

**RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF VICTORIA
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 19
6:30PM – OLD SCHOOL
730 VICTORIA RD., VICTORIA**

MINUTES OF OPEN SESSION

Attendance: Mayor Martin Ruben, Deputy Mayor Jean McCardle, Councillors Ben Smith and Shelley Trainor

Councillors Eric Gilbert, Linda Gilbert and Tom Wright attended via Zoom

Interim CAO Robert Hughes, FAA Marsha Empson

Members of the public attended in person and via Zoom.

1. Call to Order

- a. Call to order

Mayor Ruben called the meeting to order at 6:37pm.

- b. Acknowledgement of attendance in person and electronically - reminder to turn on closed captions for those listening in by Zoom.
- c. Welcome from the Mayor

Interim CAO Robert Hughes was introduced to council and the public.

- d. Establish public participation method for this meeting (5b, after standing committees, after CAO report & council questions).

2. Approval of agenda

Motion made by Councillor Trainor to approve the agenda, seconded by Deputy Mayor McCardle.

Discussion:

- Item 13a identified as needing to be moved to the closed session portion of the meeting, per MGA subsection 119 (e), after a brief open session.

Motion made by Councillor Smith to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Deputy Mayor McCardle.

Motion carried unanimously (6/0).

3. Declarations of conflict of interest

None

4. Adoption of Minutes

- a. February 12, 2024 Council Meeting

Motion made by Councillor Trainor to approve the minutes of February 12, 2024, seconded by Councillor Smith.

Motion carried unanimously (6/0).

- b. March 09, 2024 Special Council Meeting

Motion made by Councillor Trainor to approve the minutes of February 12, 2024, seconded by Councillor Smith.

Motion carried unanimously (6/0).

5. Public Presentations/Petitions/Delegations & public comments or questions

- a. Playhouse presentation

Presented by Pat Smith, President, and Stewart Hickox, Vice President

- Victoria Playhouse Inc will have a simplified season in 2024, to allow time to engage the community, and the municipality, in developing a longer term plan and strategy.
- Last year proved there was a role for The Playhouse on PEI.
- Funds have been secured for strategic planning.
- There will be a general manager this year, no artistic director.

- b. Comments or questions from the public to Council

- It was confirmed that The Playhouse will continue to utilize the office space at the School House.
- Reassuring to know there will be a season, the Playhouse is a dynamic part of the community, and the local businesses are positively impacted by theatre goers.
- Due to lack of resources, previous strategic recommendations could not be carried out, contributing to the current situation.
- Suggestions for the Community Hall, and how the Playhouse can work with the municipality for better maintenance of the building and off season use of the building, would be appreciated by Council.
- The Playhouse board is committed to creating a community organization, not just a plan to run a theatre.

Action - FAA to add Pat Smith's letter to council to the posted meeting package.

6. Business arising from Minutes

- a. 2nd presentation of 2024/25 budget

Presented by CAO Hughes

- Discovered that principal loan payments were not being captured in the water & sewer budget, causing an overall deficit.
- Recommendation to have another meeting to investigate further, attempt to avoid raising water & sewer rates. Council in agreement.
- Concern for the state of the water & sewer utility, with no asset management plan.

- Concern that the auditor did not identify that 2022/23 loan payments were not captured correctly in the audit documents.
- An extension to submit the 2024/25 budget to the province may be required. This is not a concern and is understandable given the current situation the municipality is facing, of not having a permanent CAO.
- Recommendation to approve by general category, rather than by line item, with support for this offered by Mayor Ruben. No issues with this amongst council.
- Small surplus expected for Municipal budget.
- Resident comment received regarding the budget:
 - *My primary observation relates to the overall sustainability of our municipality based on our current tax assessment base, tax rates and water and sewer rates. We continue to cover our operational costs but are not able to set aside money to pay for major asset maintenance and repairs on our assets. There was information provided as part of the Municipal Sustainability Study that provided the Municipality with a professional opinion on the ongoing maintenance and capital repairs for the assets owned by the Municipality. This information should inform the money required to safely and efficiently maintain these assets. The Municipality should also do the same for our significant water and sewer assets which have an even greater liability attached to them if something goes wrong. If we do not have the capacity to properly maintain our assets we need to consider how to address this risk to our Municipality.*
- Budget does not include maintenance, an asset management plan is needed.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor McCardle to delay decision making on the budget until which time the Water & Sewer Corporation Board can meet, in conjunction with Council, to make changes needed to come to a balanced budget. The meeting should take place prior to March 31, 2024. Motion seconded by Councillor Trainor.

Discussion:

- Concerning to balance a budget based on a carryover, that likely will not be available at the end of the year, for the next budget. There needs to be a way to decrease expenses or increase revenue.

Motion carried unanimously (6/0).

7. Reading of Correspondence

None this month

8. Reports from Standing and ad hoc Committees

- a. Water & Sewer Corporation Board - *last meeting held March 11, 2024*
 - Budget presented to the board was initially balanced and approved to be recommended to council.

- Wharf parts delayed, Island Coastal responsible for interim solution, and costs, to allow for wharf restaurant timelines to not be impacted.
- Some wharf work to begin on Wednesday, March 20.
- Lighthouse generator now working correctly to power lift station in the event of a Maritime Electric power outage.

b. Planning Board - *no meetings since last council meeting*

9. Monthly Report from CAO

- a. Activities report
 - Budget and Development Applications are top of mind.
 - Time available is very limited, will be focusing on priority items.
 - Thanks offered to CAO Hughes for stepping in.
- b. Actions list
- c. Development permits report
- d. Financial report
- e. Water test results transparency
- f. Fire Department Report

10. Inquiries by members of Council

- **Action** - Follow up requested on rental office space at the Old School, in matter of terms, rates, and potential for the Playhouse and the Municipality to switch spaces.
- **Action** - Follow up requested for tax revenue calculations for individual properties.
- Action on instituting a potential Tourism Levy to be deferred until a permanent CAO is in place.

11. Introduction and Reading of Bylaws

- a. Second reading and approval of the Draft Development Bylaw 2024
 - #2024-10 - Motion to Give Second Reading to the Zoning & Subdivision Control Bylaw #2024-01

Motion moved by Councillor Gilbert, seconded by Deputy Mayor McCardle.

WHEREAS Section 16 of the Planning Act allows municipalities to adopt bylaws to implement their Official Plan;

AND WHEREAS to the best of our knowledge, Council has complied with the processes established in section 18 of the Planning Act and with EC 640/97 - Planning Act Minimum Requirements for Municipal Official Plans

BE IT RESOLVED that the Zoning & Subdivision Control Bylaw, Bylaw #2024-01, be hereby read a second time.

Motion carried unanimously (6/0).

- #2024-11 - Motion to Approve the Zoning & Subdivision Control Bylaw #2024-01 at Second Reading

Motion moved by Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor Trainor.

WHEREAS Section 16 of the Planning Act allows municipalities to adopt bylaws to implement their Official Plan;

WHEREAS to the best of our knowledge, Council has complied with the processes established in section 18 of the Planning Act and with EC 640/97 - Planning Act Minimum Requirements for Municipal Official Plans

AND WHEREAS the Zoning & Subdivision Control (Development) Bylaw, Bylaw #2024-01, was read a second time at this Council meeting;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Zoning & Subdivision Control (Development) Bylaw, Bylaw #2024-01, be hereby approved at second reading.

Motion carried unanimously (6/0).

- b. Adoption of the Draft Development Bylaw 2024
- #2024-12 - Motion to Adopt the Zoning & Subdivision Control Bylaw #2024-01

Motion moved by Councillor Gilbert, seconded by Councillor Wright.

WHEREAS Section 16 of the Planning Act allows municipalities to adopt bylaws to implement their Official Plan;

AND WHEREAS to the best of our knowledge, Council has complied with the processes established in section 18 of the Planning Act and with EC 640/97 - Planning Act Minimum Requirements for Municipal Official Plans

BE IT RESOLVED that the Zoning & Subdivision Control (Development) Bylaw, Bylaw #2024-01, be hereby adopted.

Motion carried unanimously (6/0).

12. Appointments to Committees
(None this month)

13. Introduction of New Business

- a. V-24-04 - Re-zoning application for PID# 207290 - refer to Planning Board for consideration and recommendation to council.
- Application received from AMAR Seafoods PEI.
- Agenda amended to move discussion of this item to a closed session.

Motion moved by Councillor Smith to close the meeting at 8:18pm, seconded by Councillor Trainor.

Motion carried unanimously (6/0).

14. Items to be considered in a closed session as per MGA Section 119(1)(d)(e):

- a. February 12, 2024 Council Meeting (Closed Minutes)
- b. March 09, 2024 Special Council Meeting (Closed Minutes)
- c. CAO search committee update

Motion moved by Deputy Mayor McCardle to open the meeting at 9:15pm, seconded by Councillor Trainor.

Carried unanimously (6/0).

15. Business arising from closed session:

Motion made by Deputy Mayor McCardle for the CAO to inform the applicant of rezoning application V-24-04 that it would be in their best interest, and the municipality's, to delay their application submission until after the 2024 Official Plan and Development Bylaw are approved. They should include in their application that they need to consider the recirculation specs as outlined in the bylaw, and that bylaw text amendments may also be required and applied for, seconded by Councillor Trainor.

Carried unanimously (6/0).

16. Adjournment

With no further business, Mayor Ruben motioned to adjourn @ 9:20pm.

Submitted by CAO Robert Hughes

Approved by Mayor Ruben