

**Region of Queens Municipality Regular Council**

**TUESDAY, JULY 28, 2020, 9:00 A.M.**

**ZOOM VIRTUAL**

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Mayor David Dagley, Chair  
Councillor Kevin Muise  
Deputy Mayor Heather Kelly  
Councillor Brian Fralic  
Councillor Susan MacLeod  
Councillor Jack Fancy  
Councillor Raymond Fiske  
Councillor Gilbert Johnson  
Chris McNeill, CAO  
Christine Watson, Admin Assistant – Planning & Development

**1.0 CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Dagley called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.

**2.0 CHANGES/APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**It was moved by Deputy Mayor Kelly and seconded by Councillor MacLeod that the Agenda be approved as presented.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

**3.0 PRESENTATIONS**

There were no presentations to come before this meeting.

**4.0 TABLING OF PETITIONS**

There were no petitions to come before this meeting.

**5.0 PUBLIC QUESTION/COMMENT SESSION**

No members of the public asked any questions or commented during this meeting.

## **6.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

### 6.1 Regular Council – July 14, 2020

**It was moved by Councillor Fralic and seconded by Councillor MacLeod:**

**THAT the minutes of the Regular Council meeting held July 14, 2020 be approved as circulated.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

### 6.2 Variance Appeal Hearing – July 14, 2020

**It was moved by Councillor Fralic and seconded by Councillor Fiske:**

**THAT the minutes of the Variance Appeal Hearing held July 14, 2020 be approved as circulated.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## **7.0 DANGEROUS OR UNSIGHTLY PREMISES**

There were no items to come before this meeting.

## **8.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### 8.1 Highway Signage

**It was moved by Councillor Muise and seconded by Deputy Mayor Kelly:**

**THAT Council of the Region of Queens Municipality select design option 2 for highway signage design and that staff be requested to move forward to finalize sign design, development and installation.**

Jenny Rockett, Director of Economic Development, stated following the last Council meeting, m5 developed a series of colored signs for consideration. Following discussions with them and representatives from Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, Option 2, a singular image, was chosen and can be different depending on location.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## **9.0 CORPORATE SERVICES**

### 9.1 Municipal Government for All Vision Framework

**It was moved by Councillor Fralic and seconded by Councillor Fiske:**

**THAT the Council of the Region of Queens Municipality adopt the Municipal Government for All Vision Framework;**

**AND FURTHER THAT the proposed job description for Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator be approved;**

**AND FURTHER THAT staff be requested to begin implementation of the Vision Framework immediately.**

Councillor MacLeod stated that although this topic is very important, she felt considerable input from Councillors and members of the public should be sought before moving forward. She further stated that Council should not be dealing with the issue today via Zoom as she feels that it would best be dealt with when Council could meet in person.

**It was moved by Councillor MacLeod and seconded by Councillor Fancy:**

**THAT the motion be referred to the newly elected Council who will be elected in November.**

Councillors provided reasons for why they would / would not support the proposed motion. Some highlights included:

- More discussion needed before moving forward.
- Not a directive of Council.
- Not enough time to review document.
- Issue is relevant now and important to do now. Be the leader.
- Representatives from community will be on the committee.
- Document is a starting point and nothing wrong with the present Council moving forward today.

Councillor Fralic asked for clarification from Chris McNeill, CAO, on how and why the document was put together. Mr. McNeill stated the document has been an ongoing process for quite some time with research with different government agencies and other municipalities, some of which presently have a diversity coordinator and action plans already in place. Discussions were held with members of the community, including African Nova Scotians,

indigenous, and LGBTQ2S+. The vision framework is a starting point and there is a need to have someone focused on this in order to implement.

Councillor Fralic further enquired to the number of other Municipalities that have a diversity coordinator in place. Mr. McNeill stated following his participation in a NSFM webinar, the Town of Truro, Town of New Glasgow and the Municipality of Kings have a plan and diversity coordinator in place; as well as HRM have a large diversity department.

Mr. McNeill further stated this is a process and not a quick fix. If adopted, the first step will be internal education within our own organization and to promote to the public. Part of the process will be to advertise for a diversity action team that will be made up of people who are most affected and have direct input into what needs to be changed, how it needs to be changed and how quickly. This team would then have input into the hiring of the coordinator, they would assist with the work plan and the final step would be the hiring of the coordinator, who would then work with the team in finalizing the work plan. RQM would investigate if provincial or federal funding would be available.

**It was moved by Councillor MacLeod and seconded by Councillor Fancy:**

**THAT the refer motion be withdrawn.**

**MOTION CARRIED with 7 in favour, 1 against.**

## **10.0 ENGINEERING & WORKS**

There were no items to come before this meeting.

## **11.0 FINANCE**

- 11.1 Transitioning of Current Employee Pension Plan to Public Services Superannuation Plan

**It was moved by Councillor Muise and seconded by Councillor Fiske:**

**THAT Council of the Region of Queens Municipality authorizes the Chief Administrative Officer and the Mayor to conclude the transfer of the Region of Queens Defined Benefit Pension Plan**

**(the “Plan”) to the PSSP (the “Transfer”), including, without limitation, the following:**

- 1. To finalize the form of the agreement (the “Transfer Agreement”) with the PSSP Trustee (“PSSPTI”) documenting the Transfer, with such further amendments to the draft Transfer Agreement are as necessary to conclude an agreement with PSSPTI in respect of the Transfer, and to execute the Transfer Agreement;**
- 2. To finalize employee group agreements with trade unions, providing for the Transfer, as necessary;**
- 3. To execute such other notices, agreements and other documents as may be necessary to give effect to the Transfer, including, without limitation, providing for the amendment of the Plan to provide for the Transfer; and**
- 4. To ensure that the anticipated financial limit of the Municipality’s exposure to give effect to the Transfer does not exceed the assets in the Plan that will be transferred.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

#### 11.2 Finance Department Update

Jennifer Keating-Hubley, Director of Finance, provided an update on the finance department. Some highlights included:

- The financial condition indicators have been released for March 31, 2019.
- Additional information included with the Indicators report: number of dwellings (6,929) and population, which trended downwards from 2011 census to fall at 10,305 for 2016. 38% of population is over the age of 60.
- Overall assessment is green (low risk) for all 13 indicators, indicating great financial management. Last year RQM had one yellow indicator.
- Base FCI’s:
  - Three-Year Change in Tax base – 5.6%, which is above CPI, was 5.2% last year
  - Reliance on a Single Business/Institution – 4.0%, we are not dependent on a sole business.
  - Residential Tax Effort – Residential taxes divided by the median income (approximately \$47,000 for 2016) is 2.8% meaning that Council does have capacity to increase tax rate if necessary.

- Structure FCI's:
  - Uncollected Taxes – Based on arrears taxes divided by current year billed property taxes, 8.3%. RQM staff worked diligently on these indicators with more concentrated effort to reduce arrears balances. Since the implementation of the new payment system, there has been a huge uptake with on line banking. There is a 2.5% service charge when using credit card, which is through the service provider, and can be used for paying taxes, utility bills, Hillview Acres billings, parking tickets, permits, dog tags and solid waste.
  - 5 Year Budget Accuracy – RQM maintains spending within budget limits. We have not had a budget variance of +/- 5% in the last five years.
  - Operating Reserves – Based on operating reserves divided by operating expenses – 52.2%. We have reserves on hand available to us for such things as the pandemic, and did not have to participate in loans from the government.
  - Debt Service – Based on our principal and interest payments divided by our own source revenue. We are well within our threshold with 2.2%.
  - Outstanding Operating Debt – RQM does not have any outstanding operating debt (short term financing).
  - Undepreciated Assets – Based on our net book value divided by our gross costs of our infrastructure – 66.1%. We have less infrastructure challenges than other municipalities might have.
- Roof FCI's:
  - Deficits in the Last 5 Years – RQM has not reported a deficit in the last 5 years.
  - Liquidity – Based on current assets divided by current liabilities, 7.8%. Cash flow on the day to day basis to fulfil your operation and service needs.
  - Reliance on Government Transfers – RQM has no cash flow issues and are able to meet service obligations – 7.8%; not dependent on government transfers to meet obligations.
  - Combined Reserve – Based on operating and capital reserves divided by operating expenditures plus amortization of capital assets. RQM met threshold of greater than 40% at 71.1%.
- First Quarter Financial Statements will be available at next council meeting in hopes of having better, more up-to-date information at that time. (COVID delayed assessment appeals and some invoicing.)

Finance Director has been working to conclude the transfer of the Region's pension plan finalizing a draft transfer agreement with a motion for Council's approval to conclude on today's agenda. This has been a lengthy process, the draft agreement prep alone has been in play since February 2020, with the entire research and review

of the option on-going since late 2018. There is benefit for both ratepayers of the Region and members (staff) in the PSSP (Public Service Superannuation Pension) plan and Council should be commended for having the foresight to recognize that benefit.

Hillsview Acres:

- Have been dealing with a number of regulation changes dealing with Covid. Staff have done a great job working with families. At present are not participating in indoor visits but have extended exterior visits outside.
- Repairs to roof have been completed. There are other areas to be dealt with at a later date.
- The out-building has been re-shingled as well.
- Experienced boiler issues earlier this year which have now been repaired. A new hot water tank has been installed and will provide backup.
- Fuse panels will be upgraded to a breaker panel. Investigating the option of heat pumps.
- Hired new staff – casual CCAs. Current staff compliment is adequate and working well.

## **12.0 RECREATION AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES**

There were no items to come before this meeting.

## **13.0 PLANNING**

### **13.1 Gravestone Replacement Guidelines – Old Burial Ground**

**It was moved by Deputy Mayor Kelly and seconded by Councillor MacLeod:**

**THAT Council of the Region of Queens Municipality approve guidelines respecting gravestone replacement in the Old Burial Ground in Liverpool.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

### **13.2 Rezoning 79 Payzant Street in Liverpool to Light Industrial (M1)**

**It was moved by Deputy Mayor Kelly and seconded by Councillor Fiske:**

**THAT the Council of the Region of Queens Municipality amend the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw to rezone PID #70024518 from Restricted Residential (R1) to Light Industrial (M1);**

**AND THAT a Public Hearing be held on August 25, 2020 in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, 249 White Point Road in Liverpool, NS, at 9:00 a.m.**

Mike MacLeod, Director of Planning & Development, stated an application was received to rezone property located at 79 Payzant in Liverpool from Restricted Residential (R1) to Light Industrial (M1). The owners wish to operate an automotive machining and welding operation.

There is an existing development agreement registered on the property allowing for several uses which are not permitted in the R1 zone such as offices, recreational, retail stores and parking which was entered into between the Town of Liverpool and C. Eugene Construction Limited in 1987. The uses being proposed don't comply with the zone permitted uses or the uses permitted under the development agreement. Following review of the development agreement, it has been determined that an amendment cannot be considered as we are unable to allow new land uses that are not current permitted under the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw. The proposed uses by the applicant would be considered under a Light Industrial (M1), which can be considered through an amendment to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw.

Options to consider are:

1. Maintain status quo (deny amendment request).
2. Amend the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw to rezone PID #70024518 from Restricted (R1) to Light Industrial (M1).
3. Consider the request under the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Review project.

The Planning Advisory Committee reviewed the application and proposed use and a majority of the members recommended Option 2.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## **14.0 REPORTS**

There were no items to bring before this meeting.

## **15.0 IN-CAMERA ITEMS**

**It was moved by Deputy Mayor Kelly and seconded by Councillor Fiske that the proceedings go In-Camera at 10:55 a.m. to discuss the following:**



**15.1 Contract Negotiations**  
**15.2 Contract Negotiations**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

Mayor Dagley announced the In-Camera session would begin at 11:30 a.m. via Teleconference.

Councillor Fiske returned to In Camera at 12:00 Noon.

**It was moved by Deputy Mayor Kelly and seconded by Councillor Fiske that the proceedings exit In-Camera at 12:40 p.m.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

15.1 Contract Negotiations

Councillor Fiske declared a Conflict of Interest while Item 15.1 Contract Negotiations was being discussed.

**It was moved by Councillor Fralic and seconded by Councillor Muise:**

**THAT the Council of the Region of Queens Municipality approve the proposed Collective Agreement between Region of Queens Municipality and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1928, effective April 1, 2020.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

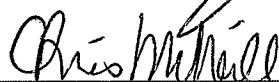
**16.0 ADJOURNMENT**

**It was moved by Deputy Mayor Kelly and seconded by Councillor Muise that the meeting be adjourned at 12:43 p.m.**

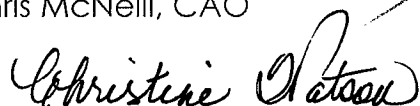
**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**



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Mayor David Dagley, Chair



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Chris McNeill, CAO



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Christine Watson, Administrative Assistant – Planning & Development

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

*August 11, 2020*