

Monthly CAO Activities Report, to May 12, 2023

1. General Finance & administration:

- The **audit** is close to completion, and Marsha has been working very effectively with the auditing team. Informed by the audit process, staff are developing a better understanding of the way that finances have been managed in the past and are developing ideas for improving financial forecasting so that we can have more confidence when making operational spending decisions.
- Marsha has done a great job of getting the **annual Water & Sewer billing** and information package out to customers of the utility. This has been a large task given the updated annual rates, but we are now set up for recurring billing in future years which will reduce the administrative burden of this annual task.
- We have discovered that the municipality has been eligible, since 2012, to **issue charitable tax receipts for donations received**. There are a few items for which we would welcome donations from the public, to enable improved amenity in the town, notably \$3000 for lawnmowing services in Victoria Park on the Causeway, and other smaller items. Staff anticipate inviting contributions and making arrangements for donor recognition in the coming month.
- The idea of a “**Victoria municipal volunteering crew**” has been discussed, to provide both practical and administrative voluntary assistance to the municipality on agreed priorities, in a streamlined and organized, rather than ad-hoc, manner. This would not only provide financial benefits (giving residents an opportunity to ‘donate’ time or in-kind services rather than funds), but we hope would also support community building. We anticipate inviting interested residents to an open meeting in the coming month or two. Any resident (who is not a Councillor, due to requirements of the MGA) who may be interested in coordinating such a group in collaboration with staff, are welcome to contact staff to discuss the potential model and the scope of the project.
- Seeing the need for **exterior painting of the Community Hall**, Marsha has sought out a quote for this painting. We are investigating grant opportunities that could cover this cost at approximately \$11,000.
- Worked with Hilary as MEO to ensure proper administration and compliance for the **municipal by-election** process.
- We have updated the way that information is presented on various pages of the **municipal website**, to make information clearer, more complete, and easier to access. Explore at <https://www.RMVictoria.com/> Further improvements will continue to be implemented throughout the year.

2. Water & Sewer:

- **Generator projects:** 2 quotes have been received for generators, both over-budget and requiring further detail, which has been requested. We are waiting on two further quotes from the supplier who did the work for Cornwall’s backup generator project, and from an industrial generator business who contacted us proactively in the last week offering to do up a quote.

- **Causeway bridge waterline project:** the engineering package is now complete, and the final permit application has been submitted to the Dept of Environment engineers. Upon approval (expected in a few weeks) it will be able to be listed on the provincial tenders website. The proposal requests that the work be completed in June or July.
- **Wharf project:** The engineering package is complete, now we only need approval from DFO, as the owners of the wharf property. They had previously given authorization for the earlier (more expensive) versions of the Wharf project, and extended their authorization two times. Because we are now past their extension date, and the design has changed (to be more affordable to the municipality), a new authorization must be given. I am beginning those conversations with DFO this week.
- **General Water & Sewer:** I regularly talk with Preston about his day-to-day work and specific projects in the town. He has verified that the tanks by the Welcome Centre will be pumped out before tourist season is in full swing this year, to avoid a repeat of last year's incident.

3. Fire Department

- Met with **Fire Department liaison**, discussing the Fire Services Bylaw update and requirements for compliance with it, and potential grant applications for a future fire-hall extension.
- Summary of **monthly report** received by CAO from Fire Chief:
 - 1 emergency response this month, responding to an injury in which an elderly resident had fallen into a large trailered boat on his property, and fractured a bone. The FD safely lifted the man from the boat and passed his care to medical support.
 - FD members had training by Autism PEI on 25 April, on the topic of how to appropriately interact and communicate with autistic children or adults. They were encouraged to invite children, or people with autism of any age, to see the Fire Hall, so they can become familiar with their work and equipment.
 - Should any local residents wish to arrange a visit to or tour of the Fire Department, this is welcome, and is likely easiest on a Saturday. Please contact the VFD (or the CAO) to make arrangements.
 - We do not currently have a comprehensive list of all FD assets, however Firefighters and the CAO will be working together to create such a list over the coming months.
 - This month, the department acquired a new-to-Victoria fire truck, purchased second-hand from Vermont at a cost of ~US\$8500 by the Victoria VFD Association, and donated to the municipality's Fire Department. The oldest of the Department's current trucks (which had also been paid for by the Association in the past) will be sold at a value of approximately \$1,500, with the proceeds going to the Association.
 - The VFD Association and CAO will be working on a memorandum of understanding to cover the transfer of assets, both for this purchase of the fire truck, and in general, from the VFD to the municipality.

- In addition, we are grateful to the VFD members for erecting the **seasonal no-parking signs** throughout the village, which they've traditionally done annually at this time of year.

4. Notable CAO meetings & correspondence:

- Attended the FPEIM Annual Meeting in Souris; the Department of Housing, Land and Communities 'Municipal Roundtable on Affordable Housing'; and a briefing on the Federal Housing Accelerator Fund.
- As per Council direction, sent letters to 4 provincial Ministers and Deputy Ministers (Tourism, Land, Infrastructure, Economic Development) regarding the Victoria Park/Amar file. Have received word from departmental staff that there was a meeting on April 20, 2023 with upper management to discuss the issue, and that they are awaiting further direction.
- Met with local MLA Jamie Fox, with Deputy Mayor Trainor, regarding the Victoria Park space, in which he recommended requesting a transfer of ownership of the property.
- Met with Victoria Business Association regarding Welcome Centre tenancy this summer.
- Discussed with Department of Transportation & Infrastructure, various options for addressing Victoria's seasonal parking/congestion challenges, and active transportation options. To inform future years' capital projects.
- Met with the person (a Cornwall resident and life-long Victoria visitor) who last month had kindly offered placement of a memorial bench. She is approaching the end of her life, and is placing the bench in her own memory. When it is ready, her family will reach out to me. I will meet them to agree on a location in the Seawall boardwalk park, and they will anchor it in place.

5. Ravis Beach Lane development

- Heard resident concerns, investigated the history of development permitting for the property, and received advice from provincial experts & our former DO.
- Met with the developer, and separately with concerned residents, to communicate municipal requirements going forward, to be consistent with our bylaws and the issued development permit. Awaiting a response from the developer.
- Have learned a lot about the development permitting process through this investigation, and have gathered ideas for how this can be streamlined and the process improved - and more clearly communicated - in future, to avoid misunderstandings.

5. Summer Contractors:

- Decided upon a lawnmowing contractor, and have offered a 5-year contract (the contract will be drafted and signed ASAP, with the first cut of municipal properties to occur in late May/early June)
- Signed a rental contract for the Welcome Centre with the VBA and the VSM for this season, resulting in increased revenues from these facilities relative to previous

years. Both understand and are supportive of the potential for a future RFP process to become the norm starting this fall (though this policy change is yet to be passed by Council)

- Received confirmation of receipt of \$5000 from the Tourism PEI Beach Grant (with thanks to Mayor Trainor for spotting this opportunity in March and supporting the RMV to take advantage of it), and contracted Allan Marshall to do maintenance/improvements during the month of May with these limited funds. All funds from this grant must be spent by June 1, in order to be received.
- Received confirmation of receipt of the Employment Development Grant to fund one summer maintenance position (Allan Marshall), starting in June. Yet to write the contract and have it signed.
- We are waiting for news on two more summer-student grant applications that have been submitted, which would improve maintenance coverage throughout the week, and make the role itself more sustainable. The results of these grants will be published this May, and should we be successful we will rapidly need to hire for these roles.

6. Council training

- Discussed with Dept of Communities staff, for Council & Committee members, about how best to prepare the session. We are now first gathering topics/questions/scenarios from Council, to define the scope of the discussion, before scheduling.