

Region of Queens Municipality Regular Council
Tuesday, April 13, 2021, 9:17 a.m.

Minutes

Present: Mayor Darlene Norman, Chair
Deputy Mayor Kevin Muise
Councillor Ralph Gidney
Councillor Maddie Charlton
Councillor Vicki Amirault
Councillor Jack Fancy
Councillor David Brown
Councillor Carl Hawkes
Chris McNeill, CAO
Christine Watson, Admin. Assistant – Planning & Development

1.0 Call to Order

Mayor Norman called the meeting to order at 9:17 a.m.

2.0 Changes / Approval of Agenda

It was moved by Councillor Brown and seconded by Councillor Hawkes 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

Leon Robertson, College Street, Liverpool – Mr. Robertson stated he had heard in the press this week about the province revamping municipal regulations with respect to virtual meetings, which RQM must be aware of. He enquired if the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities Spring Conference will be held virtually and if there are any members from RQM attending. Mayor Norman stated the conference will be held virtually and attendance will be discussed under Item 14.1.

Mr. Robertson further enquired when the budget would be on the agenda. Mayor Norman stated at the next regular Council meeting on Tuesday, April 27 at 6 p.m.

6.0 Approval of Minutes

6.1 Regular Council – March 23, 2021

It was moved by Councillor Fancy and seconded by Councillor Charlton:

THAT the minutes of the Regular Council meeting held March 23, 2021 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 Astor Theatre Society – Request for Decreased Rent

It was moved by Councillor Gidney and seconded by Councillor Fancy:

THAT the Council of Region of Queens Municipality waive Astor Theater Society's outstanding rent of \$2,000 for 2020-21 and further rental payments totaling \$4,500 until December 31, 2021.

Jenny Rockett, Director of Economic Development, stated that due to public health orders related to the COVID-19 pandemic the Astor Theatre closed its doors in March 2020. The current lease was signed in June 2020 and expires on April 30, 2025 with rent of \$6,000 per year. However, the lease was signed during the pandemic, with the Astor Theatre not being open, a reduced rent of \$3,000 was approved for the first year of the five-year term. It was expected that the Theatre would resume operations in September 2020, which did not happen.

Currently there is \$2,000 outstanding in rent. The Chairman of the Astor Theatre Society, John Simmons, has requested that this amount be waived as well as the rent be waived until the end of 2021.

Councillor Gidney stated that the Municipality is not doing enough to support its community groups.

Deputy Mayor Muise enquired if the money RQM received from the province for COVID relief could cover these costs. Mr. McNeill, CAO, stated potentially yes.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

9.0 Corporate Services

9.1 Bylaw No. 18 Respecting Deed Transfer Tax

It was moved by Councillor Amirault and seconded by Councillor Charlton:

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality give first reading to Bylaw No. 18 Respecting Deed Transfer Tax.

Mr. McNeill stated the Municipal Government Act authorizes municipal councils to charge a tax on the sale of a property which is referred to as a deed transfer tax up to a maximum of 1.5% which varies across the province. Our current rate is 1% but as Council is aware during budget deliberations, we have significant financial challenges going forward so to help lessen the amount that we increase the tax rate, Council has asked that we increase the deed transfer tax to 1.5% to help increase revenue.

All Bylaws require first reading; followed by a newspaper advertisement for public input. It will come back to Council for second reading in a month and for further council deliberation based on public input. At that time, Council will decide if they agree or not with the Bylaw change.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

9.2 Fire Department & Medical First Responder Annual Registration

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Muise and seconded by Councillor Gidney:

THAT Council of the Region of Queens Municipality approves the 2021-2022 fire department and medical first responder registrations effective April 1, 2021 for Greenfield and District Fire Department, Liverpool Fire Fighters Association, Mill Village and District Fire Department, North Queens Fire Association, Port Medway Fire Department and West Queens Medical First Responder Society according to the service levels for each department included on their 2021-2022 Application for Registration.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

10.0 Engineering & Public Works

There were no items to come before this meeting.

11.0 Finance

11.1 April 7, 2021 Tax Sale Preliminary Report

Mallory Plummer, Manager of Finance, stated a tax sale was held Wednesday, April 7, 2021 for 58 properties. Two properties were paid in full prior to the sale. The sale was held at the call centre with 6 sessions being held to accommodate 189 registrants. Fifty-three of the property sold with one falling through. The sales will cover \$144,917 in outstanding taxes and \$641,965 being deposited into the tax sale surplus account and held for 20 years.

Ms. Plummer thanked Penny Benedict, Tax Clerk, KayLee Oickle, Finance Clerk, Joanne Veinotte, Director of Corporate Services, Scott LeBlanc, Solid Waste Clerk/Safety Officer, Kelley-Anne Hurley, Bylaw Enforcement Officer, IT staff, Engineering & Public Works staff and Chris McNeill, CAO, for making the tax sale such a success.

Another tax sale is being planned for September 2021.

12.0 Recreation & Healthy Communities

There were no items to come before this meeting.

13.0 Planning

- 13.1 Variance Appeal – PID #70275094 Property at Rear of 87 Bristol Avenue in Liverpool

It was moved by Councillor Fancy and seconded by Councillor Charlton:

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality uphold the decision of the Development Officer to issue a variance for a reduced lot area to facilitate development of six (6) additional apartment units on property identified as PID #70275094.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

14.0 Reports

- 14.1 Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities Spring Conference 2021

Councillors Charlton, Amirault and Gidney expressed an interest in attending this conference virtually.

15.0 In-Camera Items

It was moved by Councillor Brown and seconded by Councillor Hawkes that the proceedings go In-Camera at 9:38 a.m. to discuss the following:

- 15.1 Sale of Municipal Property
15.2 Personnel Matter

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

Mayor Norman announced a 5-minute recess at 9:38 a.m.

It was moved by Councillor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Brown that the proceedings exit In-Camera at 10:40 a.m.

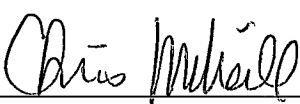
MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

16.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:41 a.m.



Mayor Darlene Norman, Chair



Chris McNeill, CAO



Christine Watson, Administrative Assistant – Planning & Development

Date Approved: 
