

**Region of Queens Municipality Regular Council
Tuesday, January 9, 2024 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
Cody Joudry, 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

Add: 8.4 Livestreaming – Councillor Charlton
8.5 Garbage Boxes – Councillors Brown and Hawkes
8.6 Streetlights – Councillor Muise

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

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

3.0 Presentation

3.1 Pemsik Conservation Mosaic

Mayor Norman welcomed Melissa Labrador, Wildcat Community, Indigenous Lead, and Gabrielle Beaulieu, Marine Establishment Group, Parks Canada, and is collaborating with Ms. Labrador on the project.

A short video was shown and can be found at:
(<https://youtu.be/NRwmM8d4Kes?si=BCrEfedezj3rZAf1>)

A Mosaic of Conservation in Kespukwitk is the Indigenous-led vision of Pemsik within the Kespukwitk district of Mi'kma'ki and is the coordinated and collaborative conservation area that brings together existing initiatives and works to fill gaps in terrestrial and marine protection. This mosaic of conservation proposes to connect the Tobeatic Wilderness Area to the lands, watersheds, and marine waters adjacent to Port Mouton, Port Joli and Port l'Hebert, as well as the Broad and Sable Rivers.

Ms. Labrador state she is working in collaboration with Chief Potter, Bear River First Nation, as well as Annapolis First Nation, Goosecap First Nation and Acadia First Nation in the feasibility stage. The conservation is to protect what is currently there and prevent industries that would destroy it.

There is already a mosaic in the Pemsik area; currently we have provincial parks, nature reserves, nature trust lands, a federal park, and CWS lands as well. Port Mouton Island is an important space and to be able to acquire the Island, in collaboration with others, for the community to use would be a big success.

Ms. Beaulieu stated Parks Canada was approached by Ms. Labrador to see if they wished to be involved with this project. The Parks interest would be with marine space.

She further commented commitments were made by the Government of Canada to protect 30% of lands and water by 2030.

There is a 5 step marine establishment process which is being processed for Pemsik. One major piece being worked on is confirming if the province is interested in collaborating as there could potentially be a transfer of lands required for establishing a marine conservation area on the edges of Kejimkujik Seaside.

Mayor Norman thanked them for their presentation and wished them well.

4.0 Tabling of Petitions

There were no Tabling of Petitions to come before this meeting.

5.0 Public Question / Comment Session

Melissa Smale, 97 Brooklyn Shore Road, Brooklyn – Ms. Smale stated she is the Treasurer, Brooklyn Recreation Committee and Director, Brooklyn Cemetery Committee. She has reviewed the draft proposed changes to Policy 23 – Area Rates, and made the following notations:

Sections 13 – 18 Public Consultation and Votes. These sections do not address the frequency in which public consultation should occur. A clause should be added to indicate that these activities should occur at a minimum of 10 years. These sections do not address what action or actions are required to trigger a public consultation other than the action of Council.

Page 55 indicates that Sections 22 and 26 have a submission date change from January 15th to February 15th, it is not reflected on page 60 of the new revised draft policy. Having this date extended would ensure that applicants with the December 31st year end have an opportunity to hold an AGM in which eligible rate payers would have an opportunity to attend, be heard and vote on allocations of funding in their tax district.

Table A – Reporting Financial Requirements – The tier for funding is appreciated, i.e. Notice of Reader performed by a CPA firm can be a substantial amount of the funds requested by the requestor (Brooklyn Recreation and Brooklyn Cemetery Committees) who have requested roughly 32,000 and 12,000. Given that the requestors are to request a rate given per \$100 of assessed rate and not a fixed rate, when applying for a renewal, how does an organization determine the tier they fall in, given the high assessments.

The only difference between Tier 2 and Tier 3 is the requirement for a Notice to Reader, but areas within the policy indicate that missing information is required within 7 days of receiving a request for additional information. This is not sufficient timeline for an organization to make motions to appoint a CPA firm to perform the review and have the report.

Leon Robertson, 45 College Street, Liverpool – Mr. Robertson stated he was glad to see the recommendation come forward for consideration under Item 7.3 – QPEC Concessions.

6.0 Approval of Minutes

6.1 Regular Council – December 12, 2023

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

THAT the minutes of the Regular Council meeting held December 12, 2023 be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

6.2 Special Council – December 7, 2023

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

THAT the minutes of the Special Council held December 7, 2023 be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

6.3 Special Council – December 19, 2023

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

THAT the minutes of the Special Council held December 19, 2023 be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.0 Recommendations

7.1 Road Naming – Lingley Lane

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality approve the naming of a new road off Cobbs Ridge Road in Liverpool as Lingley Lane.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.2 Road Naming – Audrelyn Lane

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality approve the naming of a new road off Willow Lane in Summerville Center as Audrelyn Lane

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

7.3 QPEC – Concessions Operations

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

THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality enter a one (1) year agreement with Kiwanis Club of Liverpool for operation of concessions at Queens Place Emera Centre at such time that all the terms and conditions outlined in the facility agreement are met, and that the Agreement satisfies a legal review.

Steve Burns, Manager of Events, Promotions & Sponsorship, stated following the meeting in December 2023, consultation was held with Department of Environment & Climate Change and it was agreed that a one year term is the best course of action. We are waiting on answers from the Kiwanis Club before having the agreement vetted and moving forward.

CAO Joudry noted that a draft of the lease agreement would typically be included with the report, but unfortunately timing prevented this. Assuming Council wanted to move quickly on this, get Council's authorization to sign a lease in principle based on the items in the report.

Mayor Norman asked if Council were comfortable signing a lease without first seeing it. Councillors agreed that they wished to review a copy of the lease agreement before approving.

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

THAT the motion be tabled until the lease agreement is finalized.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

8.0 Discussions

8.1 Council Implementation Report

Councillor Amirault asked under November 14, 2023 regarding Pool Committee, when updates would be available. Cody Joudry, CAO, stated it's expected within the next two Council meetings.

8.2 Community Area Rate Policy Discussion

Joanne Veinotte, Director of Corporate Services, circulated a copy of the tiered spreadsheet and revised draft Policy 23 – Community Area Rate to Councillors.

She stated that during the Council meeting in November 2023 there was discussion regarding the revised Area Rate Policy. Council asked for clarity on reporting requirement options, practice in other Municipal units, allowable use of application of area rates and some additional wording or revision to the policy and these were highlighted the Staff report.

One item of concern was the financial reporting requirement so a table was included at the back of the policy. The table was put together using two year ends; December 31st and March 31st. An organization can use any year end they wish.

She noted the comment from a member of the public this morning regarding the change of a date in the policy for renewal was correct, so Section 22 has been changed to Community organizations with an existing area rate shall submit annually to Director of Corporate Services by February 15th which was previously January 15th.

She noted if you are renewing and it is the second year of any Council's mandate, which is Section 25, the documents still have to be submitted on January 15th as staff have to organize public consultation.

Practice in other municipal units was requested to be reviewed. RQM is one of the few municipalities that do this, most do not. Others have community rates for specific assets that are owned by the Municipality not by community groups; the HRM is the biggest one.

There are two priorities that Council should consider when choosing an area or community rate; public engagement and accountability for the money.

The Tiered reporting requirements were reviewed.

Mayor Norman noted that Tiers 1 and 2 have no cost, Tier 3 is \$1,500 and Tier 4 costs depend on if an audit (\$13,000 - \$17,000) or review (\$5,500 - \$7,000) are required.

CAO Joudry noted Ms. Smale enquired on the reporting period, the difference between what the reporting period is and when the information would be due. Councillor Amirault asked Director Veinotte to explain Section 26.

Director Veinotte said Section 26 states "If community organizations with an existing area rate do not submit the required documentation by January 15th in the year of public consultation, the area rate will not be renewed for the next fiscal year". This was added as Section 25 states "Existing area rates shall be subject to public consultation

and full day vote at the expense of community organization holding the area rate in the second year of Council's mandate unless the rate was initially approved in the prior year". This means if the area rate has to be revisited, Staff need the documentation by January 15th as we have to organize the community meetings and community votes.

Councillor Brown enquired if the Lots Owners Association's request could be covered using an area rate so that they could move forward. Director Veinotte stated the Road Levy is a Bylaw issue and this is a Community Area Rate issue and is unsure of the nuances. CAO Joudry stated yes this could apply to the road levies, but either could work. The area rate is a percentage of assessed value as with the road levy, it is a flat rate.

Director Veinotte enquired to the date to have information submitted for applications. It was agreed that February 15th rather than January 15th would be appropriate.

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

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

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

8.3 Electronic Voting for 2024 Municipal Election

CAO Joudry provided an update to the report stating that the opportunity to participate with the other municipalities who have hired a company to provide electronic voting may still be available to RQM and will have more information by the end of the week. If Council is interested in discussions with electronic voting, he suggested they ask for a more detailed report at the next Council meeting and he would be able to provide a more substantial update.

Councillor Amirault noted when campaigning that many residents enquired about electronic voting and where there are many elderly

residents without computer access, suggested investigating using both methods.

Councillor Charlton noted that more electronic voting in the previous election was used for early voting at advanced polls.

Council agreed to have staff investigate electronic and paper voting options.

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

THAT Council direct staff to report back on the feasibility and cost of implementing an electronic and paper voting option for the 2024 Municipal Election in the Region of Queens.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

8.4 Livestreaming – Councillor Charlton

Councillor Charlton stated it was brought to her attention that it was unclear from a staffing point what Council's expectations were for livestreaming. There were discussions but no clear motion or procedure on what it looks like. She suggested the best approach would be to have Staff provide a report with context of what other municipalities do, how they stream and what they use.

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

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

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

8.5 Garbage Boxes – Councillor Brown and Councillor Hawkes

Councillor Brown stated this has been an ongoing issue for quite some time. Staff have done a great job so far trying to keep up with it and every year at this time the issue becomes more visible as the collection dates are reduced to once per week, but the population has grown.

He further stated the issue is not entirely a RQM problem, as some are people problems. Not all the garbage is being put into the receptacles, but thrown on the ground around them. Education has been tried to help with this issue and the use of cameras, which were stolen.

He asked that Staff investigate and provide a long term solution that will fix this problem. In speaking with the Solid Waste Clerk, the 40 grey boxes throughout Queens County consume half of RQM's budget for garbage collection.

Mayor Norman and Councillor Hawkes agreed that this issue needs to be fixed.

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

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

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

8.6 Streetlights – Councillor Muise

Councillor Muise stated there are many streetlights out within his district and within other districts throughout Queens as well. He has tried and has been working Angela Green, Administrative Assistant, as well to have them fixed. Mrs. Green stated she goes through the process of opening Work Orders with NS Power and get a 60-day guarantee to have it repaired. When it goes past the 60-day mark, government contacts are then made.

Specifically in his district it is lobster season and workers are walking to work and there are issues of safety due to the streetlights not working.

The normal turnaround time to have streetlights fixed is 90 days, but it is now over that time period.

He further stated he has received many calls from residents about this issue.

CAO Joudry suggested Council ask for a report with an action plan, which would outline all the streetlights that require repairs.

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

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

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

9.0 In-Camera Items

It was moved by Councillor Charlton and seconded by Councillor Brown that the proceedings go In-Camera at 10:33 a.m. to discuss the following:

- 9.1 Contract Negotiations
- 9.2 Legal Advice

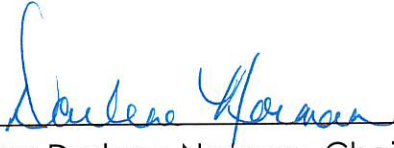
MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

It was moved by Councillor Brown and seconded by Councillor Amirault that the proceedings exit In-Camera at 11:50 a.m.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

10.0 Adjournment

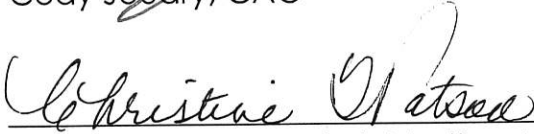
The meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.



Mayor Darlene Norman, Chair



Cody Joudry, CAO



Christine Watson, Administrative Assistant – Planning & Development

Date Approved: January 23, 2024