

**Region of Queens Municipality Regular Council
Tuesday, June 14, 2022, 9:00 a.m.**

Minutes

Present: Mayor Darlene Norman, Chair
Deputy Mayor Kevin Muise
Councillor David Brown
Councillor Vicki Amirault
Councillor Maddie Charlton
Councillor Ralph Gidney
Councillor Jack Fancy
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 9:00 a.m.

2.0 Changes / Approval of Agenda

Item 7.1 should read Medway Head Lighthouse Society for Waiver of Policy 58 – Consumption of Alcohol on Municipal Property.

It was moved by Councillor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Hawkes that the Agenda be approved as amended.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

3.0 Presentations

3.1 Brighter Days Capital Campaign, South Shore Regional Hospital –
Tim O'Regan, Paul Snow

Mayor Norman welcomed Paul Snow, Chairman, and Tim O'Regan, Campaign Co-Chair, to council to provide information on the South Shore Regional Hospital Expansion (copy of presentation attached to original set of Minutes).

Some highlights included:

Project Scope:

- Expansion increase of 28.65% or 48,705 square feet, with an overall cost of \$115.7 Million.

Facility Additions:

- Two-storey addition to Emergency Department, Ambulatory Care, Endoscopy Unit and Dialysis Unit, in addition to four Ambulance Bays.
- A single storey addition will be home to a new MRI suite as well as two smaller additions to accommodate essential upgrades to mechanical and electrical systems.

Project Highlights:

- The Emergency Department will triple in size with an increased number of exam rooms from 14 to 20.
- There will be a new access road to the HeliPad.
- There will be a Dialysis Unit with 12 treatment chairs, a new MRI Suite and new SPEC-CT Scanner.
- Expanded Endoscopy and Day Surgery.
- Weather-protected Ambulance Bays.
- System upgrades will target LEED Silver level certification.
- Construction will be phased over a 4 year period with a completion date of 2025.

Brighter Days Capital Campaign

- Community has been asked to raise \$6.6 million to fund medical equipment.
- David Himmelman and Tim O'Regan are Co-chairs of the campaign committee, which also has in excess of 100 volunteers to work with them on the campaign.

Community Impact

- The South Shore Regional Hospital services Lunenburg, Queens and a portion of Shelburne Counties.
- Will have a positive impact with the recruitment and retention of 60 – 80 health care professionals.
- Construction will have a positive impact on the economic activity potentially employing 300 construction workers.

Ways to Give

- Pledged gift (up to 5 years)
- One-time contribution
- Gifts of stocks, bonds, annuities, real estate or other capital property
- Requesting support from regional municipalities and towns both financially and logistically (i.e. ad space). Suggested gift from Region of Queens Municipality of \$100,000 over 4 years.

Councillor Fancy enquired if the expansion of the South Shore Regional Hospital would have a negative effect to the services provided at Queens General. Mr. Snow stated there would be no loss of services.

Councillor Brown enquired what the cost of fundraising is. Mr. Snow stated he did not know at the present time and there are only a few paid positions as most are volunteers.

Deputy Mayor Muise enquired if the day surgery would be running as before. Mr. Snow suggested that the MLA may be able to provide more information on where this issue stands.

Mayor Norman thanked Mr. Snow and Mr. O'Regan for their presentation and advised that Council will consider their request at a future date.

4.0 Tabling of Petitions

There were no petitions to come before this meeting.

5.0 Public Question / Comment Session

Leon Robertson, 45 College Street, Liverpool – Mr. Roberson commented on Item 8.2 – Liverpool Business Development Centre Future Investments. He enquired if there was no interest in anyone purchasing the building would some of the tenants move out if there was not enough space required for their business. Mayor Norman stated there has been no interest to purchase the building.

He further enquired if there are any Canada Day celebrations planned for this year. Mayor Norman stated yes and information would soon be posted.

Susan MacLeod, 57 College Street, Liverpool – Ms. MacLeod stated she was a Director for the Queens County Aquatic Society. She stated that following a survey done by the Society that the public were in favour of having a pool, and with the private donation of \$3 Million there would be considerable cost savings to RQM.

Ms. MacLeod further commented that there was no public interest in having a new library. She understood in conversations with the Library Board that the CAO contacted them offering them new library at no cost to the Board. She commented that there are vacant buildings in town that could be used.

She stated that Council should be working with the Aquatic Society.

Jillian Woo, 109 Sand Beach Road, Western Head – Ms. Woo stated she is a member of the Aquatic Society and offered comments that having a pool would be good for social interactions and is a requirement for children. She provided information on the new facility being proposed in Minas Basin.

Celeste Johnston, 120 Edgewater Drive, Hunts Point – Ms. Johnston provided background on work that the Society has been working on. She stated she felt there was resistance from RQM working with them. She noted she had submitted a Terms of Reference for the pool committee but has received no response or acknowledgement.

She further stated if their participation into the project is not wanted then they need to know and called for more openness and clarity.

Jeff Mercer, Chief Librarian, South Shore Regional Library, 145 Old Bridge Road, Liverpool – Mr. Mercer stated that the Library Board have been asking for a new library for some time and it was not Mr. McNeill, CAO, who initiated the process. Members of the public have been asking for a new facility. The present location can no longer sustain the library.

6.0 Approval of Minutes

6.1 Regular Council – May 24, 2022

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

THAT the minutes of the Regular Council meeting held May 24, 2022 be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.0 Recommendations

7.1 Medway Head Lighthouse Society – Waiver of Policy 58 – Consumption of Alcohol on Municipal Property

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality agree to waive Policy 58 – Consumption of Alcohol on Municipally Owned properties at the request of Medway Head Lighthouse at Port Medway Warehouse on August 19, 2022.

AND THAT the applicant be required to submit proof of insurance in no less than \$2,000,000 per occurrence with the Region of Queens Municipality as additional insured, and copy of the in effect liquor license from the Province of Nova Scotia to the Region, and that all municipal, provincial, and federal laws be strictly adhered to.

Dana Henley, Community Development Coordinator, stated a request was received from the Medway Head Lighthouse Society to serve alcoholic beverages at an opening reception on August 19, 2022. The Art Show is scheduled from August 19 – 28, 2022. The Society has attained this exemption in previous years.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.2 Thomas H. Raddall Library Steering Committee New Site Selection

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality approve the placement of the new Thomas H. Raddall Library on the lands of the Municipality adjacent to the sledding hill at the end of Queens Place Drive, Brooklyn.

Mayor Norman provided background stating the Library Steering Committee established site criteria including:

- the ability to house a 6000 square foot library,
- parking spaces for 24,
- adequate space and clearances for entrance and exit,
- easy access for emergency and delivery trucks,
- superior exterior lighting,
- outdoor grassed space for programming,
- space for outdoor storage,
- water supply for building and firefighting,
- not located where it is known to flood or drainage issues,
- close access to public transportation,
- access to sidewalks,
- currently zoned for library use, and
- municipally owned or reasonably priced from a private developer.

The Committee discussed all eight potential sites and was unanimous in its preferred site selection to be on the lands of the Municipality adjacent to the sledding hill at the end of Queens Place Drive in Brooklyn.

Councillors provided reasons why they did or did not agree with the selected location; some highlights included:

- The combination of having a pool and library together was not discussed as a Council.
- Council should be making the decision where the library is located and not the committee.
- Investigate having a feasibility study on having a library and pool combined.

- The Terms of Reference were provided by Council, therefore the direction did come from Council.
- The lands would not support having the library and pool combined and pools work best with rinks.
- MGA states that library services are a must.
- Concerns raised for youth and low income families having access to the library and be within walking distance. Where it is presently located, it is within walking distance of pre-schools and schools in the area. There are no libraries in schools.
- No public transit. Queens County Transit cannot transport pre-school aged children due to liability coverage.
- New location is hidden and out of the way.
- Library would be close to the Skate Park, the new playground, as well as Queens Place Emera Centre.

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

THAT the motion be referred back to the Steering Committee to look for accommodations in the downtown core.

MOTION DEFEATED with 4 in favour and 4 against.

Deputy Mayor Muise took the Chair at 10:07 am.

Mayor Norman stated that many people of all income levels shop at locations "across the bridge" such as the Dollarama, etc. Low income families visit the area and not just on this side of town. To say that low income families won't use the facility in the proposed location is not a reality.

The proposed location would provide expanded uses of the library, which is more than just books and also includes programming.

Users of the library would also have access to the Skateboard Park, which is free, as well as the new playground being built, which is also free.

Monies were received from the government and the library was budgeted for this year.

The library is for all of Queens's residents and not just the Town of Liverpool which should be taken into consideration and hope as a Council, that consideration would be given to long-term users.

Councillor Gidney did not agree with some of the comments made by Mayor Norman and felt they were meant to shame Council and stated he would not be supporting the location.

Councillor Amirault enquired if money could be provided for transporting groups to the library if in this location. Mr. McNeill stated yes, money could be budgeted.

Mayor Norman stated her comments were not made to shame Council for their opinions, and was offering her opinion and only asked that consideration be given for the long term plans for all of Queens.

MOTION DEFEATED with 3 in favour and 5 against.

7.3 Electoral Boundary Options

Roundtable discussions were held with Councillors to gain their input on the 2024 Electoral Boundary. Three options were provided, following discussions at the February 22, 2022 Council meeting.

The options are: Option 1 – Six Electoral Districts (average 1471), Option 2 - Seven Electoral Districts (average 1261) and Option 3 – Eight Electoral Districts (average 1104). Some highlights included:

- Option 2 is working well and will cut down on travel time for some.
- Option 2 lines up well with the other areas.
- Option 3 as Districts 6 and 7 covers a lot less travel time.
- Increase to tax payers for the addition of another Councillor.
- For public consultations, suggestion to have an on-line survey option.

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

THAT the Council of Region of Queens Municipality approve the preliminary boundaries for the 2024 municipal election public consultation process reflecting three options; six councillors, seven councillors and eight councillors.

AND THAT consultation take place with the public with Option 2 being the recommended option.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

8.0 Discussions

8.1 Council Implementation Report

There were no issues to come forward from this report.

8.2 Liverpool Business Development Centre Future Investments

Staff were requested to prepare a report for potential options for consideration following the May 24, 2022 Council meeting when staff brought forward two recommendations following a study on the HVAC system by DUMAC which would cost either \$1.2 Million or \$1.5 Million.

Options for consideration:

1. Carry out the single facility renovations and withdraw the full amount of approximately \$1.6 million from the operating reserve.
2. Carry out the four quadrant renovations and withdraw the full amount of approximately \$1.9 million from the operating reserve.
3. Carry out the single facility renovations and withdraw the full amount of approximately \$1.6 million from the call centre reserve and operating reserve.
4. Carry out the four quadrant renovations and withdraw the full amount of approximately \$1.9 million from the call centre reserve and operating reserve.
5. Carry out an independent appraisal of the building and offer to sell the building to the major tenant for the appraised value.
6. Carry out an independent appraisal of the building and offer to sell the building to the minor tenant for the appraised value.

7. Carry out an independent appraisal of the building and sell the building on the open market for the appraised value.
8. Offer the building for sale to a not-for-profit organization at less than market value.
9. Terminate the leases early and move the municipal building to this location and then sell the current municipal building.
10. Do nothing and keep operating the building under a status quo option until such time as the HVAC is no longer functional and able to be maintained. This option will require an increase in anticipated operations and maintenance costs, and it can be expected that the tenants will suffer significant periods of times where there are service interruptions due to repair work.
11. Borrow the required funding and repay the principal and interest payments on the tax rate each year for 10 years.
12. Renegotiate the rental terms with the two tenants to secure the long term rental of the facility to justify the capital investment.
13. Renegotiate the rental term rates with the two tenants to secure additional funding to help pay for the required capital investment.

Adam Grant, Director of Engineering & Public Works, stated the some equipment and compressors have been replaced several times over the last twenty years and parts can take a long to time to arrive.

Highlights from Councillors included:

- Carry out the renovations and borrow the money from reserves. It was pointed out that if borrowing money from our reserves, the pay back rules would be the same as borrowing through a debenture; over 10 years plus interest at the going rate.
- These costs do not include other maintenance such as roof replacement, parking lot repairs, exterior maintenance or generator replacement.
- Use 50% from reserves and 50% through debenture would mean 1 cent on the tax rate.
- The least impact on the tax rate would be preferable.
- Taking the full amount from reserves and would be a long time to replenish.

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

THAT 50% of the cost for repairs of \$1.9 Million come from reserves and 50% be borrowed through a debenture.

MOTION CARRIED with 7 in favour and 1 against.

Mayor Norman announced at 5 minute break at 10:57 a.m.

8.3 NSFM – Service Exchange Renegotiation and MGA Review Committee Survey

Mayor Norman stated that participation in the Service Exchange Renegotiation and MGA Review Committee survey is very important.

The objectives of the Service Exchange Agreement were:

1. To create strong, financially viable local governments
2. To develop a clearer, fair, provincial-municipal partnership, and
3. To rationalize service provision.

Under the Service Exchange Agreement, the provincial government took responsibility for:

- Social Services and Child Welfare
- Public Health and Long-term Care
- Administration of Justice
- Environment (regulatory aspects of sanitation and health standards)
- Highway Police Patrols and Central Police Services

The provincial government also continued to hold a range of responsibilities, such as those pertaining to healthcare, education, housing and provincial roads.

Municipalities took responsibility for:

- Making mandatory contributions to correctional services
- Policing
- Local Roads
- Sidewalks
- Public Transit
- Land-use Planning
- Building Inspection
- Recreation
- Control of Invasive Weed Species

Municipalities continued to be responsible for water and wastewater, management of solid waste, public libraries, and mandatory contribution to education and regional housing authority net operating losses.

Some municipalities also pay a per kilometer service exchange balancing fee in lieu of accepting the transfer of local roads under the Provincial-Municipal Service Exchange.

2. Considering the responsibilities listed above, which responsibilities does your council believe municipalities should maintain or assume and why?

Keep all services listed except the control of invasive weed species, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to maintain. We feel this should be a provincial jurisdiction so the control can be applied equally across the province.

3. Considering the responsibilities listed above, which responsibilities does your council believe the Province should maintain or assume and why?

J Class roads; this would allow financial contributions made by RQM to be allotted for other services.

Increased provincial participation for EHS recruitment and retention practices, which is a growing issue and an examination of staffing should take place.

Should not be contributing to mandatory education as this does not fall under municipalities and the costs associated could be allotted for other services.

4. What discretionary expenditures by your municipality does your council believe should be better supported by the Province?

Rural housing initiatives which are currently focused on in needs in HRM.

Support for rural economic development. RQM is not able to be part of a REN.

Support in public health, retention of doctors and nurses. RQM would benefit from having a walk-in clinic to alleviate the burden in the emergency department of Queens General.

5. To provide a sense of priorities, state the top three municipal expenditure responsibilities that your municipal council believes should be reviewed and why?

Education – Little or no municipal participation or oversight.

Policing – Review of current police funding models to look for an equitable financial contribution based on service across the province.

Solid Waste Disposal – Investigation into ways to more effectively and efficiently dispose of solid waste.

6. What new service responsibilities would your municipality find unacceptable?

- Licensing and regulation of electric scooters, bicycles and other vehicular compliance.
- Gun control
- Social services
- Environmental services
- Should not be the regulator of provincial rules.
- Should not be the funding health care initiatives.

The following questions pertain to the Municipal Government Act.

7. Please indicate the discretionary abilities that your council believes are useful for your municipality.

To establish a Municipal Code of Conduct.

Ability to engage in negotiation to increase affordable housing units.

Ability to sell land below market value to non-profit organizations or affordable housing projects.

8. What discretionary abilities conferred by the MGA does our municipal council believe are not useful and why?

None

9. What additional discretionary abilities does your municipal council believe should be granted by changes to the MGA?

None

10. A number of other federal and provincial statutes and regulations have implications for municipal budgets as non-discretionary expenses. Please indicate which regulations or responsibilities your municipal council finds to be causing considerable pressure on your budget and capacity to accomplish core goals.

Federal Wastewater Systems Regulations
Property Valuation Assessment Services

11. Are there any other responsibilities brought about by statutes or regulations that add significant pressure on your budget?

The accounting rules and regulations add pressure on the budget.

Maintenance of J Class roads.

12. If your county or district municipality elects a warden, please indicate whether, in the opinion of your municipal council, the warden system should be replaced by the mayoral system.

We have the mayoral system.

13. Village governance is established in Part XVII of the MGA. In the view of your municipality, should villages be consolidated with districts and counties? Please explain why or why not.

Yes. There are double standards where villages do not have the same fiscal responsibility or service delivery responsibility but are able and grow faster than some towns. Some villages have little justifiable reasons for being a separate entity outside of the municipality there are in. This would be a level playing field.

14. Under what conditions does your council believe municipal consolidation is advisable?

If economic growth is stifled due to geographic boundaries, there is a significant decrease of services when municipal units are combined.

9.0 In-Camera Items

It was moved by Councillor Brown and seconded by Councillor Gidney that the proceedings go In-Camera at 12:25 p.m. to discuss the following:

- 9.1 Personnel
- 9.2 Sale of Municipal Property
- 9.3 Sale of Municipal Property
- 9.4 Acquisition of Municipal Property

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

It was moved by Councillor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Amirault that the proceedings exit In-Camera at 1:40 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

- 9.1 Personnel

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality approve the Administrative Assistant – Administration Job Description.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

Councillor Gidney left Council Chambers at 1:40 p.m.

- 8.3 Continued - NSFM – Service Exchange Renegotiation and MGA Review Committee Survey

- 15. What incentives could be put in place to make amalgamation a viable option?

Increased funding and cost sharing for costs of municipal amalgamation / consolidation. Costs of feasibility studies, transition costs, etc.

Support for services that could be expanded when amalgamated.

Education on the benefits and risks associated with amalgamation.

Fulfillment of comments from other players, i.e. road agreements where municipalities are given \$50,000 per year. RQM has not seen this and has an accumulated total of \$1.3 being owed.

The following questions are related to municipal revenue.

16. Municipalities benefit from a range of grants including grants-in-lieu of taxes, the Municipal Financial Capacity Grant, and the Towns Foundation Grant. Grants-in-lieu of Taxes include Farmland Grant, Nova Scotia Power Grants-in-lieu of Taxes and Provincial or Federal grants in lieu of Taxes.

- No payment on HST; current rebate is 48.26%.
- Increase to the Forest Property Tax, hasn't changed in a very long time.
- Solar Energy Tax
- Changes in tax rates and structures for short term vacation rentals that are currently paying residential taxes.
- Licensing and Registration

17. What grants has your municipality received for operational expenses and how could these grants be approved?

Allow stacking.

18. What grants has your municipality received for capital expenses and how could these grants be improved?

Allow stacking.

Special considerations and other comments.

19. Is there anything about your municipality that your council believes deserves special consideration in terms of expenditure responsibilities, legislation, or financial support?

- As discussed in Question 7, unclear for Council to answer. Clarification needed to better respond.

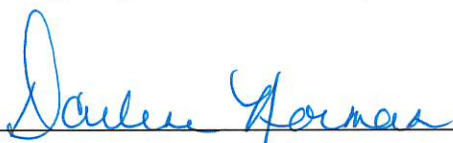
- As discussed in Question 15, RQM is owed \$1.3 Million for road maintenance post dissolution of Liverpool.
- RQM has one of the highest resident poverty rates in Nova Scotia as well as the highest percentage with a disability or accessibility needs.
- We are in a flood zone
- Unable to join a Regional Enterprise Network.
- Many socioeconomic issues that need support what is currently available under the MGA.

20. Is there anything else that your municipal council would like to share?


- The need for examination of current health care practices. Expansion of health care responsibilities could help our area; i.e. nurse practitioners to perform more duties.
- Ambulance wait times have become an issue.
- Significant inequality in health care and first response in Nova Scotia and rural, impoverished areas are feeling the outcome.
- Poverty is becoming a large problem in RQM and more support is needed.

10.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:13 p.m.



Mayor Darlene Norman, Chair

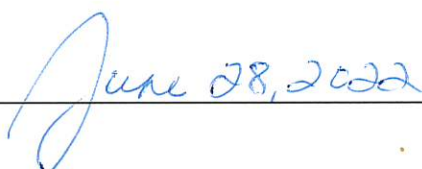


Chris McNeill, CAO



Christine Watson, Administrative Assistant – Planning & Development

Date Approved: _____



A stylized sun logo consisting of a yellow crescent shape with several yellow teardrop-like rays extending downwards from it.

Brighter Days

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

SOUTH SHORE REGIONAL HOSPITAL

Project Scope

By the Numbers

OVERALL SIZE

Currently 170,000 sq ft.

Increase of 48,705 sq ft.

=218,705 sq ft. (28.65% expansion)

OVERALL COST

\$115.7 million overall cost

Facility Additions

TWO-STOREY ADDITION

will house a new Emergency Department, Ambulatory Care, Endoscopy Unit and Dialysis Unit, in addition to four Ambulance Bays.

SINGLE STOREY ADDITION

will be home to a new MRI Suite.

TWO SMALLER ADDITIONS

will be built to accommodate essential upgrades to mechanical and electrical systems.



Project Highlights

- The **Emergency Department** will triple in size
- Increased number of exam rooms from **14 to 20**
- **New access road to the HeliPad** for life flight services
- Addition of a **Dialysis Unit** with 12 treatment chairs
- A new **MRI Suite** - anticipate 3000 scans/year in the new suite
- New **SPEC-CT Scanner** – provides detailed diagnostic images
- **Expanded Endoscopy and Day Surgery** will better support local patients
- **Weather-protected Ambulance Bays** will improve patient comfort and privacy
- **Systems upgrades** will target LEED Silver level certification
- **Construction** will be phased over 4 years, completion target 2025.



Brighter Days Capital Campaign

- Community has been asked to raise \$6.6 million to fund the purchase of essential medical equipment
- David Himmelman and Tim O'Regan Co-Chairs for the campaign committee
- In excess of 100 volunteers from the community will work on the campaign
- The community response to the initial phases of the campaign has been positive



Community Impact

- The South Shore Regional Hospital services Lunenburg, Queens and a portion of Shelburne Counties
- The redevelopment project will positively impact the recruitment and retention of health care professionals, an anticipated 60-80 new permanent jobs will be created in the community
- A modern regional healthcare facility increases the appeal of Lunenburg and Queens Counties to potential residents. This project protects our hospital's "Regional Hospital" status now and into the future.
- Construction will have a positive impact on the economic activity in the region with an anticipated 300 construction workers on site daily



Ways to Give

- **Pledged** gift (up to 5 years)
- **One-time** contribution
- **Gifts of stocks**, bonds, annuities, real estate or other capital property
- The campaign is requesting support from the regional municipalities and towns both financially and logistically (ie ad space)
- Suggested gift from the Region of Queens Municipality \$100,000 over 4 years



**OUR LOCAL HOSPITAL IS WORTH ALL
OF OUR SUPPORT.
IT IS READY FOR THE COMMUNITY
WHEN THE COMMUNITY NEEDS IT.**

