

**Region of Queens Municipality Regular Council
Tuesday, October 10, 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

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

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

3.0 Presentation

There were no presentations to come before this meeting.

4.0 Tabling of Petitions

There were no petitions to come before this meeting.

5.0 Public Question / Comment Session

Mable Wisniewski - 34 Mersey Avenue, Liverpool – Mrs. Wisniewski stated she was pleased to hear about the application to the UARB for compensation to water users and thanked council.

6.0 Approval of Minutes

6.1 Regular Council – September 26, 2023

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

THAT the minutes of the Regular Council meeting held September 26, 2023 be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.0 Recommendations

7.1 Trucking of Bulk Salt Tender

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality approve that Tender PW09-2023/2024 – Trucking of Bulk Salt be awarded to Van Dyk Excavation & Truckin' for the tendered price of \$78.76 per metric tonne, plus HST for the 2023/2024 winter season.

Adam Grant, Director of Engineering & Public Works, stated a call for tenders for the trucking of bulk salt for the 2023/2024 winter season was issued. The tendered price is the largest increase we've seen in years, but matches up with market trends considering fuel and operating costs increase.

Mayor Norman noted the report indicates there will be no budget impact. Director Grant stated he did not budget for \$79, and is too early to comment on impact.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.2 Ice Resurfacers

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality approves the purchase of a 2024 Zamboni 450 from Saunders Equipment Ltd., Fredericton, NB at a price of \$156,500 + HST.

Director Grant stated the Director of Recreation applied for a grant for the purchase of a new Zamboni and was fully funded.

A Request for Proposal was issued for a fully electric resurfacers. Two proposals were received and one didn't meet specifications.

Mayor Norman noted the grant was secured through the Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage and the difference between the grant and the price will go towards an EV charging station and other equipment that is required to be used with the Zamboni.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.3 J Class Road Subdivision Street Paving

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality approve the overage for the Oliver Street paving project of \$18,715.

Dan McDougall, Interim CAO, stated Oliver Street was selected to be paving as part of the partnership with the Province. As stated in Section 6.2 of the partnership agreement, overruns of more than 10% require notification. The cost overrun for this project is estimated to be \$40,000. The new estimate is \$100,000. The budgeted amount is \$31,285 for this project; therefore the new cost share amount is \$50,000.

Deputy Mayor Fancy asked if it would be possible to break roads into sections when making application as in some cases the whole road repair is not required. Mayor Norman stated the province requires specifics and we can ask when applying.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.4 UARB Application for Rate Adjustment

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality apply to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board for a one-time reduction of the consumption rate of 70% for one quarter only to be funded from the Utility Reserve.

CAO McDougall stated at the September 26 Council meeting, staff were directed to prepare an application to the UARB requesting a one-time reduction in the consumption rate for one quarter only of 70%. The reduction will be funded from the Utility Reserve which currently has a balance of \$180,000 and the estimated cost for the reduction will be approximately \$56,000.

The billing cycle is from August 22 to November 30, 2023. If the application is granted in time, as invoices are mailed before the Christmas break, staff will apply the reduction to this billing.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.5 Property at 9777 Highway 8, Caledonia, Queens County, NS
PID #70154539

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

THAT Region of Queens Municipal Council declare the property located at 9777 Highway 8, Caledonia, Queens County, Nova Scotia and identified as PID #70154539 as dangerous or unsightly as defined in the *Municipal Government Act of Nova Scotia*.

AND THAT Region of Queens Municipal Council cause an Order to be served upon the Estate of Wallace Meade, and the person in charge thereof, Patrick McInnis, located at 9777 Highway 8, Caledonia, Queens County, Nova Scotia requiring that, within (30) days of the date of the service of the Order, the following work be carried out:

1. **Clean-up of all metals, plastics, toys, fires, recyclables, household garbage, construction and demolition materials strewn about the property or noted as remnant remains (or property stored thereof).**
2. **Demolition of one small makeshift outbuilding/chicken coop that is falling over.**
3. **Leveling of property accordingly removing holes and tripping hazards.**

AND THAT if the Estate of Wallace Meade, and the person in charge thereof, Patrick McInnis, fails to comply with the Order, the Administrator may cause the requirements of the Order to be carried out and all expenses incurred by Region of Queens Municipality become the responsibility of the parties of interest.

Kelly-Anne Hurley, S. Cst, Bylaw Enforcement Officer, stated the property owner of PID #70154539 is Wallace Meade (Deceased) and the Person in Charge Thereof is Patrick McInnis.

This property has been on the Region of Queens Bylaw Enforcement Roster for Dangerous and Unsightly Premises on and off since 2012. In June of this year, the mobile home situated on the property sustained catastrophic damage from an undetermined fire. The damages rendered the property as an "Immediate Threat to Public Safety" as the structural integrity of the mobile home was compromised.

As the property owner is deceased, Bylaw Enforcement made immediate contact with the tenant presently residing on the property who advised that there was a "life lease" and a person in charge thereof. The representative, Patrick McInnis, was immediately contacted and a clean-up commenced slowly. He could not be present today.

To this date, the dwelling has been fully demolished via Demolition Permit #116-23 – issued July 2023. The property, now considered as "Unsightly", requires a full clean-up.

The deadline for the clean-up is Friday, November 10, 2023.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

8.0 Discussions

8.1 Grey Boxes on Private Roads – Labelle Area

Councillor Brown clarified when he requested this item be added to the agenda it was for all grey bins, not just the one in the Labelle area, but that's the one that triggered the issues from residents. A lot of complaints have been received from Baker's Point and Chapel Hill as well, and some in Beach Meadows.

Staff have been good at cleaning up and finding a solution, but we rapidly outgrow those solutions. Engineering may fix some, or we can fix them with enforcement, but whichever way we go, it will take a budget.

Enforcement have been inspecting the boxes on weekends and notify people of what is or is not allowed in them. It's not that we have a capacity problem, we have a people problem. Disallowed garbage is being put in the bins causing health and safety issues, as well there is a problem with people dumpster diving.

Councillor Brown suggested the installation of cameras to allow for enforcement, or have large bins on the side of a hill that is fenced in which would eliminate people dumpster diving and keep the animals out (as is done in Toronto).

There are communal green bins that are not secured and attract animals within the communities and is becoming a safety issue.

Mayor Norman asked how much of an effort are residents making to separate their garbage at these locations. Scott LeBlanc, Solid Waste Clerk, stated they are doing a fairly good job. All the tools are there to source separate.

Mayor Norman further asked if staff had any suggestions on how in the next 7 – 8 weeks discussions can evolve around some solutions. She asked if holding a community meeting around grey boxes would be beneficial, and to allow residents to bring forth any alternative ideas, and if having smaller sites would help alleviate the issue.

Director Grant stated all Councillors have grey boxes in their areas and if residents that use them can offer solutions, they can offer them any time. People who abuse the grey boxes are not going to attend a community meeting. We have tried different methodologies over the years to make it easier, increasing pick up times and increasing staff time. It is on the responsibility of the people to be honest and fair.

Mayor Norman asked if our bylaw enables us to issue fines. Director Grant stated yes, but there would need to be surveillance 24 hours a day/7 days a week, and to have enough evidence to go to court to support that. If council wishes, we can get proposals for an independent consultation for a contractor to investigate to see what works in other areas and provide solutions for next budget year.

S. Cst. Hurley stated the illegal dumping fines are \$697.50. Residents have brought forth pictures and videos, but the people in them have to be identified. The difficulty is trying to place the camera we presently have, is in a location so that we can pick up license plate number to identify the dumpers.

She further stated in a conversation with Steve Whynacht, IT Manager, said that he can investigate. The issue is placing the camera and not having it stolen. At Sunhaven we have tried this on several occasions. The current camera we have requires batteries which requires them to be changed on a frequent basis.

Councillor Brown suggested a solution may be to have cameras to hook into the fibre op system by having Nova Scotia Power install a plug in receptacle like is done with the wreaths. The issue would be getting the right angle on the pole, which may require installing a new pole.

Deputy Mayor Fancy suggested having the installation of larger containers in the spring and fall for clean ups. He suggested have garbage picked up at the residents' homes.

Councillor Charlton asked if residents could be moved to regular collection, keeping in mind that not all would be accessible. Director Grant stated there are many different factors to take into account, collection on private roads you cannot get the conventional trucks

down the roads. Investigation into moving the boxes was also looked at but the problem is getting right-of-way allowance or sites.

Councillor Charlton asked if staff could investigate the installation of cameras, maybe at the Sunhaven site, and provide options for consideration prior to budget discussions. S. Cst. Hartung stated in past experiences, having lights, signage and cameras goes a long way in deterring people.

Councillor Amirault suggested an information flyer be circulated to seasonal residents providing all pertinent information.

Consensus was given by Council for staff to investigate the installation of high definition cameras, power poles, lighting and signage to be installed at all 3 grey bin sites; Sunhaven, Narrows Road East and West.

8.2 Homelessness in Queens

Mayor Norman stated in discussions with Richard Lane, Director of Economic Development, he said economic development is normally looked at a top down approach, but with homelessness it is a bottom up approach. It is important that we understand the extent of homelessness in Queens County. Mayor Norman suggested this topic be added to next Council for further discussion with Director Lane.

She further said that during a meeting with Mayor Savage, HRM, he suggested that homelessness will double in Halifax. There are 40 tents set up around Town Hall and approximately 60 others around the city, and others around rural areas and fears it will grow here as well.

As a Council we need to understand the extent and the reasons for it.

Councillor Charlton asked if South Shore Open Doors have been approached to do a presentation. They represent Lunenburg and Queens Counties and provide information on who, where, ages and demographics that are effected. Council agreed to have CAO McDougall have Director Lane investigate, and if he chooses, to invite them to Council.

Councillor Brown suggested after speaking with some HRM Councillors at the most recent NSFM Convention, that they would be a good resource to provide support.

9.0 In-Camera Items


There were no In-Camera items to come before this meeting.

10.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.



Mayor Darlene Norman, Chair



Dan McDougall, Interim CAO



Christine Watson, Administrative Assistant – Planning & Development

Date Approved: October 24, 2023