

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

**Tuesday, February 27, 2024**

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

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

##### **Add In Camera Item 9.3 – Contract Negotiations**

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

There were no questions or comments to come before this meeting.

## **6.0 Approval of Minutes**

6.1 Regular Council – February 13, 2024

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

**THAT the minutes of the Regular Council meeting held February  
13, 2024 be approved as circulated.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## **7.0 Recommendations**

7.1 Bylaw No. 14 – Tax Exemption

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

**THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality give first  
reading to Bylaw No. 14 respecting Tax Exemptions, as  
amended.**

Joanne Veinotte, Director of Corporate Services, stated since the last review, requests for tax exemption have been made by Medway Area Heritage Society, Mechanics Lodge and Queens Neighborhood Cooperative Housing Ltd. and have been added to Schedule A of the proposed bylaw.

The Medway Area Heritage Society requests exemption for The Seely Hall, The Old Meeting House and a parcel of resource property.

We are waiting for Property Valuation Services Corporate to complete a name change for a property assessed to the Mechanics Lodge.

Housing is not eligible for an exemption, therefore, the property requested by Queens Neighborhood Cooperative Housing Ltd. has not been included. Currently this property is assessed as vacant land. The impact of granting an exemption would be \$255.

Hines Pro Guide Limited has been removed as their registration on the Registry of Joint Stock Companies has lapsed.

Mayor Norman noted that several companies listed on Schedule A are currently not registered with Joint Stocks and suggested reviewing to ensure they all have valid registrations. Councillor Muise stated there are some in his district who have filled out and filed their registration papers with the fee but are still waiting for confirmation.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

7.2 February 2024 Area Rate Requests

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

**THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality receive the report titled February 2024 Area Rate Requests for information;**

**AND THAT Council consider approving the community area rates as presented at the March 12 Council meeting.**

Councillor Amirault stated overwhelming support was given to both of these groups and they have been doing great projects. She asked to have this dealt with today instead of at the March 12 Council meeting.

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

**THAT the motion be withdrawn.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

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

**THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality receive the  
report titled February 2024 Area Rate Requests for information;**

**AND THAT Council approve the community area rates as  
presented.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

7.3 Electronic Voting and Appointment of Returning Officer

**It was moved by Deputy Mayor Fancy and seconded by Councillor  
Gidney:**

**THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality receive the  
report titled Electronic Voting and Appointment of Returning  
Officer;**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

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

**THAT Ian Kent be appointed the 2024 Region of Queens  
Returning Officer;**

**AND THAT staff be directed to implement the hybrid voting  
solution as outlined.**

Cody Joudry, CAO, stated several Nova Scotia Municipalities are currently using electronic voting and Council asked staff to investigate RQM participating. Staff are recommending the hybrid option which will allow residents to electronically vote or on paper.

Mayor Norman stated the hybrid option will cost approximately \$50,000 plus the electronic system of approximately \$20,000. Ted Bulley retired as Returning Officer and Ian Kent has been appointed both provincially and federally, and it would make sense that he continue on as the Region's Returning Officer.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

7.4 Liverpool Library Next Steps

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

**THAT the Council of Region of Queens Municipality receive the report titled Liverpool Library Next Steps.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

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

**THAT staff be directed to commence renovations of the vacant space at the Liverpool Business Development Centre with a budget of \$1,050,000 plus a 20% contingency, funded from Canada Community Building Fund and remainder from accumulated surplus;**

**AND THAT staff be directed to collaborate with the library board and senior staff to create a consultation plan as outlined and present it to Council for approval;**

**AND THAT the Liverpool library be relocated to the Liverpool Business Development Centre by December 2024;**

**AND THAT notice of this decision be given to the South Shore Library Board.**

Councillor Amirault stated this is the best solution for now to ensure library services continue in Queens County and everyone working together will provide what is needed.

Councillor Brown stated the meeting recently held with all parties went well and asked that consultation start soon, even though this Council will not see the project through to the end, to provide the incoming Council with the information they need.

Mayor Norman stated she agrees with Councillor Brown. As noted in the report there is discussion on community fundraising that will be required. Libraries are funded through the Department of Community Culture and Heritage, who have funded other libraries such as HRM. If the new Council needed additional funding other than the \$3 Million earmarked, they would be unable to seek funding from the Department of Culture and Heritage in time for their 2025/26 budget.

She further commented she feels that the property where the library currently sits could have been affordably purchased and kept there until a developer was found. However, Council did not want this.

The Liverpool Business Development Center has been chosen as a temporary measure. During the refit the CEO of the library and library staff will be consulted on their needs.

**MOTION CARRIED with 6 in favour and 1 against.**

7.5 Brooklyn Recreation – Notice to Reader Reimbursement

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

**THAT the Council of Region of Queens Municipality reimburse the amount of \$1,150 to Brooklyn Recreation.**

CAO Joudry stated Councillor Amirault requested this be added to the agenda for consideration by Council.

Councillor Amirault stated the revisions to this area rate policy were started in April last year and was expected to be completed within a couple months, but due to staff changes, but the timeline for the policy passed and asked Council to reimburse Brooklyn Recreation for the amount of the Notice to Reader, which does not now have to be completed on the new application.

Deputy Mayor Fancy took the Chair at 6:30 p.m.

Mayor Norman stated that although the amount is small, is cognizant of the fact that Council have approved an area rate for them this year which will give them in excess of \$32,000. They have a balance sheet showing they have \$29,000 in assets left over from last year. It's not the matter of the money, it's the principle of the fact that this group does not illustrate the need to have that money reimbursed and have awarded an area rate to them this year knowing that they have money that remained unused last year and previous years and would not be supporting this request.

Councillor Brown stated that although not a huge amount, but when they submitted the request for an area rate it was budgeted to include the Notice to Reader. If given the extra money, every

resident will be subsidizing Brooklyn Recreation, therefore is not in favour of reimbursing them.

Councillor Amirault stated they need the money for operating costs as they do not get their payments from the Region until June or July.

Councillor Charlton stated the Notice to Reader was due by January 15 and they had it done. The policy was not approved in a timely manner. Since then, the criteria was changed therefore she is in favour.

**MOTION CARRIED with 5 in favour and 3 against.**

Mayor Norman resumed the Chair at 6:35 p.m.

## **8.0 Discussions**

### **8.1 Core Active Transportation Network Project**

Kimberly Halliday, Physical Activity Coordinator, provided background on the Active Transportation Network project. Active transportation refers to any human powered activity like walking, cycling, wheelchair, scooter, etc. An application was submitted to Cycle Nova Scotia to participate in their Core AT Network program. They will do community engagement, focus groups and surveys to determine what is wanted. They then design reports which will provide cost estimations. They have worked with various communities, i.e. Town of Lunenburg, recently. There is no budgetary costs for the initial plans, but conversations will be held with Planning, Public Works and Economic Development.

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

**THAT Council receives Core Active Transportation Network Project Information;**

**AND THAT Council consider endorsing the Core Active Transportation Network Project at their March 12, 2024 meeting.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## 8.2 NSFM Spring Convention

Mayor Norman stated the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities will have their spring conference on May 8 – 10, 2024 in Baddeck, Nova Scotia. In order to prepare a recommendation for next Council, she asked Council who would be interested in attending.

Councillor David Brown, Councillor Kevin Muise and Councillor Charlton indicated they would like to attend.

## 8.3 Public Engagement

CAO Joudry stated he has heard a lot of interest in engaging the public more on various matters that arise. The report outlines what public engagement could look like. Not all public engagement is the same, for example, informing the public, consulting the public and empowering the public. Each would have different expectations. He asked if Council was interested in having a framework around how public engagement is done.

Mayor Norman referred to the chart included with the report and asked under the participation goal, the final decision rests in the hands of the public. As a heads up, she commented that it is very rare that Council ever leaves the final decision to the hands of the public, but there are times that is what the public expect. Council cannot give a committee the power to spend Council money, but Council can if it so wishes give a committee or the public, the right to make a final decision as long as it doesn't land on money.

It is right and just to engage the public as much as we can, to hear their opinions, but there are times when the public who comment the most or are the most effected, are unhappy with the decision Council reaches.

Council agreed that framework is important and wished to see a report come forward.



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

**THAT the Council of Region of Queens Municipality receive the report titled Public Engagement Framework;**

**AND THAT staff be directed to develop a public engagement framework for Council's consideration.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

## **9.0 In-Camera Items**

**It was moved by Councillor Gidney and seconded by Councillor Hawkes that the proceedings go In-Camera at 6:52 p.m. to discuss the following:**

- 9.1 Contract Negotiations
- 9.2 Contract Negotiations
- 9.3 Contract Negotiations

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

**It was moved by Councillor Brown and seconded by Councillor Hawkes that the proceedings exit In-Camera at 8:03 p.m.**

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

- 9.1 Contract Negotiations

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

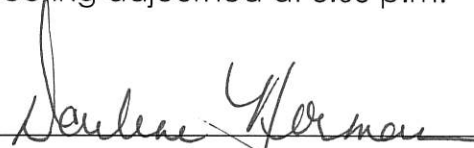
**THAT Council of Region of Queens Municipality approved the amended lease clauses as presented and authorizes Mayor and Chief Administrative Officer to sign the amended lease agreement for the remainder of the term.**


Mayor Norman stated the lease for the library has a term expiring December 31, 2024. Some changes include a rent reduction, furnace oil invoices will be paid by the tenant (RQM), and are responsible for cleaning the library space and snow clearing.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

### 10.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

  
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Mayor Darlene Norman, Chair

  
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Cody Joudry, CAO

 *for* \_\_\_\_\_  
Christine Watson, Administrative Assistant – Planning & Development  
*ANGELA GREEN, ADMIN ASST - ADMINISTRATION*

Date Approved: March 12, 2024