



Village of Baddeck

492 Chebucto Street
Unit 5, P.O. Box 63
Baddeck, Nova Scotia B0E 1B0

Monthly Village Commission Meeting

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

Village of Baddeck Office 492 Chebucto St, Baddeck.

Participants: Jennifer MacDonald (Chair), Bonnie Whyte, Denise Roberts, Dan McNeil, Gary Crowder, Roman Braun-Huettner (VM)

Online:

Regrets:

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM by Com. MacDonald.

Com. MacDonald reads the land acknowledgment to the Mi'kmaq People.

1. Approval of/Additions to the Agenda

- a. Agenda was distributed on January 24, 2025.
- b. Agenda was approved as distributed.

2. Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

- a. No conflicts of interest

3. Approval of the Minutes from previous regular meeting: January 22, 2025

- a. Minutes from the regular meeting in January were distributed on February 7, 2025.
- b. Corrections were made regarding misspellings and the Commissioners' positions on the Waterfront Committee. No other errors, omissions, or additions were noted. The minutes were approved as amended.

4. BABTA - Community Bathrooms

- a. There was a discussion of continuing the agreement under similar terms, with the village confirming their ability to absorb the costs.
- b. The commission discussed the need to finalize details by March and will gather community feedback before making a decision.
- c. There was a suggestion to set up a meeting with the county to bring all parties to the table for further discussion on the community bathrooms and related concerns.
- d. There were discussions on tracking water usage at the public bathrooms using smart meters. It was noted that estimating the number of flushes could provide rough figures on usage.



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- e. *It was emphasized that in order to comply with the water utility regulations, the account name for the public bathroom facility needs to be changed to reflect the property owner. This will be addressed before the next March meeting.*
- f. *The Commission will discuss the issue further at the February 19th meeting and will make a decision by the March meeting, allowing time for any necessary changes and further input from the community.*

5. Transfer of Fire Department Building Ownership

- a. *The Fire Department has maintained the building since 1972, but ownership has been unclear.*
- b. *A May 2023 motion was moved to include a right of first refusal (ROFR). However, the 55-month duration and involvement of multiple parties have caused complications. Legal advice is being sought.*
- c. *The Fire Department expressed concerns about the long ROFR period and its impact on their future plans for the property.*
- d. *The Commission recognized the intent behind transferring ownership, to give the Fire Department more control, as they've maintained the property independently.*
- e. *A suggestion was made for the Commission, Fire Department, and municipality to work together on a fair agreement. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.*

6. Upcoming Community Meeting

- a. *The community meeting is scheduled for February 19th at the Masonic Hall at 6 PM. It's informational, no decisions or motions will be made at the meeting.*
- b. *Information has been shared through various channels including social media and direct mail.*
- c. *Topics for discussion: Budgetary items, snow plowing, garbage collection on Main St., utilities (wastewater and water treatment), and a review of the strategic plan.*
- d. *The meeting aims to gather feedback from residents, commercial users, tourism operators, and other stakeholders.*

7. Policies to Discuss

- a. **Anti-Racism and Equity Policy:** *The draft of the policy is not yet complete and will be postponed to the next meeting. This policy must be finalized by April 1st, so it is important to have it ready by the March meeting.*
- b. **Social Media Policy:** *The draft policy was presented and discussed.*
 - *The policy states that social media will be used for communication, with no staff dedicated to monitoring the site.*
 - *Comments will be disabled on posts due to limited staff.*
 - *The Village Manager is authorized to post urgent information (e.g., water line breaks) without prior Commission approval.*



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- *Non-urgent posts will be reviewed by the Commission to ensure they reflect the spirit of discussions and decisions made by the Commission.*
- *The Village Manager has the discretion to share posts on social media based on the municipality's mutual interests, as they are important to the community. However, there is no obligation to post these due to limited resources.*
- *Any subcontractors managing social media on behalf of the village must adhere to the social media policy.*
- *The policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it stays up to date.*
- *Hard copies of all policies are available at the office, and some will be published online.*

Commissioner Whyte moved a motion to approve the Social Media Policy. Seconded by Commissioner Roberts. All in favor – motion carried.

8. License of Occupation from Parks Canada:

- The Village is considering an agreement for property near the museum driveway. Parks Canada will remove the unsafe structure at their cost. The Village will become the occupier, with a yearly rent of \$250. The property will be insured under the Village's policy, and the Village will report to Parks Canada annually.*
- Commissioner Whyte declared a potential conflict of interest due to a family connection with Parks Canada and recused herself from the decision.*
- TIR previously agreed to maintain the armor stone in front of the property, which is crucial for road and bridge protection.*
- Discussions about rebuilding the boardwalk in the future and raising funds for the project in 5-10 years were raised.*
- The Commission decided not to pursue the agreement at this time, awaiting the completion of armor stone and boardwalk removal before making further decisions. No formal motion will be made until clarity is obtained.*

9. Snow Plowing Meeting Request

- The Victoria County Municipality CAO has requested a meeting with the village to discuss snow plowing services, with 2 Commissioners, 2 counselors, and 2 municipal staff members involved.*
- Commissioners Crowder and Whyte, along with Village Manager and Monica MacLean, are assigned to coordinate the discussion.*
- The public works team has tracked approximately \$22,000 in snow plowing costs this season, with an average of 25 hours per week spent, leading to increased overtime.*



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- d. *The Commission supports the meeting to discuss snow plowing and explore solutions for safety and costs.*
- e. *A package with sidewalk ownership, estimates, and the RFP request from June, along with relevant correspondence, is available in the shared drive.*
- f. *The goal is to create a working group to address snow plowing and broader issues between the Municipality and the Village.*
- g. *The village will not share costs for a facilitator; this will be an accounting decision for the Municipality if they choose to hire one.*

10. Reports

a. PW Report

- i. *Included in VM Report.*

b. Accessibility Advisory Committee

- i. *The first meeting of 2025 was held on January 28th. The village's **Accessibility Plan** was approved and posted online.*
- ii. *The committee discussed future improvements, focusing on village properties and future collaboration with **Victoria County** on accessibility plans.*
- iii. *The committee's structure requires that 50% of its members self-identify as having a disability. The addition of **Cathy Cooper** and **Gloria MacAskill** will help meet this requirement.*

Commissioner McNeil moved a motion to approve the Cathy Cooper and Gloria MacAskill as a new committee members. Seconded by Commissioner Roberts. All in favor – motion carried

c. VM Report

- i. *Presented by Roman Braun-Huettner.*
- ii. *Concerns were raised about the fairness of the village tax system, especially regarding residents outside the village using water and wastewater services without paying the same tax rate. Expansion of village boundaries was discussed but would require public meetings.*
- iii. *There is ongoing communication with PVSC and Victoria County to address issues with the village property coding system on the PVSC file, to potentially adopt a system for the Village.*
- iv. *The team is planning to have everything ready for tax bill preparation by June or July, with the latest expected distribution in August.*
- v. *Village lawyer is drafting a letter to PVSC to apply for tax-exempt status for utility properties.*
- vi. *The Village Commission is supporting the Lions Club's application for an accessibility grant for Kidston Island and the Villages application for the accessibility plaza at the new boardwalk entrance.*



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- vii. *The water leak on Grant Street has been fixed*
- viii. *Public works team is undergoing training in wastewater treatment.*
- ix. *The village secured \$220,000 through the MCGP grant for generators at the treatment plants. The funds may be reallocated to install generators at the wells due to power outage risks.*
- x. *The team is awaiting a response from TIR about changing the status of Abandoned Road to a maintained road to improve access to the wells.*

Commissioner McNeil moved a motion to support Lions club Grant application for accessibility grant. Seconded by Commissioner Crowder. All in favor – motion carried

d. Financial reports

- i. *Reconciled statements and bank statements were shared with the Commission.*
- ii. *The accounts receivable at the end of January were \$370,000, which is a \$10,000 increase from December. The majority of this is due to the issuance of water bills. The team has collected \$90,000 and issued \$110,000.*
- iii. *Monthly financial statements have been added for review, showing a surplus. Depreciation needs to be added to QBO and will adjust this figure.*
- iv. *There was a review of the outstanding water bills, with most customers paying regularly and a few on payment plans.*

e. Waterfront Baddeck Committee

- i. *Boardwalk Update: A significant step forward was made for the boardwalk project. The total funding of **\$2.2 million** is expected to be finalized within the next week.*
- ii. *The committee is getting closer to the point where the tender document for the boardwalk's structural work can be sent out k..*
- iii. *A section of the street near the boardwalk may need to be closed to facilitate the project, particularly for water line installation and culvert work. This needs **TIR's approval**.*
- iv. *The team is still waiting on approval from **DNR** for one last permit. Once received, construction should begin in the spring or summer.*
- v. ***Adam Pemberton** is now responsible for working on a new operations manual and a fire safety plan. He will collaborate with the team to finalize these plans by the summer season.*
- vi. ***Lions Club** reached out regarding a **proposed school trip** from **Arichat** to **Kidston Island** in June, with **Grade 9 and 10 students** interested in visiting. However, since the June timing is not feasible, we will propose alternative dates after July 1st or in September.*



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- vii. *The approval process for the waterline replacement and other infrastructure projects was discussed. A decision is expected at the next meeting, targeting approval for the project. The team will reach out to UARB to understand the approval process and gather the necessary cost estimates and financing options for the projects.*

Commissioner Whyte moved a motion to empower the Waterfront Baddeck Committee and the Village Manager to send out the tender document for the Boardwalk Project. Seconded by Commissioner Crowder. All in favor – motion carried

f. Audit Committee:

- i. *The next meeting will be on February 26, 2025.*

g. Wharf Manager

- i. *No Report*

Motion to accept all reports as presented, moved by Com. McNeil, and seconded by Com. Roberts – All in favour – motion carried

11. Correspondence

- i. *A request for a \$5,000 contribution from the fire department, which hasn't been provided in the last three years, was noted and will be considered in the next fiscal year's budget.*
- ii. *A letter from Victoria County's CEO confirmed \$250,000, including \$189,000 from CCBF and \$65,000 from the municipality's budget. The \$65,000 will be treated as a municipal contribution, not CCBF funding. The village is deciding whether to accept the check under these terms. CCBF funds, allocated based on population, can only be used for specific projects like wastewater and water infrastructure. The village has not cashed the check yet, pending clarification on the fund's designation. The village plans to use the funds for eligible CCBF projects as intended. Victoria County is no longer allocating CCBF funding for the village. The village is comfortable with cashing the check for the municipal contribution but agrees to continue using the funds for eligible CCBF projects, ensuring it aligns with the intended purpose.*

Motion to ensure the funds received from Victoria County are used for projects eligible for CCBF funding and will be put in a separate account, moved by Com. McNeil, and seconded by Com. Whyte – All in favour – motion carried



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- iii. *The village received a letter from their landlord regarding their rental agreement. It was decided to discuss this matter in the next meeting due to time constraints.*

Meeting adjourned at 6:16 by Com. MacDonald, next meeting is March 12, 2025

The council moved into an in-camera session.

The in-camera session was adjourned at 6:36.



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Signatures:

Minutes approved

Com. Jennifer MacDonald

Date

Minutes approved

MBW

Com. Bonnie Whyte

March 12, 2025

Date

Minutes approved

Com. Denise Roberts

Date

Minutes approved

Com. Daniel McNeil

Date

Minutes approved

Gary Crowder

Com. Gary Crowder

March 12, 2025

Date

Certified by

B-H

March 12-2025

Roman Braun-Huettner (Village Manager)

Date