

## **Region of Queens Municipality Regular Council**

**Tuesday, January 23, 2024 6:00 p.m.**

**Milton Community Hall, 168 Tupper Street, Milton**

### **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 6:00 p.m.

#### **2.0 Changes / Approval of Agenda**

**Add 8.5 – 3-Way Intersection, Liverpool**

**Add 8.6 – RQM Owned Streets – Safety Request**

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

**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**

Mary White, 1022 Brooklyn Shore Road, Beach Meadows – Mrs. White offered comments on Item 7.1 Community Area Rate. She stated she is not in favour of having area rates for non-essential services. These rates cause a burden to lower income people.

She expressed that with an increase to taxes is included with your total debt ratio and may affect your borrowing power at the bank, i.e. a mortgage.

Through discussions within the community, many residents have voiced their concerns about not wishing to donate to the committees seeking area rates, but would rather donate to other charities of their choice. With an area rate there are no donation receipts.

Mrs. White asked Council to take her comments into consideration when discussing this issue.

## **6.0 Approval of Minutes**

6.1 Regular Council – January 9, 2024

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

**THAT the minutes of the Regular Council meeting held January  
9, 2024 be approved as circulated.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## **7.0 Recommendations**

7.1 Policy 23 – Community Area Rate

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

**THAT the Council of Region of Queens Municipality adopt  
revised Policy 23 – Community Area Rate as presented.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 7.2 Letter of Support – LIP/ZIP Application

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

**THAT the Council of Region of Queens Municipality approve the letter of support for the South Shore Multi-Cultural Association to include in their application for funding for the establishment of a Zonal Immigration Partnership for the South Shore.**

Richard Lane, Director of Economic Development, stated in Canada there is a mechanism for immigration partnership which brings multi-sectoral agencies together to attract, integrate and support newcomer populations. In Nova Scotia there are four existing Local/Zonal Immigration Partnerships LIP's, but the South Shore does not have one.

The funding is through the Federal government and the application is due January 31, 2024 and funding will be announced April 1, 2025. The South Shore Multi-Cultural Association has expressed interest in being the lead applicant. They are canvassing support from a wide range of agencies, including all the South Shore municipal units. The application will be submitted this week and are looking for a letter of support from the Region of Queens for the Zonal partnership.

Councillor Gidney stated in the report is says there are no budget impacts at this time and asked what the cost would be to the Region. Director Lane stated it would depend on the mechanism that is set up, but Cody Joudry, CAO, stated LIPs are funded 100% from the government and so the cost may be zero.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 8.0 Discussions

### 8.1 Policy 82 – Fire Department Capital Purchases & Operating Grants

Joanne Veinotte, Director of Corporate Services, at the Emergency Services meeting held January 9, 2024, staff presented a revised truck purchase schedule for review by the Fire Chiefs, all were present.

The difference to the Policy that was adopted by Council in the fall is the addition of an updated Schedule A and funding principles. There is an increase in funding starting in 2026-27; pumpers/tankers maximum is \$425,000, aerial trucks maximum is \$425,000 and rescue vehicles maximum is \$200,000.

The increases are supported by the funding model that is in place. Currently it is 2 cents on the tax rate.

In addition, Schedule A has been updated and a commitment was added that it will be reviewed every two years.

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

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

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 8.2 Tourist Accommodations Levy

Director Lane stated in October 2022, the Nova Scotia provincial government made changes to the Municipal Government Act (MGA) for municipalities to apply to impose a levy on the purchase price of all tourism accommodations.

At the same time to these MGA changes, legislative amendments and regulations to Tourist Accommodation Registration Act came into effect April 1, 2023 and required all accommodations in Nova Scotia to register.

For RQM to be able to administer a system for the collection and disbursement for accommodation levy monies, several elements would need to be developed. The amount charged for the levy is up to a maximum of 3%.

The Tourist Accommodation Act will become known as the Short Term Rental Registration Act. There are changes to that legislation which are being currently discussed and is a moving situation, so what is there now may change to things such as compliance to zoning regulations, etc.

A rough guesstimate of what the levy could produce from the number of beds available in Queens County is \$240,000 per year which would come to the municipality. The legislation only stipulates so far as that money has to be used to further tourism. The Municipalities that were in place before the legislation changed used that money either for direct marketing by themselves or indirectly somehow through a regional marketing destination group or it could be used to further promote tourism by creating festivals to the region.

A system would need to be set up that would allow accommodation providers to make payment to RQM and we would need to track it. It would take a significant amount of staff effort.

Mayor Norman stated in the report it states "In order for Council to make an informed decision whether to proceed, staff could develop a survey to be distributed to all accommodation providers to gauge the level of support or opposition to a levy." She asked if Council wished Staff to proceed on investigating further.

Councillor Charlton stated it should be open to everyone and not just accommodation providers, i.e. Privateer Days could benefit. On a survey they could identify if they were an accommodation provider, a business, or a not-for-profit organization, etc.

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

**THAT the Council of Region of Queens Municipality direct staff to develop a survey related to an accommodation levy and provide further information regarding implementation and staff costs.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

### 8.3 Memorial Bench Request

Mayor Norman stated a request to place a memorial bench was presented to Council on April 11, 2023 and staff were directed to return with a draft policy about requests for memorials. With the departure of our Municipal Clerk the process came to a halt. Other municipalities handle these type of requests as they are received.

The requestor has again asked permission to have the bench placed and suggested Tupper Park. Council agreed to proceed with this request.

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

**THAT this issue be referred to the next Council meeting for a recommendation to allow the placement of the memorial bench in Tupper Park.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

### 8.4 Apitamkiejit Wind Energy Project – Community Liaison Committee

Councillor Brown stated he has received an invitation from SWEB Development, Wind Energy developers, looking for community advocates that would like to become members of their Community Liaison Committee (CLC).

Mayor Norman stated councillors sit on not-for-profit organizations such as the Library and Housing committees. SWEB is a business and a private organization. She stated she has concerns to start placing Council members on private businesses and organizations on behalf of the RQM, as we would be seen as supporting their organization.

Councillors agreed with Mayor Norman. Councillor Brown was advised that he can sit on the committee as a resident if he wishes.

Councillor Muise suggested having the information put on the RQM's website to assist them in seeking members to join their committee.

#### 8.5 3-Way Intersection – Councillor Gidney

Councillor Gidney provided information on the recent incident of a resident being struck in the 3-Way intersection. This intersection has been problematic over the years.

An Intersection Review was completed in 2015 and some of the recommendations have been addressed.

The Traffic Authority is currently working with a consulting firm to address crosswalk safety concerns. Mayor Norman asked about this. Adam Grant, Director of Engineering & Public Works, stated last September complaints were received concerning another crosswalk in Liverpool which triggered consultation with a consulting firm to investigate the areas in Liverpool which seem to be problematic. The work is currently underway and we expect a report within the next couple of months.

Deputy Mayor Fancy suggested ways for consideration for pedestrians to be noticed at crosswalks, for them to pause before proceeding; i.e. flags, flashing lights or some kind of noise to alert them that it is safe to cross.

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

**THAT the Council of Region of Queens Municipality refer this matter to Staff to review the previous Intersection Review 2015, the pending review with the Traffic Authority and the consulting firm, the RCMP and any other sources deemed necessary to prepare a report for Council with options to address the safety concerns surrounding the crosswalks at Main and Market Streets with a cost estimate for each option.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

Councillor Charlton stated a local Constable noted other municipalities have engaged in the Crosswalk Safety Society and has recommended this is something RQM could act on quickly. The use of the flags would cause pedestrians to pause before entering the crosswalk. The Society provides buckets and flags. The use of flags has proven to be effective in pedestrian safety. We could participate in this before we have a long term solution.

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

**THAT the Council of Region of Queens Municipality direct Staff to explore a partnership with Crosswalk Safety Society respecting buckets and flags specific to the 3-way intersection in Liverpool.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

#### 8.6 Traffic Safety on RQM Streets – Councillor Charlton

Councillor Charlton stated it was brought to her attention that formal direction for Staff to provide a report on the petitions received on speeding and safety around Main and School Streets was not given.

She also asked for Councillors to consider other streets that could be decreased in speed limits from 50 to 40 if criteria was met. She has been advised that there are other streets in her district that are of concern.

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

**THAT the Council of the Region of Queens Municipality direct Staff to provide a report outlining Council's powers and authority under traffic management;**

**AND THAT Staff be directed to provide a list of options and a recommendation regarding resident's concerns outlined in the petition received for areas surrounding Main and School Streets.**

**AND THAT Staff be directed to provide a list of Municipal roads that meet the criteria to apply for speed limit decreased to the province.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 9.0 In-Camera Items

**It was moved by Councillor Brown and seconded by Councillor Hawkes that the proceedings go In-Camera at 7:15 p.m. to discuss the following:**



- 9.1 Contract Negotiations
- 9.2 Contract Negotiations
- 9.3 Contract Negotiations
- 9.4 Personnel Matters

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

**It was moved by Councillor Amirault and seconded by Councillor Gidney that the proceedings exit In-Camera at 9:48 p.m.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 10.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

  
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Mayor Darlene Norman, Chair

  
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Cody Joudry, CAO

  
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Christine Watson, Administrative Assistant – Planning & Development

Date Approved: February 13, 2024