

Staff Report February 9, 2021

CAO and Municipal Clerk– Alain Muise & Lori Murphy

Municipal Administration Building *Council Priority (multiyear)

The building is advancing mostly on schedule, with payments being made out of our capital reserve for progress payments. The work this month is focused on furniture and signage for interior and exterior, along with finalizing paint colors as the crack filling has begun. The project remains within budget parameters. Since our last meeting, the solar panel framing has been installed. At the same time as this work is being done, Louis and his team are leading some internal improvements in the house/storage. Some of the work will be done internally, and some will be done by Garian (roof, structural, door and window changes).

Affordable and Alternative Housing *Council Priority (multiyear)

The Request for expression of interest is posted publicly. The deadline has not yet expired. Our planners have provided initial advise and Council has asked for PAC to provide further guidance on planning matters.

Strategic priorities sessions

See agenda for more information, a draft SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) is shared, along with community and corporate values. Further analysis is ongoing.

Rural Internet – WREN *Council Priority (multiyear)

A recent announcement was made announcing additional investments in Argyle. A small investment from our part, as our coverage is already close to 99% with the larger project. Recently, Develop NS shared maps for specific regions in our community.

COVID

We recently received further detail on the accountability framework for COVID funding. At the end of the fiscal year, we will be required to submit a report, and will be able to transfer reserves into 2021-22.

Fishing dispute

Recently the Wardens and Mayors were kept up to date on progress, we have yet to meet with Minister Jordan a second time.

Mariners Center expansion and bridge to services*Council Priority 2019-20

Recently, the new and revised committee met for a 3 hour meeting. The meeting outlined some of the history of the work that brought us to this point, along with financial estimates, and a review of some of the newer aquatic facilities in Nova Scotia. The new aquatic center committee and the bridge committee were reset, and will be meeting in the coming week to continue the work. All three municipal units received a presentation from the Y-caps regarding the need for a pool to be restored in the County.

Yarmouth International Airport Corporation *Council Priority 2019-20

The Airport Corporation met this Wednesday, and received 2 presentations, one from Celtic Air Services and another from Jim Smith, representing the interests of the Yarmouth Area Chamber of Commerce. The board approved a process to sell one of the excess buildings on site. Work is likely to commence and move aggressively on the right sizing process approved by the board. The financials indicate a better year than expected. A large amount was expected to be needed from the surplus (\$95,000) but will likely be \$40,000.

Other projects

Eel Brook Volunteer Fire Department – MLA LeBlanc, Councilor Donaldson, Warden Muise and Deputy Warden Albright met with a group of EBVFD volunteers to discuss the status of their capital project, and the potential for funding in light of the recent announcement for funding in Bridgetown for a “community center”, with large fire doors. We are still in touch with other levels of government for additional funding.

Our new Director of Recreation Services is Scott Surette, announced on Friday last week. Interviews for our building inspector will occur asap.

Chris Frotten and I co-led an application for funding from the Province of NS for a regional planning effort. Deadline was Friday and was met. 7 municipal units have joined the plan.

Budget planning has commenced, and I will be supporting the work of our Director of Finance, in this endeavor.

Finance Department- Marsha d'Eon

With the end of the fiscal year fast approaching, I am continuing to compare budget to actuals, trial balances and making sure all is in order prior to March 31st year end.

Work has been started on the 2021-2022 budget.

This year's tax sale that was scheduled to take place on Thursday, February 11, 2021 has been postponed until April 13, 2021 due to COVID regulations.

Property tax reminders were sent out February 3, 2021 in hopes of collecting a few more outstanding taxes.

T4's will be completed and sent out by the end of the week.

All other services, including monthly reconciliations, accounts payable, and monthly financial reporting to staff and Council continues and is on schedule.

Council Report Public Works and Development (Hans, Louis, John)

West Pubnico Sewer Treatment Plant (WPSTP)

Plant Operations

The plant is operating at high efficiency after having higher outfall sample numbers due to this summer's low water flows although we remain in compliance with NSDoE guidelines. Staff is still waiting, due to Covid travel restrictions on the replacement of the LEL (Lower Explosive Limit) gas detectors which are a requirement in any treatment facility. This should be installed as soon as restrictions ease for travel between provinces. Staff has also finished with the installation of the new hydraulic mixer and the plant is now back to normal operations. 11 of the 12 lift stations are running with very little interruptions and no major breakdowns. The lift station on Rock Road is losing power for no apparent reason. Local electricians were not able to find the issue so KRC controls Ltd will be in this month to troubleshoot the problem.

This month we did not come across any sewer connections.

Capital Project Initiatives

We are working actively with Trident Processes to get the MD Press dewatering machine details sorted out in order to make it fit within our existing Sewer Plant. During the process of sourcing the conveyor for transporting dewatered sludge we made the experience that we need a bit more complex unit to keep it clean and easy to use. We are waiting on a few quotes to complete this task, but we are still anticipating having the unit ready by early April 2021. More details will follow soon.

The lateral upgrade on Franks Road has been completed by Amiro and Surette and is ready for the proposed development at this location.

We received a comprehensive report on the Red Cap pump station issue and are working through the report to make adjustments in the future with the goal to reduce the overflow risk at this location.

Tusket Sewer Treatment Plant

Plant Operations

The plant is operating at high efficiency and is in compliance with NSDoE. Our outfall samples have returned to normal values after a very dry summer and lower than normal flows for an extended period of time. We are still awaiting on the report from CBCL as to

their findings why our PH level is so low and so many solids end up in the treatment plant filters. Pumps and filters need more careful observation and more frequent cleaning due to these solids. This in turn increases the durability of our pumps which are at a high cost to replace. All 112 septic systems have been maintained for the season and no major issues to report. The lift station is operating without any issues to report.

The brewery's field bed and treatment are still giving us issues even after tightening the side streaming, close monitoring, more frequent pumping efforts of the tank and doing repairs to the field bed. There will be a trial done to see if lower dosing can or will resolve some of these issues in the new year and the engineer has been notified and is aware of this issue.

We did not receive any new connection request.

Capital Project Initiatives

The Mission Communication Module is working well for us and we are collecting valuable data each day and noticed reduced overtime on monitoring and troubleshooting of the plant and pump station already.

East Pubnico Water Utility **System Operations**

Staff continues to monitor, and repair as needed, and meter reading are done on a regular basis. Water has been running at full capacity since the pump repair at civic #432 Willett Road.

Capital Project Initiatives

The tender to hire a contractor closed On February 3rd, 2021 to move forward with the upgrades to the two wells on Willett Road and all valves operating the system. We are aiming to complete the work by end of March 2021.

Wedgeport Sewer Improvement Program **System Operations**

All 42 systems are in full operation with no major issues. Some of the BIO PRO systems needed minor adjustments since these are smaller versions of treatment plants, in turn will require pumping to be done more frequent but all are working without any issues to report.

Capital Project Initiatives

We submitted 42 new locations to the consultant with the goal to get the conceptual design going and are making progress on receiving a couple more applications for the program. Depending on the COVID outbreak results from December 2020 we are looking forward to the individual site inspections by the engineer in February 2021 and proceed with installations this summer to complete the 3rd phase of this project.

Municipal Administration Building

We are actively engaged in the project and are supporting all involved parties with material selection, site clarifications, financial project claims and other upcoming questions. Garian Construction is the lead contractor, and they are managing the project well to stay on schedule to move into the new building by June 2021. We appreciate staff's engagement during the project with all kinds of material and color selection questions.

The outside of the building will be fully completed within the next week or two and the contractor will focus entirely on the inside of the building. They are working on finishing the drywall work over the next few days and start painting soon after. Tiles for floors and walls should start within the next week or two. The solar panels are expected to be installed by end of next week and power should be hooked up to the building as well. Final touch ups on the landscaping and parking areas will be performed in the Spring. All is on schedule for us to move into the building by end of May or early June.

Tusket New Road Development

The new road in Tusket is substantially completed and the final touch will be done in the spring 2021. It is now known as Rue JE Hatfield Court. NS Power is working on the installation of the power lines and things are starting to come together.

The stormwater pond was successfully installed and proved to be working well. Further planting improvements will be performed by our own staff next year.

Policy and By-Law Working Group

We are further developing our SOT schedule with the support of a legal team and hope to have provincial concerns addressed and our By-Laws registered for the use of Summary Offence Tickets. This process will most likely require a series of By-Law changes and we will present the affected By-Laws in the coming months. This could help us with the enforcement of several by-laws and increase our options on how to respond to certain situations in a more effective way.

We also successfully updated Overtime policy to better assist staff with clarification on this topic. Any questions on this policy can be directed to the Director of Public Works (Hans).

The municipal clerk is working on several staff policies regarding code of conduct, progressive discipline and other guiding rules to better guide and protect staff and the organization in case of any questions or concerns.

Planning Department / GIS Work

Alix is actively working on the following projects and initiatives:

- Charlene and I met online on Jan 8 with a representative of the Eelgrass Task Force regarding data sharing.

- Charlene and I met online with Gabarus aquaculture group and other stakeholders on Jan 7.
- Charlene and I met online with Merinov on Jan 8 regarding potential oyster and sugar kelp research projects.
- Updated zoning information (that had changes through the 2020 LUB review) in MapSearch for John Sullivan.
- Charlene and I met online with Stacey Frame on Jan 11 regarding a potential application to the Atlantic Fisheries Fund for research projects.
- Charlene and I met online with Coastal Action on Jan 18 regarding their ghost gear program and rope recycling pilot project.
- Newsletter committee meeting on Jan 19.
- Send information/maps to the Dalhousie engineering team working on drought issues for MoDA.
- Sent civic address and postal code data to Canada Post for their work on creating better postal code boundaries.
- Created assessment increase datasheet for Alain for Kings Lake and Pure Nature Drive.
- Produced a list of new AANs and their associated Fire District area rates for Sheila.
- Met with Spiri Robotics on Jan 27 regarding working together on eelgrass mapping (in relation to the Aquaculture Development Area [ADA]).
- Charlene and I met with Jim Conrad on Jan 30 to get information on how to engage with lobster fisherman for the ADA.

The new Land Use By-Law was adopted by council in July of 2020 and went into effect (effective date) November 2020. MODA has engage WSP to handle all our planning issues on a contract basis for the immediate future. The adoption of the new LUB is the trigger for mapping updates and renaming of existing development zones, which is being handled by Alix.

Animal Control

SPCA is handling all of our domestic animal complaints and they had a few calls without major issues. We received a complaint about two dogs and handed the case over to our local SPCA office. With the loss of the Yarmouth Dispatch center, we also lost the service for dog control issues. The SPCA can be directly reached under 902-307-0475 in case of any dog issues.

No other animal complaints were filed.

Garbage Handling

We successfully renewed our Solid Waste Collection contract and operation continues without major changes. We are working with Waste Check on a few garbage complaints and optimized the Fall and Spring cleanup routes with the Pickup contractor.

After recent discussion with the current contractor, we started to receive all rejection notifications and are keeping track of residents that are not properly disposing their waste. Waste Check and the Collection contractor have increased their activities in

checking green bins for plastics due to severe issues at the composting facility. This will avoid cost increases due to fines.

All other collection activities are running as per schedule and weather permitted delays are being handled on time.

Building Inspection Report Software

At present all software used in the Public Works and Inspection office is up to date and working well. In the winter months of 2021 software functions will be reviewed and updated for the building permit, fire inspection and development permit functions. Changes to applicable Nova Scotia Codes make these software changes necessary.

Sub-Division Activity

To date in 2021, we only have one subdivision file on the go.

Building Inspection Report

To date In the 2021 building season, staff have issued 9 Building Permits. Staff has also issued 11 development permits. Note: a Demolition Permit is tallied under the Building Permit numbers and the adoption of the new LUB require all development within the municipality to start with a Development Permit. We have provided background information for several possible rezoning inquires. 0 letters for Zoning Confirmations have also been issued.

Fire Inspections

The Deputy Fire Marshal has accepted my appointment as the Fire Inspector for the Municipality of Argyle. Dave Andrews will continue to mentor me as I transition into this new position. There are 135 open files with 95% of the occupancies overdue for an inspection.

Unsightly or Dangerous

The legal actions regarding the Noise Complaint are still ongoing and referred by the judge till mid March.

We are also working on a series of new garbage related complaints and are still trying to resolve ongoing issues. We keep getting new complaints and are assessing the situation over the next few days and are waiting to hear back from a few residents. Next steps will be taken if we don't hear from them in time. We are focusing on the severe situations first and then handling the remaining situations on a case by case basis.

We are also trying to identify areas of training and PPE that would be needed to improve our operations and procedures to make it safer for staff and residents.

Maintenance

Staff has been busy with finishing up last minute summer projects. Equipment maintenance has been ongoing in preparation for next season. All projects are looking very good and maintenance is being done at a high level of excellence. All maintenance staff has taken on the project of doing most of the inside work on the storage building at the new Administration building to save on cost. This project is progressing well and should be done before it is time to move.

Industrial Park

We continue to receive requests from interested buyers for the remaining lots. It appears that the medicinal processing plant will proceed, and we are available to support the owner with the sewer connection requirements. The Tusket Falls Brewery is reviewing their chances on re-zoning their lot and are looking into a possible food serving use. We still have 2 lots available for sale.

Staff

Tara is waiting to hear back on her Fire Inspector exam, and we hope she will become a certified Inspector for our Community soon.

We are still working through the internal responsibility changes and the teams are adjusting well to the change.

Software

At present all software used in the Public Works and Inspection office is up to date and working well. In the winter months of 2021 software functions will be reviewed and updated for the building permit, fire inspection and development permit functions. Changes to applicable Nova Scotia Codes make these software changes necessary.

Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee

The Municipality Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee had paused shortly with the outbreak of the pandemic but resumed very quickly after and released a series of work safe procedures and guidelines to ensure the safety of all staff. We are meeting on a monthly basis and renewed our program as required on an annual basis. We are welcoming a new member to the team and Alix d'Entremont joined the Committee as a new staff representative. We are glad to have him on the team and are looking forward to his engagement in this important role.

Staff is moving along good with the establishment of certain work safe procedures that are needed for a variety of special tasks and that are not covered by national standards. We are also making immediate changes and improvements to tasks that create a high risk or have resulted in injuries.

Any safety related issues should be reported immediately to your supervisor or committee member!

Miscellaneous

1. Comeau's Hill Rd Wharf - the window of opportunity has closed on this project until spring 2021. Aberdeen Paving Ltd and they have assured us the quoted price will stand for next spring.
2. We are also looking into the opportunity to introduce alternative heating systems to the community with the goal to offer more affordable heating options in a more economic viable and environmentally friendly way. We are working with Torchlight Bioresources to explore the option of pellet heating and how it could create a positive change to the region and open potential doors for the local forestry sector. We are in the Chicken and Egg situation and are trying to review ways to foster biomass heating solutions.

Community Development Officer Report-Charlene LeBlanc

Jan 8, 2020 – Feb 4, 2021

- Attended a Farmworks meeting and shared the info with those eligible to apply.
- Attended a CDENE hosted workshop "Go, Grow & Succeed Internationally"
- Attended numerous meetings related to the ADA (Aquaculture Development Area), which is nearing completion
- I took a Seaweed Intensive Course from the Maine Seaweed Institute to better prepare the ADA .
- Attended the AANS (Aquaculture Assoc of NS) priority setting session
- Created an Energy Projects/Rebates document for MODAs use
- Working with industry and Merinov re: two potential R & D projects that could benefit the ADA
- On a local committee hoping to host a job fair in May
- Doing in person stakeholder engagements with fishers re: ADA
- Contacted U Ste Anne on a potential "Clean Water Project".
- Assisted businesses with Canada jobs funding applications
- Assisted a business with the Accessibility grant
- Assisted an AFF client with his claim forms.
- Alix & I planning to meet Spiri Robotics re: drone use for eel grass and water sampling. If MODA must contribute, it will likely be in-kind.
- Met with Coastal Action and plan to guide them to some gear that needs to be retrieved. They have placed rope bins in MODA
- Attended meetings with neighbouring EDO's and WREN

Court House & Archives – HDO & Archivist Report - Judy Frotten

Grant applications – We have submitted grant applications to secure funding for summer students, through federal and provincial funding streams. In light of ongoing pandemic, we are seeking @3 positions this year.

PADP Project – Peter Crowell’s work on the specially funded PADP project “Municipality of Argyle 2000-2010 records processing project” is going well and is expected to wrap up by end of the month. Kaitlin continues to oversee the project. She has a training session on Feb. 16 with the CNSA Advisor on uploading the project description to the province’s database “MemoryNS.”

Staffing changes – As per CAO’s email announcement on Jan. 22nd, Municipal Archivist, Kaitlin Wood, has advised she will be leaving at the end of April. With much consideration, and with the CAO’s support, we have opted to change the position to Municipal Research Assistant, with the intent of also creating a Contract Municipal Archivist position. The Job Poster for the Municipal Research Assistant position was posted on MODA’s FB and website on January 27 and shared on ATCHA’s social media. We also shared it with listserv for South West NS Curator’s group, and Council of Nova Scotia Archives’ listserv, and Association of Nova Scotia Museums (ANSM) has shared it in their province-wide publication “The Beacon.” Job competition deadline is Feb. 19th. Applications will be shortlisted, and an interview team will conduct the interviews the following week, with the intent to hire in early March, to maximize the time the new employee is able to spend with Kaitlin. Response has been very positive and we expect to have strong candidates.

Professional Development – Judy is participating in a 3-session virtual museum workshop “How to Be An Ally” on Jan. 28, Feb.4 and Feb.11. Presenter is Jeff Ward, General Manager of Membertou Heritage Park Indigenous Cultural Centre at Membertou First Nation.

Budget time – Judy is working on Draft Budget 2021-2022 for the Court House. She also met with Louis Boudreau to identify future work needed at the Court House and has started to contact companies for quotes.

Interview – Judy and Kaitlin were interviewed by Norbert LeBlanc of “Le Courrier” and Ryan Robicheau of CDÉNE to talk about how we managed during the first and second wave of the pandemic, as part of a series they are doing of many local businesses. It will be published in the online version of the “Courrier” in the near future.

JOHSC / Pandemic Planning Committee – Judy attended JOHSC meeting on Jan. 12th and next one is scheduled for Feb. 10th. She also attended Pandemic Planning meeting on Jan. 13th.

Wellness Committee – Kaitlin attended the meeting on Jan. 20th.

ANSM – Judy and Kaitlin participated in ANSM’s virtual “Deep Dive” on “How to use your Evaluation” on Jan. 14th. This series is offered by Association of NS Museums (ANSM) to assist participating museums with preparation for Museum Evaluation Program (MEP) which will take place in 2021. The next is schedule in Feb.

AMHGS / Strategic Plan – Judy and Kaitlin continue to assist the Historical Society (AMHGS) with the development of a new Strategic Plan. The working committee met on Jan. 20th and Feb. 2nd and will meet again next week. Next AMHGS Board meeting is Feb. 17th.

The Argus – We have started the process for the spring 2021 issue of The Argus.

Research requests – Just a note that our Volunteer Researcher who normally takes care of many of the genealogical inquiries that we receive by email has been unable to do this for a while due to health reasons. This has resulted in increased research requests for us to process, keeping Kaitlin quite busy.

Tusket River Project – This project has been put on the back burner temporarily as we shift our focus to more pressing things. We intend on resuming work on it as soon as we are able.

Director of Programming and Active Living -Ginette d’Entremont

Parc des Jeunes

In November I reported that I had applied for funding through the Community Health Board for the renovations project to the Parc des Jeunes playground, to make this playground accessible to all. I am pleased to announce that we were successful in receiving \$4789.61. I will also be applying through Communities, Culture and Heritage for more funding for this project in April when the funding sources open. We also received an accessibility audit from Dalhousie University on this project to assist us with the work.

Active Communities Fund

The final stages of the signage project will be completed next week. We have received permission from NS Power to put the bike signs for the Lake Vaughan loop in the telephone poles.

After the Bell

I have resumed the After the Bell program for the winter months going every other Friday until early March.

Meetings

January 12, 22, 27, & Feb 3 – 55+ Senior Games meeting with YASTA

January 14 – South Shore Connect committee

January 19 – CEC École Belleville

January 21 – Municipality of Argyle Accessibility Committee

January 26 – YSMRA

February 2 – Glenwood Park project subcommittee meeting

Professional development

Took part in a webinar through Hike NS on snowshoeing. It was a good refresher for when we lead events using the snowshoes.

I will be taking training through Zoom for the South Shore Connect website so that I will be able to keep the documents up to date.

Winter activities/events

A 4-week Ladies Nordic Walking winter series begins on Wednesday February 3rd and ends of February 24th, from 6-7pm at the PEB track. This activity is free to participants.

We have a Ladies Nature Day Hike planned for Saturday February 20th. This 9 km guided hike will be at Soloman Lake in Kemptville. The cost of the activity is \$45 per person and includes lunch and warm drinks. Registration is required for this event.

Senior Safety Coordinator-Peggy Boudreau

December 2020 and January 2021

- December was a busy month had various meetings.
- Part of an exercise with Nakile to practice their emergency plan.
- Delivered gifts such as food, cards etc to many clients ,nursing homes and Boarding homes in the municipality.
- Worked with different groups to help make connections of needs in our community.
- Working from home and not being able to do visits as much as needed did create some issues but we worked through it.
- No new clients , visits were minimal. RCMP referrals and Adult protection were also minimal.
- High risk clients continue to climb. Working closely with Mental health and outpatient social workers at the Yarmouth Hospital. Covid has definitely increased levels of mental health for many.

January

- January has been one of many challenges
- New clients are up 5 new clients this month. RCMP referrals are also up.
- Domestic issues , mental health and home supports has been on our case load and have increased in this month.
- Still limiting home visits to a minimum due to covid.
- Working from home and connecting with resources as much as possible.
- Organizing meetings with different agencies to connect for supports. For example Police advisory home care, continue care and housing are some of the main ones.