

**Region of Queens Municipality Regular Council
Tuesday, July 12, 2022, 9:00 a.m.**

Minutes

Present: Mayor Darlene Norman, Chair
Deputy Mayor Kevin Muise
Councillor David Brown
Councillor Maddie Charlton
Councillor Ralph Gidney
Councillor Vicki Amirault
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

Add In Camera Item 8.2 Contract Negotiations, 8.3 – Acquisition of Municipal Property and 8.4 Sale of Municipal Property

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

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

3.0 Tabling of Petitions

There were no petitions to come before this meeting.

4.0 Public Question / Comment Session

Leon Robertson, College Street, Liverpool – Mr. Robertson enquired to the 14 staff vacancies that were mentioned at the last Council meeting and that projects could be halted due to the shortages. He enquired if the positions were advertised. He was concerned with the number of major projects. Mayor Norman stated yes the number of vacancies were correct at that time of the meeting.

Robin Anthony, Brooklyn Shore Road, Brooklyn – Mrs. Anthony stated she viewed the video of the Special Council meeting held last week on the library site location. From the perspective of someone who grew up poor, and who was never taken to the library as a child, she was excited about the potential library site location being next to Queens Place Emera Center, as the location made sense. It made sense when the poor kids' parents went grocery shopping they may be able to convince their mother to take them to the library or after watching their friends skate to take part in programs offered at the library. It's often the stigma that keeps them out of the library.

She commended Council for making the library a priority. The library is something that is accessible to everyone with no stigma associated and is good physiologically for everyone in the community.

5.0 Approval of Minutes

5.1 Regular Council – June 28, 2022

Councillor Charlton asked for an amendment on Page 5, fourth paragraph to read that she is in favour of an outside ramp if there were no safety concerns from the Accessibility Committee about it being covered.

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

THAT the minutes of the Regular Council meeting held June 28, 2022 be approved as amended.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

5.2 Special Council – July 5, 2022

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

THAT the minutes of the Special Council meeting held July 5, 2022 be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 Establishment of a Pool Committee

Mayor Norman stated at the last Council meeting, Council requested that a pool committee be struck and enquired how Council would like to proceed.

Councillor Charlton suggested the committee be done the same way as the library with a Terms of Reference, consist of 2 members from the Aquatic Society, 2 members of the public who are avid pool users and 2 members of Council.

Councillor Fancy suggested 2 members of Council, 3 members of the public, some of which could be members from the Aquatic Society.

Councillor Charlton suggested those from Council who want to participate on this committee should be chosen today and to advertise for committee members, as has been done in the past for other committees.

Councillor Fancy and Councillor Amirault indicated they wish to sit on this committee. All Councillors agreed to have them sit on the committee along with 2 members from the Aquatic Society and 2 members of the public who are avid swimmers. The Aquatic Society can nominate from their committee who they would like to participate and advertise for 2 members of the public who are avid pool users from Queens County.

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality establish a Pool Committee and appoint the following people to the Committee effective October 1, 2022:

Councillor Vicki Amirault, Councillor Jack Fancy, 2 members from the Aquatic Society and 2 members of the public to be determined at a later date.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.0 Discussions

7.1 South Shore Regional Hospital Foundation Brighter Days Capital Campaign Funding Request

Joanne Veinotte, Director of Corporate Services, stated at the June 14, 2022 Council meeting, South Shore Regional Hospital Brighter Days Capital Campaign Co-Chairs Tim O'Regan and Paul Snow made a presentation of the Foundation's plans to increase the size of South Shore Regional Hospital.

The Foundation is requesting donations from all municipalities along the South Shore and suggested Region of Queens Municipality contribute \$100,000. They have suggested \$25,000 a year for the next four years.

There are three options for consideration:

- Option 1 – Deny funding request.
- Option 2 – Fund \$100,000 as a grant from the Special Operating Reserve in the 2022/23 budget.
- Option 2 – Fund \$25,000 this year, which would be unbudgeted, then consider the subsequent three annual payments of \$25,000 during budget deliberations.

Councillor Fancy stated this is a good project but enquired how this will affect the Queens General Hospital and voiced his concerns on services such as day surgery being lost. He suggested donating \$25,000 for the first year and revisit the remaining requested amount in future years. Mayor Norman stated that the Hospital Foundation has donated \$750,000 to this project.

Councillor Brown suggested making a one-time payment so the decision making is not part of another council's mandate. The South Shore Regional is a regional hospital in which many residents from Queens visit and in supporting the hospital, we are supporting our residents.

Councillor Charlton enquired to the possibility of meeting with members from the Hospital Foundation before making any decisions. Chris McNeill, CAO, stated the Foundation does not run the hospital, and suggested she could speak to the Health Authority on any concerns.

Councillor Gidney stated it makes sense to have a regional hospital and supports a \$100,000 in one payment. Councillor Hawkes agreed.

Councillor Amirault stated she wants to support the request but suggested the tax payers of Queens would like to support our local hospital. She suggested a \$25,000 donation and discuss further of any future payments.

Deputy Mayor Muise took the Chair at 9:40 a.m.

Mayor Norman suggested making a one-time payment of \$100,000 up front and have no risk of a future council not supporting. The project is important and is our regional center. The Hospital Foundation donated \$750,000 which speaks volumes of their support for this expansion.

She further stated she fully supports the requested donation.

It was moved by Mayor Norman and seconded by Councillor Brown:

THAT Council of the Region of Queens Municipality support the South Shore Regional Hospital Brighter Days Capital Campaign with a one-time payment of \$100,000 from the Special Operating Reserve.

Councillor Charlton raised concerns by taking the full amount from the Special Operating Reserve, in case monies would be needed for other projects. Following discussions stated she supports the motion.

Councillor Brown stated RQM would not be sending a clear message to the Foundation by revisiting their request every year.

MOTION CARRIED 6 in favour and 2 against.

Mayor Norman resumed the Chair at 9:50 a.m.

7.2 Request to Collect Road Levies

Ms. Veinotte, stated the Greater Molega Lake Land Owners Association (GMLLOA) have requested that Region of Queens Municipality consider implementing the collection of road levies as part of the Tax Bill process. Staff met with the Association president

and treasurer on June 22, 2022. They are a registered non-profit with their own set of bylaws with approximately 1100 members and provide audited financial statements to their members.

A new Bylaw would be required which will cost approximately \$10,000 - \$15,000. The GMLLOA will provide up to \$10,000 towards the cost of drafting and adopting the bylaw.

Our current SAP system has the capacity to provide this service and GMLLOA have agreed to pay a 5% administrative fee to compensate for the costs. The initial year is expected to be 2024 with billing estimated to be \$14,000 annually.

Any legal fees associated with any disputed fees will be incurred by RQM.

Deputy Mayor Muise voiced his concern of RQM being responsible for incurring any court costs. He enquired if the Association has ever taken a resident to court over collection of fees. Councillor Brown stated yes and every case was won. The road levies is part of the agreement when a lot is purchased. The Association does not have access to Property on Line and have no way of finding the owner of some of the lots. If property changes hands, any uncollected levies is transferred to the new property owner.

Councillor Charlton voiced her concern of the workload this would put on staff. Mrs. Veinotte stated the existing staff would be able to handle this in addition to their workload. The Association would provide all necessary information for staff to input into the SAP system. Once the information is in the system in the initial year, each subsequent year will be less work. The amount owing for the levies will be listed on the tax bill.

Councillor Charlton further commented that if roads are not plowed in the area, there is concern over emergency services. Mayor Norman stated the area is one of the fastest growing in Queens and this would help keep roads safe year round.

Councillor Gidney also voiced his concern for the workload on staff. He did not think that a 5% fee was enough to cover staffs time.

Councillor Amirault agreed with Councillors Charlton and Gidney on the pressure of staff for the additional work and once it is done for one organization, there will be others that will request it also.

Councillor Hawkes agrees with Councillor Gidney that 5% is not adequate to cover staffs time and thinks the Association should cover any court costs.

Mr. McNeill stated RQM is comfortable to start this program in 2024. The lot owners provide all the information and RQM staff will just have to enter information into the system. We will still be processing the same amount of bills. Any other group or association wanting the same service will have to meet the required standards and criteria.

He further stated in conversations with other municipalities, they have not incurred any court costs.

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality recommend Staff to create a Bylaw to collect road levies for the Greater Molega Lake Land Owners Association.

MOTION CARRIED 5 in favour and 3 against.

7.3 Town Hall Arts and Cultural Centre – Accessibility Renovations

Mayor Norman stated the Town Hall Arts and Cultural Centre has been identified as a priority by the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) for accessibility issues. One of the accessibility improvements identified was to create a ramped entry to the lobby.

Several potential options were identified; an exterior ramp on the RBC side of the building, interior ramp off Gorham Street and an interior ramp coming in from the rear parking lot near Gorham Street. The AAC felt that a new ramped entry on the RBC side of the building would meet the accessibility needs of users of the facility and recommended it.

At the June 28, 2022 Council meeting staff reviewed the background information and AAC's recommendation. Following this discussion Council requested that staff cost out a further option of a fully glass enclosed external ramp.

Two options were brought forward. A fully enclosed wooden outside ramp, built to code is estimated to cost \$400,000.

An enclosed glass ramp, subject to the building code, would require lighting, HVAC, a foundation, structural supports, sprinklers, etc. and costs are expected to be in excess of \$750,000. Our current 2022-2023 accessibility budget shows a balance of \$76,261.

Elise Johnston, Accessibility and Inclusion Coordinator, stated the Committee chose the single outside ramp for various reasons, making it the only viable option; no good option for inside. It would need to be meaningful accessibility, i.e. it has to be comfortable, inviting and attractive to draw people to attend. There are heated mat options for icy conditions that could be considered. The Committee is open to cost-sharing any additional incurred costs, i.e. snow removal.

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

That Council of Region of Queens Municipality approve a single ramp entry be erected on the RBC side of the Town Hall Arts and Cultural Centre.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.4 Shared Building Inspection Services

Mayor Norman stated that staff have become aware of an initiative that has been undertaken by municipal units in Lunenburg County respecting a joint municipal partnership for the delivery of building inspection, fire inspection and dangerous and unsightly services.

What is currently being implemented in part of Lunenburg County is that Building Inspection, Fire Inspection and Dangerous and Unsightly Premises staff are becoming employees of Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MODL) and the other municipal units are contracting with MODL for these services and the intent is to:

- Establish a consistency in the level of service
- Provide adequate staffing resources to effectively carry out required work
- Have backup resources to cover for things like vacations, sick time, retirement, etc.
- To eliminate potential competition among municipal units for limited staffing resources.

Councillor Gidney enquired if there would be a building inspector located in RQM offices and if it would incur additional costs. He stated he was in agreement, but would need to see the bottom line before making a decision. Mayor Norman stated those details have not yet been worked out.

Councillor Charlton enquired why the dangerous and unsightly premises was not being currently considered. Mayor Norman stated it eventually will be but they are presenting focusing on building and fire inspection.

Mr. McNeill stated this will speed up the permit approval process.

Consensus given by Council to proceed with investigating this initiative.

8.0 In-Camera Items

It was moved by Councillor Fancy and seconded by Councillor Brown that the proceedings go In-Camera at 10:45 a.m. to discuss the following:

- 8.1 Potential Litigation**
- 8.2 Contract Negotiations**
- 8.3 Acquisition of Municipal Property**
- 8.4 Sale of Municipal Property**

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

Mayor Norman announced a 10 minute break at 10:45 a.m.

It was moved by Councillor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Gidney that the proceedings exit In-Camera at 12 Noon.


MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

9.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12 Noon.



Mayor Darlene Norman, Chair



Eric Levy, Municipal Clerk



Christine Watson, Administrative Assistant – Planning & Development

Date Approved: 