

MINUTES

Regular Meeting of Council
Wednesday, November 4, 2015 @ 4:30 pm
Council Chambers

Present:

C. Elliott	Mayor
C. Abbott	Deputy Mayor
W. Lorenzen	Councillor
G. Parrott	Councillor
B. Dove	Councillor

Advisory and Resource:

D. Chafe	CAO
G. Brown	Town Clerk
J. Blackwood	Director of Engineering
N. Newell	Director of Recreation & Community Services
P. Fudge	Fire Chief
S. Burbridge	Director of Municipal Works
S. Fisher	Deputy Municipal Clerk
E. Laite	Youth Representative

Regrets:

R. Anstey	Councillor
S. McBreairty	Councillor

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Meeting was called to order at 4:30pm.

2. VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

Royal Canadian Legion Poppy/Remembrance Proclamation

The Mayor proclaimed November 1st to November 11th as Remembrance Period in the Town of Gander.

National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

The Mayor proclaimed that from November 25, 2015 to December 10, 2015 “Be a Time of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women” in the Town of Gander.

3. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

Motion #15-238

Minutes for Approval

Moved by Deputy Mayor Abbott and seconded by Councillor Dove that the Minutes from the Regular Meeting of Council on October 14, 2015 be adopted as presented.

In Favour: 5 Opposing: 0

Decision Motion carried.

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

None.

6. REPORTS – STANDING COMMITTEES:

A. Recreation & Community Living:

The Recreation & Community Living report was presented by Councillor Lorenzen.

The Recreation & Community Living meeting was held on October 26, 2015. The meeting was chaired by W. Lorenzen, Councillor. Other members present included: B. Dove, Councillor; R. Anstey, Councillor; N. Newell, Director of Recreation & Community Services; B. Freeborn, Administrative Coordinator.

The following items were discussed:

NL Blizzard Hockey School

The NL Blizzard Hockey School wrote asking to review the invoice and hours for the hockey school held at the Gander Community Centre this past summer. The Committee doesn't believe that the reasons stated justify amending the invoice since the NL Blizzard Hockey School stated in their Expression of Interest that they would rent a minimum of 80 hours. Council had already agreed previously to reduce the invoice by 6 hours due to private rentals that were held during the same week. This is being referred to the Finance and Administration Committee for their consideration.

The Administrative Coordinator left the Committee meeting at 4:00 pm. At that time, the Director of Engineering joined the meeting.

CEF Donation to Cobb's Pond Rotary Park

The Director of Engineering explained to the Committee that CEF has approached him with regard to a project they could assist with. They would be available for approximately 6-8 weeks with members to complete a project. It would only be the labour for a project not the materials or project design. It was discussed that recreation would be an area where the members could complete this type of work. They discussed a number of areas such as Cobb's Pond Rotary Park, the picnic area around Cobb's Pond as well as the newly purchased property adjacent to the Tennis Courts on Memorial Drive. The Committee felt this was a great idea. The Committee agreed to discuss this in the coming weeks to see what could be done in the area of Recreation.

Recreation Master Plan

The Director advised the Committee that the final copy of the Recreation Master Plan has been submitted to the Town of Gander. The Director has been using the document to help determine priorities for the 2016 budget. This document will be made available to the public on the Town of Gander website. For more information, please contact the Director at 651 5927.

Upcoming events

Nov 5th - Bonfire Night. Taking place at the Raynham Avenue site at 6:00 pm. There will be hot chocolate, hot dogs & marshmallows.

Nov 5 – 7 - Municipalities Newfoundland & Labrador Conference at the Community Centre.

Nov 13 & 14 - Gander Flyers vs. Corner Brook Royals. For information on tickets, please call 651-5931.

Nov 19 – Joy in Giving Benefit Concert for Syrian Refugees. Tickets are on sale at the Arts & Culture Centre.

Nov 20 – National Jersey Day. Show your love and support for sport by wearing a jersey, team or club uniform to school, work or play.

Nov 28 & 29 – Gander Flyers vs. Grand Falls Windsor Cataracts.

Nov 25 – Christmas Tree Lighting at the Town Hall at 7 pm.

For more information on any of these events, please contact the Recreation & Community Services Department at 651-5927.

B. Development, Tourism & Culture Committee:

The Development, Tourism & Culture Committee report was presented by Councillor Lorenzen.

The Development, Tourism & Culture Committee was held on October 27, 2015. The meeting was chaired by S. McBreairty, Councillor. Other members present included: R. Anstey, Councillor; W. Lorenzen, Councillor; D. Quinton, Economic Development Officer.

The following items were discussed:

HBB Application-20 Collishaw Crescent

The Committee reviewed an application from the resident of 20 Collishaw Crescent.

WHEREAS an application has been received from “Platinum Shears” to operate a Home-Based 1 chair/1 client Personal Service business.

AND WHEREAS the advertising and discretionary use notices were posted with no objection received by the deadline date of October 21th, 2015 and it meets all of the Town of Gander’s Development Regulations.

Motion #15-239

HBB Application – 20 Collishaw Crescent

Moved by Councillor Lorenzen and seconded by Councillor Dove that “Platinum Shears” be permitted to operate a Home-Based 1 chair/1 client Personal Service business from 20 Collishaw Crescent.

In Favour: 5 Opposing: 0

Decision: Motion carried.

Meeting Date – Affordable Housing Steering Committee

Staff advised the Committee that a representative of CMHC would be in Gander from November 4th to November 6th and would be available to attend a committee meeting if one could be scheduled during his time in Town.

The Committee recommended that a meeting be called for November 5th at 3:30pm to accommodate the representative’s schedule.

Cooper/Roe Intersection

The Committee was updated on efforts to engage property holders near the Roe Avenue – Cooper Boulevard North intersection in discussions regarding property access.

The objective of this initiative is to work with existing property owners to identify possible solutions to ensure continued development in the area while alleviating traffic congestion where possible. These discussions are ongoing.

C. Governance & Community Engagement:

The Governance & Community Engagement Committee report was presented by Deputy Mayor Abbott.

The Governance & Community Engagement Committee meeting was held on October 27, 2015. The meeting was chaired by C. Abbott, Deputy Mayor. Other members present included: S. McBreairty, Councillor; W. Lorenzen, Councillor; D. Chafe, CAO.

The following items were discussed:

Presentation

Representatives of Ping Street presented on overview of their product of the same name, a location-based discovery tool offering real-time access to a wide range of information on municipal services. The service is provided through mobile phones and related portable technology. The Committee feels that this application would offer residents and visitors with easy and convenient access to information about the community and municipal services. The adoption of such a service would be consistent with recommendations of our strategic plan. This item has been referred to the 2016 budget process for further consideration.

Review of Previous Minutes

The Committee reviewed the Minutes of the meeting held on October 6th. No changes were requested or required.

Vacant Residential Land

The Committee was advised that measures have been taken to address a number of issues pertaining to vacant residential land throughout the community. There are several property owners who have contravened Section 5.14 of our Building Regulations which states that from the date of purchase of a lot, the applicant has one year to commence construction of the project.

From the date of issuance of a building permit, the applicant has one year to establish substantial completion of the project. The Committee was also advised that tickets have been issued to these owners.

The CAO also advised the Committee that staff is currently exploring a means by which Council can tax vacant land owner more equitably given that we do provide access to all municipal services to the property regardless of whether or not the owner avails of them. Recommendations will be brought forward during the 2016 budget process.

Contractor Performance

The CAO advise the Committee that he has had conversations with senior representatives with the provincial departments of Municipal Affairs and Transportation and Works on the matter of banning under-performing contractors from being awarded future municipal work. The Department of Transportation and Works has a “Contractor Performance Evaluation System” in place that explicitly allows for the suspension of bidding privileges for contractors who have previously failed to fully meet their contract obligations. The Committee feels that contractor performance is an issue for a lot of municipalities and would like to see Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador take a lead role in advocating for more municipal authority and discretion when awarding tenders.

A letter will be written to the Infrastructure Committee of Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador asking that they make this issue a priority. In the meantime, staff will continue to investigate Council’s authority on this matter and will bring forward recommendations in the near future.

Building Business Recommendations

At its last meeting, the Committee reviewed the Summary and Recommendation reports arising from a facilitated discussion session with the Gander and Area Chamber of Commerce. The intent of the session was to identify opportunities for building better relations between the municipality and local businesses.

The reports make a number of recommendations that the business community feels would help improve their relations and dealings with the Town. Management reviewed and discussed the reports and has identified a number of actionable items relating to customer service, communications, policies and procedures. The Committee feels that the actionable items identified are realistic and within the operational means of the municipality. The Deputy Mayor and the CAO will meet with the Chamber representatives for their input prior to implementation of the selected recommendations.

Virtual Town Hall Meeting

The CAO advised the Committee that Council will be holding its first virtual town hall meeting via Twitter on Thursday, November 12th at 7 p.m. Council will be available to answer questions and discuss issues important to residents. Our Twitter ID is @townofgander and residents are encouraged to participate.

Policy -The Appointment of Elected Officials to External Committees & Boards

The proposed and previously reviewed policy for the appointment of Elected Officials to External Committees and Boards has been reviewed by this Committee and Management and is now being recommended for adoption.

Motion #15-240

Policy – The Appointment of Elected Officials to External Committees & Boards

Moved by Deputy Mayor Abbott and seconded by Councillor Lorenzen that the policy for the Appointment of Elected Officials to External Committees and Boards be adopted as presented.

In Favour: 5 Opposing: 0

Decision: Motion carried.

Town of Gander’s Website

The Town of Gander’s Website was launched in September 2010 and has gone through several small modifications since that time. The Manager of Information Systems advises that the site cannot be easily adapted to newer social networking and online services applications and that it may be prudent to build a new site.

The Committee feels that the website is due for redevelopment and has referred this item for discussion during the 2016 budget process.

Public Engagement Action Plan

The Provincial Government recently released a draft of their plan for public engagement. Entitled “Open Government” the plan is based on four key pillars; Open Information, Open Data, Dialogue and Collaboration. The Committee believes that this is a strong and well crafted approach on which to develop and model our own public engagement action plan. This item has been referred to Management for further review and action.

MNL - Liberal Party of Canada Correspondence

The Committee reviewed a copy of a letter from the President of the Liberal Party of Canada to the President of Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador. In her letter, she outlined the details of her party's intent to significantly increase the Government of Canada's financial support for core municipal infrastructure including water and wastewater treatment systems. The Liberal Party is promising to increase the amount available from \$65B to \$125B over the next ten years.

With the new majority Liberal Government now elected, the Committee is looking forward to working with our federal and provincial partners to address outstanding infrastructure issues including the much needed wastewater treatment plant.

Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador (MNL) - Call for Questions

MNL advised its members that the provincial party leaders have been invited to the President's Forum at this year's annual general meeting and is asking its members to submit a question which will be directed to the leaders during the Forum. Questions should be based on one of four key issues; municipal revenue, regional government, municipal legislation and water/wastewater. The Committee has asked staff to submit a question relating to funding support for wastewater treatment plant.

Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) - Communiqué

The Committee reviewed a post federal election Communiqué from the FCM reminding municipalities of the promises made by the Liberal Party of Canada as a part of their ten-year plan. These are:

- Sustained and predictable investments in core municipal infrastructure, like roads and bridges that meet the needs of communities of all sizes;
- New historic investment in public transit across the country, including both new capital construction and state of good repair;
- Renewed federal leadership in affordable housing to build more housing units, refurbish existing ones, renew existing co-operative agreements, and operational funding support for municipalities.;
- Significant investment in green infrastructure, including local water and wastewater, clean energy, and climate resilient infrastructure including flood mitigation systems;
- Automatic transfers of any uncommitted federal infrastructure funds near the end of any fiscal year to municipalities, through a temporary top-up of the Gas Tax Fund; and
- Increased partnership with regular meetings between the new Prime Minister and FCM.

Each of these commitments would be beneficial to our community and would help address the needs of our growing town. The Committee is hopeful that the new Liberal Government will honour their commitments.

Crisis Communications Plan

The Committee inquired as to whether or not the town had an official communications strategy or plan in the event of a crisis situation. While a communications protocol is included as a part of the comprehensive emergency plan there is no specific plan in place for a lesser event. Staff has been asked to develop a general crisis communications plan.

D. Engineering, Planning & Controls:

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

The Engineering, Planning & Controls Committee meeting was held on October 28, 2015. The meeting was chaired by G. Parrott, Councillor. Other members present included: C. Abbott, Deputy Mayor; S. McBreairty, Councillor; J. Blackwood, Director of Engineering; J. Hillier, Administrative Assistant.

The following items were discussed:

Contract Change Order No.2 – Blackwood Drive

The Committee reviewed a contract change order from the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs regarding the Blackwood Drive 2015 Infrastructure Upgrades for the amount of \$18,645.00

It has been determined that imported rock fill was required in the storm sewer trench at the roadway surface for the following reasons:

1. The proposed storm sewer is lower than the existing, which seems to have penetrated the water table in the area.
2. Material from the trench was deemed suitable upon visual inspection, however was not withstanding rolling machines and vehicles upon compaction. A geotechnical sample was collected which determined that the material is 36% silt. This type of material retains high amounts of water, and does not provide adequate frost protection or bearing capacity for the road.

In order for adequate road structure and to prevent frost heave it was determined that two (2) feet of imported rock was required on the surface.

The Director of Engineering advised the Committee that he had reviewed the Blackwood Drive contract with DMG and determined that there was monies budgeted for rock fill, however not of sufficient quantities to cover this change in scope.

The Committee is recommending payment for the contact change order as attached and forwards this to the Finance Committee for its review and consideration.

Discretionary Use – 66 Elizabeth Drive

The Town Council of Gander has received an application from Goodyear's Limited to occupy the building and property at the above noted address for the purpose of hosting an indoor weekly market and small scale hydroponics operation.

It is noted that this area is zoned Commercial Downtown and Shop is permitted as a Discretionary Use under the Town of Gander Development Regulations.

This was advertised and one objection was received by the deadline date of 12:00 noon on Friday, October 23, 2015.

Motion #15-241

Discretionary Use – 66 Elizabeth Drive

Moved by Councillor Parrott and seconded by Deputy Mayor Abbott approval of the discretionary use application for 66 Elizabeth Drive as attached.

In Favour: 5 Opposing: 0

Decision: Motion carried.

Discretionary Use – 299 Magee Road

The Town Council of Gander has received an application from the owner of 299 Magee Road to conduct private/semi-private dog training sessions within the detached garage at the front of the above noted property.

It is noted that this area is zoned Rural Residential and Animal uses are permitted as a Discretionary Use under the Town of Gander Development Regulations.

Motion #15-242**Discretionary Use – 299 Magee Road**

Moved by Councillor Parrott and seconded by Deputy Mayor Abbott approval of the discretionary use application for 299 Magee Road as attached, pending no objections are received by the advertised deadline of 12:00 noon on Friday October 30, 2015.

In Favour: 5 Opposing: 0

Decision: Motion carried.

SmartCentres – Secondary Access

The Director of Engineering presented to the Committee drawings that were prepared by the Engineering department representing several options for a secondary access off of Cooper Boulevard. Currently the properties in that area are owned by several different companies which would have to be in agreement with this secondary access.

The Committee reviewed all four options and is recommending that a meeting be held with the property and land owners in that area to discuss which option would best suit all parties involved.

This item will be forwarded to the Economic Development Committee for review and consideration.

E. Public Works & Services:

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

The Public Works & Services Committee was held on October 28, 2015. The meeting was chaired by R. Anstey, Councillor. Other members present included: B. Dove, Councillor; G. Parrott, Councillor; P. Fudge, Fire Chief; S. Burbridge, Director of Public Works; D. Moulton, Supervisor of Municipal Works; G. Whitt, Administrative Support Clerk; L. Small, Administrative Assistant; W. Jenkins, MEO Supervisor.

The following items were discussed:

Delegation- Gander International Airport Authority (GIAA)

The Committee met with representatives of GIAA and NavCanada to discuss the use of Airborne Drones in the community. With the growing recreational and commercial use of drones, the Committee feels it is important that the Town be proactive in taking measures to prevent any problems with the air space and final descent runways which circle the town. Commercial drones are regulated by Transport Canada; however, non-commercial ones are not.

Drones are fast becoming useful in business for surveillance, highway patrol, and forest fire fighting to name a few; they can be a great tool, however, the safety factors have to be considered. There have been two reports just recently, one in Gander, of a drone flying near the airport. The Committee felt that the best solution would be to educate the public on the safe use of drones in and around the air space and work with the public to provide information and possibly even some special fly time sessions. The idea is not to prevent the use of drones as that would be impossible. The idea is to educate our citizens on the safety repercussions for aircraft, as well as privacy issues, as these machines can fly into private property.

Our Municipal Officers have been asked to speak with anyone they see using the drones simply to inform them of the correct use. The Town will also post information provided at the meeting on the Town's website and Facebook page for residents to avail of and work with the RCMP and our Municipal Officers to try and create a reporting culture for everyone's safety. The recommended use is 9 km from any airport with a maximum height of 90 meters. Signage will be used to indicate no fly areas close to the airport and GIAA will work with the town to produce a safe environment for recreational users.

Previous Minutes Review

The previous minutes were approved as presented.

Break and Enters - email from resident

The Committee received a complaint from a resident who lives in St. John's but is quite concerned for their parent whose home was broken into here in Gander. The correspondence indicated that the Town has turned a blind eye to the recent rash of break and enters, the RCMP was no help either and something needs to be done.

The Municipal Police force now has more cars and officers and they rotate street surveillance constantly and respond when called. The RCMP presence is not something that Council can control, however they work in conjunction with our officers to provide as much coverage as possible.

Residents need to be diligent in protecting their properties and keeping homes and vehicles locked. Residents interested in stepping forward and taking a leadership role can also contact the RCMP for advice in setting up a neighbourhood watch type group in their area.

Third Quarter Statistics

The Committee was provided with the third quarter statistics for the Fire and Police Departments. There were 60 fire calls which is up from last quarter and police incident reports totaled 412, which is also up. There were 82 animal related calls, 71 traffic complaints, 157 speeding tickets, and 19 fire lane violations to name a few.

Councillor Anstey left the Committee meeting.

Removal Order, 148 Memorial Drive

The Committee was advised that a fence removal order was required for the 148 Memorial Drive. This is a barb-wire fence and poses a safety hazard.

Motion #15-243

Removal Order, 148 Memorial Drive

Moved by Councillor Dove and seconded by Councillor Parrott that a removal order be issued to the owners of 148 Memorial Drive for a barbed wire fence.

In Favour: 5 Opposing: 0

Decision: Motion carried.

F. Finance & Administration:

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

The Finance & Administration Committee was held on October 29, 2015. The meeting was chaired by B. Dove, Councillor. Other members present included: G. Parrott, Councillor; C. Abbott, Deputy Mayor; G. Brown, Director of Finance; D. Chafe, CAO.

The following items were discussed:

Purchasing Policy

Several months ago, the Town modified its Purchasing Policy on a trial basis with regards to the dollar values required before staff invite three quotes for a purchase. The new levels are working very well and management feels they should be implemented on a permanent basis.

Motion #15-244 Purchasing Policy

Moved by Councillor Dove and seconded by Councillor Parrott that the changes to the quotation requirement levels in the purchasing policy be made permanent.

In Favour: 5 Opposing: 0

Decision: Motion carried.

43 Brown Crescent Assessment Error

The Committee reviewed a letter from the owner of 43 Brown Crescent. In his letter he indicates that when he contacted the Assessment Agency about his new assessment for 2016, the file was reviewed and it was found that there was an error in the size of his house. This meant that his house had been over assessed for a period of years. He is asking that the Town refund the taxes charged as a result of the error in his assessment. Legally, the Town is not required to provide a refund as property owners are responsible for appealing their assessments if they feel there is an error. The Committee did, however, feel that in this case something should be done for the property owner and is recommending that the overpayment for the six year period from 2010 to 2015 be refunded to the property owner.

Motion #15-245 43 Brown Crescent Assessment Error

Moved by Councillor Dove and seconded by Councillor Parrott that a property tax refund of \$824.67 be made to the property owner of 43 Brown Crescent.

In Favour: 5 Opposing: 0

Decision: Motion carried.

Chamber of Commerce

The Committee received a delegation from the Chamber of Commerce to discuss the Town's upcoming budget. Chamber representatives included Darrin Murray, Debbie Yannakidis, Kevin Higgins and Hazel Bishop.

The Chair welcomed the Chamber to the meeting and passed the floor to them.

They asked what Council's plans were with regard to taxation in the upcoming budget and they were advised that this is going to be a very difficult year budget wise for the Town of Gander but that no decisions have been made yet and Council is reviewing its options.

A discussion also took place on the proposed infrastructure upgrades in the Town including the proposed new Wastewater Treatment Plant and the recommendations coming out of the recently released Recreation Master Plan.

The Chamber representatives left the Committee meeting.

Blizzard Hockey School Invoice Request

The Committee reviewed the recommendation from the Recreation Committee regarding a refund request from the NL Blizzard Hockey School. They are requesting they be credited for six hours on their invoice for their summer camp.

The Finance Committee agrees with Recreation and is not recommending that the invoice be adjusted.

Property Tax Reduction

The Committee reviewed one residential property tax reduction application which has been submitted in accordance with Council's policy on tax reductions for residential property. The Director advised that the application met the requirements of Council Policy and recommended approval.

Motion #15-246

Property Tax Reduction

Moved by Councillor Dove and seconded by Councillor Parrott that the one property tax reduction application be approved as attached.

In Favour: 5 Opposing:

Decision: Motion carried.

Contract Change Order Number 2– Blackwood Drive

The Committee reviewed Change Order #2 for the Blackwood Drive contract and the recommendation from the Engineering Committee that the Change Order be approved. Finance agrees with the recommendation.

Motion #15-247

Contract Change Order Number 2 – Blackwood Drive

Moved by Councillor Dove and seconded by Councillor Parrott that Change Order #2 for Blackwood Drive Infrastructure Upgrades be approved in the amount of \$18,645 HST inclusive.

In Favour: 5 Opposing: 0

Decision: Motion carried.

7. ADMINISTRATION

None.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

9. NEW BUSINESS

Gas Tax Capital Investment Plan

The Town has been advised that it will be receiving in excess of 2.3 million dollars in Gas Tax funding for the period of April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2019. It has to submit a list of projects that it plans to spend the money on.

Motion #15-248

Gas Tax Capital Investment Plan

Moved by Deputy Mayor Abbott and seconded by Councillor Parrott that the Town of Gander submit its Capital Investment Plan to the Department of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs for Gas Tax Funding in the amount of \$2,349,112 to carry for the following projects:

1. Airport Boulevard from Bennett to Cooper.
2. Pinedo Street.
3. Edinburgh Avenue from Elizabeth to Cooper.
4. Peterson Avenue.

- 5. Cooper Boulevard from Raynham to Mitchell.
- 6. Griffin Place.

If Council decides to modify this list it can do so by making the requested change in writing to the Department.

In Favour: 5 Opposing: 0

Decision: Motion carried.

Town Owned Parking Lots Snow Clearing

Deputy Mayor Abbott stated that the Town is currently awaiting legal advice on whom it has to refund snow clearing payment to. Its target is to be completed by the end of the year.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion #15-249

Adjournment

There being no further business, it was moved by Deputy Mayor Abbott and seconded by Councillor Parrott that the meeting be adjourned.

In Favour: 5 Opposing: 0

Decision: Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15pm.

C. Elliott, Mayor

G. Brown, Town Clerk