

**Region of Queens Municipality Regular Council
Tuesday, August 9, 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
Eric Levy, Municipal Clerk
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 Items 9.2 Potential Litigation, 9.3 Sale of Municipal Property and 9.2 now becomes 9.4 Personnel

It was moved by Councillor Brown and seconded by Councillor Amirault that the Agenda be approved as amended.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

3.0 Presentation

3.1 Queens Care Building Society

Mayor Norman welcomed Chris Clarke, Chair, Queens Care Society Andrew MacVicar, Executive Director, Queens Manor and Chair, Project Steering Committee, Maury Tate, Project Manager and Tony Ross, Principal, Montgomery, via Zoom.

Mr. Clarke stated the Queens Care Building Society are present today to provide an update on the progress for the new nursing home for Queens and to discuss its location. A Cooperation Agreement was signed between the Queens Care Building Society and Region of Queens Municipality. A Steering Committee was struck with members from the Queens Care Building Society and the Region of Queens Municipality.

The facility will have 112 beds which has an additional 22 new beds from the original plan which will have a huge impact on acute care. There are currently 103 staff at the Manor and it is expected to almost double. The cost of the project itself is between \$50 – 70 Million.

He thanked employees of Region of Queens Municipality for their contributions, especially Chris McNeill, CAO, Adam Grant, Director of Engineering and Public Works and Janie Ryan, Manager, Hillsvie Acres. He further thanked Kim Masland, MLA for Queens, who worked hard for the additional beds for Queens.

The objective today is to determine a site for the new facility to proceed. Mr. Clarke noted that Alex Denero from Marco is present and is the Construction Manager.

Mr. MacVicar provided an update on activities the Steering Committee have been working on. They have been busy designing the new facility. The project was awarded to Fowler Bauld & Mitchell from Toronto and Montgomery Sisam Architects Inc. from Halifax.

The RFP for construction manager was completed in June and Marco Builders of Canada, located in Halifax and Newfoundland, were selected to be construction managers for the new build.

Over the last two months work has been done to establish a design that best meets the needs of residents and staff from both facilities. Tony Ross led sessions with people from both current facilities to establish a vision for the new facility.

The sessions which included discussion on Nova Scotia guidelines for long term care facilities and how this will affect the layout and the day-to-day functions of the facility. The design team will be interacting with frontline staff from all departments from both facilities.

Tony Ross, Principal, Montgomery Sisam Architects Inc. provided a presentation to Council.

Some highlights included:

Amenities already in place such as the Best Western Hotel, Queens Place Emera Centre, Skate Park, and Cosbys.

He reviewed the Modules for 112 residents and compared a one storey building to a hybrid model.

Elements of our program that need space:

- Priority parking, staff parking and bus parking
- Geothermal energy infrastructure
- Noise buffer
- Resident courtyards
- Community hub
- Solar PV
- Fire protection
- Maintenance path
- The Residents – Queens Manor and Hillsvie Acres have exemplary existing Recreational Programs and want to continue to deliver life to years

A site of 11.7 acres was used as a baseline for the study.

Mr. Ross provided information on Option 1, a one storey building. In addition to the existing site features, some proposed features include an arrival and priority parking, canopy/drop-off, home community spaces, household supportive services, loading, park/plaza, highway landscape buffer, and geothermal field. He stressed the importance of incorporating community integration with the residents to enhance their social lives. Each section of the building will have access to outdoor spaces.

He provided background on Option 2, a hybrid model which combines a one and two storey building and incorporates much of the same features as in Option 1.

He commented that the list would be endless on the vision for the Community Programming, for other programs could be incorporated on this site, i.e. a farmers market, outdoor skating, a child care centre, seniors programming and a community garden.

Mr. Ross showed views of the Tidal View Manor in Yarmouth, NS and Peel Manor in Brampton, Ontario to show what the proposed facility could look like.

Maury Tate, Project Manager, stated there is a need to secure land to finalize the design. He anticipates the facility opening by 2025 / 2026.

Councillor Gidney enquired if the design includes double rooms for seniors who may be married. Mr. MacVicar stated the decision for this would be up to the administrator but this has happened previously and will be looked at.

Councillor Gidney enquired if there will be Palliative Care Rooms available. Mr. MacVicar stated most of the rooms are private and would provide privacy. Consideration for family spaces will be considered.

Councillor Brown enquired what their vision for a community hub would look like. Mr. Ross stated the vision is boundless and many things could be integrated such as child care or a library, just aligning the right partners and securing funding.

Councillor Fancy enquired which option the Building Committee desired and all stated that Option 1 would be the most appropriate and provide ground level and access to outdoor spaces to the residents.

Mayor Norman thanked the Building Committee for their presentation.

Mayor Norman announced a 5 minute break at 10:00 a.m.

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 provided positive comments on the presentation by the Queens Care Building Society. He noted a large surplus on the financial statements. He further enquired under the Council Implementation Report under Planning on the watercourse setbacks. Mayor Norman stated it was previously 50 feet with the ability to reduce to 25 feet and the new setbacks are 100 feet with the ability to reduce to 50 feet, providing documentation and a study has been completed.

Patti Pike, Main Street Milton – Ms. Pike stated she was representing Queens Care Society and noted that Susan MacLeod and Randy Dickie were also present. They are part of the affordable housing committee working to bring housing to Queens for seniors. They support the Queens Care Society project who are seeking the location for their facility at the Queens Place site. This site provides accessibility and is a vibrant area which enables the residents to be involved and all residents and staff would benefit from this location.

6.0 Approval of Minutes

6.1 Regular Council – July 12, 2022

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

THAT the minutes of the Regular Council meeting held July 12, 2022 be approved as amended.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.0 Recommendations

7.1 Bylaw for Road Levy Collection for Non Profit Associations

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality approve the initiation of the Bylaw drafting process that would document the conditions required in order to facilitate collection of Road Levies by Region of Queens as part of the tax billing process.

Joanne Veinotte, Director of Corporate Services, stated since this was discussed at the last Council meeting she has received 3 enquiries from other home / land owners associations.

MOTION CARRIED with 6 in favour and 2 against.

7.2 South Shore Regional Hospital Foundation Brighter Days Capital Campaign Funding

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality approve a donation of \$100,000 to the South Shore Regional Hospital Foundation Brighter Days Campaign, to be funded directly from the Special Operating Reserve in the 2022/2023 budget year.

Councillor Fancy stated he is concerned for the Queens General Hospital and should only be providing the campaign with \$25,000 and then revisit next year.

Deputy Mayor Muise stated he was not against the foundation, but he has been receiving many call on our own Emergency Room and feels the money should be going to them instead.

Councillor Charlton stated the hospital foundation support this campaign. RQM has not received any request for money from

Queens General. Queens's residents will be using The South Shore Regional Hospital and suggested to sit with Al Doucette, Queens General Hospital Foundation representative, to see how we can help. Councillor Amirault agreed.

Deputy Mayor Muise took the chair at 10:33 a.m.

Mayor Norman stated following discussions Councillor Brown had with Al Doucette, Region of Queens Municipality was encourage to write a letter of support of Queens General on the purchase of a CT machine. The Foundation has not asked the Region for money. Providing money to Queens General would not help with the ER issues.

The South Shore Regional Hospital is our hospital as well and encouraged everyone to support this ask.

MOTION CARRIED with 6 in favour and 1 against.

Mayor Norman resumed the chair at 10:37 a.m.

7.3 Town Hall Arts and Cultural Centre – Accessibility Renovations

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality approve the installation of a new barrier free access ramp and building entry on the eastern side of the Town Hall Arts and Cultural Centre (RBC side) to meet the accessibility needs of users of the facility.

Mike MacLeod, Director of Planning and Development, stated having the ramp installed on the eastern side of the Town Hall Arts and Cultural Centre (RBC side) is the most appropriate location and meets the required needs of the users.

Councillor Gidney pointed out there are items not addressed in the letter from the Astor Theatre Society.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.4 Adoption of Audited 2021-2022 Financial Statements

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality adopt the Audited Financial Statements for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2022.

Mrs. Veinotte circulated updated sheets from the statements and explained the difference was reallocation of money i.e. payments to the School Boards and RCMP, to agree with the budget note.

A special meeting was held with the Audit and Internal Control Committee and the financials were reviewed and no outstanding issues were found. Kelsey Murphy, Senior Auditor from Grant Thornton requested some formatting changes.

The statements will remain in draft form until Grant Thornton receive a legal letter and they do not anticipate any issues.

In response to Mr. Robertson's comment on the surplus, some contributors were double the Municipal grants in the amount of 1.2 Million, double our Canada Community Building Fund in the amount of \$680,000 and \$300,000 contributed as a result of our pension plan surplus. Deed transfer tax was close a million over budget for the year.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

8.0 Discussions

8.1 July 18 Tax Sale Summary

Mallory Plummer, Manager of Finance, stated a tax sale was held at the Best Western on July 18, 2022 for 23 properties. As originally stated all properties were sold, but since then one bidder has not made payment nor made contact. Bidders have 3 days to pay. No properties were redeemable so purchasers can take ownership right away.

Another tax sale is planned for November with 60 notices being sent out. Our lawyer is doing title searches.

A total of \$46,000 was received to pay off outstanding accounts and \$280,000 is going to the Tax Sale Surplus Reserve Account.

The proceeds in excess of the taxes and costs outstanding are held in Trust for a period of up to 20 years, unless withdrawn by the previous owner through a Court Order. The amount will then be transferred to the Capital Reserve Fund if no Court Order is received.

8.2 Council Implementation Report

No issues were brought forward from this report.

8.3 Financial Review Quarter One 2022

Mrs. Veinotte provided a review of the first quarter financial statements. Some highlights included:

Revenue Analysis:

- Protective Services – Hydrants \$200,178 and budget is \$196,427 (difference is caused by rounding and will be allocated to the utility before year end).
- Deed Transfer Tax – In Quarter 1, 2021, the deed transfer tax was \$400,156, this year it is \$390,680. It was anticipated to decline 50% and was budgeted for. So far this year, no significant decline has been seen. The deed transfer tax was 1% and not the current rate of 1.5%.
- Nova Scotia Power Corporation – Actual is higher than budget. This rate is set by the province and is unknown at the time of budget.
- Real Estate (comparison analysis of Q1 2021/22 to 2022/23) – Total number of sale were down 34% (258 to 169). Total sales value down 28% (\$36,844,108 to \$26,292,536). Average sale value was up (\$141,820 to \$157,316). Sale prices are consistently over assessed, averaging 68% over 63.5% last year. Sold lots with dwellings represents about 50% of sales. Districts 9 and 10 show strong sales.

Expenditures:

Expenditures are expressed as a percentage of the annual budget. They will show as being close to 100% of budget rather than 25% for the quarter for those that are recorded at the beginning of the year.

Section 9 – General Government Services:

- Travel – Council related mileage expense for meetings.
- Other – Legislative – Hall rentals for meetings, cell phone for Mayor, meal expense for Council, training or courses (none taken yet), Queens Coat Branded clothing (none spent yet).
- Taxation – Reduced Taxes – This is our low income tax rebate which both the amount and the LICO to be eligible for this rebate were increased, and the uptake has been strong with some residents having tax bills lower than \$300.
- Licenses and permits are almost at 50% with the main contributor being building permit revenue at 48% of budget for the year.

Section 10 – Protective Services:

Firefighting more than 25% because grants are paid 50% in the first installment and liability insurance was more than anticipated.

Section 11 – Transportation Services:

Small tools and equipment includes safety gear. Over \$11,000 was invested in safety shoes this quarter.

Section 12 – Environmental Services:

- Sewage Collection treatment and disposal – There was an error in the calculation during the budget process. The total for sewage treatment and disposal included the \$109,552 for the sewage collection system and has been corrected on this statement. This was discovered when the June statements were done using the new format and a copy of the relevant page has been included in the budget with the error highlighted.
- Garbage and Waste Collection – RQM contract GE Trucking for this service and will now be paying an additional fuel surcharge each month at the price of 10% above the base price that was set when the contract was negotiated at 89.64 cents per liter. If the price of gas increases above 10% of this price, a fuel surcharge for the difference is owing and we anticipate these charges to be over \$150,000. This quarter was \$45,000.

Section 14 – Environmental Development Services:

- Other Costs – Accessibility projects completed this year and looks to be over budget because the revenue is recognized in Section 7.
- Tourism and Economic Development – Includes Liverpool Business Development Center. There were unbudgeted expense of over \$40,000 this quarter due to a fire in the building.

Section 15 – Recreation and Cultural Services:

Parks and Playgrounds includes a one-time purchase of a used truck.

Section 16 – Fiscal Services:

Budgeted transfer from reserve include Sidewalk Reserve, First Responders, Landfill Equipment, General Equipment, Landfill Report cost recovery and 2nd Generation Landfill.

8.4 Human Resource Policy Employee Handbook

Mayor Norman stated Eric Levy, Municipal Clerk and Diversity Coordinator, has been working on the Human Resource Policy Employee Handbook. A review committee of staff and Councillors was created to review and discuss the applicability and potential effectiveness of the policies.

Revisions to the documentation:

- Page 15 – Section 3e – Representation definition, for consistency, will be replaced with definition of Representative on Page 8.
- Page 15 – Section 5 – The reference to Section 3 should read as Section 4.
- Page 15, Section 4, add African American.
- Page 24 - Question was raised concerning Item 4 under Policy Details. It was determined to only provide this information and not provide any personal or confidential information.
- Page 48, Section 11 – The reference to Section 3 should read as Section 2.
- Page 96, Section 4b – The reference to Section a should read Section 4a.

Deputy Mayor Muise questioned the reasoning on Page 19, Section 14, of not hiring an immediate relative or intimate personal relations to a current employee. Mr. Levy stated this is common practice and would be discouraged to have members of the same family working together, and anyone in the recruitment process would be asked to excuse themselves to not be in a conflict of interest.

Councillor Amirault enquired about the Policy concerning Court Leave and why it was not included. Mr. Levy stated this is legislated and would be covered under the Labour Standard Code.

Councillor Amirault enquired about the Policy concerning Computer Purchase Program and why it was not included. Mr. Levy stated in discussions with Directors, it was determined the program is slowing down and the overall cost of computers has become more affordable than it was when that policy was created.

Councillor Amirault further enquired about the Policy concerning Donation in Memorial. Mr. Levy stated the Mayor does send a card. In addition, the challenges in tracking where the request comes from and the risk of omitting someone.

Councillor Charlton asked for clarification under Policy concerning sick leave, Section 9 states a medical certificate may be required if sick leaves exceeds three (3) days, and noted that some people do not have doctors and it may be hard for employees to get the required documentation especially if they do not have a family doctor. Mr. Levy stated that employers can ask for doctor's notes after 3 days to provide more details why the employee is absent. If employee is having issues, investigation as to how the employer can help them and the issue of attaining the note would be taken into consideration.

Mayor Norman asked for the insertion of "or chosen family" to be inserted, in Policy concerning Recruitment, Section 15, where we do recognize a chosen family in this document.

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

THAT this issue be referred to the next Council meeting for a recommendation.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

8.5 Road Naming – Cahoon Lake

Mr. MacLeod stated a request has been submitted to name an existing right-of-way off Highway 331 in East Port Medway. Cahoon Lane is the name choice and is acceptable as no same or similarly name road exists in Queens County.

As per Policy 6 respecting Naming and Renaming of Roads, a road name change or naming a petition must be submitted by the owner of the road, and if no specific owner can be determined, a petition signed by 70% of the persons that own land abutting the road may be submitted. Over 70% were in agreement with this name change.

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

THAT this issue be referred to the next Council meeting for a recommendation.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

8.6 Fees for Planning Services

Mr. MacLeod stated under Policy 7 – Fees for Planning Services establishes fees for the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and / or Land Use Bylaw (LUB), development agreement process, etc. and will offset costs associated with providing these services.

The current policy was adopted in 2011.

He noted suggested changes:

- 7.02 – A slight increase for an amendment to a planning document from \$700 to \$750. If the actual costs are less than the deposit, the Municipality shall refund the balance to the applicant.
- 7.03 – This is a new section that pertains to development agreements which incurs legal fees and registering at the Land Registration office. Suggested cost of \$850 due to the last number of development agreements done, \$700 does not cover the costs and we had to go back to the applicant for the additional funds.
- 7.07 – Minor change in the cost of processing a variance application to \$25.00, up from \$10.00
- 7.08 – This is a new section and pertains to a site plan approval application with a fee of \$25.00. This is similar to the variance application.
- 7.17 (formerly 7.15) - The reference to CD has been removed, no one uses them any longer. Customers are to supply their own portable storage devices.
- 7.17 – Remove reference to sending letter to applicants outlining a process due to letters being written when necessary; not everything requires a written outline of the process.

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

THAT this issue be referred to the next Council meeting for a recommendation.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

9.0 In-Camera Items

It was moved by Councillor Gidney and seconded by Councillor Amirault that the proceedings go In-Camera at 11:34 a.m. to discuss the following:

- 9.1 Sale of Municipal Property**
- 9.2 Potential Litigation**
- 9.3 Sale of Municipal Property**
- 9.4 Personnel**

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

Mayor Norman announced a 10 minute break at 11:34 a.m.

It was moved by Councillor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Brown that the proceedings exit In-Camera at 12:35 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

9.1 Sale of Municipal Property

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality declare properties identified as PID #s 70077698, 70777722 and 70077680 as surplus to municipal needs and enter into a purchase and sale agreement with Eric and Dawn Fry to convey the municipal lands for the appraised value of \$95,000.

Mayor Norman stated the Region was approached about municipal property that was available for housing. Vacant land sitting at the first bridge in Milton, known as Garika Park, was considered surplus land and has gone through the appraisal process. Council understands the need for housing in Queens.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

9.3 Sale of Municipal Property

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality declare property identified as a portion of PID 70260203 as surplus to municipal needs and enter into a purchase and sale agreement with Queens Care Building Society for the future development of a new long term care facility.

Mayor Norman stated there has been much discussion regarding the new 112 bed residential/nursing home. Queens Place land has been look at. We had an excellent presentation this morning and the site offered within the South Queens area is unique and will provide a unique and meaningful community based facility.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

10.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.



Mayor Darlene Norman, Chair



Eric Levy, Municipal Clerk



Christine Watson, Administrative Assistant – Planning & Development

Date Approved: September 13, 2022