

**Region of Queens Municipality Regular Council
Tuesday, November 28, 2023 6:27 p.m.**

Minutes

Present: Mayor Darlene Norman, Chair
Councillor David Brown
Councillor Vicki Amirault
Councillor Kevin Muise
Councillor Ralph Gidney
Councillor Maddie Charlton
Councillor Carl Hawkes
Cody Joudry, CAO
Christine Watson, Admin. Assistant – Planning & Development

Regrets: Deputy Mayor Jack Fancy

1.0 Call to Order

Mayor Norman called the meeting to order at 6:27 p.m.

2.0 Changes / Approval of Agenda

It was moved by Councillor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Brown 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 Tabling of Petitions to come before this meeting.

5.0 Public Question / Comment Session

Susan McGibbon, 127 Main Street, Liverpool – Ms. McGibbon gave a background to her career as a senior marketing executive and her position as Board Chair to the Library in the Township of Georgian Bay, Ontario in addition to sitting on the Board of Directors on the Federation of Public Libraries, a library advocacy group which represents 365 branches in Ontario.

She voiced her concern about process in some of the decisions being made with respect to the library and offered her opinion as having experience with the roles she's held.

She further stated the need for more data to determine where and what the library will be to the community, holding town hall meetings to get input before making any decisions.

She urged Council to listen to constituents and to think about the location, and expressed her opinion that it would be better served if located next to the Queens Place Emera Center. She offered her assistance.

Laura Methot, 85 High Point Terrace, Molega North – Ms. Methot stated she is the Vice President of the Greater Molega North Lot Owners Association and is present to talk about the Road Levy Bylaw update on the agenda. The Association is a not-for-profit organization chartered in the Province of Nova Scotia in February 1977. The Association represents the largest recreational land development in the Atlantic Provinces covering approximately 3,000 acres on the shores of Ponhook, Molega, Beaver Dam, Annis, Beaver Tail and Black Raddall Lakes and represents 1,200 lot owners. They maintain 52 kms of roads, 3 bridges and 13 boat launches. Winter clearing is done to allow for full time access to all properties.

The Board is made up of volunteers who work for the benefits of its members. Other municipalities, such as Lunenburg and Halifax Regional offer the opportunity for road ownership associations to engage them to allow annual road association dues as part of the annual tax bill. In 2022, discussions began with the Region on the potential for such a bylaw. At the 2022 and 2023 AGM's, members were told on the progress and intention to adopt such a bylaw. At both AGM meetings there was unanimous support on the matter.

6.0 Approval of Minutes

6.1 Regular Council – November 14, 2023

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

THAT the minutes of the Regular Council meeting held November 14, 2023 be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.0 Recommendations

7.1 Dangerous & Unsightly – Property at 66 Martin Road, Harmony Mills, Queens County, NS PID #70157508

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

THAT Region of Queens Municipal Council declares the property located at 66 Martin Road, Harmony Mills, Queens County, Nova Scotia and identified as PID #70157508 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 Lawrence C. Zong, located at 66 Martin Road, Harmony Mills, 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. Full clean-up of construction and demolition materials and transport to the Region of Queens Landfill Facility and leveling of the property accordingly;**
- 2. Clean-up of miscellaneous items strewn about the property including plastics, metals, shingles, glass, etc.;**
- 3. Formal posting of civic number #66 for Fire, Police, and Ambulance response; AND**
- 4. Proper remediation of any well or septic remaining.**

AND THAT if the Estate of Lawrence C. Zong 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.

Jason Hartung, Bylaw Enforcement Officer, stated the property owner is Lawrence C. Zong (Deceased/Estate of). Jacob Zong is the Person in Charge.

66 Martin Road hosted a dwelling that over the last few years deteriorated to collapse. Jacob Zong presently resides in a recreational vehicle on the offending property and has no way of cleaning up the construction and demolition materials himself and properly disposing of the same via transport to the RQM Landfill facility. Zong fully understands the process leading to a full clean-up of the dangerous and unsightly property which poses a threat to public safety.

Recommendations for a full clean-up are as follows:

1. Full clean-up of construction and demolition materials and transport to the Region of Queens Landfill Facility and leveling of the property accordingly;
2. Clean-up of miscellaneous items strewn about the property including plastics, metals, shingles, glass, etc.;
3. Formal posting of civic number #66 for Fire, Police, and Ambulance response; AND
4. Proper remediation of any well or septic remaining.

These items must be actioned and resolved as soon as possible.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.2 Community Investment Fund 2023-2024 – Pleasant River Community Hall Society

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality provide grant funding to the Pleasant River Community Hall Society in the amount of \$2,305.00 from the 2023-2024 Community Investment Fund.

Stephanie Serada, Community Development Coordinator, stated an application was received from Pleasant River Community Hall Society for the replacement of a section of the roof shingles of their facility. All required documentation was provided and meets criteria.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.3 Development Agreement – New Fixed-Roof Overnight Accommodation in South Brookfield

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality adopt an administrative policy respecting entering into a development agreement with Jasmine and Matthew Mallay to allow for the establishment of an 8 unit fixed-roof overnight accommodation on their property identified as PID #70191937 and located on Highway 8 in South Brookfield.

Cody Joudry, CAO, suggested Council Table the Motion as new information has been received related to species at risk and environmental matters. Staff have a responsibility to do some due diligence on our part to bring further information back to Council before anything proceeds.

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

THAT the motion be tabled until further information is brought before Council.

Councillor Charlton stated there are discussions that could be held at PAC meetings on any additional steps that need to be checked into before coming before Council.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.4 Intervenor Status – Liverpool Bay

Joanne Veinotte, Director of Corporate Services, explained the options for funding. If Option 1 is chosen, costs will contribute to any surplus or deficit for the current fiscal year. Option 2 will fund the cost

from reserve and will not affect operations but will reduce the reserve balance.

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

THAT Council authorize up to \$120,000 plus HST to fund Intervenor work related to Kelly Cove's ARC application for Liverpool Bay from:

Councillor Amirault stated the last Council committed a substantial amount to the branding of the Region of Queens to Queens Coast and although it's not all of Region of Queens is about, it is a substantial part, and it will devastate our branding name. Queens Coast is about the coast and beaches. The Region does not need massive fish farms to ruin our pristine waters. The size of the fish farm proposed is 40 hectares, up from 4 hectares. The other two are going to be 40 hectares as well in Brooklyn and Mersey Point.

It will have a devastating impact on Beach Meadows Beach and is directly across from them. We have been beautifying the beach, making it accessible and recently invested into a new washroom facility.

Keeping in mind there is another recreation facility, the Brooklyn Marina, as well as Mersey Seafoods, that will have access issues due to the restriction of the waterways. Fully behind supporting the application.

Councillor Muise questioned the meaning of the motion; are we are recommending RQM being an intervenor or are we approving where the funds are coming from. CAO Joudry stated we have been approved to be an intervenor which was not voted on, and suggested a friendly amendment to the motion to where we are funding it from and that we will be an intervenor.

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

THAT Council authorize up to \$120,000 plus HST to fund Region of Queen's Intervenor work related to Kelly Cove's ARC application for Liverpool Bay from:

Councillor Muise enquired if, as an intervenor, can items be added or are we limited to what is on the application when submitted. Mayor Norman stated expert witnesses can be added and we are not limited to what was on the application when submitted.

AMENDED MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.5 Solid Waste Facility Tipping Fee Waiving

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality waive tipping fees associated with the disposal of demolition materials originating from 156 Wolfe Street, Liverpool, up to 10 metric tonne.

Director Veinotte stated as discussed at the last Council meeting, the property located at PID #7005073, Edith Baker who is deceased, has a dwelling that has fallen to disrepair and needs to be demolished. Mr. and Mrs. Hatt, who have taken over responsibility for that property, have requested to have the tipping fees waived for demolition materials that will be taken to the RQM Solid Waste Management Facility site.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.6 South Queens Wastewater Treatment Facility UV System Upgrade

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality reject all tenders for Proposal No. PW11-2023-2024 October 2023.

Adam Grant, Director of Engineering and Public Works, stated as previously discussed, we issued an RFP to replace the ultraviolet system at our south Queens plant. We received one submission that was significantly over budget. We are reevaluating our tender process and are looking to reject this one.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.7 Bioeconomy Development Opportunity Zone

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

THAT Region of Queens Municipality direct staff to utilize up to \$5,000 from the existing budget to support and promote bio-based manufacturing investment opportunities.

Richard Lane, Director of Economic Development, stated in December 2022 the Nova Scotia Innovation Hub engaged Ecostrat Inc. to produce a report and regional investment risk-rating to support efforts to attract new bio-based manufacturing industry investment to the area. The work would lead to the creation of a Bioeconomy Development Opportunity Zone (BDO Zone), which would include Region of Queens. Council did not provide funding to produce the report, but the Nova Scotia Innovation Hub continued without it.

An Independent Review Committee was formed to provide input to the report from a wide range of forestry perspectives including Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Renewables, Mi'kmaw Forestry Initiative, WestFor Management Inc., Western Woodlot Services Cooperative Ltd., Medway Community Forest Cooperative, Harry Freeman & Son Limited, Novan Forestry, as well as the Forestry Economic Task Force, Nova Scotia Innovation Hub, Invest Nova Scotia, and four municipal units. Four sites were identified for their suitability for development, including Port Mersey Commercial Park and Freeman Lumber in Queens, along with Kaiser Meadow Industrial Park and the Bridgewater Business Park.

Four sites were identified for their suitability for development, including Port Mersey Commercial Park and Freeman Lumber in Queens, along with Kaizer Meadow Industrial Park and the Bridgewater Business Park.

The report and rating have been approved by the review committee and the group is ready to launch the designation by a press release and subsequent direct marketing to the bioeconomy investor community and are now looking for financial contribution from the municipal stakeholders to promote their region to Global investors.

As part of Council's approved 2023/2024 budget, \$5,000 was included for investment attraction work.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

Mayor Norman announced a Recess at 7:12 p.m.

8.0 Discussions

8.1 Council Implementation Report

There were no questions or discussions arising from this report.

8.2 Financial Review Quarter Two

Director Veinotte provided an update on the Quarter Two financial statements:

Revenue Analysis:

Section 1- Taxes

Deed transfer tax budget was set at \$720,000 for the year and as of September 30th we have received \$693,184. While there were fewer sales transactions than previous years, there were several larger transactions in North Queens, and sales in Port Medway exceeding \$1.2M per purchase. Queens Home of Special Care Society land purchase also contributed to the increase.

Nova Scotia Power Corporation actual is higher than budget. This is set by the province and we did not know it would increase when we created the budget.

Section 2: Grants In Lieu Of Taxes

Grant in lieu for crown timberlands and the remainder of the fire protection grant will not be received until January/February 2024.

Section 4: Sales Of Services

Protective services are monies collected from parking meters.

Tax certificates stand higher than expected, but corresponds to the higher than expected market activity.

Section 5: Other Revenue From Own Sources

Building and development permits higher than budgeted.

Return on investments have exceeded the budgeted amount. This is due to the interest rate continuing to increase and fully utilizing our

Investment Policy. Note that as operating cash is utilized throughout the year, interest revenue growth will decrease, so growth in interest revenue will not be consistent over the year.

Included in Miscellaneous revenue is an unsightly claim moved from being posted as an expense to forming a lien on the property, thus no longer being an expense to the Region, but to the assessed owner. Also included is Efficiency NS Funding for Queens Place, FOIPOP requests and copier revenue from the library.

Section 7: Conditional Transfers From Federal & Provincial Government

Recreation NS Equipment Loan support of \$6,862 for an adapted trike that lives at QPEC which can be borrowed by the public.

Section 8: Other Transfers

Other transfers include the \$763,008 brought in to operations from deferred revenue. This was received in March 2023 from the Province for Sustainable Services Growth Fund. It is also shown in Section 16 as a transfer to the capital fund for Waterloo project.

Proceeds from the sale of land the the Queens Care Society is also recorded in this section, with a corresponding transfer to the Special Capital Fund is Section 16.

Expenditures:

Section 9 - General Government Services

Travel – Council related is all mileage expense for meetings claimed by Councillors.

Financial management- Billings from Grant Thornton for work on 22/23 audit, extra work had to be completed this year for the new Asset Retirement Obligation reporting standards. The costs posted here represent the overage from last year's accrual for Audit fees. There was an extra one time charge for management of the new Asset Retirement Obligation Section of the financials, an extra charge that will be reoccurring for additional audit testing around the IT system of \$4,000 per year, and extra time charged to assist staff with finalizing the statements after the ARO had been audited and finalized.

Taxation - Reduced Taxes is our low-income tax exemption. By implementing the tiered system, more residents have taken advantage of this rebate.

Tax sale costs were recovered in October when the tax sale was held.

Other- includes \$21,000 for legal services, \$16,800 for Asset Retirement Obligations project paid to AECOM, \$32,000 for CAO search and over \$20,000 on evaluation for lift station capacity.

Other general government services: Other- RQM scholarships and \$38,000 paid to Queens County Transit.

Section 10 - Protective Services

Firefighting force more than 50% because grants are paid 50% in the first installment, 20% in the second installment.

Fire station building expense includes over \$80,000 for repairs and maintenance. This consist of new radiators which were carried forward from last years budget and included in this years budget and the insurance claim deductible for water damage to floor and unplanned maintenance due to a failure of the water lateral in the building.

Section 11 – Transportation Services

Small tools and equipment include the upgrade of a scan tool which had surpassed its useful life and safety equipment purchased for EPW staff.

Works garage renovations total \$101,000 which include electrical, insulating, heating, washrooms, office furniture and making use of space for offices to accommodate the new positions approved by Council. The amount budgeted was \$73,000, an overage of almost 40%. Increases in quotes received at the time of budget preparation vs project completion was the cause, no change in scope on the project.

The main contributors to roads and streets budget include the Liverpool Bridge Sidewalk Redesign, Snow Removal and Asphalt Paving, all of which have incurred minimal expenses to date, which is why the budget percentage appears off.

Section 12 – Environmental Health Services

Sewage Collection treatment and disposal administration is insurance cost.

Sewer Treatment Plant Operations required the purchase of two unbudgeted pumps which cost over \$26,000 but are essential to operating the sewage collection systems.

Wastewater Collection Maintenance has exceeded the budgeted amount by over \$22,000 due to the cost of a new connection in Milton. Staff are currently working on updates to the sewer bylaw which will remove this expense from the general rate payers who are not receiving wastewater services.

Leachate Management costs under landfill expense are at 80% of budget. Expenses are highly influenced by weather. Staff shortage has required increased operating costs in overtime to compensate.

Recycling costs are down due to staffing shortages and no overtime requirements due to the temporary shut down of the MRF Facility.

Section 14 - Environmental Development Services

Environmental Planning and zoning administration are under budget due to vacant staffing positions. We are currently advertising for two positions in this department.

Other- Accessibility projects are still being developed therefore there has been minimal funds spent of the \$100,000 budget.

Economic Development is under budget as the \$1,000,000 HVAC Project for the Liverpool Business Development Center is in the early stages.

Section 15 – Recreation and Cultural Services

Swimming pools are not closer to 100% of the budget as would be expected due to early closure of Milton Pool. There will be additional expenses to come to stabilize Milton pool for the winter period.

Parks and Playgrounds includes purchase of 2023 Gator Dump Trailer for \$18,800 and unbudgeted purchase of 2017 Subaru for \$26,000.

Section 16 – Fiscal Services

Budgeted transfers from reserve: Sidewalk Reserve, First Responders, Landfill Equipment, General Equipment, and 2nd generation Landfill. Detail of all activity as follows:

Special Operating Reserves	\$ 232,192.78	\$ 1,407.86	Comfort Center
		\$ 2,500.02	First Responders
		\$ 15,784.92	FD safety
		\$ 12,499.98	Sidewalk Reserve
		\$ 75,000.00	Bell Internet
		\$ 75,000.00	2nd gen landfill
		\$ 50,000.00	Cell Tower reserve
Special Operating Reserve Equipment	\$ 225,000.00	\$ 100,000.02	Landfill Equipment
		\$ 124,999.98	General Equipment
Special Operating Reserve Capital	\$ 942,696.17	\$ 939,425.50	LTC land sale
		\$ 3,270.67	PC report
Capital Out of Operating	\$ 813,008.00	\$ 763,008.00	Waterloo
		\$ 50,000.00	Beach Meadows
		<u>\$ 2,212,896.95</u>	

Hillsview Acres

New revenue line added for non resident associated funding. This amount includes funding for the completion of the washroom renovation, tub room renovation and exterior doors.

Building expense is also over budget but is offset by the funding mentioned above.

Recruitment and Retention bonuses of \$114,000 included in Salaries and Benefits and in Other Funding Sources.

Utility

Interest revenue much higher than budgeted due to the interest rate rising.

Water treatment expenses higher than budgeted: chemicals are at 96% of budgeted amount, process equipment costs increased, and facility repairs and maintenance over budget due to unexpected damage. Some expenses are expected to be recovered through insurance. Operating costs will continue to be over budget due to staff shortages and use of contractors for the interim.

Disaster Funding

A funding request has been submitted to provincial EMO for review. There are \$18,000 in Public Works related expenses that are not included in this statement as they are part of that submission for reimbursement. Once reviewed any costs that are not approved by EMO will be added to operational costs for the next quarter.

8.3 Area Rate Policy Discussion

Director Veinotte stated as part of the budget process last year, Council heard there were concerns from the Associations that some of the reporting requests were onerous for them. Staff were directed to draft a new community rate policy based on that feedback.

She reviewed the policy changes:

- Section 10 (b) – Associations could request a lump sum before. The new policy sets out the amount of one cent on \$100 of assessment.
- Section 10 (d) – This section changes the reporting requirements and does not provide any independent verification of the use of funds that are collected from residents and disbursed to the organizations. The current policy requires that financial statements be prepared at a Notice to Reader level by a professional accountant and provided as part of the application or renewal.
- Public Consultation and Vote – This is now mandatory for all new applications.
- Renewal of Existing Area Rate – This used to include a Section called Accountability and the organizations were required to provide a forecast to the end of the fiscal year along with copies of invoices verifying expenditures to date. This requirement does not exist in the draft policy.
- Section 29 (a) – Donations to other organizations is now prohibited from the area rate funding. This is a new requirement in the draft policy. Previously some Associations were donating funds to other organizations and was not the intent of the area rate.

She reviewed the clarification of language, which was also discussed during budget deliberations.

The most recent set of financial statements refers to the most recent set that are completed, not the financial statement for the most recent year end. For example, if an organization's fiscal year end is December 31, the reporting requirements for an application submitted January 15th, 2023 would be for financial statements as of December 31, 2021. If an organization's fiscal year end is March 31, the reporting requirements for an application submitted January 15th 2023 would be financial statements as of March 31, 2022.

The term Auditor will be removed from Appendix A as the financial information provided is not audited nor verified by an independent party.

The difference in reporting requirements between the new draft and the old policy is substantial. A policy is not written for one organization, a policy is written for the region.

Potential key decision points for Council to consider were reviewed.

1. The deadline for renewals in the new policy is January 15. As the new policy only requires public consultation and vote for new applications, staff are not opposed to extending the deadline for renewals to February 15, except for the year that the public consultation is required. The goal would be to have all the area rates approved going into budget deliberations.

Councillor Amirault questioned the dates for the required financial statements when submitting their application, stating the most recent information would not be provided. Director Veinotte agreed, but the financial reports would be the most recent one that have been independently reviewed. The proposed forecast does not exist in the new community area rate draft.

Mayor Norman stated there used to be a section for accountability, and asked why would be not want them to provide a forecast to the end of the fiscal year, along with copies of invoices verifying the expenditures to date. Councillor Charlton voiced her concern also on consistently for accountability, as there should be consistency, i.e. when groups apply through the Community Investment Fund. There is a need for accountability.

Director Veinotte reviewed the three levels of assurance:

1. Notice to Reader (basic level),
2. Review, and
3. Audit.

The Region of Queens are required to have an audit done which is very expensive and requires hours of testing. A review is a step back from that, they do not do much testing but do investigate reasonability of bank statements, cash flows, etc. It is not as expensive as an audit, but still costs. The issue raised at the meeting was the cost of the Notice to Reader which is the basic

level of assurance where you information, i.e. receipts and statements to an accountant, who would run them through their financial statements and are looked at for reasonability; i.e. basic checks. They are not tested.

She suggested investigation, if permitted under the MGA, into how we do low income tax rebates by looking into a tiered system. CAO Joudry stated if Council likes the idea of a tiered system, then it could be investigated.

Mayor Norman asked about holding public consultation once every 10 years. Director Veinotte said this is what the policy states, but that does not mean you cannot have one. Councillor Amirault stated ten years is too long and suggested having one once per council term, i.e. the third year of term. Director Veinotte suggested holding it within the first year of term so that council would be familiar with all the area rates. Following discussions, it was decided to have the consultations during the second year of term, so as to not overwhelm new Councillors, and include considerations if an association held a meeting the previous year.

Councillor Charlton asked for consistency among the groups and the grants. CAO Joudry stated staff will investigate the tiered reporting process and bring back to Council for consideration.

Councillor Charlton asked with respect to area rates and holding public meeting, if we have investigated what other municipalities do. Director Veinotte said no, as she is unsure of rules of the MGA pertaining to area rates. Angela Green, Administrative Assistant, stated when she and the previous Municipal Clerk created the policy, environmental studies were conducted at other municipalities and will provide that information.

Councillor Amirault asked for further clarification on other proposed changes.

1. Why has the application fee changed from \$250 to \$325?
Director Veinotte suggested it may have been the charges seen in the other municipalities, but will investigate.

2. Under voting eligibility, there were issues at the last area rate meeting with some residents owning multiple properties. Under item 20 it states that any person who owns property within the assessment district or districts under consideration and are eligible to vote, etc., can it read any person who owns properties, so that residents can only cast one vote.
3. Under item 25, it states Section 22, and should read Section 23.
4. Under item 28 c., which states community beautification and clean up, including maintenance of cemeteries, and asked for properties instead of cemeteries. Mayor Norman stated this was one of the main complaints last year, and it's important to keep cemeteries in.
5. Under 29 e., will there be a conflict where we are doing improvements to the Hank Snow Playground where it is within reasonable proximity, and change the wording to "other than parks already existing".

Mayor Norman asked, under the MGA, in order to vote for an area rate, do you have to be eligible to vote in municipal elections? Director Veinotte stated she will investigate and provide clarification.

8.4 CBCL Report and Growth Planning

CAO Joudry stated staff were directed to determine the possibility of costs to provide water and wastewater services to Mount Pleasant.

The Province of Nova Scotia recently announced an infrastructure grant program related to growth. Applications are due by December 13, 2023, and require a clear motion of council that demonstrates support for the planned work. The Mount Pleasant Extension and related work that is already planned and in the capital budget, appears to be a good candidate for the program.

Staff are suggesting the organization of at least 2 workshops in early 2024 to enable Council and staff to better understand what the challenges are and what growth planning would involve.

Director Grant stated the CBCL is very comprehensive. Projecting a 54% growth, approximately 60 hectares, and with an additional thousand people on the system, in addition to the 2,500 currently on it in the Liverpool area alone.

We have issues with our lift stations, water transmission along with system expansion, and to see all these issues satisfied, a preliminary ask would be \$12 Million. We need to investigate where we go from here. To provide additional services, there will be additional costs to have a reasonable level of development. The level of fire protection, etc. would need to be taken into consideration, and consideration changing it globally.

Council agreed the need to move forward and apply for the grant.

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

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

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

8.5 Liverpool Library – Site Selection

CAO Joudry provided history on the library issues and site selection. He further stated the existing library lease is in the Rossignol Center and extends until December 31, 2024. Staff have been working with the landlord to ensure that the space continues to be suitable as per lease terms.

Council approved a Library Steering Committee Terms of Reference in April 2022 to provide council with advice and recommendations related to siting and design of a new library.

Councillor Amirault stated as the Chair of the Library Committee, a meeting was held and the proposed site was visited. The Committee were excited. The space is blank and can be designed to meet their needs, i.e. washrooms, kitchen facility, etc. There is green space. The infrastructure is there already and a new HVAC system is being put in. The timeline is much less than building, 10 months to a year for renovations.

The library is in need of a new location, the building is for sale and the conditions are not as good as they should be.

There may be need of upgrade to the electrical system and no storm water. It would have its own entrance and is quiet with no noise transferred from the surrounding businesses.

Concern was raised on the location and as stated in their minutes, there would be fewer walkers if the QPEC site was developed as compared to where it is currently located. It was suggested that Queens County Transit may be utilized to help with this issue. The cost to build a new structure could potentially be more than the budgeted \$3 Million and there is currently a shortage of labourers.

The current library has 4,700 square feet, the proposed site has 7,000 square feet which allows area for development.

Councillor Gidney asked if the Committee considered holding town hall meetings to discuss with the public on the location. Councillor Brown stated there was a public meeting to ask the public what they would like to see in a library, but not on the location, and voiced his concerns that the site selection was taken from the committee.

Councillor Charlton stated the meeting was advertised prior to and there were only 7 or 8 people in attendance. There is 13 months remaining on the lease. She raised concerns on the timing of building a new library and if no action is taken with the proposed location, and we may be without a library.

Councillor Muise took the Chair at 9:05 p.m.

Mayor Norman stated a new building cannot be done in 13 months. If the Liverpool Development Center is chosen as the location for the library, we need to be diligent in changing signage and promoting the location. It is a very isolated spot, but the majority of Council are in favour of seeing this come forward on future agendas to discuss options. To assist staff we need to discuss the option to endorse this location, etc.

She further stated she felt that it is in an inappropriate location.

The majority of council agreed to move forward with the proposed location.

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

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

MOTION CARRIED with 6 in favour and 1 against.

Mayor Norman resumed the Chair at 9:12 p.m.

8.6 Request for Funding for New Year's Levee

Mayor Norman stated each year the Municipality receives a request from the Mersey Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion requesting municipal support to co-host a New Year's Day Levee.

The proposed event is anticipated to cost \$1,500 and to be co-hosted by the Legion and Municipality. Therefore, the usual request of 50% cost-sharing is being requested.

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

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

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

8.7 Utility and Review Board Decision

Director Veinotte stated the decision was received from the UARB on with approval for a one time reduction in rates for one quarter.

The UARB received several complaints from utility users and their decision stated "Based on the information provided, I find that the Utility's response to the power surge, over which they had no control, was reasonable. I also approve the reduction in rates for the most recent quarter, I agree that using a previously unused reserve to cover the reduction in revenue is prudent".

Section 52 of the Public Utilities Act, which is a key part, their response stated "I note that reasonableness is a key part of this provision. The boil water advisory was a reasonable response to a situation that was beyond the control of the Utility. I can think of no other response that would have ensured the safety of the drinking water. In my opinion, the Utility complies with s52 of the Act".

The bills are the process of being prepared and will go out before Christmas.

8.8 Road Levy Bylaw Update

Director Veinotte stated this bylaw will be written based on what we've seen with the Greater Molega Lake Land Owners Association (GMLOA), but noted that this bylaw will apply to everyone in the Region that applies.

A meeting was held with representatives from the GMLOA where timing was discussed as there was some concerns around public engagement and the right time to do it. On the issue of public engagement, Council will need to discuss having both or just one around the consultation of the bylaw as the Region as a whole and have another when the Association applies for the road levy.

The reporting standards have previously been discussed and are very strict. \$5,600 has been spent on legal fees and no legal bills so far this fiscal year.

The bylaw has been drafted. Staff and CAO Joudry are comfortable with it and it has been reviewed by our legal team. She asked how Council wished to proceed around engagement with the public.

Mayor Norman stated most of the GMLOA are seasonal residents and asked how public consultation would be held. Director Veinotte stated the GMLOA have indicated at their meetings, they have roughly 60 people in attendance, but they have 1,200 members. If some kind of public engagement was to be held, some component may be virtual so that all residents could participate. The challenge would be how best to reach out to them. We could reach out to the Association for any contact information they have.

CAO Joudry asked if Council wished to consult the public on this topic. If so, before the bylaw is adopted, or before an individual Association's approval?

Councillor Charlton suggested if done the same way as the Land Use Bylaw, a draft document would be circulated, community meetings would be held in several districts throughout Queens to allow as many people as possible to provide feedback, and hold virtual meetings as well. Council would be provided the feedback and have a better understanding before decisions are made.

Councillor Brown agreed to the need to have public consultation both on the bylaw and with each Association applying for the road levy. The members of the Associations need to be informed, go by what their individual bylaws allow them to do, and to have a vote.

Mayor Norman asked where do we hold the public sessions, how many and who attends? Councillor Brown recommended Greenfield and Port Medway. Councillor Hawkes recommended Caledonia.

CAO Joudry asked if Council wished to hold public sessions on the bylaw and again with individual associations.

Mayor Norman asked if there is wording within the bylaw that would indicate that a public session be held with the Association. Director Veinotte stated in the current draft bylaw, the Associations have to have a meeting where they've engaged their membership. A concern is some members do not attend meetings or see the fees on their tax bills and not know why.

Mayor Norman asked how to advise the members of the Associations on the public sessions, i.e. direct mail to everyone on public roads? CAO Joudry recommended, if this the approach we are taking, before an Association's road levy is adopted, the municipality, being the one collecting the money, does a direct mail and provide notice of a meeting. As a government it would be incumbent on us.

Director Veinotte stated to attain all the addresses it will take a lot of staff time, but it can be done. As a team, we need to look at the best way, and will investigate if this can be done through SAP. Once

it is decided what we want, we can come up with solutions on how best to do it.

9.0 In-Camera Items

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

10.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:43 p.m.



Mayor Darlene Norman, Chair



Cody Joudry, CAO



Christine Watson, Administrative Assistant – Planning & Development

Date Approved: December 12, 2023