

**Region of Queens Municipality Regular Council
Tuesday, July 11, 2023 9:00 a.m.**

Minutes

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

1.0 Call to Order

Mayor Norman called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2.0 Changes / Approval of Agenda

Move Item 4.1 Wastewater Extension Request under Discussions and it will become Item 8.4.

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

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

3.0 Presentation

3.1 Mersey River Wind Farm – Mitch Underhay

Mayor Norman welcomed Mitch Underhay, Development Manager, Roswall Development Inc., to Council.

Some highlights included:

- Completed over 500 MW of early stage wind energy development
- Led over \$150 Million USD of energy construction.

- Constructed, financed and operated over 50 MW of renewable energy projects, most in Nova Scotia.

Vision – The ability to sell clean electricity directly to customers is the key link for an accelerated energy transition.

Renewable to Retail – This is the first chance for customers to sign up and purchase 100% renewable electricity from Roswall rather than Nova Scotia Power. These long-term predictable energy contracts will provide savings and price security.

Project Site – Located on a large tract of Crown Land west of Milton above the Mersey River.

Project Updates

- Phase 1 – 8 Turbines start date 2023
- Phase 2 – 25 Turbines start date 2024
- Total Capacity – 148.5 MW

Approvals in Place

- Crown Land – Integrated resource management process complete and letters of offer expected for this summer.
- Municipal – continuous community outreach
- Provincial – EA approved March 27, 2023 with conditions
- Federal – NavCAN permit approved
- Interconnection – System Impact Study completed. Final Facility Study completed.

Environmental Assessment – Approved with conditions March 27, 2023.

Community Liaison Committee – Ongoing with members of the community with information being shared.

Community Benefits

- Creation of an annual Community Dividend.
- Priority access to Renewable to Retail clean energy rates.
- Creation of a not-for-profit energy ate to provide additional savings.
- Approximately 100 people will be temporarily employed during construction.
- Dedicated crew of 6 – 12 full time equivalent technicians.
- Annual Taxes Revenue for municipality of approximately \$1,170,000 per year

Next Steps

- Signing of Lease for Crown Land with DNRR
- Signing of Generator Interconnection Agreement with NSPI
- Finalizing environmental access plans with NSECC
- Starting of construction activities
- Renewall will provide RQM with Offtake Commitment Letter
- Form a community liaison committee

Deputy Mayor Fancy enquired about tariffs and how you are going to be able to keep the price below NSPI? Mr. Underhay stated the Act enables this. The Renewable to Sale Program has the tariffs listed out on what is needed to pay and when. When financials are assessed, the cost is looked at to produce the wind energy. This is done over time, so the amount of energy produced over the course of a year is known. Once the consumption data from our customers is known, we will look at the energy usage over time and compare it to our model generation. The closer they are aligned, the less tariffs we will have to pay. We will have an idea of what this will look like over a period of 25 years and as inflation and our costs grows, fossil fuels will grow more quickly.

Mayor Norman asked what happens after 25 years. Is that the life of the turbines, and then what do you do with them? Mr. Underhay stated we are now just starting to see the end of life of some of the projects wind turbines. A decommissioning reserve is set aside as part of capital for the end of life of the project.

Ideally at the end of the project we would like to repower, but if not, we would decommission. The decommission reserve allows for the towers to be taken down but the foundations would remain in place as they are very large concrete foundations. They would be taken ground level. The towers are mainly steel and could be recycled. The blades are fiberglass, which is considered waste, and would go to the landfill. The parts from the generator, such as copper, could be recycled.

Mayor Norman stated in earlier meetings that the roads and trails would be accessible, and asked if this was still the case. Mr. Underhay stated yes, they do not intend to impede access. In early road construction, things would be shut down but they'd try to allow some access. Once construction is complete, a fence would be erected around the substation and high voltage, signage would be posted for safety, i.e. ice dropping from the turbines, and through education, ensure people are aware.

Mayor Norman asked if the province signs the lease agreements, and everything is ready to go by the fall, how long will it take to do the roads, and put the new transmission lines to the substation for 8 turbines in Phase 1. Mr. Underhay stated it is expect to have the turbines delivered next spring, which means a lot of road construction will be done through the winter along with the power line construction. The expectation would be that Phase 1 would come on line at the end of 2024.

Councillor Amirault enquired if there are any plans to upgrade the first part of the River Road and bridge, so it can handle the traffic during construction. Mr. Underhay stated yes, and there may be a need to fill in the ditch to make turns onto the road on a temporary basis which will require a permit from Department of Transportation. The road itself is not in good condition and after heavy traffic it will need to be upgraded. He further stated there should not be any issues with the bridges, but their structural engineers are investigating.

Councillor Brown enquired if rebates will be offered to customers with battery backups. Mr. Underhay stated not at present, but maybe a consideration in the future.

Mayor Norman thanked him and his team for the presentation and updates.

3.2 Queens County ATV Association & Queens Rails to Trails Association

Mayor Norman welcomed David White, President, Queens County ATV Association, to Council. Mr. White introduced Martin Huntley, President, Queens Rails to Trails Association and Greg Wigglesworth, Vice President, Queens County ATV Association.

Some highlights included:

Important Updates:

Queens County ATV Association received \$5,000 grant of trail work from Off Highway Vehicle Infrastructure Fund (OHVIF) via ATVANS.

Queens Rails to Trails Association has applied for a 3 year grant valued at \$60,000 to maintain Multi-Use Trails.

2022 Spending Survey – Over \$464 Million from OHV went into the NS economy.

Road Trails Act – Royal Assent Received April 12, 2023 which enables:

- Municipalities to grant access to roadways they maintain;
- Provides opportunities for “Road Trails” on provincially maintained roadways under 90 km/hr;
- Recognizes the economic and recreational importance of Shared Use/Multi-Use Trail development;

Goal - To have a connected route across Queens County to complete section of the Western Loop of the Great Trail to promote recreation and positive local economic impact.

What We Need:

- Municipal support for roadways under municipal jurisdiction.
- Municipal support for updating the status of section of trail to be Multi-Use.
- Municipal support for changes to roadways under provincial jurisdiction.
- Provincial support for roadways under provincial jurisdiction.
- Provincial support for updating the status of section of trail to be Multi-Use.

Road Trails Rules Summary:

- Must hold a valid Driver's License.
- Must have Off Highway Vehicle registered.
- Must have 3rd Party Liability Insurance.
- Must have ATV/UTV course.
- Must wear approved helmet.
- Must wear seatbelt if machine is equipped.
- Must have a left-hand side mirror.
- Maximum Speed – 25 km/hr.
- Must travel with head lamps and rear facing red indicator lights on at all times.
- Vehicle cannot be operated if noise level is higher than set by manufacturer (can't modify existing or install louder exhaust).
- May only travel 30 minutes after sunset and 30 minutes before sunrise.
- Must travel single file.

Road Trail Proposal:

Nickerson's Pond Road to Great Hill Road to Route 3 Highway traveling towards Liverpool until reaching Old Cobb's Barn Road.

Municipal Roadway – Old Cobb's Barn Road traveling on Route 3 Highway to Bristol Avenue to Henry Hensey Drive crossing Main Street onto Brunswick Street traveling up it until joining the Trestle Trail traveling to White Point Road crossing onto Harley Umphrey Drive turning onto West Street and connecting to Trail behind the RQM office.

Provincial Designation – Alter the designation of the Trail behind the RQM office traveling towards Hunts Point until approximately Silver Rock Drive to create connectivity and access to lodging and restaurants.

Provincial Roadways – Turning onto Beech Hill Road from the Trail traveling inland under the 103 Highway to Old Port Mouton Road, traveling across roadway to Route 3 Highway on the Liverpool side of Broad River, crossing Broad River Bridge on Route 3 Highway traveling to River Head Road and reconnecting to the Summerville Extension of the Port Mouton Multi-Use Trail.

Asks:

1. Region of Queens Municipality work with QCATVA and QRTA to begin the process of modifying bylaws to enable "Road Trails" on roadways maintained by RQM.
2. Region of Queens Municipality provide a letter indicating their support for the entire proposal.

Deputy Mayor Fancy voiced his concerns for traffic on Bristol Avenue and enquired if there were other ways to approach this. Mr. White stated when this plan was created several options were considered, with access to services in the safest way possible and wished to avoid turnarounds. Concerning Bristol, he referred to the Road Trail Act, which states if the machine has the ability to travel with all four wheels off the paved surface, that's what it's asked to do. Where it can't, then it's asked to travel with all wheels on the paved surface, so these vehicles would operate the same as a car. The only holdback in traffic is the Road Trail Act stipulates a speed of 25mph and is investigating if this speed would be accepted in this area. Overall they do not see it as an issue.

Councillor Hawkes asked how the Association is going to enforce their rules. Mr. White stated as this organization is county wide they do represent the county and rely on people who see a problem to report the problem. He encouraged people to report any issues to the RCMP and DNRR.

Mayor Norman stated the first agreement with ATVANS indicated they'd have enforcement abilities, being out on the trails checking registration, licenses, etc. Mr. White stated their groups' ability to do a policing function is non-existent, and look to the policing agencies for this and they would provide education and more signage. With the current agreement with RQM, which is held with the Queens Rails to Trails Association, it states that users would have to be a member of the provincial body which helps dissuade those that don't always follow the rules.

Mayor Norman asked about the timeline they were looking for respecting the Association's asks from RQM. Mr. White stated for RQM to bring forward concerns so they can be addressed so any routing changes can be made if necessary and a letter of support so they can move forward with the project. He noted they are waiting for the government to enact the legislation which they are expecting at the fall sitting.

Councillor Muise stated he had residents contact him about the presentation and voiced their concerns about Bristol Avenue. He enquired if ATV's are permitted to cross the 103 Highway. Mr. White stated no, they are not permitted to cross any 100 series, but our advantage here is the use of tunnels.

Councillor Muise further enquired if you can use intersections; i.e. off Old Port Mouton Road. Mr. White stated it would be crossing Highway 103 and the ramp speed.

Mayor Norman stated if Council agreed to move forward with this proposal, that the formation of a small working Committee may be in order and suggested if anyone had any further questions or concerns they could contact the Association members.

Mayor Norman thanked them for their presentation.

Mayor Norman announced a 5 minute break at 10:24 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 that both presentation were good. He asked if Rumclo Development had received approval for their services extension as was stated in the July Edition of the Queens Crown. Mayor Norman stated this was still under discussion.

6.0 Approval of Minutes

6.1 Regular Council – June 27, 2023

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

THAT the minutes of the Regular Council meeting held June 27, 2023 be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.0 Recommendations

7.1 Solid Waste Facility Tipping Fee Waiving

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality waive tipping fees associated with the disposal of fire-impacted materials originating from 82 Tupper Street, Milton up to a maximum of 10 metric tons before October 1, 2023.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.2 Phone System

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality approve the purchase of a Fortivoice phone system and applicable hardware.

Steve Whynacht, Information Technology Manager, stated the current phone system which was installed in 2014 by Bell Aliant is no longer supported and has reached its end of life. Bell Aliant has discontinued use of all PBX systems.

The cost for this system is a one-time hardware and installation fee of \$16,850 and is unbudgeted.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.3 Police Advisory Board Terms of Reference

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality establish a seven (7) member Policy Advisory Board and approve a Terms of Reference.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

Mayor Norman asked who would be interested in sitting on the Police Advisory Board. Deputy Mayor Fancy, Councillor Hawkes and Councillor Brown put their names forward.

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

THAT Council appoint the following three Council members to the Police Advisory Board to a two-year term commencing on the first duly called meeting of the Policy Advisory Board: Councillor Hawkes, Councillor Brown and Deputy Mayor Fancy.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

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

THAT Council appoint the three Council members appointed to the Police Advisory Board as an ad-hoc nominating committee to review applications and recommend appointments to Council for current and future community appointment vacancies on the Police Advisory Board.

Dan McDougall, Interim CAO, stated it would be proactive in recruiting candidates for the Police Advisory Board and would provide a confidential platform to consider applications before names are released.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

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

THAT Council appoint the following community member representing the Indigenous community to a two-year term commencing on the date of the first duly called meeting of the Police Advisory Board, Andrew Francis.

Mayor Norman stated Mr. Francis is an active member of our community, works in the forestry industry for the Provincial government and is a Band Member. We are fortunate to have him as a member of the Police Advisory Board committee.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.4 Liverpool Business Development Center HVAC Replacement

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality approves the tender for the replacement of the HVAC system at the Liverpool Business Development Center to Sea Coast HVAC at a cost of \$1,766,325.00 + HST.

Garrett Chetwynd, Assistant Director of Engineering, stated an assessment was undertaken in 2022 that recommended the existing unit be considered for immediate replacement of a new multi-unit style system which Council approved during budget deliberations.

A tender was issued and closed June 22, 2023 with one submission from Sea Coast HVAC at a price of \$1,766,325.00 + HST.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.5 Replacement Municipal Street Sweeper

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality approves the purchase of a 2024 Bucher/Freightliner V65T/M2-106 from Saunders Equipment Ltd., Fredericton, NB at a price of \$388,000 + HST.

Mr. Chetwynd stated the replacement of a 1995 Ford Sweeper was included in the capital budget. A Request for Quotation was issued and closed on July 4, 2023 with two proposals submitted; one from Saunders Equipment Ltd. with delivery in March 2024 for \$388,000 + HST, and one from another company for \$492,110 + HST.

This piece of equipment not only sweeps streets but cleans out catch basins both in Liverpool and Caledonia and will help increase level of service,

The machine is not in working condition and will be disposed of for scrap metal.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

8.0 Discussions

8.1 Privateer Hockey Team – Deputy Mayor Fancy

Mayor Norman asked if Council felt that staff should investigate finding another hockey team to replace the Privateer Hockey team who have recently given notice they will no longer be using QPEC.

Deputy Mayor Fancy agreed with Mayor Norman and asked if we should investigate in holding tournaments. With the Privateers' leaving, it has left a void, and asked what level of hockey should replace them.

He suggested holding music events in the rooms upstairs on the weekends to provide events.

Councillor Charlton stated the rink has value and the community enjoyed attending the hockey games. As a council, if we validate the importance of this, we ask staff to provide us with recommendations. Councillors agreed.

8.2 Town Bridge AT Upgrades

Mr. Chetwynd stated during budget deliberations Engineering and Public Works requested funding for the replacement of the bridge railings and pedestrian sidewalks. Council advised they wanted to see interim work completed to mitigate hazards while staff worked on ways that would see pedestrian ways be reinstated wider and potential bicycle lanes.

The services of CBCL Limited were engaged to provide an evaluation and identify options to promote active transportation (AT) with a wider sidewalk and potential bicycle lane.

Four options were provided with cost estimates:

1. Maintain existing - \$325,000
2. Modify existing - \$700,000
3. Exterior AT Corridor - \$3,400,000
4. Separate AT Structure - \$4,400,000

Mr. Chetwynd stress the infrastructure under and on the side the bridge, i.e. pump station, water main, and some NSPI infrastructure. He further stated timelines would vary and noted the bridge belongs to the Province and agreements would need to be worked out with them before proceeding.

Councillor Charlton enquired as the Province owns the bridge if there are any funding opportunities. The bridge needs to be kept safe and accessible. She commented she is not in favour of modifying the road and would be in favour of an exterior corridor if funding is available and not a burden to taxpayers. Mayor Norman stated repairs were not budgeted for this year but we could investigate if the Province would be willing to cost share on the separate pedestrian walk, but is our responsibility, as is the road and sidewalk. Mr. Chetwynd stated the Province is responsible for the structure and paving is cost shared 50/50. They have indicated there are no immediate plans to do anything to the bridge.

Dan McDougall stated there was a Build Canada Green funding available in the past and is optimistic it will become available again and suggested RQM apply.

8.3 Three Year Cost Share Agreement for Subdivision Roads

Mayor Norman stated the current three-year agreement is set to expire March 31, 2024 and Nova Scotia Department of Public Works is requesting we consider entering into a new one from 2024 to 2027. Entering into this agreement does not bind the municipality to submit road upgrade requests or to agree to the 50/50 cost share on any particular road.

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality authorize entering into the 2024-2027 Three-Year Cost Share Agreement for Subdivision Streets – Agreement No. 2023-017 with Nova Scotia Department of Public Works.

AND THAT the Mayor and Chief Administrative Officer be authorized to execute the agreement on Council's behalf.

MOTION CARRIED with 7 in favour and 1 against.

8.4 Request for Wastewater Extension – 3622 Highway 3, Brooklyn

Mayor Norman stated a letter of request was received for the extension of municipal services to 3622 Highway 3, Brooklyn.

Mr. Chetwynd stated the address in question is on the s turn past the bridge in Brooklyn and our system does not run in that direction. The services run down Brooklyn Shore Road. Working within the Provincial right-of-way requires permitting as well as a permit from Department of Environment. While the property is close to the manhole, the grating in the area does not allow for a direct connection to it.

Our Sewer Bylaw currently states where there are no services available to them, they contact their Councillor to petition an extension on their behalf, but it's at the Council's discretion and cautioned there would be implications to the budget the time constraints.

Councillor Amirault asked for an estimate of the cost for this extension and if there are any plans for extension in any of the streets in Brooklyn. Mr. Chetwynd stated he has not done an estimate but when work was done in the area previously there is significant rock and as done in town when work is done, the streets are altered which wouldn't be permitted in this area. There is a lot of costs associated with traffic control. Based on our capital plan, there are no future plans to extend in Brooklyn at this time.

Councillor Charlton stated we are aware the need for a master plan for our wastewater system. We have requests from the huge developments that have implications to our wastewater. So until we become aware of that, it would be unfair to consider one property when there are other areas that have asked for the same consideration.

Mayor Norman stated communication will be made with the applicant.

9.0 In-Camera Items

It was moved by Councillor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Gidney that the proceedings go In-Camera at 11:25 a.m. to discuss the following:

9.1 Contract Negotiations

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

It was moved by Councillor Hawkes and seconded by Councillor Gidney that the proceedings exit In-Camera at 11:42 a.m.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

9.1 Contract Negotiations

Richard Lane, Director of Economic Development, stated RQM has been invited to participate in the Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Program (ZEVIP) for the installation of fast charging sites for vehicles. There will be no cost for the installation and operation for these charging stations other than snow clearance and the cost of having one staff member attend training which will be through NSPI. The agreement can be withdrawn if funding is not finalized 100 percent.

We would be entering into a 10 year lease agreement which would be renewable on five year increments thereafter unless a 90 day written notice is given.

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality enter into a Site Host Agreement with Nova Scotia Power for the location of an EV charging station on Municipal property.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

10.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:47 a.m.



Mayor Darlene Norman, Chair



Dan McDougall, Interim CAO



Christine Watson, Administrative Assistant – Planning & Development

Date Approved: 
