report - Judy Frotten**

- **Fall Guide** – We hired Kaitlyn Cosman through funding received from YCW – Canadian Museums Association, on a part-time basis from Sept. 28 to Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>. She worked all her hours by Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup>, & we completed final reports and exit interview. Kaitlyn worked on a few small projects but her main role was social media posting and promoting “Tusket River Reminiscing” project on FB. She worked from home for the second half of work term.
- **Tusket River Project** – In early Nov. Kaitlyn Cosman launched social media aspect of our collaborative project with Francine Dulong of Blooming Ludus. She created posts and videos, engaging with people who were posting/emailing. In this community engagement project we asked the public to share memories, photos, etc. with the aim to create a virtual exhibit this winter. Carla Allen wrote an article which appeared in the Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup> issue of “The Tri-County Vanguard.” We will continue to accept content until at least the end of January. (If further funding can be secured in 2021, we will work with Francine towards the next phase of the project.)
- **PADP Project** – Peter Crowell continues as contract archivist for the specially funded PADP project “**Municipality of Argyle 2000-2010 records processing project**”. The project is expected to wrap up by end of Feb.
- **JOHSC / Pandemic Planning Committee** – Judy attended Dec.8<sup>th</sup> JOHSC meeting- next meeting scheduled Jan.12<sup>th</sup>. She also attended Pandemic Planning meeting (formerly “Back to Work working group”) on Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>.

- **ANSM** – Judy and Kaitlin Wood participated in ANSM’s virtual “Deep Dive” on “Accreditation” on Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>. This series is offered by Association of NS Museums (ANSM) to assist participating museums with preparation for Museum Evaluation Program (MEP) which will take place in 2021.
- **AMHGS / Strategic Plan** – Judy and Kaitlin continue to assist the Historical Society (AMHGS) with the development of a new Strategic Plan. The “Policies Committee” met on Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> and will meet again on Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>. This document is crucial to both AMHGS and our 2021 Evaluation. Next AMHGS Board meeting is Jan. 20<sup>th</sup>.
- **The Argus** – The Fall/Winter 2020 issue of the Argus is being delivered to members this week. This double issue includes: Margaret d’Entremont interview (part of our oral history project); School House Cove Cemetery (a Peter Crowell article on Kemptville); two articles by former summer students: “The Simon “Square” d’Entremont House (by Alissa Adams) and Marguerite (LeBlanc) Muise (by Brittany Paulick); more WWII excerpts from Basil LeBlanc’s wonderful memoir “A Journey into the Past”; and the issue ends with a lovely section where AMHGS Board members share some of their favourite Christmas memories/traditions (a great way to introduce the Board and provide Christmas content). We will soon be doing some social media posts to try and boost our membership numbers, since they suffered a bit (@10%) in 2020, due to the pandemic and lack of tourists/new researchers.
- **Grant applications** – Though some of our federal funders are still processing our end of term reports for seasonal student projects for 2020, the 2021 project has just rolled out for both provincial and federal funding, with deadlines in January. Judy and Kaitlin are working on these applications for summer 2021 positions. Much thought needs to be put into what our tourist season will look like for this year, and what our employment needs will be, in order to create this year’s student positions.

#### **Director of Programming and Active Living -Ginette d’Entremont**

- **Grant applications**  
I will be applying for funding the summer employment opportunities through Young Canada Works and Canada Summer Jobs. The deadlines for both funding sources are towards the end of this month.
- **Active Communities Fund**  
I am wrapping up our AT project through this funding opportunity. Signage will be installed on the Rail Trails from Pubnico Head to Tusket as a pilot project, identifying kms from one community to the next. This is a great initiative from a

safety standpoint. If the signs remain undamaged in the next few months, I will apply for more funding to complete the 47 kms of Rail Trails in our Municipality.

The hiking brochure that I received funding for is in the final stages of production and should be complete in a few weeks. Printed copies should be available early February.

- **School partnerships**

I was asked and agreed to sit on the School Advisory Committee of Drumlin Heights Consolidated School as a community member. The advisory committee meets in person once a month. I attended my first meeting with them on December 16<sup>th</sup>.

- **Meetings**

November 17 - CEC École Belleville  
November 18 – ÉcolePlus École secondaire de Par-en-Bas  
November 19 – Yarmouth Shelburne Municipal Recreation Association (YSMRA)  
November 19 – Argyle Recreation Commission (ARC)

- **Professional development**

I will be attending a PAPE (Physical activity practitioners exchange) session on January 28<sup>th</sup> through Zoom. The topic of discussion will be Social Support Networks for Physical Activity.

I will be attending a ParticiP ACTION Webinar on January 21<sup>st</sup>.

- **Winter activities/events**

I am working on planning winter activities such as hikes and snowshoeing, however, these events are weather dependent as well as public health restrictions on numbers for events.