

**Region of Queens Municipality Regular Council  
Tuesday, November 22, 2022**

**Immediately Following Public Hearing  
Scheduled at 6:00 p.m.**

**Agenda**

**1.0 Call to Order**

**2.0 Changes / Approval of Agenda**

**3.0 Presentation**

- 3.1 Accessibility Committee Update
- 3.2 Diversity & Inclusion Action Team Update

**4.0 Tabling of Petitions**

**5.0 Public Question / Comment Session**

**6.0 Approval of Minutes**

- 6.1 Regular Council – November 8, 2022

**7.0 Recommendations**

- 7.1 Sale of Municipal Property
- 7.2 Community Investment Fund – Queens County Track Society

**8.0 Discussions**

- 8.1 Region of Queens Pool Committee – Letter of Mandate
- 8.2 Operational Policy 3 – Public Art
- 8.3 Administrative Policy 23 – Respecting Regular Meetings of Council –  
Councillor Hawkes
- 8.4 Ad Hoc Communications Strategy Review Committee

## **9.0 In-Camera Items**

- 9.1 Contract Negotiations
- 9.2 Sale of Municipal Property
- 9.3 Contract Negotiations

## **10.0 Adjournment**

**Region of Queens Municipality Regular Council  
Tuesday, November 8, 2022, 9:00 a.m.**

**Minutes**

Present: Mayor Darlene Norman, Chair  
Deputy Mayor Jack Fancy  
Councillor David Brown  
Councillor Maddie Charlton  
Councillor Ralph Gidney  
Councillor Vicki Amirault  
Councillor Kevin Muise  
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 9.1- Personnel**

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

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

**3.0 Presentations**

3.1 Queens RCMP – Quarterly Report

Mayor Norman welcomed S/Sgt. Dan Archibald to Council. Some highlights included:

- Reviewed staffing levels, which there are shortages. Recruiting levels are down country wide.

- Crime remains low. Stats are lower this year compared to last.
- Objectives remain the same as last year.
  - Road safety is a priority; impaired driving remains the same.
  - Crime prevention – Dip in offenders in the area, conditions are enforced.
  - Mental health strategy – With local hospital closures, patients are transported to the nearest hospital, which takes members out of area. This remains a struggle.

Councillor Brown stated in the Greenfield and surrounding areas residents have been voicing their concern over breaks-ins. In addition, there is a number of instances of drinking and driving through the LaBelle area. S/Sgt. Archibald noted that members spend a lot of time in North Queens on calls and also do proactive patrols on the Ponhook and Wildcat Reserves.

Deputy Mayor Fancy noted the radar trailer is out of service and enquired if it is a priority to bring it back into service. S/Sgt. Archibald stated the radar trailer was borrowed from another county and is in the process of being repaired; there is only one person in the province that does these repairs.

He further stated there is a possibility of purchasing a new one, or installing stationary ones, depending on funding and logistics.

Councillor Charlton enquired if there are any areas he would recommend more than others. S/Sgt. Archibald stated areas that we thought would be the same as they thought, such as Summerville by the Quarter Deck, which is a tight quarter area or areas with a high density of people.

Councillor Charlton further enquired if installing flashing lights at the 3-way intersection would be beneficial. S/Sgt. Archibald indicated it could be a benefit, but he is not a Traffic Authority expert.

Mayor Norman thanked S/Sgt. Archibald for his presentation.

### 3.2 Request for Water & Sewer Extension, Mount Pleasant

Larry Cochrane and Rob LeBlanc were welcomed to Council. Some highlights included:

- Mr. Cochrane provided his working background.
- The proposed development is located near the hospital and schools and provides a harbor view.
- Requesting for an extension of services of 150m for water and 200m for sanitary.
- The property is 35 acres and in a RL zone. Under the Municipal Planning Strategy, rezoning will be necessary for the multi-unit apartment building to RM zone and RG for the development of duplexes.
- Development would be completed over 2 phases and include 87 units over a span of 11 years with \$20 Million invested.
- Community Benefits – Increase in local spending, jobs and bring new residents.
- An environmentally sustainable community – Solar panels and green space for recreation.
- Conceptual Design – Phase 1 – 30 semi-detached homes, 3 single family homes and a 24 multi-unit apartment. Phase 2 – 30 semi-detached units. A total of 87 homes.
- Current Community Challenges include economic development, housing shortage, hospital staffing, and long-term care expansion.
- Semi-Detached homes are approximately 900 sq. ft. and retail for \$400,000.
- Detached - Three single family homes, approximately 1400 sq. ft. and retail for \$500,000.
- Apartment Building – One 24-unit apartment building that could potentially cater to lower income housing. Approximate cost of \$4 Million.
- Construction of homes will come from local builders and Pre Fab Prestige.
- Reviewed the average household spending in Nova Scotia Survey 2019. Total spending \$48,236.

Assumptions for Phase 1 taken from 2019 provincial survey:

- 10% increase to 2022 due to inflation brings the average household spending to \$53,059.
- 40% spent outside County - \$31,835 average household income
- Inflation at 3% annually.
- Rural tax rate of \$1.07 per \$100 assessment
- Sewer and Water tax calculated at \$105 quarterly/\$420 annually

- Property taxes do not reflect any increase over the seven year period - \$1,650,000 on 3 single family homes, \$12,000,000 on 30 semi-detached homes, and \$4,000,000 on the 24-unit apartment for a total of \$17,650,000 which averages to \$310,000 for the 57 units.
- Extension of Services – Quotes by Dexter Construction Company Limited budgeted for \$725,000 plus HST.
- ROI for extending services will recoup the cost within 7 years.

Phase 2 will begin in Year 8 (2030 and be completed in 2034).

- 30 semi-detached homes, with an estimated value of \$450,000.
- Estimated household spending to be \$48,000 annually
- Estimated tax rates to be \$1.16 per \$100 of assessment and sewer and water to be \$630 annually.
- Potential property taxes and sewer and water of \$1,600,000, \$14,400,000 in spending and an increase of 30 new households.

Once the 11 year project is completed the potential property taxes, sewer and water is \$2,350,000, local spending of \$20,800,000 and 87 new households.

If the Region approves the extension, Cochrane Property Developments will commit to build the main entrance roads and services for the first 400 feet and construct the first 4 units which is an estimated investment of \$2,500,000. These guarantees will help offset any risks to the Region.

The development will attract new families, see a significant increase in property taxes, green and modern construction for development, increase spending and build a reputation as a great place to live.

Letters of support were received from Dr. Al Doucet, Chair, Queens General Hospital Foundation, Kerry Morash, President, South Shore Chamber of Commerce and Honourable Kim Masland, MLA, Queens.

Mayor Norman thanked Mr. Cochrane and Mr. LeBlanc for their presentation. She stated Council will take the proposal into consideration during budget deliberations and will provide feedback to them in a suitable timeframe.

### 3.3 Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute (MTRI) Review

Mayor Norman welcomed Jane Barker, Co-Director, MTRI, and Alysha Griffin, Community and Municipal Outreach Coordinator to Council. Some highlights included:

- Ms. Barker gave a background on Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute, which has been in business since 2004.
- Reviewed Mission Statement – To promote, conserve and sustain biodiversity in Kespukwitk and beyond.
- Reviewed Vision – Prosperous communities where forest and aquatic ecosystems are healthy, connected, and where species are not at risk.
- Research – Aquatic Health, water quality for mercury content, Species at Risk and Forests and Landscape Connectivity.
- Organizational Growth – Gross income increased as well as assets. The number of year round employees increased.
- Major Project/Collaborations (20 projects):
  - Blanding's turtle and eastern ribbon snakes
  - Bats – White-nose syndrome
  - Rare lichens
  - Monarch butterflies
  - Atlantic Coastal Plain Flora
  - Old Forests
  - Invasive species – HWA
  - Forest biodiversity (working with private landowners)
- Family Forest Network: Collaboration of 11 organizations dedicated to implementing ecological forestry province-wide on privately owned woodlands.
- The Kespukwitk Conservation Collaborative: Multiple conservation organizations in SW Nova Scotia working together to protect species at risk in one of 11 of Canada's designated Priority Places for SAR conservation.

Ms. Griffins provided some highlights:

- Municipal Engagement Project: Municipal Species at Risk (SAR) Stewardship Toolkit. Is reaching out to all Municipalities to answer the Municipal Environmental Stewardship survey which was released in the spring.

- Municipal SAR Stewardship Projects: Blue Felt Lichen Trail, Signage in the Municipality of Digby, Sand Barrens, Stewardship in the Village of Aylesford, Stewardship of Eastern Mountain Avenues in Big Meadow Bog, Brier Island. Continues to look for more projects to support.
- Conservation Showcase at White Point Resort on November 9, 2022 and encouraged everyone to attend. There will be 27 posters, and a presentation will begin at 7:30 and will be livestreamed on Facebook.
- Kespukwitk Conservation Showcase, 8:30 – 4:30 (no room available and registration is now closed).
- Community Science Showcase – 6:30 – 9:00 p.m., is free and registration still open.

Councillor Amirault enquired to the links for the presentation. Ms. Griffins will provide information to the Administrative Assistant who will send to all Councillors.

Deputy Mayor Fancy enquired about invasive weeds in Queens. Ms. Barker stated there are many and is a guide on their website. She encouraged him, or anyone, to visit the facility if in the area.

Councillor Muise enquired about the bat population. Ms. Barker stated things are looking hopeful in Nova Scotia but the number in Newfoundland have dropped.

Councillor Brown stated he noticed an increase in the hemlock wooly adelgid invasion in his area and noted the cost of inoculation is very expensive. This year was the first time seeing blue green algae blooms in his area and noted that approximately 75% of cottage owners get their water from the lakes.

Mayor Norman noted Region owns several parcels of land that may be of interest to partner with going forward for consideration to undertake projects.

Mayor Norman thanked Ms. Barker and Ms. Griffins for their presentation.

Mayor Norman announced a 5 minute break at 10:23 a.m.



#### **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. Robertson commented on Item 3.2, presentation for water and sewer extension, stating the project sounded good and encouraged Council to give consideration for the request as there is a need for housing.

Susan MacLeod, 57 College Street, Liverpool – Ms. MacLeod stated she was having a hard time hearing and enquired to the timeline for the in-house sound system which has been in the budget for some time. Mayor Norman stated she could not comment on this at the present time but would find out and advise her. Mayor Norman reminded Councillors to speak up and project their voices.

Peter Gow, 34 Jenny Drive, Pine Grove – Mr. Gow stated he is President of the South Shore Flying Club. The Club has had a lease agreement since 2015 with the Region to run the airport, as well a lease for a terminal building and land. He provided members of Council a copy of his statement.

He further stated the Flying Club has worked hard to clean up and repair the terminal building at their expense.

An email was received on October 24, 2022 from Chris McNeill, CAO, asking to meet. At the meeting he and members of the Flying Club were present and were told the sale of the airport was withdrawn by the proposed buyer. Mr. McNeill stated the airport will be sold to the Nova Scotia Drag Racers Association (NSDRA) for \$50,000 and suggested they may work out a lease with them.

Mr. Gow enquired why the Flying Club was not given the same consideration for the purchase, and is this purchase proposal a done deal. He stated the Flying Club could offer to purchase the airport for \$100,000 and would enter into a long term lease with the NSDRA.

He further commented in an informal chat with the President and Vice President of NSDRA it was likely there would be no room for the Flying Club, as they would be increasing the number of races. Consideration would be given to selling the fuel system, as NSDRA would have no need for it and event fees would be charged to the Flying Club for functions and fly ins.

Their proposal would come at no cost to the Region.

David Joudrey, Western Head – Mr. Joudrey stated he is the President of the Nova Scotia Drag Racers Association. The NSDRA was formed in 2004 and have provided a safe environment for racers and spectators from all over the Maritime Provinces. Several races have moved to our track because of its reputation. Over the years we have maintained and upgraded the airport property. Each year further improvements are undertaken to the property.

Mr. Joudrey stated 2023 will mark the 20<sup>th</sup> season for the NSDRA and thanked the Region for consideration to purchase the airport property. He further stated they fully intend to work with the Flying Club for what is best for both groups. The airport is a piece of local history that dates back to the late 60's, early 70's that we don't want to see end. We have met briefly with members of the Flying Club to let them know we are willing to work with them.

Douglas Decker, 30 Evergreen Lane, Brooklyn – Mr. Decker stated from 2004 to March 2021 he was the director of the NSDRA and former Treasurer. He stated the gross income to date for the group is approximately \$1.7 Million, approximately \$150,000 spent to lease from the Region, and approximately \$120,000 spent on improvements. The Association did not ask or receive any money from the Region.

He further stated from information received from the Region's tourism staff, the economic impact in the area was approximately \$4 Million since being in business. We are a valuable asset.

In February, when we were told the airport was being sold, at that time we were told we could only get a three year agreement. It becomes important for us to be in business for another 20 years to have better control of the airport to ensure we have long term viability.

Terry Feener, 212 Beech Hill Road, Hunts Point – Mr. Feener stated he felt the Drag Racers are good stewards for the property. He stated that the offer to purchase the airport for \$500,000 sounds undervalued. He enquired to Council's decision to drop the selling price down to \$50,000, which seems to be an awful drop in price. Mayor Norman stated that the price the independent buyer was interested in was an appraised market value and Council has the ability to sell any of its property for as low as a \$1 to non-profits; an example is the Region selling 3 properties to a local not-for-profit organization for housing.

Mr. Feener enquired if the decision to sell for the lower amount is being made by one person for Council as a whole. Mayor Norman stated it was made by all of Council.

Bill Wamboldt, 200 Larry Wamboldt Road, Greenfield – Mr. Wamboldt stated he does not think the sale of the airport should be considered without public consultation. A public consultation should be held to get some ideas, as there may be other opportunities that can be held on that property. Recreation is a big business. He suggested that Council Table the sale of the airport until proper consultation can be held. Mayor Norman stated that the motion today is to hold a Public Hearing, not to sell the property, which will enable Council to agree to sell the property at less than fair market value. The Public Hearing will be scheduled for December 13, 2022.

## **6.0 Approval of Minutes**

6.1 Regular Council – October 25, 2022

**It was moved by Councillor Brown and seconded by Councillor  
Gidney:**

**THAT the minutes of the Regular Council meeting held October  
25, 2022 be approved as circulated.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## **7.0 Recommendations**

### **7.1 Sale of South Shore Regional Airport**

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

**THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality give notice of its intent to sell PID #70110903, also known as the property of South Shore Regional Airport, to Nova Scotia Drag Racers Association, for less than fair market value;**

**AND THAT a public hearing respecting the proposed sale be held on December 13, 2022, in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Administration Building, 249 White Point Road, Liverpool, at 9:00 a.m.**

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

**THAT the wording “to Nova Scotia Drag Racers Association” be removed from the recommendation and be replaced with “to all potential buyers”.**

Deputy Mayor Fancy enquired if a major change can be made to the motion, as this is. Chris McNeill, CAO, stated yes changes can be made, but you would have to start the process over as you cannot have a public hearing that is generic.

Councillor Brown stated his concern is that if you have one name in the recommendation and we have a public hearing and we have some competing offers for the airport, and we defeat this motion because of some other possibilities, we would be back where we are today. This would give us a chance to see what the public thinks we should do. I am not against the Drag Racers, but we work for all the people in Queens County and they all have a right to have their say.

Councillor Charlton stated holding the public hearing would give the public an opportunity to voice their concerns. If motion is defeated at that time, we'll be back to where we are again.

**AMENDMENT DEFEATED with 3 in favour and 5 against.**

Deputy Mayor Fancy stated there are no less than four people who would be interested in purchasing the airport property. We have worked in good faith with the NSDRA.

He further stated he is unsure of where we are with the legal aspect of the Region and does not feel comfortable going forward without consulting with our lawyers or do anything against the MGA.

**It was moved by Deputy Mayor Fancy and seconded by Councillor Brown:**

**THAT THE motion be deferred until legal representation is sought on concerns of where the Region stands with the sale and the MGA.**

Councillor Muise enquired if we can attain legal advice and still go ahead with the hearing. Deferring will delay it for another month.

Councillor Charlton reiterated that the motion is for a public hearing only.

**AMENDMENT DEFEATED with 2 in favour and 6 against.**

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

## 7.2 Fire Department Leadership Training

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

**THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality authorize the funding of Fire Department Leadership Training and Relationship Building Facilitation as an unfunded liability in the 2022-2023 operating budget for an amount of approximately \$12,000.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

7.3 Memorandum of Understanding respecting EMO Mutual Aid

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

**THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality authorize entering into the proposed agreement with Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, Municipality of the District of Chester, Town of Bridgewater, Town of Lunenburg, and Town of Mahone Bay for Emergency Management Mutual Aid.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## **8.0 Discussions**

8.1 Bioeconomy Development Opportunity Zone (BDO Zone) Initiative

Richard Lane, Director of Economic Development, stated the Nova Scotia Innovation Hub (NSIH) is seeking municipal support to create a Bioeconomy Development Opportunity Zone (BDO), which will include the Region of Queens.

The BDO zone initiative is a program that identifies and scores areas that are suitable to attract new bio-based manufacturing industry investment.

The BDO Zone initiative would have two components:

1. The rating process uses internationally recognized risk metrics to quantify biomass feedstock and infrastructure “success” characteristics. This process can take up to six months and requires the development of a Local Advisory Committee, on which RQM would have representation.
2. Promotion of the BDO Zone for 12 months on [bdozone.org](http://bdozone.org), in press releases to over 50 bio-based organizations and sector publications worldwide, on webinars featuring our zone via BDO

ZoneCONNECT, and private, hosted discussion groups with prequalified bio-project developers, investors, and strategic partner companies actively looking to build new bio-based plants in BDO Zones.

The cost of the certification process is estimated at \$77,000, but there are potential funding options available to offset the cost.

NSIH could prepare an application to Natural Resources Canada's (NRCan) Clean Fuels Fund in the 'Establishing Biomass Supply Chains' stream. This option would only require a letter of support and minimal staff time commitment from municipalities, but approval may not be granted until the third quarter 2023.

The second option would be to pursue funding through NSIH itself. An approval decision could be made by January 2023, but this option would require a financial contribution by municipal partners, of approximately 25%. The actual financial ask will depend on the number of participating partners, but to leverage \$57,750 from NSIH would require \$19,250.

Mr. Lane stated the bioeconomy can take in feedstocks from a number of different sectors; forestry, farming and the ocean. These have a primary harvest as well as secondary products. The bioeconomy would make sure of this feedstock.

Councillor Brown enquired to the cost to the Region to participate. Mr. Lane stated our cost would depend on the number of participants, which would be 25% of the overall cost.

Deputy Mayor Fancy commented that Brooklyn Power has trouble attaining chips to run their facility. Mr. Lane stated this process would determine where to source the appropriate product.

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

**THAT this issue be referred to the next Council meeting for a recommendation with Option 2.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 8.2 Region of Queens Pool Committee – Terms of Reference

Councillor Brown stated when the pool committee was struck, it was made clear there would be no staff resources to add to this committee, and the committee was going to be responsible for doing the work themselves and reporting back to Council.

Item 8 of the Terms of Reference states “receive and review month progress reports from the CAO” in regards to the project. This is determining that we are using staff resources.

Item 9 of the Terms of Reference states “assist the CAO by conducting research, etc”. Again, this is using staff resources, when they were told when the committee was set up there would be no staff resources.

Role of the Chief Administrative Officer and Staff is saying that the CAO, Director of Recreation and Healthy Communities and Engineer will work with the Committee. This says we are putting staff resources in when we told them we could not.

Role of Committee Members states they may seek or provide information to the CAO and consult other municipal staff but shall not direct staff. Again, we are giving the Committee power to question staff and work with staff when they were told we did not have time for.

The Resources section states the Committee shall have access to the CAO, Director of Recreation and Healthy Communities and other appropriate staff as authorized by the CAO.

All through these Terms of Reference it is telling them that they have direction to direct staff when we told them staff does not have the time to take this on at present. The Terms of Reference should go back to the Committee to rewrite them to reflect that the Committee will be making recommendations to Council without the use of staff.



Councillor Charlton stated that this is made to look like an unreasonable ask, but it almost mimics the Terms of Reference for the library with a few changes. Our Council prioritized the pool Committee and the majority of Council wished to have one, and because we have not adopted a Terms of Reference before, it has left this Committee unsure of their role.

She further stated she feels it has created some animosity that neither party needs and would like to see this move forward in a positive way. In order to do this, we need positive feedback. When the pool committee was first discussed, it was mentioned that perhaps taking some of the donated money, if possible, or through the Region to hire a consultant or to look at third party options because of our staffing issues. It is unreasonable to think our staff can do everything, we have staffing issues like other organizations, and need to look at the positive. What is a reasonable way to make this work?

She stated she attended the first pool committee meeting and there are people that can provide great value to this committee and it is unfortunate to see that crumble and not having a working relationship with the committee.

The replacement of the pool is in our capital plan and our Council has prioritized that at some level and enquired what would need to be shifted in order to make this work. There is \$2.5 Million in our capital plan to build this pool, we have a donation, so we have the funds and we need to come together as a Council and move forward.

Deputy Mayor Fancy stated in order for any Committee to move forward they need a Terms of Reference or mandate of what they're trying to achieve. These Terms of Reference were brought forward, using the Library Committee as an example, and if there needs to be corrections, then they need to be made so that the Committee can move forward.

Councillor Amirault stated the Terms of Reference were not made to use staff time but trying to incorporate staff for decisions and not eliminate them.

Chris McNeill, CAO, stated this is different than the library project. We do not operate the library, so using the Terms of Reference for the library would be inappropriate as it is very different from this project.

Councillor Charlton asked to find a way to move forward because at the end of the day there is the majority of Council that want to have a Pool Committee and feedback is required as the Pool Committee is unsure of their role. She enquired if Terms of Reference that make sense for this Committee be brought back at the next Council meeting and could have feedback from staff.

Councillor Muise stated the pool will be run by staff so staff should be involved with this Committee and enquired why staff was working on the Library Committee if not operating it. If the Pool Committee is unclear of what they're doing it becomes a big problem without staff involvement. Mayor Norman stated it was made clear when the Library Committee was struck that we are not going to operate it. We have no experience in running a library, we are building a building for library users; therefore, we created a Library Committee as we will own the building that will be rented to the South Shore Regional Library which is mandated by the Provincial government.

Councillor Brown stated during budget talks it was indicated that staff would be available to sit on the Library Committee, but when the donation came through for the pool, it was an add on project for staff and they would not have time, but if Council was willing to wait until next budget, they would be available. Council put the Pool Committee in place ahead of it and to include staff time in the Terms of Reference becomes problematic. If the Terms of Reference were changed to get the references to directing staff removed, then everything goes back on track and the Pool Committee can move forward.

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

**THAT the Terms of Reference be referred back to the Pool Committee to reformat and remove staff references.**

Councillor Charlton stated this would be unfair to the Pool Committee. We need guidance from staff on how we can move this forward in a positive way that is reasonable because if staff resources are removed from the Terms of Reference they will spend their time getting things ready and there are too many unknowns and is asking for a partnership for a way forward.

She further enquired when staff be available to sit down with the Pool Committee, as it is unfair to put it back on the Pool Committee without clear expectations.

Councillor Gidney stated he did not see any issues with the way the Terms of Reference are written. The Pool Committee will be doing all the work and is not a big staff issue and can move on with how it is written.

Mr. McNeill stated that Council needs to decide what the role is of the Pool Committee and what the role is of staff which will dictate the Terms of Reference. It would need to be determined what parts of your staff are deficient and what expertise the community members have to fill the gap. This will be the first of its kind in Queens County where a community group is given full opportunity to design and build a public infrastructure.

**AMENDMENT DEFEATED with 2 in favour and 5 against.**

Councillor Charlton stated there is not enough information provided on how to move forward and do not feel it is different than the library committee as both are for the community. She reiterated her question as to what is reasonable time for staff, as well as many other unanswered questions, so it is hard to move forward.

She further asked if Council could direct CAO to bring back a revised Terms of Reference to the next Council meeting that allows for the Pool Committee to be involved, much like the library committee, with a way to have our staff involved in the capacity that they can be, or a recommendation to hire a consultant. Mayor Norman stated Council was told that staff does have time to commit to a committee at this point in time. Because of the projects being undertaken at present, staff requested to wait until spring to begin the process. If

Council wishes to add another layer to the staff workload, then as a Council we must soon meet and determine what projects we are going to let go and decide what projects we have the ability to move forward with.

Councillor Amirault reiterated the need for the Pool Committee to work with the CAO because without his input how is the Pool Committee to have any resolutions.

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

**THAT the Terms of Reference come back as a recommendation at the next Council meeting with the opportunity for our CAO to provide feedback on items of concern.**

**AMENDMENT DEFEATED with 4 in favour and 4 against.**

Mayor Norman stated we have to move forward. She noted that Chairperson of the Pool Committee was present and enquired if they could provide a mandate of the Committee's strengths and what they could provide as resources. Deborah Spartenelli, Chairperson, Queens Pool Committee, stated the committee could work on project without staff input and work with staff in the spring as it would take time to complete some of the work, and did not see any issues with waiting until that time.

Mayor Norman noted the pool completion date is the end of 2024. The final decision of any recommendations brought forward by the Pool Committee will be the decision of Council. The Committee has the ability to advise and bring forward a variety of proposals for consideration.

Councillor Amirault and Deputy Mayor Fancy, who are Pool Committee members, feel that there is a need for a Terms of Reference.

Councillor Charlton enquired if the Pool Committee does not have a Terms of Reference if they can bring recommendation to Council for consideration. Mr. McNeill stated that no other committee has a Terms of Reference except for the library project which is a unique build.

Mayor Norman stated the Pool Committee can provide updates to Council at any time and feels it is a time to celebrate the donation to construct a pool.

Deputy Mayor Fancy reiterated the need for the Pool Committee to have a mandate in order to move forward.

Ms. Spartenelli asked for clarification on bringing their mandate to next Council. Mayor Norman stated yes.

## **9.0 In-Camera Items**

**It was moved by Councillor Brown and seconded by Councillor Muise that the proceedings go In-Camera at 12:15 p.m. to discuss the following:**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

Mayor Norman announced a 15 minute break at 12:15 p.m.

**It was moved by Deputy Mayor Fancy and seconded by Councillor Brown that the proceedings exit In-Camera at 1:48 p.m.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 10.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:48 p.m.

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Mayor Darlene Norman, Chair

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Eric Levy, Municipal Clerk

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Christine Watson, Administrative Assistant – Planning & Development

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

## **Region of Queens Municipality Staff Report**

**7.2**

**To:** Council

**From:** Meaghan Roberts, Director of Recreation and Healthy Communities

**Date:** November 22, 2022

**Re:** Community Investment Fund 2022-2023

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### **Background**

The Community Investment Fund (CIF) is entering its fourth year. It was initially approved by Council on November 27, 2019, and amended by Council on January 14, 2020.

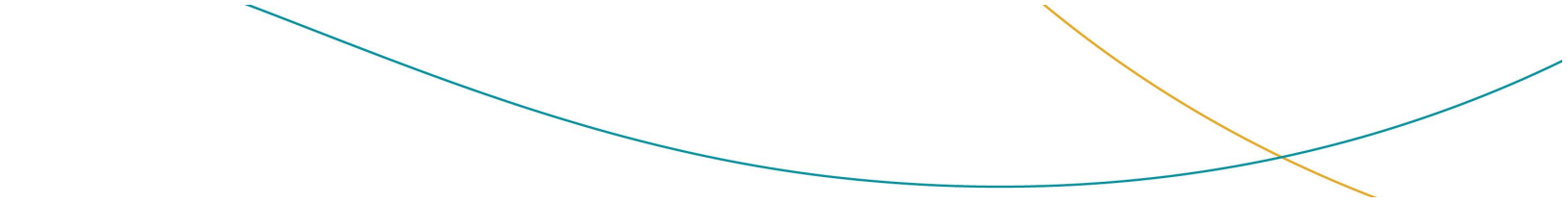
Total funding available in the 2022-2023 budget year is \$175,000, in addition to the remainder in reserve of \$302,331.25.

The deadline for operational funding was January 31, 2022, all other funds are available for application throughout the year beginning April 1 until all funds have been exhausted.

### **Details**

The funding request for consideration today is for New Capital Investment Fund application that has provided a complete application.

Organizations are eligible for Capital Investment Funds under three categories:

- 
- a) Up to twenty-five percent (25%) funding of eligible expenses for new capital community infrastructure, to a maximum of \$250,000;
  - b) Up to fifty percent (50%) funding of eligible expenses for alterations or improvements to existing community infrastructure that will prolong the life of the facility at least 10 years or significantly increase usage, to a maximum of \$50,000; or
  - c) Up to twenty-five percent (25%) funding of eligible expenses for new capital community infrastructure planning or feasibility studies, to a maximum of \$10,000.


### **Queens County Track Society**

**Request: \$250,000**

Queens County Track Society will be constructing a full size (300' x 190') turf soccer field and 400m, 8 lane gravel running track for community use at Liverpool Regional High School. In addition, the total overall project will have added features of fencing, lighting and some physical activity and sport enhancements. The funds being requested from Region of Queens Municipality will be for the full size (300' x 190') turf field and 8 lane gravel running track portion of the overall project. There is a proposed ten (10) year tri-party Land Use Agreement for community use of schools which will be a substitute for an ownership or lease requirement and demonstrates permission to pursue capital funding for construction at this site. Queens County Track Society will be the lead to promote, facilitate, and oversee school, community use and operations of the facility. Basic maintenance will be provided by South Shore Regional Centre for Education and the Queens County Track Society will oversee the high level maintenance needs.

The Society has applied for provincial and federal infrastructure funding for the other portions of the project costs. The additional gap in funding will be met through funding by private partners, fundraising, donations, corporate sponsorship, etc. As this project is securing funding, estimated project pricing is provided in lieu of quotes. Once federal funding is secured, the Project Management team will issue an RFP to secure competitive pricing for the project. The total eligible costs for the portion of the project requesting new capital funding are projected well in excess of \$1,000,000 before HST which allows the Society to access up to a maximum of \$250,000 based on total eligible costs. All required documentation was provided and the request meets Policy 11-Community Investment Fund's criteria.





As the projected project start date is April 2023, the recommendation for funding is from the Community Investment reserve account which currently has a total balance of \$302,331.25.

### **Applicable Legislation**

*Municipal Government Act (MGA)* authorizes Council to expend money under:

#### **Authorized municipal expenditures**

65A (1) Subject to subsections (2) to (4), the municipality may only spend money for municipal purposes if:

- (a) the expenditure is included in the municipality's operating budget or capital budget or is otherwise authorized by the municipality;
- (b) the expenditure is in respect of an emergency under the *Emergency Management Act*; or
- (c) the expenditure is legally required to be paid.


(5) In the event of ambiguity in whether or not the municipality has the authority under this or any other Act to spend money or to take any other action, the ambiguity may be resolved so as to include, rather than exclude, powers the municipality had on the day before this Section came into force.

### **Budget Impacts**

This report is seeking approval to expend money from Community Investment Fund reserve fund. All funding will be distributed as per guidelines set out in Operational Policy 11 – Community Investment Fund.

### **Recommendation**

**That** Council of Region of Queens Municipality provide grant funding approval, from its Community Investment Fund reserve account, to Queens County Track Society in the amount of up to \$250,000;



**AND THAT** funding not be released until Queens County Track Society provides satisfactory proof of its financial resources to complete the full size (300' x 190') turf soccer field and 400m, 8 lane gravel running track portion of the project as outlined in the application.

**AND FURTHER THAT** total eligible costs as received under the project tender for the full size (300' x 190') turf soccer field and 400m, 8 lane gravel running track portion of the new capital project are more than \$1,000,000 before HST.

**AND FURTHER THAT** a fully executed long term land use agreement is in effect prior to funding being released.

## **Communications**

The funding applicants will be notified of a decision following Council. Approved applicants will be included in the 2023-2024 Grant Disclosure per Policy 89.

# **Letter of Mandate**

## **Region of Queens Pool Committee**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of Region of Queens Pool Committee (the Committee) is to provide the Region of Queens Council (Council with educated, knowledgeable, recommendations for the design, placement, programs and services for a new pool. This new facility will be created to ensure long-term sustainable access to a pool for all residents of Queens County and visitors, ensuring its design reflects efficient functionality and multiple usage. The Committee provide recommendations to Council to guide the work of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) as they lead the process to build and operate this important community recreational facility. This Committee must ensure that the information and authority granted to it is always used in a non-partisan, non-personal manner, and the general well-being of the community always takes precedence over any individual person or business so that the best options to support community access to the aquatic facility is maintained.

### **Authority**

The Committee will be granted its legal authority to advise the Council by virtue of being delegated this responsibility with Council's approval on September 13, 2022 of this Terms of Reference. Council's authority to establish this Committee is included in Sections 9A and 24(1) of the *Municipal Government Act*.

### **Scope**

The scope of the volunteer Committee shall be to review and assess current and future aquatic activities from both a staffing and community use lens to ensure all facets of the development are considered and implemented where possible and feasible. The Committee reports to the CAO and Council. This relationship is limited to providing recommendations and information to the CAO and to Council when applicable to do so.

Specifically, the Committee shall endeavour to:

1. Conduct a review of current aquatic services in the Region of Queens
2. Obtain information regarding aquatic operations in both indoor and outdoor pools in Nova Scotia.
3. Provide recommendations to CAO and Council re potential size and site locations for a new pool, considering accessibility and community fit, along with expected capital and operating costs, culminating in a recommendation to Council for the selection of a size and site.
4. Work with the Architect/Designer re both the interior and exterior design of the new facility,

5. Consult with key stakeholders and use this public input to inform recommendations re participant flow, accessibility, safety, functionality, technology, energy efficiency, equipment, lifeguard areas, public areas and locker rooms.
6. Provide a community lens and recommendations to the Council respecting materials, social media strategies, educational training, community engagement, and other issues that are required to educate and inform residents throughout Queens County of this project.
7. Act as information resource for users and community regarding this project with Chairperson or their designate acting as Committee spokesperson for the project.
8. Place two committee members as part of the review team(s) that provide recommendations to Council re the contracting of the project manager, general contractor and architect.

### **Reporting Relationship of The Committee**

The Committee shall be accountable directly to Council of Region of Queens Municipality and CAO.

### **Role of Chairperson**

The Chairperson is ultimately responsible for organizing, chairing and facilitating all meetings. The Chairperson will also ensure that appropriate research, directions and recommendations are given to the Committee, including the provision for review of work plans, policy directions, strategies, financial commitments, research and data collection. The Chair shall vote on all motions, any motion that is a tie is considered defeated.

### **Role of Vice Chairperson**

A Vice Chairperson shall be appointed and act in the place of the Chairperson during absences, unavailability, or conflicts of interest of the Chairperson.

### **Role of Committee Member**

Committee Members are expected to prepare for and attend all meetings of the Committee unless they provide prior notice of absence to the Chairperson. Committee Members are required to always act in the best interest of the community generally and set aside personal beliefs and business interests at all times because they will conflict with the objectives and strategic directions of the Committee.

### **Membership**

Membership on the Committee shall include up to six (6) members comprising of two members of the Queens Community Aquatic Society, two Council Members and two members of the public who are pool users, duly appointed by Council pursuant to Section 24 of the *Municipal Government Act* for a term to expire one month after the functional opening of the new aquatic facility. Public Members appointed to this Committee should possess an open and positive mindset, be passionate about aquatic activities, understand the importance of such, be willing to undertake difficult discussions, understand the importance of physical exercise in a water environment to promote health and well being. Any resignation shall be tendered in writing to the Chairperson. Subsequently a replacement will be sought to fill the remaining term of office. Any Committee Member who misses three consecutive meetings without due cause shall be deemed to be no longer a member of the Committee. A Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall be elected at the first meeting of the Committee by a majority vote of the members and shall continue to hold office until the project is complete or they resign/are removed from the Committee.

### **Duration of Mandate**

The Committee membership terms shall begin on October 18th 2022 and shall be for a term to one month after the functional opening of the new aquatic facility or resignation/removal.

### **Frequency of Meetings**

The Committee meetings shall be held on such day and times as the Committee decides each meeting of the Committee. The Committee shall meet at a minimum 18 times for the duration of the project. All meetings are open to the public, unless designated as in camera. Meeting times and locations will be made public through social media.

### **Quorum Requirements**

The quorum for a committee meeting is 50% of the sitting members plus one.

### **Agenda, Minutes and Resolutions**

Minutes, advice, and recommendations of the Committee shall be provided to each member of the Committee within a reasonable time prior to the beginning of, or after the conclusion of such meetings. The Chair shall provide each member of the Committee with the agenda and required supporting documentation at least four days prior to every meeting.

### **Conflict of Interest**

It is expected that all members of the Committee will adhere to the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, disclosing any pecuniary or indirect pecuniary interest in any matter before the Committee and refraining from taking part in, or trying to

influence either before or after the meeting, any directions or decisions respecting such matters. Any breach of this guideline will require the Chairperson to ask Council to remove that member and appoint another member in their stead. If the breach is by the Chairperson, this shall be reported to Council by the Vice Chairperson. The Committee will conduct its business in accordance with the Municipality's Code of Conduct Policy.

### **Resources**

The Committee will have access to all documents and records of the Municipality that are publicly available and within its purview when requested and subject to confidentiality when noted.

### **Decision Making Process**

All decisions of the Committee shall be made by majority vote of the Committee members present and eligible to vote. Where a majority is not forthcoming, the vote shall be determined in the negative. All decisions of the Committee will be made without undue influence or biased decision-making favouring any Committee Member's personal or financial interests, or that of family members or close friends.

### **Confidentiality**

All meetings of the Committee are considered public, except those matters deemed to be private and confidential in nature and subject to Section 22 of the *Municipal Government Act*. Minutes and subsequent resolutions of such meetings shall be recorded and publicly available upon approval by the Committee. Information and reports of the Steering Committee shall be subject to normal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPOP) regulations.

### **Communications**

All communications and messaging from the Committee's work and activities shall come solely from the Chairperson or their designate. It is expected that all decisions of the Committee will be supported by all members of the Committee upon ratification. This does not limit the ability of an individual member from speaking freely with the media, but in all such cases the individual committee member should be clear that it is their personal opinion and not that of the Committee.

### **Reporting**

The Committee shall be added as an agenda item under reports on a regular agenda basis, even though there may be nothing to report.

### **Responsibilities**

The Committee shall be responsible for developing critical and measurable success factors of the Committee through its associated research and annual

work plan, including regularly evaluating its work and success against these criteria. The Committee is expected to make timely decisions and give solid advocacy and capacity building advice to the CAO and the Director of Recreation and Healthy Communities that are in the best interests of all residents without exception.

## **Region of Queens Municipality Staff Report**

**8.2**

**To:** Council

**From:** Eric Levy, Municipal Clerk and Diversity Coordinator

**Date:** November 22, 2022

**Re:** Operational Policy 3 – Public Art

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### **Background**

The Municipal Government for All Vision Framework was approved by Council in 2020. Within this framework, a fund was earmarked for the purchase of a public art installation to celebrate the diversity of Queens County.

### **Details**

In order to responsibly purchase public art, it was determined that a policy setting out the parameters for the purchases of public art was necessary.

The proposed *Policy 3 – Public Art* outlines the importance of public art as well and setting out the requirements for funding, selection, purchase, donations, maintenance, and removal of public art.

### **Applicable Legislation**

Section 47 of the *Municipal Government Act* states:

- (1) The council shall make decisions in the exercise of its powers and duties by resolution, by policy or by by-law.





## **Budget Impacts**

There are no anticipated budgetary impacts in the adoption and implementation of these policies aside from the purchasing of art itself in the event it takes place.



## Region of Queens Municipality

### Policy 3 - Public Art

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#### **Policy Statement**

Region of Queens Municipality recognizes that public art in a municipal setting helps create thought-provoking, culturally vibrant spaces that celebrate and express the diversity of our communities and cultures while promoting social connectivity and cohesion.

Public art also enhances how people experience a place, contributing to its mood, safety, and accessibility. By encouraging public art, Region of Queens Municipality is supporting the local arts community and contributing to Queens County being a destination for visitors and new residents.

#### **Policy Objective**

To establish parameters around the selection, purchase, maintenance, and official removal of public art.

#### **Policy Details**

##### *Funding*

1. Municipal Departments with their own budget may opt to use a portion of their budget for the procurement of public art with the approval of the Chief Administrative Officer.
2. Should Municipal Council wish to purchase public art under this policy, funding for the installation must be determined during the operating budget development process establishing the purchase.
3. Maintenance costs for public art will be incorporated into each department's annual operating budget that has public art.

##### *Purchased Art Selection Process*

4. Region of Queens Municipality may purchase public art by publishing a Call for Proposals, or contracting an artist directly, if the budget for the public art creation and installation is designated with the Municipality's budget for that year or a future year.



5. Final selection of public art shall be done by the Chief Administrative Officer with input from the applicable Municipal Department and the Diversity and Inclusion Action Team when deemed necessary.
6. Artists will be selected on the following criteria:
  - a. Qualifications as demonstrated on past work
  - b. Appropriateness of the proposal in relation to the project
  - c. Monetary/appraised value
  - d. Timeline and probability of successful completion
  - e. Suitability of the artistic work for display in a public space
  - f. Relevance to Queens County's landscape, cultural heritage, and/or history
  - g. Input from Queens County residents in purchases being done via a Call for Proposals

#### *Donated Art*

7. Region of Queens Municipality may accept donations of art or donations of funds intended for public art installations.
8. Should one be necessary, any donation shall be accompanied by a maintenance plan supplied by the artist or donor.
9. All donations must be unencumbered and the location of the installation is at the discretion of the Municipality.
10. All donations that receive tax receipts must meet Canadian Revenue Agency requirements and any appraisals are to be done at the donor's expense and shall be reviewed by the Director of Corporate Services.
11. Region of Queens Municipality reserves the right to decline to consider or accept any gift, bequest, or donation of art.

#### *Borrowed Art*

12. Region of Queens Municipality will not borrow temporary public art.

#### *Agreements and Maintenance*

13. Following the approval of the purchase of public art, the artist and Region of Queens Municipality will enter into a written agreement outlining the obligations of both parties during the lifespan of the art work, which may include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Scope of work
  - b. Materials
  - c. Timelines



- d. Installation
  - e. Maintenance
  - f. Warranty
  - g. Copyright and moral rights
  - h. Payment and sub-contracting
  - i. Insurance
  - j. Unveiling
  - k. Artist recognition
14. Region of Queens Municipality is responsible for coordinating the installation of all owned public art.
15. All artistic works owned by Region of Queens Municipality may be insured under the Region of Queens Municipality's insurance policy.

*Removal of Public Art*

16. Region of Queens Municipality may remove and dispose of public art whenever necessary.



## Region of Queens Municipality

### Administrative Policy

## 23 – Respecting Regular Meetings of Council

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### Policy Statement

It shall be the policy of Region of Queens Municipality to have a consistent, predetermined schedule for Regular Council Meetings.

### Policy Objectives

1. To maintain a consistent schedule for Council Meetings
2. To have a schedule of meetings in Queens County communities to encourage resident engagement

### Policy Details

3. Council of Region of Queens Municipality shall hold a bi-monthly council meeting on the second Tuesday of each month in the Council Chamber of the Municipal Administration Building, 249 White Point Road, Liverpool beginning at 9:00 a.m.
4. Council of Region of Queens Municipality shall hold a bi-monthly council meeting on the fourth Tuesday of each month in Council Chamber of the Municipal Administration Building, 249 White Point Road, Liverpool, beginning at 6:00 p.m. except for meetings which shall be held in the following locations:
  - a. April – West Queens
  - b. June – North Queens
  - c. October – East Queens
  - d. January – South Queens
5. Notwithstanding Section 4, no council meetings shall be held on the fourth Tuesdays of July and August.
6. When a meeting date falls on a holiday, the meeting shall be held on the next business day.
7. In cases when there is a health and safety concern related to holding a meeting outside of the Council Chamber, Council may hold those meetings in the Council Chamber. If feasible, the non-Council Chamber meeting will be rescheduled to another time within the current fiscal year.



8. In cases when there is a health and safety concern related to holding a meeting in-person, or a quorum is not expected to be present, the Mayor, in consultation with Council and Chief Administrative Officer, may cancel a council meeting or hold said meeting electronically. If a meeting is cancelled, it shall not be rescheduled and agenda items will carry over to the next scheduled meeting.

**This is to certify that** Policy 23 was passed by Council on the Region of Queens Municipality at a duly constituted meeting of said Council held on 24<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2022.

**Signed** by the Mayor and Municipal Clerk this 25<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2022

Mayor

Municipal Clerk

## **Region of Queens Municipality Staff Report**

**8.4**

**To:** Council

**From:** Eric J. Levy, Municipal Clerk and Diversity Coordinator

**Date:** November 22, 2022

**Re:** Ad Hoc Communications Strategy Review Committee

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### **Background**

In 2017, the *Region of Queens Communications Strategy and Operational Policy 83: Social Media* were approved by Council. These documents outline the Region's objectives, processes, and regulations around communication including social media, website, in-person communications, and various other facets of internal and external engagement.

### **Details**

Staff are currently carrying out a full review of policies, bylaws, and practices. The *Communications Strategy and Operational Policy 83* are being requested to be prioritized at the request of a member of Council.

With the review of policies and practices that have a wide ranging impact on the organization, it is valuable to have a review committee to gather various perspectives.



Staff are requesting that a small ad hoc committee of staff and Council be created to conduct a review of these two documents. Staff are asking Council to appoint two Councillors to sit on this committee.

The times and dates of meetings will be determined at a later date by the committee. All members will be expected to read the documents and have a solid understanding of current communications practices.

### **Applicable Legislation**

Section 24(1) of the *Municipal Government Act* states that Council may establish standing, special, and advisory committees.

### **Budget Impacts**

There are no additional budget implications for this request.

### **Communications**

Once Council decides on approves committee members, staff appointments will take place and the meeting dates and times will be established.



## **REGION OF QUEENS MUNICIPALITY**

### **Operational Policy No. 83 Social Media Policy**

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#### **General Statement of Policy**

It shall be the policy of the Region of Queens Municipality (“Municipality”) to provide clarity and direction respecting the use of social media for employees, volunteers and elected officials.

#### **Policy Objectives**

1. To establish a policy that promotes municipal transparency and accountability to the public; and,
2. Provides clarity to employees, volunteers and elected officials with respect to their role representing the Municipality, and their interactions and representations on social media.

#### **Policy Directions**

##### **Municipality’s Social Media Accounts and Postings**

1. The creation and administration of social media sites, including but not limited to, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, representing the Municipality must be authorized in advance by the Chief Administrative Officer (“CAO”).
2. Operation and administration of the Municipality’s social media accounts and postings will be delegated by the CAO to the Communications Officer outlined in the Communications Strategy. Only persons authorized per the Communications Strategy shall post on behalf of the Municipality on any social media medium. Further, only content approved by the official spokesperson or their delegate shall be posted on behalf of the Municipality.
3. When the Municipality uses a social media site which allows public comments and posts, the following content will not be permitted:
  - Comments/posts not related to a posted article/topic/information;
  - Business solicitation;
  - Profane or inappropriate language;
  - Content considered to be defamatory, disparaging, disrespectful or insulting to individuals, including municipal staff or representatives;

- Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation or any other prohibited ground of discrimination under the Nova Scotia *Human Rights Act*;
- Sexual content or links to sexual content;
- Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity; and
- Any content deemed inappropriate by the Municipality.

The Municipality reserves the right to monitor its social media sites and remove any content. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, if the Municipality finds any content on its social media site that offends section 3 herein, it will remove the content, or contact the appropriate administrator or network and request the content be removed.

4. User comments and messages posted to official social networking sites are considered transitory records and will not be kept as a permanent record by the Municipality.

### **Use of any Social Media**

5. Social Media sites are public, regardless of the privacy settings. As such, any postings (content, statements, pictures or comments, etc.) by an employee, volunteer or elected official, regardless of whether posted on Municipality sites or otherwise, could negatively impact the Municipality, its reputation, workplace, other employees, partners/vendors or its customers/clients.

Employees, volunteers and elected officials are required to comply with the following guidelines when making posts or comments on **any** social media site, regardless of whether their social media interactions are during or outside of work hours:

- a. Conduct and represent themselves professionally;
- b. Posts, pictures, comments or any content involving the following will not be tolerated:
  - i. Proprietary and confidential municipal information, including internal information and activities, confidential information of municipal employees, businesses partners, customers or clients;
  - ii. Inappropriate content, including harassing, bullying, intimidating and discriminatory content or sexual innuendos regarding employees, management, volunteers, Council members or other elected officials, customers/ clients, corresponding organizations or vendors; and

- iii. Defamatory, derogatory or disparaging statements regarding the Municipality its employees, management, volunteers, Council members or other elected officials, customers/clients, corresponding organizations, or vendors.
  - c. No employee, volunteer or Council member shall purport to speak or post on behalf of the Municipality, unless they have received the authorization to do so, as outlined in this policy and the Communication Strategy (as amended from time to time).
  - d. Unless acting as the official or authorized spokesperson, the comments or postings of staff or elected officials do not represent the Municipality; however, all staff, volunteers and elected officials shall comply with this policy.
6. The use of social media in the workplace must not have a negative impact on that employee's productivity or efficiency, or the productivity or efficiency of others in the workplace.
7. Any communications sent over the Municipality's networks and computers are the Municipality's records. At any time without prior notice, the Municipality reserves the right to examine and analyze email, personal file directories, internet access logs, and any other information stored on the Municipalities computers. Such examinations support external and internal investigations, assure compliance with various policies, and assist in the management of information systems. Employees, volunteers and elected officials should have no expectation of privacy associated with the information they store in or send through these systems, whether encrypted or not. Employees, volunteers or elected officials using the Municipality's information systems and/or Internet access should realize that their communications are not automatically protected from viewing by third parties. Do not sent information over the Internet or internally that is considered sensitive or private without encrypting the message.
8. The Municipality will adhere to all applicable legislation regarding privacy and freedom of information, including but not limited to, the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. In addition, the Municipality's records may be subject to subpoena by a court of competent jurisdiction. As such, employees, volunteers and elected officials should be aware that personal and other information contained in electronic correspondence (or printed versions thereof) which are directed to the Municipality or other information contained on the Municipality's networks and computers may be required to be disclosed under legislation or pursuant to a subpoena from a court of competent jurisdiction. The anonymity or confidentiality of the sender or author of any information contained within the correspondence or otherwise contained on the Municipality's networks and computers cannot be presumed or relied upon.

### **Failure to Abide by Policy**

9. Any employee who fails to follow this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Any volunteer who fails to follow this policy, may face a restriction or removal from volunteer roles, activities or opportunities.

Council members who fail to follow this this policy may be subject to corrective action by Council in accordance with Policy 74 – Code of Conduct for members of Council and Public Committee Members.

Approved by Council: June 13, 2017

# COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY REGION OF QUEENS MUNICIPALITY

May 16, 2017

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## **INTRODUCTION:**

Great communications is about doing a few simple things right, every single time. It is about creating a simple narrative message, supporting the person who is to do the telling, knowing who to tell it to, using the channels they want to receive it, and then compelling them to pass it on.

The Region of Queens Municipality (RQM) has been in existence for since April 1, 1996. Amalgamation formed an area that is diverse in geography, culture, and economics. RQM provides municipal services, including fire protection, community development and planning, engineering, parks and recreation facility services, a residential care facility, solid waste management and water/waste water services to a population of more than 10,000 citizens. In addition to the provision of services to the population, Council has developed three strategic priority areas of focus: 1. Growing the economy and population, 2. Delivering desirable municipal services, and 3. Governing to the best municipal practices.

The overall goal of this communications strategy is to make the Region of Queens Municipality the first and best source of information about what is going on in the Region. It is necessary to continue to move from communication which responds to negative publicity, to communication which is proactive and leads public opinion by focusing on the progression and accomplishments, notwithstanding the inherent challenges. While doing this, the goal is to also ensure that communication is planned, and anticipates issues and opportunities.

The RQM has internal and external audiences. There are a number of communication tools that can be used to deliver messages to each of these audiences, including the media, newsletters, notices and bulletins, public information sessions, and the internet. The more ways used to communicate a message, the more likely the message will be received correctly and by a broader audience.

A limited number of people will be official spokespersons, which will help to ensure that the messaging is constant. The Mayor will continue to be an official spokesperson for the RQM Council and in his/her absence, the official spokesperson shall be the Deputy Mayor. Additionally, the CAO will be an official spokesperson, and the Communications Officer may also provide information to the media.

It should be noted that no matter how effective the communications program is, not all people will want to receive information about their government. Also, it takes time to increase the public's level of knowledge and understanding of municipal affairs.

Communications messages and the means used to most effectively communicate with the Region of Queens Municipality's audiences may change over time; it is important to ensure that this strategy is reviewed and updated periodically (i.e.; updates may be made and circulated to Council and staff, as well as posted publically, as required. Full document reviews should be undertaken soon after a change in Council, as mandates are subject to change) to ensure that it remains reflective of the direction that the Municipality is moving, and also to ensure that the strategy remains a living document used by staff and Council.



## **Overall Communications Goal**

**For the Region of Queens Municipality to have an informed public, knowledgeable about the Region's plans, priorities, growth and progress.**

### **COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES**

**Objective** – *To make RQM a key source of information for stakeholders seeking proactive information about growth, planning, and operations in the municipality .*

- Key stakeholders are informed about RQM's direction, and consider RQM their first and best source of information about developments and progress in the region. The RQM has an obligation to the public to keep them informed of the activities and undertakings.

Measures include:

- Increased website and social media site visits
- Increased readership of communiqués, *the Municipal Matters Newsletter* and updates
- Increased direct-to-influencer speaking platforms for Mayor and Councillors
- Increased positive media coverage
- Increased participation in public events

**Objective** – *To integrate communications within RQM and at Council towards a planned, proactive strategic model*

- Council members and Departmental leaders, think about the communications implications and opportunities when making key decisions and when planning
- Council members and Departmental leaders understand the value of communications, and actively seek out and communicate positive stories or potential issues

Measures include:

- Increased awareness and compliance with media relations and social media guidelines
- Minimize the exposure for negative media coverage by providing proactive accurate information

- No “surprises” – a well informed Staff and Council who are aware of the projects and actions of the organization

**Objective** – *To augment the internal communications environment*

- Members of Council receive news early in the process, through receiving copies of all information that will be disseminated to the public and media before the information is made public. This ensures that elected officials are aware, informed and are prepared in the event they receive questions from the public.

All employees receive news early in the process. By hearing news first, they feel engaged and understand their role in success of the Municipality.

- Measures include: Employees and Council have greater understanding and awareness of RQM plans and direction
- Increased employee engagement
- Increased employee satisfaction

**Method:** *Align communications with management decision-making*

**How to:** Communications is a key consideration of operations. Ongoing representation of communications issues at the council level ensures that the concerns and interests of all stakeholder groups are rooted into the organization’s way of doing business. As an integral part of every decision, communications issues are treated with the same level of priority as other business elements. The more sensitive and responsive an organization is to communication-based issues and challenges, the less likely it is to be in a constant position of "putting out fires"/reactive communications.

To implement this tactic, there should be a broad understanding of the RQM’s communications opportunities, and the senior team to ask, “Should communications be here?” whenever major decisions are being made. Key opportunities include: yearly budget planning, organizational business planning, project planning, etc.

**Results:** Communications Officer is able to input into strategy and business planning at a macro level

**Method:** *Use proactive media relations*

**Objective:** Provide key background information surrounding an issue to media proactively to ensure that accurate information is shared in a timely manner.

**How to:** Being proactive with media means initiating and responding to media interest promptly and honestly. Through the implementation of an issues management grid and the adoption of an issues action plan protocol, RQM can establish a more planned and proactive approach to communications surrounding issues.

Initiating media coverage when there is:

- A good news story about the organization to promote our vision, mission or plans
- Newsworthy information which, by virtue of being addressed through internal channels is now public knowledge
- Emergency and crisis situations
- Issues and events including negative ones, which are on the public radar, brewing on the government (Council) front or that will be of consequence to the way we do our business and offer our services.

Sample tools initiating media coverage surrounding an issue include:

- a) **Proactive statements/releases** – Similar to traditional media releases, when an issue arises that should be addressed proactively, one key tool is a statement issued to media. This should be provided to key media who are either covering a story, or from whom an inquiry has arisen.
- b) **Briefings with key reporters** – When appropriate, another key tool is a background briefing with one or two key reporters. This is a structured and well-messaged opportunity for the RQM to provide messaging and access to the media.

By anticipating the need for communication, we are in a better position to set the tone and make certain information in the media is accurate. In controversial or sensitive situations, a proactive stance demonstrates our commitment to keeping key publics informed about decisions that may affect them.

There are circumstances when it is not permitted by the MGA/advisable not to initiate media coverage. These include:

- Personnel matters
- During negotiations, when news and developments are confined to the negotiating table
- External or internal investigations of the organization, a staff member or someone else with connection to the organization
- Incidents under police investigation

In each of the above noted cases, it is best to be prepared with statements in case of requests. These statements should explain why we are unable to provide detail or additional information (as opposed to simply saying “no comment”).

**Results:** RQM is seen as a leader on key issues, rather than responding to negative coverage. RQM is seen as transparent as it provides information – even potentially negative information - proactively.

### ***Method – Correct errors, misquotes and “bad press”***

**Objective:** Create an opportunity and a practice whereby RQM’s Communications Officer correct misinformation as soon as possible and respond to negative media in a way that does not prolong a “bad news” story.

**How to:** Generally speaking, unless the factual error or misquote is serious (see below), the best policy is no response. Minor inaccuracies can easily occur, particularly when the information being relayed or interpreted is complex.

An error misquote is considered serious when it does the following:

- Jeopardizes the image or calls into question the integrity of the RQM
- Creates alarm and confusion for staff, stakeholders and the public
- Factually misrepresents the RQM

Appropriate responses might be:

- For simple factual errors and misquotes, ask the journalist, editor or producer to follow up with a correction, retraction, or clarification
- For widespread published errors that will be compounded over time, issue a press release
- If all else fails, lodge a formal complaint with the local press council (National News Media Council <http://mediacouncil.ca/>)

Ultimately, the actual practice of judging when to “let it go” (i.e. decide that the information is not worth challenging) or to correct misinformation lies with the Communications Officer for RQM, with the consent of the Mayor and CAO, who will be in the best position to develop the necessary relationship with the media.

**Results:** When misinformation is identified, RQM has recourse to correct it

### ***Method – Maintain augmented and segmented stakeholders lists***

**Objective:** Know your audience and create an engaged group of citizen-leaders.

**Implementation:** The RQM currently has a list of stakeholders with whom it shares information periodically. Some of this communication happens at the Mayor/CAO level, and in other cases,

departments may have specialized stakeholder lists for projects and special activities. A segmented and targeted contact database of key stakeholders could be developed to distribute correspondence, updates, and other materials to directly. Groupings to include:

- **Economic and business stakeholders** – Those who would be interested in budget/tax updates, etc.
- **Planning and development stakeholders** – The private development community who would be interested in updates
- **Community groups, tourism associations, and other organizations** – Those with a vested interest in RQM’s yearly events and planning.

**Results:** RQM has a list of key stakeholders at its fingertips for use in direct-to-stakeholder engagement.

***Method – Establish a macro-agenda for communications***

**Objective:** The CDC will create a simple, user-friendly yearly agenda for communications which identifies key moments and opportunities at a macro level. The items are populated by the Mayor and Communications Officer, as well as other members of the team; it focuses on events (positive and negative) on the horizon. This is an opportunity to create a visual roadmap for communications to use for communications activities throughout the year.

- The macro-calendar poster, will be a “year at a glance” document, with the draft calendar pre-circulated internally to ensure that nothing is missed. The final calendar will be shared with all inside the organization, including Council, and updated quarterly when Strategic Priorities are updated. The calendar is a natural guideline for ensuring communications is ongoing and well planned. For example, if in the calendar major construction or infrastructure development is identified for July, RQM communicators should seek opportunities in April/May to position the need and the opportunity for the project prior to trucks appearing on the road.

***Method – Implement and communicate augmented media relations protocol***

**Objective:** Maintain the established protocol for engagement with the media supports proactive and engaged media relations activities.

**Implementation:** The Mayor, CAO and Deputy Mayor serve as official spokespersons for RQM. The Communications Officer serves as the conduit through which media relations activities flow (i.e. inbound calls and inquiries flow through their office, not necessarily expecting them to serve as spokesperson, but rather, as facilitator for the media relations). While there is value in ensuring that

the municipality's Communications Officer is engaged and informed about all media relations, in today's media environment, it is also essential that those within the RQM can work in cooperation with the spokespersons to respond to media requests. The result is an organization that is transparent and accountable, while still maintaining a consistent message.

The Communications Officer, being the facilitator for media enquiries in addition to other work within the RQM, has a protocol and standard of service in place for responding to enquiries. While some enquiries from the media are deadline sensitive, not all enquiries necessitate immediate response. The service standard reflect our desire to be responsive and have a positive cooperative relationship with the media, while also recognizing that the communications aspects are one facet of the CDC's position.

In general, media inquiries are received by the RQM (staff and management) in two ways:

- A reporter calls the Mayor, CAO or CDC and asks for comment, or to arrange an interview with the appropriate spokesperson
- A reporter calls an employee or Director/Manager directly and asks for an interview or comment

Regardless of how the media call is received, there are a few steps to take to ensure that the interview is successful, and the reporter receives the information that they need:

1. **Ask the reporter for a few details about the request**
  - a. What information do you need?
  - b. What is the story about?
  - c. When will the story air/be published
  - d. Who else are you talking to about this story?
2. **Set a time for the interview.** It is preferable to take some time to gather information rather than doing an interview "on the spot".
3. **Provide the CAO, Mayor with an overview of the request.** They have information that relates to the issue, or are able to add insight into issues currently in the media that might have inspired this interview request.
4. **Review the media coverage when it airs/appears to ensure that there are no factual errors.** If there is an error in the coverage, make note of it, the air or publication date/time, and the correct information. If necessary, call the reporter and provide the correct information.

## **OTHER KEY POINTS:**

- **In the event the request is received by someone other than the Communications Officer, do not accept an interview if you are not a designated spokesperson.** Instead, take the reporter's information and provide it to the Communications Officer who will supply the appropriate spokesperson.
- **Return telephone calls promptly.** Journalists are under extremely tight deadlines, their calls within the hour. Work within the deadlines they provide to coordinate schedules to ensure a spokesperson is able to speak with them. In the event of a tight deadline, if no spokesperson is available, advise the journalist, and provide a fact sheet, or an approved statement.

**After Hours Media Requests.** The Communications Officer responds to media inquiries during regular hours of operation: Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Summer hours in July and August are 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.). After-hours service for media enquiries is provided when the Region of Queens Municipality deems the request is of an urgent, operational nature. Other inquiries will be addressed during regular business hours.

Media requests from accredited media (representatives of a recognized media organization) are given priority. Other media/media students: Please note that while the Region of Queens Municipality will make every effort to accommodate non-accredited requests, delays in responding may occur.

**Results:** The RQM has a broader voice in the media, and an established media protocol and service standard.

## **AUDIENCES**

### **“Who do we need to talk to, and what do they want to know?”**

Knowing who are the target audiences or stakeholders is an important part of any communications plan. With every planned communication, the municipality must think about to whom it should flow, and how its messages will be received, while ensuring that they are relevant and impactful. The additional challenge is to ensure that those responsible for delivering the information are knowledgeable and well prepared to transfer that information easily.

The internal audience is made up of Council (the Mayor and Councillors), the CAO, senior management and all employees, and any members of agencies, boards, committees and

commissions. It is this internal audience that has to first be engaged in the communications strategy and vision. It is important that they understand the strategy so they can act on it, help build understanding and relationships, and improve the image and reputation of RQM. They are the municipality's voice and face in the community.

The external audience includes the residents of RQM, other government organizations, and the media. The Municipality has a responsibility to keep people informed and engaged on issues that affect the quality and pace of their lives. Businesses have a similar concern, wanting to have the assurance that their interests are being considered in the decision-making process. Other external audiences that should not be ignored are online users, social and community groups, youth, visitors, and the media. Tools like the website, Facebook pages, newsletters and other direct communication help these audiences get a better sense of the Region and its services and plans.

## **MESSAGES AND NARRATIVE**

A narrative is the overarching story that communicates a single powerful idea that transforms and inspires the target audience to care, own and take action. The purpose served by short and simple narrative messages is to re-establish, quickly and effectively, an organization's goals and objectives, its vision, mission and track record, and the reasons that motivate it to act in a particular sector of activity.

While the spokesperson has the task of conveying specific messages about the issue he/she is addressing, he/she must at the same time send out a clear organizational message: who we are, what we do, and why we do what we do.

The RQM spokesperson must always attempt to link any communications back to the organization's vision of where the Region is going. RQM's vision and priorities are a process, a roadmap of how the municipality will grow, evolve and prosper. It is essential that all who are responsible for knowing about this process completely understand it and are engaged. It is not enough to tell them; they must understand and be able to carry forth the messages. Likewise, those who are on the receiving end of any information must understand that, whatever initiative or issue that is being discussed, it must be linked back to the longer-term vision, priorities and plan to get to achieve the priorities set by Council. Each message delivered must link to the vision and priorities of RQM, as long as the vision and priorities are clearly articulated. As always, proof points will fill in to substantiate the point being made, and the stories being told.

As a result of a workshop and several strategic planning sessions, combined with feedback heard from constituents during the 2016 municipal election campaign, the following vision, goals and strategic priorities have been developed that will guide the Region of Queens in the foreseeable future.



Developed during the 2009 Municipal Planning Strategy consultations, the vision statement establishes a general development framework upon which are built a series of land use priorities that

Council and the public deem important to the future growth of communities within the Region of Queens Municipality over ten to fifteen years. With updates to the MPS, this vision may change to reflect the changes and priority areas in the community.

## VISION

The Region of Queens Municipality will be a place where communities respect the natural environment, possess strong character, enjoy access to a variety of recreational opportunities and continue to develop an economy that builds on the assets of the Region as a whole.

## GOALS 2017-2018:

1. Revitalization of downtown Liverpool;
2. Provision of municipal infrastructure that improves lifestyle; And,
3. Maintaining and developing quality infrastructure

## ADMINISTRATIVE GOALS 2016 – 2020

1. Organizational Capacity
2. Empowered Council
3. Clear public information and policy
4. Focused and accountable performance

THE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES OF COUNCIL were developed and adopted in January, 2017, and are:

1. Growing the Economy and Population
2. Delivering Desirable Municipal Services
3. Governing to Best Municipal Practices

## **DELIVERY OF MESSAGES**

A number of communication tools will be used to deliver messages to the appropriate audience. Among those will be newspaper, radio, Municipal Matters Newsletter, the RQM website, the RQM and Queens Place Emera Centre Facebook and Twitter pages, RQM Instagram page, public speaking opportunities, letter to the editor, and others that arise. It is most important to deliver timely messages that can be clearly understood by everyone and provide useful information.

To ensure that messages are consistent and not coming from many directions, there will be a limited number of people who will be the spokesperson for the RQM. The Mayor, in his elected position, will continue in this role as has been the standard since the 2001 strategy was developed, and in his/her absence, the Deputy Mayor shall be the spokesperson. Additionally, the CAO will be an official spokesperson speaking on the operations and undertakings of the Municipality, as designated by the Mayor.

This is not to prevent staff from providing technical and other relevant information. However, the Mayor will be the official spokesperson and will speak as the official “voice” of the RQM, and in his/her absence the Deputy Mayor shall carry out this role. A coordinated effort from Council and staff is important.

The Communications Officer has been assigned the role of Communications Lead and will be responsible for managing the tasks and day to day preparation of the planned communications issued by the RQM. The Communications Officer is also the first point of contact for media enquiries.

### **COMMUNICATIONS ROLES OF COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Often, members of Council are contacted by members of the public or the media seeking information, expressing a concern, or enquiring about a rumor or misinformation. While Council members are not official spokespersons of the RQM, they may respond to these types of questions. An elected official may express their personal opinion, but may not speak on behalf of Council. When questions/concerns are made by the public, the Council Member should get the basic information, then pass this on to the CAO, or have the person contact the appropriate staff member directly. The standard service response time for staff in responding to enquiries made by the public is within 24 hours, or on the first working day following a holiday or weekend, if at all possible. When answering constituent requests, Councillors should be specific in what the Council Member will do,(i.e., promise a timely response, advise the CAO, etc.), but should avoid committing to “fix” the issue. Council Members are encouraged to coordinate with the CAO and Communications Officer before to responding directly to complaints to ensure a united response and to prevent overlapping efforts in the event another department is currently responding or has already responded.

With regard to discussions with the media, Council members are to keep in mind that the Mayor and CAO are the official spokespersons for the media. If a Council member wishes to provide their personal opinion, it is advisable that they are clear in stating that it is their own opinion, and not that of Council. Council members shall not discuss or go “off the record” with the media regarding confidential or privileged information pertaining to in-camera or closed sessions, attorney-client privileged information including personnel, litigation, contract negotiation, or real property negotiations.

To enhance Council Member’s ability to communicate with staff and the public, municipally purchased tablet computers, or in some cases, a cell phone will be provided. When individual Council members have completed their term of office, the communication devices must be returned to the RQM. Members of Council have been provided a municipal email address to use for correspondence pertaining to the work of Council, and their role as elected officials. These email addresses are posted on the RQM website, in municipal newsletters, on Councillor business cards and given out by municipal staff as a means for the public to contact their elected officials.

## **COMMUNICATIONS REGARDING EMERGENCY SERVICES AND AT TIMES OF EMERGENCY**

As part of the work of communications for the Region of Queens, the Communications Officer will share information about the actions of Council, the work of Region Staff, the progression of Council's Strategic Priorities, and celebrate the community and the accomplishments of its citizens, businesses and community groups. In addition to the daily work of ensuring the internal and external audiences are informed about these areas, there is other specialized communications work that is undertaken from time to time, as needed. The Communications Officer works closely with the EMO Coordinator and with Fire Chiefs of the Regions 5 fire departments as well as with the first responders to assist in their communications needs. Descriptions follow for these two communications considerations.

### **Fire Communications**

The Communications Officer will work with the local fire departments to share information about fire safety, fundraising efforts, volunteer recruitment, as well as information on the work of the departments. Information may be shared on the website and social media pages, as well as via other means (ie; unpaid through public service announcements or paid advertising in local newspapers, radio stations and other opportunities as they arise). This messaging is important to convey in the interest of public safety, and to aid fire departments in their growth and development.

### **EMO Communications**

Throughout the year, the Communications Officer works with the Emergency Management Coordinator to ensure that the public has access to information about safety (ie; provision of information on the RQM website in the EMO tab that pertains to emergency preparedness), and will also maintain a database online of river water levels and rainfall for the Medway River watershed.

During an emergency or disaster requiring EMO involvement, the Communications Officer will serve as a member of the Emergency Operations Centre team, providing communications updates regarding situational status to the public, the media and some agencies, as directed by the Emergency Management Coordinator or Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator and the CAO. Information flowing outward from the Emergency Communications Centre will be through direct contact with the media, as well as information posted on the Region of Queens website (on the Latest News Page and the EMO Current and Developing Situations page) as well as on social media (RQM Facebook page, RQM Twitter feed). The tone of the communications will be professional and calm, and the content will reflect the current situation, expectations of future developments, and advice on public safety. The public will be advised of locations of Comfort Centres, Warming Centre or evacuations as needed. Comfort and/or Warming Centres will open at the discretion, and under the advisement, of the Emergency Management Coordinator.

When there is an activation of the EMO Emergency Centre, or if the Emergency Management Coordinator requires information sent to the public, members of Council and RQM staff will

receive updates of the situation as well. To ensure that consistent and clear messaging is being provided to the public, Council and staff are advised to share the information provided to them, and to forward any requests for information from the public or media to the Communications Officer in his/her role with the Emergency Management Centre. This will reduce misinformation being shared or circulated.

Excerpts from the Region of Queens EMO Communications Plan follow.

## **Region of Queens Municipality EMO COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

The ability to communicate during an emergency or disaster is possibly the single most important factor that contributes to the success or failure of emergency responses. Without effective communications, direction, coordination and control will not exist.

The aim of the Region of Queens Municipality's Communications Plan is to provide a communications resource and infrastructure that enables those dealing with an emergency to communicate with municipal departments, government and external voluntary agencies to support their function in responding to an emergency.

The scope of this communications plan will be to provide a plan for the following components:

- a. emergency alerting system
- b. communication links to various levels of government
- c. coordinated and controlled operations
- d. human and material resources inventory

### **ALERTING PROCEDURE**

1. On receipt of a warning of a real or potential emergency or disaster, the police department will contact the Emergency Management Coordinator or Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator.
2. On receipt of the warning from the police department, the Emergency Management Coordinator or Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator will activate the Emergency Operations emergency alerting system in whole or in part. If the Emergency Management Coordinator or Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator cannot be immediately contacted, then the Staff Sergeant or his designate shall be authorized to activate the emergency alerting system.
3. On receipt of the warning, it is the responsibility of all Emergency Operations Coordinators and volunteer organizations to activate their respective emergency alerting systems.

## **COORDINATING INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Immediately on arrival at the Emergency Operations Centre, the members of the Emergency Operations Centre will establish telecommunications via telephone with their respective agencies or organizations.
2. The Emergency Communications Coordinator will establish and maintain radio communications with the responding agencies or organizations and, if required, with the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Organization.
3. The Emergency Communications Coordinator will coordinate the provision of radio operators and equipment to furnish telecommunications to emergency agencies and organizations.
4. The Emergency Communications Coordinator will establish and supervise the Message Control Centre. All messages are to be logged and copies retained.
5. All IN and OUT radio messages are to be directed through the Message Control Centre.
6. All members of the Emergency Operations Centre and their respective operations are to maintain a log of all actions taken and significant actions not taken.

### **Emergency Operations Centre**

Direction, coordination and control of all emergency operations will be conducted from the primary Emergency Operations Centre (Municipal Office).

Within the Emergency Operations Centre, provision is made for the Emergency Operations Centre Operations Committee.

Each of these officials will have access to the telephone system and can also send and receive messages via the Message Control Centre.

The Message Control Centre ensures that outgoing messages are properly routed and that incoming messages are routed to the correct officials.

The Communications Centre houses three (3) separate radio communication networks. Emergency Management TMR and VHF systems provide emergency command channels and liaison channels.

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY: Social Media  
Strategy  
REGION OF QUEENS MUNICIPALITY

# REGION OF QUEENS MUNICIPALITY - SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

## INTRODUCTION

This document outlines guidelines regarding social media goals and objectives, specific online target audiences, how to best create and leverage content, and how to manage an online social community.

## REGION OF QUEENS GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

All communications, including RQM social and broader online presence, should further the Strategic Priorities of the Municipality, which are:

- ***Growing the Economy and Population***
- ***Delivering Desirable Municipal Services***
- ***Governing to Best Municipal Practices***

With these broad objectives in mind, the business objective as it pertains to online communications should demonstrate that the RQM is a community that is addressing its challenges head-on and reinforce that the Council and staff are an integrated group dedicated to working with the community for the betterment of the region.

Through compelling online chronicling and actions, we will build the audience and activate supporters for the RQM.

By chronicling, we mean sharing good news stories and success, accomplishments, and when the Region overcomes obstacles.

By actions, we refer to acknowledging that the social presence will be viewed as a vehicle to generate conversation with citizens and stakeholders, and a way to engage broad community participation.

## Online Communications Goals and Objectives

The goal of the RQM social presence is ensure that the public has information to reinforce the Region's overall vibrancy and development. This aligns directly to the broad communications objective of growing the economy and population of the Region.

Additionally, an engaged and active social presence will leverage the voices of Councillors and staff members who regularly participate in social conversation. These voices represent constituents, and while they may have particular priorities that may not always align with the Region as a

whole, they can reinforce important successes and add a layer of credibility to the Municipality with stakeholders and the public.

Finally, an active social presence can also impact other regional goals outside of the Strategic Priorities. Specifically, it's a good vehicle to reinforce tourism goals and objectives, especially as tourism is a primary industry within the Region.

## **AUDIENCES**

The Region of Queens has many audiences to consider when creating social content and managing its online community.

### **1. Business and investors**

One of our most important targets is the business community within the Region, across Nova Scotia, and ultimately, potential investors from outside the province as well. It is critical that should businesses be interested or investigating the area as a business location, they see an active Municipal government that's working together in the best interest of the community, and a dynamic, lively public community.

### **2. Constituents**

A key primary audience to consider is the citizens of the Region of Queens. Councillors must account to those who elected them (constituency-based support) while considering what is in the best interest of the "greater good". As potential supporters of the efforts of Council and Administration, businesses and community groups are motivated in seeing their municipal government is working together to better their community.

### **3. Visitors and Potential Visitors**

Showcasing the assets of our community to those who are visiting the RQM or may be planning a visit to the area, is an important external audience to consider. Visitors often check websites and social media pages of areas they are interested in, and to have compelling information that is a mix of events, business promotion, and services provided by the Municipality can lead them to plan a trip to the area. Visitors may become future residents, and it is important that they can see that the community is multi-faceted with year round, diverse activities.

### **4. Government, media and other stakeholders**

It's useful to consider government and media as external stakeholders, both from a partnership perspective and as a potential distributor of information and stories online. Good news stories from the Region should be shared across the province to demonstrate the leadership role the Region is taking from a business development perspective. Similarly, sharing stories with local and regional media via online platforms will be an important addition to traditional media outreach to increase reach and impact.



## CHANNEL CONSIDERATIONS

At this point, the RQM uses traditional methods to externally communicate progress to audience groups, though a website, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages are also maintained.

As new social media channels become commonplace, the Communications Officer will access and use channels that will reach the majority of the RQM's audiences.

### Current channels

- **Website**

The website is one of the Region's primary communications vehicles, and to fully support a social presence and traditional communications tactics, a reorganization of the website has been undertaken and is ongoing.

- **Facebook**

From a content perspective, the Facebook pages are well maintained and active with content posted frequently, incorporating pictures and video where possible. A Facebook page for the Region of Queens Municipality, Queens Place Emera Centre and the Town Hall Arts and Cultural Centre are maintained.

- **Twitter**

Nova Scotia has an incredibly active Twitter community. Nova Scotians are highly engaged on this particular platform, and journalists, bloggers, politicians and the community are all regularly participating in conversations online. During the summer of 2015, the Region activated a Twitter account. In late winter, 2016, Queens Place Emera Centre activated a Twitter account. As this is a relatively new platform for the Municipality, a protocol for use was developed and is included in this document, as follows.

**Purpose:** The purpose of maintaining a Twitter profile is to connect with target audiences, drive traffic to the website and Facebook page, and further leverage the organizations' online storytelling reach.

**Administrators of the Twitter accounts:** In the interest of ensuring that the presence on Twitter can be maintained as needed and frequently, more than one person must be responsible for the Twitter accounts. The Communications Officer in her role with Communications for the Municipality must have access to the accounts via being advised of account name, user name and password for both the Region of Queens Municipality and the Queens Place Emera Centre Twitter pages.

Administrators for the Twitter page for the Region of Queens Municipality are:

- Heather Cook, Community Development Coordinator
- Dana Henley, Secretary, Recreation and Community Facilities and Economic Development

- Richard Lane, Economic Development Officer

Administrators for the Twitter page for Queens Place Emera Centre are:

- Steve Burns, Manager of Events, Promotions and Sponsorships
- Heather Cook, Community Development Coordinator
- Meaghan Roberts, Director of Recreation and Healthy Communities

**Content:**

As with the Facebook pages, the expectation is that the content on both Twitter pages be posted frequently (ie; at least several times a week), and will be primarily promotional in nature – highlighting positive things taking place at Queens Place Emera Centre and in the Region of Queens Municipality. The key difference between the two accounts is that the Queens Place Emera Centre account will be focused on events and activities held at Queens Place Emera Centre, or that the Centre is directly involved in. These events and activities may include the events taking place at the Centre organized by user groups or renters of the facility, as well as those organized by the staff of Queens Place Emera Centre and the Region of Queens Municipality. The Region of Queens Municipality will promote the activities undertaken by the Municipality, cross promote some Queens Place Emera Centre activities as well, and will feature posts about things that make the community great, including volunteers, community festivals, and other events and activities.

**Tone and style:**

A clear tone and style to any online content is critical to ensure that the RQM can remain strategic, consistent and confident in their online presence. To help develop style and tone, those writing should consider the personality of an employee you'd want to represent the RQM -- someone community-minded, enthusiastic and friendly, as well as forward-thinking and open to new ideas.

**Interactions online:**

At the present time, Twitter will be used by the Region of Queens Municipality and Queens Place Emera Centre as a method to spread information in an outward fashion. Conversations will not be engaged in with followers. If there is a retweet or response to a post that is negative, do not engage with the person who tweeted it. Responding to negative posts simply prolongs the negative exposure.

In the summer of 2017, an Instagram account was activated and trialed by summer staff. While it is slowly growing followers, it is giving staff an opportunity to feature photographs of the community that show the beauty, diversity and unique features of our community. Instagram is a very visual social media channel, and is a good means to showcase the picturesque community, and the activities, events and festivals that take place here.

## Secondary channels

- **Councillors active on social media**

The Region has a great opportunity to leverage its highly engaged Councillors via social media, and reach greater numbers of constituents and other target audiences. However, both parties must ensure that any material presented online reflects a Council that is working to improve the community.

Specifically:

- Posts from Councillors that highlight events, community groups or other non-political issues should be shared and leveraged by the RQM.
- Councillors should not post on behalf of the Region. As a result of their elected position, the opinions that Councillors post on their social media accounts is perceived by the public and in the eyes of the law as being the opinion of the RQM. While Councillors may have opinions on issues that are not yet resolved, care should be used when posting on social channels as those opinions and statements are perceived as being that of the RQM, and may have legal ramifications or cause concern among residents.
- Both the Councillor and Region should post regarding successes to demonstrate both the unified perspective, and the Councillors specific perspective. For example, if a new policy is implemented that was brought forward by a particular Councillor, the Councillor can post that this is a project that he or she was excited to lead or support, and is proud of the complete Council for the work they've accomplished.

## **Content Strategy ... KEEP IT INTERESTING, TIMELY AND OF USE TO THE AUDIENCE**

The kind of content the RQM creates is the most important thing to consider with social strategy. If the RQM ensures that the content it produces or shares is interesting to its audiences, they will be more apt to trust the organization, share your story and information, and engage with you online.

This document outlines several things to bear in mind when creating content that works:

- Content themes
- Editorial calendar
- Style and tone

Broadly, there are two types of social content the Region should develop. By using both Stock and Flow content, the content will be diverse, interesting and tell the story of the community.

- **Stock Content**

Stock content is defined as durable, long-term content that serves your audience and mission and will be the same in months as it is today. These are stories about the Region's history and the Municipal Council's mandate, local regional statistics that may be of interest, as well as frequently asked questions and business information. This type of content is found online via search and is the foundation of your online reputation. Stock content is contained in web pages, but also pointed to in social media posts and updates.

- **Flow Content**

Flow content is curated content, and is the daily feed of posts and updates that will keep your audience engaged and interested. This is not necessarily content you create (but it often is). Rather, this is content that links to other areas of the web that support your overall story. Flow content is reactive, can be completely spontaneous and could include content like answering questions from constituents, sharing events and community initiatives, or relevant newsworthy information. An important part of flow content to consider is leveraging other content that is found online via your social channels. The sharing of other content (e.g. linking to an event's webpage or reposting their post about an event) is an easy and efficient way for social profiles to be maintained and remain active.

## **Themes**

Consciously developing key storylines through ongoing communications can act like glue, sticking your audiences to your website, social media accounts, blogs or other communications. The overarching themes align with your narrative pillars:

- Growing the economy and Population
- Delivering Desirable Municipal Services
- Governing to Best Municipal Practices

Content that is created should align with each theme, to ensure that the complete Region of Queens story is being told.

### **Editorial Calendar**

An editorial calendar has been a trick of the publishing trade for centuries to help newspapers keep up with their publishing cycle. It is a simple and easy way to schedule who's responsible for writing what and to keep an eye on upcoming important events or programs to use in content.

For online content, an editorial calendar maps the creation of stock content. Specifically, it outlines:

- Dates for creating and publishing
- The topic of the post
- If approval is needed and received
- How many visits/shares

### **Style and Tone**

A clear tone and style to any online content is critical to ensure that the RQM can remain strategic, consistent and confident in their online presence. To help develop style and tone, those writing should consider the personality of an employee you'd want to represent the RQM -- someone community-minded, enthusiastic and friendly, as well as forward-thinking and open to new ideas.

## **CONNECTING WITH THE COMMUNITY**

It is critical to note that participating in online communications is a method to genuinely connect with constituents, other Nova Scotians and municipalities, and potential visitors and businesses. The Region of Queens should strive to create an environment where people feel they can express themselves, and then provide opportunities and encouragement to do so. In any social environment, the Municipality can reach out to their audiences and really listen and engage with them, which will ultimately give them extra value, and make their experience with you worth telling others about.

In spring of 2017, Operational Policy 83: Social Media Policy was developed (see Appendices section) to guide staff and Council in the use of social media. The Policy has two main purposes, which are to promote municipal transparency and accountability to the public and to provide staff and Council with clarity with regard to their roles and interactions on social media.

On occasion, there are posts made, either on the RQM pages or on personal or business pages that criticize the actions or decisions of the RQM. Policy 83 provides advice on management of those posts, as well. It is important for the Communications? To work cooperatively with the CAO in determining the response to those concerns expressed by external audiences, and to use caution when making changes in direction based on the opinions expressed on social media. The opinion of few is not always the opinion of the larger population, or may be made without access to all the information.

To be successful online, you must be responsive, courteous and authentic. For the RQM, this means that questions or concerns from the public must be dealt with in a timely, respectful way.

# APPENDICIES SECTION

**REGION OF QUEENS MUNICIPALITY**

**Operational Policy No. 83  
Social Media Policy**

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**General Statement of Policy**

It shall be the policy of the Region of Queens Municipality (“Municipality”) to provide clarity and direction respecting the use of social media for employees, volunteers and elected officials.

**Policy Objectives**

1. To establish a policy that promotes municipal transparency and accountability to the public; and,
2. Provides clarity to employees, volunteers and elected officials with respect to their role representing the Municipality, and their interactions and representations on social media.

**Policy Directions**

**Municipality’s Social Media Accounts and Postings**

1. The creation and administration of social media sites, including but not limited to, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, representing the Municipality must be authorized in advance by the Chief Administrative Officer (“CAO”).
2. Operation and administration of the Municipality’s social media accounts and postings will be delegated by the CAO to the Communications Officer outlined in the Communications Strategy. Only persons authorized per the Communications Strategy shall post on behalf of the Municipality on any social media medium. Further, only content approved by the official spokesperson or their delegate shall be posted on behalf of the Municipality.
3. When the Municipality uses a social media site which allows public comments and posts, the following content will not be permitted:
  - Comments/posts not related to a posted article/topic/information;
  - Business solicitation;
  - Profane or inappropriate language;
  - Content considered to be defamatory, disparaging, disrespectful or insulting to individuals, including municipal staff or representatives;



- Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation or any other prohibited ground of discrimination under the *Nova Scotia Human Rights Act*,
- Sexual content or links to sexual content;
- Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity; and
- Any content deemed inappropriate by the Municipality.

The Municipality reserves the right to monitor its social media sites and remove any content. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, if the Municipality finds any content on its social media site that offends section 3 herein, it will remove the content, or contact the appropriate administrator or network and request the content be removed.

4. User comments and messages posted to official social networking sites are considered transitory records and will not be kept as a permanent record by the Municipality.

#### **Use of any Social Media**

5. Social Media sites are public, regardless of the privacy settings. As such, any postings (content, statements, pictures or comments, etc.) by an employee, volunteer or elected official, regardless of whether posted on Municipality sites or otherwise, could negatively impact the Municipality, its reputation, workplace, other employees, partners/vendors or its customers/clients.

Employees, volunteers and elected officials are required to comply with the following guidelines when making posts or comments on **any** social media site, regardless of whether their social media interactions are during or outside of work hours:

- a. Conduct and represent themselves professionally;
- b. Posts, pictures, comments or any content involving the following will not be tolerated:
  - i. Proprietary and confidential municipal information, including internal information and activities, confidential information of municipal employees, businesses partners, customers or clients;
  - ii. Inappropriate content, including harassing, bullying, intimidating and discriminatory content or sexual innuendos regarding employees, management, volunteers, Council members or other elected officials, customers/ clients, corresponding organizations or vendors; and

- iii. Defamatory, derogatory or disparaging statements regarding the Municipality its employees, management, volunteers, Council members or other elected officials, customers/clients, corresponding organizations, or vendors.
  - c. No employee, volunteer or Council member shall purport to speak or post on behalf of the Municipality, unless they have received the authorization to do so, as outlined in this policy and the Communication Strategy (as amended from time to time).
  - d. Unless acting as the official or authorized spokesperson, the comments or postings of staff or elected officials do not represent the Municipality; however, all staff, volunteers and elected officials shall comply with this policy.
6. The use of social media in the workplace must not have a negative impact on that employee's productivity or efficiency, or the productivity or efficiency of others in the workplace.
7. Any communications sent over the Municipality's networks and computers are the Municipality's records. At any time without prior notice, the Municipality reserves the right to examine and analyze email, personal file directories, internet access logs, and any other information stored on the Municipalities computers. Such examinations support external and internal investigations, assure compliance with various policies, and assist in the management of information systems. Employees, volunteers and elected officials should have no expectation of privacy associated with the information they store in or send through these systems, whether encrypted or not. Employees, volunteers or elected officials using the Municipality's information systems and/or Internet access should realize that their communications are not automatically protected from viewing by third parties. Do not sent information over the Internet or internally that is considered sensitive or private without encrypting the message.
8. The Municipality will adhere to all applicable legislation regarding privacy and freedom of information, including but not limited to, the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. In addition, the Municipality's records may be subject to subpoena by a court of competent jurisdiction. As such, employees, volunteers and elected officials should be aware that personal and other information contained in electronic correspondence (or printed versions thereof) which are directed to the Municipality or other information contained on the Municipality's networks and computers may be required to be disclosed under legislation or pursuant to a subpoena from a court of competent jurisdiction. The anonymity or confidentiality of the sender or author of any information contained within the correspondence or otherwise contained on the Municipality's networks and computers cannot be presumed or relied upon.

### **Failure to Abide by Policy**

9. Any employee who fails to follow this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Any volunteer who fails to follow this policy, may face a restriction or removal from volunteer roles, activities or opportunities.

Council members who fail to follow this this policy may be subject to corrective action by Council in accordance with Policy 74 – Code of Conduct for members of Council and Public Committee Members.

Approved by Council: June 13, 2017

**POLICY NUMBER – 24**

Page 1 of 1

**Policy Subject / Title – Use of Recording Devices**

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**GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY:**

24.1 It is the Policy of the Region of Queens Municipality to have a series of guidelines for the use of recording devices during committee meetings of council and any council procedure in a public forum.

**DEFINITIONS:**

24.2 *Audio Recording* means: The use of a device that records the audio only.

24.3 *Video Recording* means: The use of a device that records the video and audio of a proceeding.

**POLICY PROCEDURE:**

24.4 The use of video recording devices shall not be permitted during any committee meetings of council or any council procedure in a public forum without the consent of council.

24.5 The use of audio recording devices during committee meetings of council shall be permitted.

24.6 When an audio recording device is to be used during any committee meeting, council meeting or public hearing in a public forum, (including by the media) other than the Region's recording system used by staff for purposes of minute preparation, the Mayor or Chair of the meeting shall be informed prior to the opening of the meeting of any audio recordings to be made at the said public session. The Mayor or Chair shall announce that such procedure is taking place.

24.7 Nothing in this policy shall preclude the media from using video or audio recording devices for interviews during any recess on public meeting proceedings.

**Approved by Council: August 16, 2004**

**POLICY NUMBER – 51**

**Page 1 of 1**

**Policy Subject / Title – Release of Information to the Public**

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**GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

51.01 The Region of Queens Municipality wishes to establish a policy and procedure for the release of information contained in meeting packages to the public, including the media. As such, the following procedures adopted by Council shall be adhered to balancing the public's access to information and every citizen's right to be afforded confidentiality.

51.02 For the purposes of this policy, "Responsible Officer" means the Chief Administrative Officer or his/her designate.

**POLICY PROCEDURE:**

51.03 No part of any committee meeting package shall be released to the public until such time as the Responsible Officer has reviewed the material proposed to be released and he/she is satisfied that the information is allowed to be released pursuant to Section 20 of the *Municipal Government Act*, concerning Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPOP).

51.04 Verbal requests may be accepted by the Responsible Officer for information that is determined by the Responsible Officer to be background information, staff reports or a matter of public record and able to be released under FOIPOP regulations.

51.05 Prior to releasing correspondence or any information from external sources to the public, consideration shall be given to FOIPOP guidelines.

51.06 Any request for information contained in committee packages that is not considered background information must be received in writing by the Responsible Officer. After receiving the request, the information requested or portions of it, may be released to the applicant or denied within thirty (30) days provided all of the regulations concerning FOIPOP have been adhered to.

**Approved by Council: March 20, 2000**