

MINUTES

Regular Meeting of Council
Wednesday, April 7, 2021 @ 4:00 pm
Council Chambers

Present:

P. Farwell	Mayor
T. Pollett	Deputy Mayor
G. Brown	Councillor
O. Fudge	Councillor
P. Woodford	Councillor

Advisory and Resource:

D. Chafe	CAO
B. Hefford	Town Clerk
K. Hiscock	Director of Finance (A)
B. Freeborn	Director of Recreation & Community Services
T. Barron	Director of Municipal Works
H. Lowe	Fire Chief
R. Locke	Director of Development
J. Blackwood	Director of Engineering
W. Maree	Communications Coordinator (A)
K. Bull	Deputy Municipal Clerk

Regrets:

B. Dove	Councillor
R. Anstey	Councillor

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Meeting was called to order at 4:00pm.

2. VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

None

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion #21-038

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Fudge and seconded by Councillor Woodford that the Agenda for the Regular Meeting of Council on April 7, 2021 be adopted.

In Favour: 5 Opposing: 0

Decision: Motion carried.

4. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

Motion #21-039

Regular Minutes for Approval

Moved by Councillor Brown and seconded by Deputy Mayor Pollett that the Minutes from the Regular Meeting of Council on March 17, 2021 be adopted as presented.

In Favour: 5 Opposing: 0

Decision: Motion carried.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

None.

6. REPORTS – STANDING COMMITTEES:

A. Recreation & Community Services:

The Recreation & Community Services report was presented by Councillor Fudge.

The Recreation & Community Services meeting was held on March 30, 2021. The meeting was chaired by O. Fudge, Councillor. Other members present included: T. Pollett, Deputy Mayor; G. Brown, Councillor; P. Woodford, Councillor; B. Freeborn, Director of Recreation & Community Services (A); B. Hefford, Town Clerk; S. Francis, Administrative Coordinator.

The following items were discussed:

Central NL Bike Committee Re Mountain Bike Trail

At the previous meeting, Council reviewed a request from the Central Newfoundland Biking Association seeking permission to start a trail network at the site of the former ski hill, which borders Gander Lake. Council asked if the work could be done under previously issued provincial approvals. Management noted that previous permits were issued more than 20 years ago and recommended that Council seek approval for this project by submitting an application to the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Municipalities, Water Resources Division.

The Director suggested that before the provincial application is submitted, the Central NL Bike Committee resubmit their development application to the Engineering Department for approval and both the mountain bike trails and the approved walking trails are noted on a map so there is no confusion or duplication of trails.

Once the development application is approved, the Department will submit the application to the Water Resources Division.

Councillor Woodford asked that engineering to evaluate all options with water resources to identify efficient options for moving this project forward.

Shipshape Skate Sharpening & Repair Contract Renewal

The owner of Shipshape Skate Sharpening & Repair wrote asking for an extension to his contract for 2021-2022 since it was not feasible for him to operate this past ice season due to the restrictions from COVID-19. The Director advised that there were no problems during his first season, 2019-2020, and the conditions of the contract were met. The Director is recommending extending the contract for another year, with a review at the end of next season. The Committee agreed with renewing the contract for another season under the same terms and conditions.

Motion #21-040

Shipshape Skate Sharpening & Repair Contract Renewal

Moved by Councillor Fudge and seconded by Deputy Mayor Pollett that the contract for Shipshape Skate Sharpening & Repair be extended until April 30, 2022.

In Favour: 5 Opposing: 0

Decision: Motion carried.

Ball Hockey Expression of Interest

There were no expressions of interest received to run a summer ball hockey camp at the Steele Community Centre. This was likely due to the COVID-19 provincial health restrictions and the numbers allowed. The Director is hoping that if the restriction on numbers is increased over the next couple of months, a group or individual will come forward with a proposal.

Variance Report 2020

The Department's variance report for the year ending December 31, 2020 was reviewed. The Director noted that there was an overall savings of \$330,342. Some of these variances were attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic and not being able to host any events such as the Festival of Flight. Other variances were due to positions not filled, reduction in rates for electricity and oil, and Trailway projects which were not completed.

The Committee was pleased with the overall savings and forwards to the Finance Committee for their review and consideration.

Farmer's Market

The Special Events Coordinator briefed the Committee on a request for the Town of Gander to host a Farmer's Market. The Coordinator has done some research and spoken to a couple of people who are well versed in hosting this type of event and believes that we need to start the process by contacting farmers in our region to see if they would attend an event like this; and if so, what frequency and times would they suggest.

The Committee thought that hosting a Farmers Market was an excellent idea and could lead to other opportunities; however, they agreed that we should put a proper plan in place first. They would like the Special Events Coordinator and the Economic Development Department to contact farmers in our region, speak to the organizers of successful markets in Clarendville and St. John's to see how they organize their market. Once this is complete, a committee will be put together of farmers, crafters, and residents who have expressed interest in assisting with the market.

The Committee would also like the event staff to organize a couple of markets over the summer/fall to see how they work out and if the farmers have an interest in this type of event.

The Mayor noted that the term Farmer's Market is not literal or exclusive to Farmers. He suggested that the targeted vendors be expanded to include would include crafters, artisans, etc.

Festival of Flight

The Chairperson asked if the Department has begun planning for the Festival of Flight and if the events are being planned virtual or in-person.

The Special Events Coordinator and Director advised that we are planning for both virtual and in-person events, however, it is hard to know at this point what types of events and numbers will be allowed. They are prepared to adjust accordingly as long as the restrictions are lifted in time for planning purposes.

Age Friendly Community Survey

In 2019, Council passed a motion to become an Age Friendly Community. In an age-friendly community, the policies, services, and structures related to the physical and social environment are designed to help seniors "age actively". In other words, the community is set up to help seniors live safely, enjoy good health, and stay involved. Council's first step in this process was establishing a Seniors Advisory Committee to provide information and advice to Council on matters related to seniors. This Committee has been working on the next phase, which is to assess the community's age-friendliness by developing an action plan and enabling our community and/or region to decide what changes they want to make and how. A comprehensive assessment will show what the community is already doing well and help identify short and long-term goals and objectives.

A survey is now available for residents to provide their feedback on matters such as transportation, housing, health services, communication & information, and respect & social inclusion. If needed, after the survey is complete, the Department will be forming some focus groups to explore issues further. The link to the survey can be found on the Recreation & Community Services and Town of Gander Facebook pages and the Town of Gander website. Anyone who does not have access to social media, can contact the Department at 651-5927 for a paper copy or they can take the survey at the office on an iPad. Staff will also be available to help anyone that needs assistance.

2022 NL Winter Games Update

The Deputy Mayor, Chair of the games, provided the Committee with an update on the status of the winter games. The Host Committee is almost complete, and the interviews have taken place for the Games Manager. However, the town has not received any funding from the provincial government, and until that money is received, the Games Manager is unable to start, and detailed planning cannot begin. The Committee is hoping to receive some positive news from the provincial government within the coming weeks so they can move ahead with planning since the games are less than a year away.

Council is concerned that the uncertainty is becoming problematic in ensuring ample time is allocated for preparations and planning. Sport NL has been engaged. The Mayor suggested we approach the Minister to seek input on the ability to proceed under the uncertainty of Covid.

B. Development and Tourism Committee:

The Development and Tourism Committee report was presented by Deputy Mayor Pollett.

The Development and Tourism Committee meeting was held on March 30, 2021. The meeting was chaired by O. Fudge, Councillor. Other members present included: P. Farwell, Mayor; T. Pollett, Deputy Mayor (via MS Teams); G. Brown, Councillor; R. Locke, Development Director; B. Hefford, Town Clerk.

The following items were discussed:

Street Naming Policy - Management Recommendation

The Committee reviewed a recommendation from management not to amend the current Street Naming Policy. Management felt that naming streets exclusively after aviators is an embedded part of Gander's aviation culture and marketable from a tourism perspective and should continue in its current version. Should Council proceed with broadening street name eligibility, they should only do so with very specific limits incorporated into the policy.

After discussion and consideration, the Committee feels that the policy should be amended to recognize individuals who are not aviators but have made a significant contribution to our rich aviation history, however, eligibility criteria should remain specific to aviation and recognize the following:

- First responders
- Innovators
- Persons who performed heroic acts
- Persons who have had long standing careers in the aviation industry and have received accolades for their outstanding accomplishments.

The Committee would like to emphasize that the purpose of any such changes is not to detract from our aviation history but to become more inclusive in recognizing significant aviation- related contributions.

The Committee requested that this item be placed on the next management meeting agenda for discussion and feedback.

HBB Application-27 Payette Street

The Committee reviewed an application from the resident of 27 Payette Street to operate a home-based one-chair, one-customer hair salon.

The advertising and discretionary use notices were posted with no formal objections received and it meets all of the Town of Gander’s Development Regulations.

Motion #21-041

HBB Application – 27 Payette Street

Moved by Deputy Mayor Pollett and seconded by Councillor Brown that Hair at Ripley’s be permitted to operate a home-based one-chair, one customer hair salon from 27 Payette Street.

In Favour: 5 Opposing: 0

Decision: Motion carried.

HBB Application-20 Grieve Crescent

The Committee reviewed an application from the resident of 20 Grieve Crescent to operate a home-based one-chair, one-customer hair salon.

The advertising and discretionary use notices were posted with no formal objections received and it meets all of the Town of Gander’s Development Regulations.

Motion #21-042

HBB Application – 20 Grieve Crescent

Moved by Deputy Mayor Pollett and seconded by Councillor Brown that Hairitage Beauty Salon be permitted to operate a home-based one-chair, one-customer hair salon from 20 Grieve Crescent.

In Favour: 5 Opposing: 0

Decision: Motion carried.

The Committee would like to note that all home-based businesses must abide by the provincial and federal COVID-19 rules and regulations.

Passenger airline service returning to Gander International Airport

The Committee would like to notify the residents of Gander and Central Newfoundland that passenger airline service is returning to Gander International Airport. Recent announcements by West Jet and Sunwing were welcome news for our devastated local aviation sector.

The Committee would like to acknowledge the commitment and patronage shown by the commercial airline operators that have chosen to return to the central Newfoundland market.

In the spirit of shop local, the Town of Gander would encourage the residents, business, and regional partners to make deliberate and conscious decisions to Fly Gander. As we emerge from this challenging time, people will begin to resume travel, and Gander International Airport Authority’s position as essential and critical regional infrastructure will be a cornerstone of the rebuild strategy.

West Jet will be offering seasonal daily service from Gander to Halifax from June 29th to October 30th, 2021.

Sunwing will be offering direct flights (Tuesdays & Fridays) from June 15th to August 31st, 2021.

Although Air Canada has not publicly announced their return to Gander, they are now accepting online bookings for a daily Gander-Halifax service which is slated to start June 1st, 2021.

The Mayor stated concern about the ambiguity in Air Canada’s position. As they reduced service in Gander, while increasing routes in Deer Lake. It appears to be a strategy to condition residents of Central NL to travel to Deer Lake or St. John’s. The Town of Gander is not satisfied with this strategy and will continue to insist that any Federal Package be conditional on reinstatement of Gander’s Routes.

He noted that there was a recent meeting held with Air Canada, which included the following Stakeholders:

- Minister of Tourism
- Destination Central
- Chamber of Commerce
- GiAA
- Zita Cobb
- MP Scott Simms

Commercial Truck Route

The Committee discussed the proposed commercial truck route and potential implications this may have on the business community. The Committee would like to note that the Gander and Area Chamber of Commerce has been asked to gather feedback from their membership. This will be considered before final adoption.

Variance report ending December 31, 2020

The quarterly variance report was reviewed by the Committee. The report reflects a significant budget variance in the form of savings totaling \$69,259. These savings can be primarily attributed to reduced wages due to a staffing shortage and pandemic-related savings in travel and advertising expenses.

Central Health Correspondence

The Committee reviewed correspondence from Central Health promoting a short film titled “Talk to Your Doctor-Stories of the Rural Physician in Newfoundland and Labrador”. This film was produced by two Memorial University medical students. It outlines the challenges of recruiting and retaining medical professionals in rural areas.

The Board of Trustees, Central Health and the Community Advisory Committees are inviting municipal leaders and their staff to work closely on recruitment and retention efforts in both strengthening partnerships and growing opportunities to welcome and support medical professionals and their families.

Currently, Mayor Farwell is a member of the local Community Advisory Committee and departmental staff are continuously engaged with Central Health’s recruitment team. Council and Staff are also involved with an ad-hoc Physician Recruitment and Retention working group who have organized appreciation events and other initiatives aimed at recruiting and retaining medical personnel.

The Committee and staff welcome the opportunity to investigate new partnership opportunities that would strengthen our medical community.

The Mayor sat in the meeting on April 6, 2021. The Medical By-Laws are being presented for amendment. This is a key recommendation coming from the Vaughn report.

C. Public Works & Services Committee:

The Public Works & Services Committee report was presented by Councillor Brown.

The Public Works & Services Committee meeting was held on March 30, 2021. The meeting was chaired by R. Anstey, Councillor. Other members present included: G. Brown, Councillor; P. Woodford, Councillor; T. Barron, Director of Municipal Works and Services; B. Hefford, Town Clerk; G. Whitt, Administrative Support Clerk.

The following items were discussed:

Fall Cleanup Dates

The Director is recommending the Annual Curbside Cleanup be held September 20th – October 1 inclusive. Refuse will be collected on the same day as the scheduled garbage day in the area. Guidelines for the Fall Cleanup will be made available to the residents.

The Committee agrees with the recommended dates for the Annual Curbside Cleanup and recommends updating the 2021 Guidelines for the Annual Curbside Cleanup.

Water Quality Report – Summer 2020

The Director presented the Committee with a summary of the Town of Gander Tap Water Quality Report. The report shows the Town's water quality with reference to the Canadian Drinking Water Guidelines for each parameter.

The most recent report is for Summer 2020, where the Town's Water Quality Index had a rating of Excellent. This index level can only be obtained if all measurements meet recommended guidelines virtually all the time.

This testing is conducted by the Provincial Government and a report of the results may be viewed on the Department of Municipal Affairs and Environment website:

<https://www.mae.gov.nl.ca/waterres/whatsnew/index.html>

Variance Report

The Committee reviewed the Municipal Works and Services variance report for the fourth quarter. The Department was \$255,967 under budget in 2020.

The items noted in the variance report were brought forward from previous quarterly reports. The main contributing factors to the savings included reduced usage of electrical and chemicals at the new Wastewater Treatment Plant, decrease in the cost of fuel, NL Power rebates and staff travel and training. Timing was also a factor with delays in receiving items prior to year-end and is reflected as a cost savings in this report. The 2021 variance reports will show those items as an unbudgeted expense.

Notable Dates

- The next Waste Transfer Station is scheduled for April 10th. Hours of operation are 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. This date may be subject to change depending on the provincial government Covid -19 level in place at that time.

Details on this event can be viewed on the Town of Gander Website at www.gandercanada.com

D. Public Safety & Protective Services Committee:

The Public Safety & Protective Services Committee report was presented by Councillor Fudge.

The Public Safety & Protective Services Committee was held on March 31, 2021. The meeting was chaired by B. Dove, Councillor (Via Teams). Other members present included: P. Farwell, Mayor; T. Pollett, Deputy Mayor; R. Anstey, Councillor; P. Woodford, Councillor; G. Brown, Councillor; H. Lowe, Director of Protective Services/Fire Chief; B. Hefford, Town Clerk; L. Small, Administrative Assistant.

The following items were discussed:

Business Arising from Previous Minutes

During the review of the previous minutes, the Truck Route was discussed at length and the Committee has agreed that there are concerns with the impact on businesses, school, and recreational areas. Before the item is recommended to final reading, ambiguity around the impacts on local business operating outside of the truck route requires clear interpretation. It was also suggested that a vehicle decal system be introduced to distinguish local traffic.

The review is ongoing and the deadline for input on the proposed Truck Route is **April 27, 2021**. Council invites feedback from the business community.

Ogilvie Street- Boardwalk Safety

The Director provided an update on the recent safety issues with snow clearing the boardwalk connecting Ogilvie Street to the main trailway. He is waiting on direction from NL Power on what is permitted around powerline easements; vertical markers may not be permitted to indicate the trail area in question. The Committee is in the process of forming a user group to review this issue.

Taxi Service - Update

The Committee was pleased to learn that Busy Bee Cabs, Gander's only Taxi Company has resumed 24-hour operations.

The ongoing discussion about the effectiveness of the Taxi and Limousine Regulations will be deferred. Council's goal is to ensure an effective and commercially viable taxi service is in the community. The impact of the Regulations in relation to these objectives will be contemplated as COVID restrictions are eased and community life returns to some form of normalcy.

Crosswalk at 55-57 Elizabeth Drive

The Director reported that he received a phone call from a resident who had previously submitted a petition to place a crosswalk near the seniors' housing at 55-57 Elizabeth Drive. There is currently a crosswalk at the intersection of MacKay Street and Elizabeth Drive, but there is no sidewalk between the housing units and the intersection. The Engineering Department has recommended against the crosswalk being placed at 55-57 Elizabeth Drive, as that would be a mid-block crosswalk and not within the Transportation Association of Canada Standards (TAC) for that area. The owners of the housing units have been approached about this issue, but to date no solution has been found.

The Committee would like to see a resolution to this safety issue and the Director will consult the Public Works Department for assistance.

Activity Report

The Director reported that in-house training has resumed at the Fire Hall within Covid-19 guidelines and the Fire Department introduced its low angle rescue equipment to the members on March 24th.

The most recent practical training took place at the fire training grounds on the weekend of March 26-27th and was the first training exercise for the Rookies. Despite the inclement weather on Saturday, the training was a success. The next practical training is scheduled for the weekend of April 16-17th.

Peter Pan Childcare and Gander Elks delivered cookies as a thank you for first responders. Photos of the groups were taken outside as per Covid-19 guidelines.

Municipal Enforcement has a new officer on staff and the schedule has been adjusted accordingly following a week of orientation with Cst. Jenkins.

The Mayor suggested MEO's be introduced at a meeting and also welcomed Kelly Bull, the new Deputy Municipal Clerk.

E. Engineering, Planning & Controls:

The Engineering, Planning & Controls Committee report was presented by Councillor Woodford.

The Engineering, Planning & Controls Committee meeting was held on March 31, 2021. The meeting was chaired by P. Woodford, Councillor. Other members present included: G. Brown, Councillor; R. Anstey, Councillor; J. Blackwood, Director of Engineering; B. Hefford, Town Clerk.

The following items were discussed:

Cooper/Memorial Roundabout

The Committee reviewed correspondence from a representative of Jerry's Car Sales Limited expressing disappointment regarding the decision to delay the construction of the roundabout at the intersection of Memorial Drive and Cooper Boulevard. They indicated that this intersection is continually getting busier with the number of near traffic accidents growing and that delaying the construction of this project will almost certainly increase the capital cost. The Committee agreed with the points made in the correspondence however, only the design portion of the roundabout was approved in the 2021 capital budget and that consideration for the actual construction would have to be discussed in relation to all priorities before Council prior to committing to construction.

The department is continuing to work with the consultant to ensure the design is ready to tender in the event Council decides to move forward with the construction in this season. Part of the scope of work for the design of the roundabout is that the consultant will reach out to adjacent property owners and discuss the design and how it may impact their properties.

Rezoning Request

A request has been made to Council for consideration in changing the zoning of a parcel of land located within the Municipal Planning Area Boundary from Rural to a different zoning designation that would permit the construction of a personal residence.

The parcel of land in question is currently occupied as an agricultural lease and the occupant feels it would be easier to monitor the property and protect the animals occupying that property by taking up permanent residence on that site.

Council is in the final stages of approving the new Municipal Town Plan and as this item was not presented at the public hearings it could not be considered at this time as a change within that plan. To accommodate the request an additional public hearing would be required, and the Committee is not recommending that be undertaken at this time. The Committee is recommending the applicant be notified that they could make application for Council's consideration for the proposed rezoning following the approval of the new Town Plan.

Radon Test Kits

The Town of Gander has been provided the opportunity to become part of a program which supplies test kits and the associated laboratory testing for the presence of Radon in residential homes within our municipality at no charge. The **100 Test Kit Challenge**, targets municipalities across Canada where radon testing has thus far been limited, but where there is a potential for homes to have elevated radon levels. The program has been carried out across the country over the past couple of years and has a proven record of success. Conducted over several months, the program has a phased approach with an educational and media component as well as suggestions on how to distribute the kits across the municipality. Additional test kits can be purchased by the Town at a reduced rate should it be felt necessary to obtain a more complete picture of the issue. The Town will not receive individual test results but will receive a generalized report of the community outcomes.

Enrollment in the **100 Test Kit Challenge** provides residents of Gander with an excellent means to be proactive on this potential health hazard. Costs on behalf of the Town would mostly be the person hours associated with the program awareness and distribution of the test kits. The Committee feels that this program would provide a cost-effective promotion of public health and awareness on the possible presence of Radon in our community and the information collected would better enable us to consider measures to help protect our residents.

The Committee recommends that Council become active participants in the program and would like to encourage any resident that would like to become involved to contact the department at 651-5915 or by emailing info@gandercanada.com.

Variance Report

The Committee reviewed the Departmental Variance report to December 31, 2020. It was noted that there were savings as a result of reduced training due to the pandemic and training that was undertaken was done remotely, greatly reducing the overall cost. There were unanticipated expenses under building maintenance and lower than projected building permit revenues. The overall departmental experiences a deficit of \$19,544.

The Committee was generally pleased with the financial position of the department at this time and forwards it to the Finance Committee for their review and consideration.

F. Finance & Administration:

The Finance and Administration Committee report was presented by Councillor Brown.

The Finance & Administration Committee meeting was held on April 1, 2021. The meeting was chaired by G. Brown, Councillor. Other members present included: P. Woodford, Councillor; R. Anstey, Councillor; T. Pollett, Deputy Mayor; B. Hefford, Town Clerk; K. Hiscock, Director of Finance (A).

The following items were discussed:

Request for Interest Write-off

The Finance Committee was presented with correspondence requesting the forgiveness of interest in the amount of \$3,382 owing to the Town on the commercial property located at 249 Airport Boulevard.

The request identified the present pandemic and the fact that the business owner did not have any income from the property for at least two years as the reasons to forgive the interest. However, the interest owing had been accruing for many years prior to the pandemic.

Therefore, the Finance Committee is not recommending the request and would like the property owner to be notified of the decision.

FCM Correspondence “Municipalities welcome key step toward a community – rooted recovery”

The Finance Committee was presented with correspondence from FCM informing that the annual federal Gas Tax Fund transferred to municipalities will be doubled for one year.

The Finance Committee welcomes this news as the Town of Gander will receive an additional \$498,000 to be used to upgrade municipal infrastructure.

Property Tax Reductions

The Committee reviewed seven applications for residential property tax reductions that met Council’s policy based on income criteria.

Motion #21-043

Property Tax Reductions

Moved by Councillor Brown and seconded by Deputy Mayor Pollett that the property tax reductions be approved as attached.

In Favour: 5 Opposing: 0

Decision: Motion carried.

WWTP Change Order Isolation Gates

The Engineering Committee referred Change Order #34 with Pomerleau Inc. to have two isolation gates installed in the discharge channels at the Wastewater Treatment Facility at a cost of \$92,398.19 HST inclusive to the Finance Committee for consideration.

The upgrade was identified by Town staff co-operating the facility during the commissioning of the project. They felt that the proposed change would provide effective and efficiency maintenance scheduling and operations. The original design and installation had isolation gates on the inlet side of the channels, however, during peak flows effluent can back up into the outlet channels creating a challenging environment to undertake maintenance. Under these conditions, and in the absence of the newly proposed gates, maintenance would have to be deferred until such a time as the levels recede. This project can be added now, prior to the completion of the project, and be eligible for cost shared funding, reducing the Town's net cost by approximately 63%.

Motion #21-044

WWTP Change Order Isolation Gates

Moved by Councillor Brown and seconded by Councillor Woodford that Change Order #34 with Pomerleau Inc. to have two isolation gates installed in the discharge channels at the Wastewater Treatment Facility at a cost of \$92,398.19 HST inclusive be approved as attached.

In Favour: 5 Opposing: 0

Decision: Motion carried.

Year End Variance Report

The Finance Committee was presented with the Unaudited Operating and Capital Variance reports for the year ended December 2020. The revenues less expenses resulted in an operating surplus of \$340,382. While the surplus is encouraging, it was not unexpected and will be used to balance the 2021 operating budget.

The major variances for all Departments that contributed are as follows:

- Wastewater Treatment Plant operating costs are \$267,000 under budget.
- Wages & benefits are \$108,000 under budget due to delay in filling positions.
- Heating oil and fuel expenditures are \$123,000 under budget due to price decrease and reduced consumption.
- Land sales revenues are \$97,000 under budget due to lack of development.
- Ice rentals are \$95,000 under budget due to closure of arena.

The Capital Variance report indicates \$9.3 million was spent on various capital projects in the community such as:

- Continuation of the new Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- Major upgrades to the Steele Community Centre ice plant and heating systems.
- Major road upgrades to Magee, Cooper, Roe, Corrigan, Brock and Rowsell.

Due to the recent approval by Council to use unspent funds in the capital out of revenue accounts at year end, the Town will save an estimated \$80,000 in borrowing costs over a ten-year period. The Finance Committee is pleased with the savings and has made debt reduction a priority.

G. Other Reports:

None

7. ADMINISTRATION

None

8. CORRESPONDENCE

None

9. NEW BUSINESS

The Mayor noted that due to the MNL submission deadline, these resolutions have been already submitted.

Regional Air Transportation Connectivity Resolution

Whereas, the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador have experienced a significant reduction in air transportation connectivity throughout the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas, Newfoundland and Labrador is isolated from mainland Canada and relies on air connectivity for the transportation of people, goods, and services necessary to our maintain our way life and continued participation in the global economy; and

Whereas, the reduction in air connectivity has had significant impacts on our socio-economic composition in the form of job losses, reduced economic production, and less effective public service delivery.

Therefore, Be It Resolved that Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador lobby the provincial Members of the House of Assembly, the Members of Parliament, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Senators to recognize air connectivity as a critical and essential service to be maintained in all regions of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Caretaker Convention Guidelines Resolution

Whereas, municipalities within Newfoundland and Labrador have been delayed from going to tender, entering contracts, and executing prior approved projects as result of Caretaker Convention enacted during Provincial Elections; and

Whereas, this interpretation has impacted previously approved, high priority municipal projects, resulting in significant and material delays; and

Whereas, there are no formal guidelines to define what projects, programs, and activities are restricted under Caretaker Convention.

Therefore, Be It Resolved that Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador lobby the provincial Members of the House of Assembly to develop clear and detailed Caretaker Convention Guidelines establishing what activities are restricted during future Provincial Elections; and

Be It Further Resolved that Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador make representation to ensure routine and prior approved municipal projects and programs are exempt from the Caretaker Convention Guidelines.

Organizational Review

Councillor Brown noted this past fall we entered into a contract with KPMG to undertake an independent review of the Town's operations and organizational structure. This review was commissioned with the intent of identifying opportunities for optimizing the delivery of both legislated and discretionary municipal services. I am pleased to report that we have received the Consultants' final report.

The report includes twenty-four recommendations across five parameters: strategy, structure, process and lateral capability, people practices and culture. Specific recommendations include the introduction of a set of key performance indicators and the development of a responsibility assignment matrix to improve the management of capital work projects.

KPMG noted that our residents enjoy high service level standards and that the introduction of some additional procedures and adjustments to others should allow the continuation of services at current levels. The Consultants also noted that while our current staffing levels were appropriate, continued growth may create a need for up to four additional positions over the next few years.

Council is pleased with the report and recommendations that will now help guide important decisions regarding the structure and functioning of Town operations.

The full KPMG report will be available online at www.gandercanada.com.

The Mayor thanked everyone who participated in the review particularly Derm Chafe who administered on behalf of Council.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion #21-045

Adjournment

There being no further business, it was moved by Councillor Woodford and seconded by Councillor Fudge that the meeting be adjourned.

In Favour: 5 Opposing: 0

Decision: Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

P. Farwell, Mayor

B. Hefford, Town Clerk