



Municipality of the District of Clare
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
Wednesday, April 20, 2011

PRESENT: Warden Jean Melanson; Deputy Warden Ronnie LeBlanc; Councillors: Brian Comeau, Russell Comeau, Danny Hill, Arnold LeBlanc and Simon LeBlanc; CAO/Clerk Connie Saulnier. Translators: James Crombie and Richard Landry. Camera Operator: Jene Dugas Cottreau.

ABSENT: Councillor Nil Doucet and Deputy Clerk Jeannette Doucet.

1) CALL TO ORDER

Warden Jean Melanson called the Council Meeting to order at 7:09 pm.

2) APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOVED BY Councillor Danny Hill and **SECONDED BY** Councillor Russell Comeau that the proposed agenda be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

3) PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations.

4) ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETINGS

4.1 March 16th, 2011 Regular Council Meeting

MOVED BY Councillor Simon LeBlanc and **SECONDED BY** Councillor Russell Comeau that the minutes of the March 16, 2011 Council Meeting be accepted as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

4.2 April 6th, 2011 Council-in-Committee Meeting

MOVED BY Deputy Warden Ronnie LeBlanc and **SECONDED BY** Councillor Danny Hill that the minutes of the April 6, 2011 Council-in-Committee Meeting be accepted as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

5) BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

5.1 Presentation regarding Anaerobic Digesters: May 3rd at 6:30 pm

CAO Connie Saulnier informed Councillors that the Municipality of Digby had suggested Tuesday May 3rd (at 6:30 pm) as the date for the presentation regarding anaerobic digesters. Councillors noted the date and those available will attend.



5.2 Conflict of Interest (Councillors on Boards)

At the March 16th Council meeting, Councillors had discussed a request from *Le Transport de Clare* regarding the appointment of a member of Council to sit on its Board of Directors. During that discussion, Council inquired if sitting on such a board could be considered a conflict of interest, since the group approaches Council for grants. Clarification was requested. Councillor Brian Comeau, who sits on the *Festival acadien de Clare* committee, had stated that he had agreed to sit on the committee as a resource person and not as a voting member to avoid a conflict of interest, and also wished clarification.

CAO Connie Saulnier provided to Council information taken from Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations' "Local Government Resource Handbook" (see attached) and from the "Municipal Conflict of Interest Act".

Council discussed the issue of Indirect Pecuniary Interest, the word "pecuniary" meaning financial. CAO Saulnier explained that when a Councillor sits on a board as a volunteer (without being appointed by Council), the Councillor should declare a conflict of interest and leave Council chambers when Council is considering financial matters, such as grants, etc. for that particular organization.

CAO Saulnier clarified that the conflict of interest does not apply when a Councillor is appointed to a board by Council, for example the Clare Firefighters' Association, the *Villa Acadienne*, etc. Councillors thanked the CAO for the information and the clarifications, and it was stated that this issue was very clear now.

5.3 Dangerous and Unsightly Premises

CAO Saulnier updated Council regarding the properties that had recently been deemed as Dangerous and Unsightly. She indicated that of the property owners who had received letters from the Municipal Solicitor, all but one had proceeded to action by having their property either cleaned or the necessary buildings demolished.

She indicated that another letter should be sent by the Solicitor to the property owner who has not complied with the Municipality's request. The letter will stipulate that the work must be done within a certain period of time and if no action is taken, the Municipality will have the work done and the property owner will be billed. The order for such action must go to Council.

6) WARDEN'S REPORT

6.1 National Day of Mourning: Thursday April 28, 2011

Warden Jean Melanson reminded Council that Thursday April 28, 2011 is the National Day of Mourning, commemorating workers whose lives have been lost or injured in the workplace. He stated that the Municipality of Clare could lower the flags at half mast on this day as a gesture of showing respect to those workers who lost their lives or were injured at their workplace. Council was in agreement.



Warden Jean Melanson attended the following meetings and functions:

- Public Utilities Review Board meeting in Cornwallis at which a summary was given of the findings of consultations done last year in municipalities across the province regarding the Community Feed-In Tariff and encouraging renewable energy development in Nova Scotia (such as sun, wind, water, biomass, etc.); there are two provincial programs for new initiatives that may apply to the Municipality of Clare; more to follow.
- Fundy Web Broad Band Board of Directors meeting; members were informed that the fiber optics, not being used by the municipalities, will be sold soon;
- Information Session organized by *Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse* (CDÉNÉ) in Meteghan River at which Jean was invited to speak on the Municipality of Clare's services, departments, tax rate, budget, etc.
- While in Halifax for the Volunteer Ceremony, Warden Melanson had the opportunity to speak with the Minister of Finances and Acadian Affairs and the Minister of Service Nova Scotia; he spoke to them briefly regarding the CAP program; he read to Council a letter he had written as feedback from the Municipality regarding the research the Province had done last year on the CAP program; the letter will be sent but Warden Melanson stated he does not anticipate any changes this year.
- Provincial Volunteer Award Ceremony in Halifax at which Anne LeBlanc of Concession was honoured as Clare's volunteer of the year, and the young Simon Dugas of Comeauville was honoured as the Provincial Youth Volunteer of the Year for the Province.

Regarding the young volunteer, Deputy Warden Ronnie LeBlanc commented that during a recent swim meet in Halifax, Simon Dugas had qualified for the East Coast Championship and wished to congratulate him for this and all of his other accomplishments.

Councillor Arnold LeBlanc added that Simon Dugas's parents, Ruth and Carmen, should be congratulated as well, and also wished to congratulate Simon for all of his accomplishments.

7) OFFICIAL STATEMENTS FROM THE MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

There were no official statements from the members of Council.

8) CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence to address.

9) COMMITTEE REPORTS

9.1 Planning/Development/Building

Councillor Danny Hill stated that the committee had not met. He indicated that Genivar is working on the draft of the amended Land Use By-Law which will be presented to Council in the very near future.



Building Permits Report (2-Year Comparison)

Councillor Danny Hill presented the building permits reports for March (*copy included*) as submitted by the Building Department:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Permits</u>	<u>Value of Construction</u>
2011	20	\$532,500
2010	17	\$740,500

9.2 Clare Municipal Recreation Committee – Councillor Brian Comeau

Councillor Brian Comeau gave an overview of the March minutes regarding the Recreation committee's activities. He enumerated the funds and grants that were awarded to the various organizations.

9.3 Tourism – Councillor Arnold LeBlanc

9.3.1 Clare Municipal Tourism Committee

Councillor Arnold LeBlanc indicated that many projects and activities for the upcoming 2011 tourist season. He asked Council to review the details provided in the Committee's March 29 meeting minutes.

Councillor LeBlanc indicated that the Tourism Department's five year plan is coming to an end and the Committee is discussing holding a Public Consultation Session this fall, with the upcoming five year plan as a topic of discussion during the event.

Councillor LeBlanc indicated that as of April 14, Larry Peach is working full-time at the *Rendez-vous de la Baie* as the Tourism Director for the Municipality.

9.3.2 Yarmouth and Acadian Shores Tourism Association (YASTA)

Councillor LeBlanc indicated that work continues on various projects (such as the web site and the visitors guide). He pointed out that there are proprietary projects in need of direction, and the vacant position of General Manager, formerly filled by Larry Peach, has not yet been filled, leaving only one (1) employee on YASTA staff. Councillor LeBlanc stated that interviews were conducted however the selection committee felt that no one qualified for the position. The vacant position will be re-advertised with the objective of hiring a General Manager as soon as possible.

Councillor LeBlanc indicated that the YASTA Board would like to ask the Municipality if it would lend the services of Larry Peach, part time, and pay him accordingly (until a new General Manager is hired). They also intend on requesting to borrow the services of Denise Nickerson, currently employed with Municipality of Yarmouth/Friends of the Light House.

CAO Saulnier indicated that she will discuss the terms with YASTA, such as how many hours per week they would want the services of Mr. Peach.

**9.4 Villa Acadienne – Councillor Brian Comeau**

Councillor Brian Comeau informed Council regarding various issues and events related to the *Villa Acadienne*. He indicated that two Registered Nurses (RN) had been hired. They are both from India. He pointed out that the Villa had been advertising for a very long time to find RNs and everyone was pleased to finally have two new RNs on staff.

9.5 Waste Check – Warden Jean Melanson

Warden Melanson informed Council that he was away and was not able to attend the last Waste Check meeting.

9.6 Clare Energy – Warden Jean Melanson

Warden Melanson informed Council that Clare Energy will meet in May.

9.7 Clare Firefighters Association: Quarterly Report – Councillor Danny Hill

Councillor Danny Hill reported regarding the Clare Firefighters Association's activities. Councillor Hill listed the numerous calls answered and training exercises held by the volunteer firefighters of Clare.

Councillor Hill informed Council that Fire Chief Blaine Rodgerson thanked all the firefighters that had assisted during the fire in Havelock that destroyed the Havelock Wesleyan Church on March 22. The fire departments from Southville, Weymouth, St. Bernard and Little Brook were called in for aid. Rodgerson thanked all the firefighters and the local residents who helped, indicating that their efforts saved the nearby parsonage and prevented the fire from reaching a house nearby.

The Fire Chief asked Councillor Hill to thank the Municipality of Clare for the new trucks and new equipment that the fire departments have, saying that they were a tremendous asset to their firefighting efforts.

10) NEW BUSINESS**10.1 Member of Public on Police Advisory Board**

It had been decided in the past that the entire Council would serve as the Police Advisory Board. CAO Saulnier informed Council that the RCMP was asking if Council would recommend someone from the general public, at least one citizen, to sit on the board with Council when RCMP officers give reports and discuss policing related issues.

Council discussed and it was stated that advertisements had been placed in the past regarding the board and there had been some feedback from citizens. Council suggested that staff approach these individuals to see if they are still interested in serving on the board.



10.2 Appointment of Leo LeBlanc to the Tri-County Housing Authority

CAO Saulnier read a letter from Community Services wishing to advise that the term of Léo LeBlanc, the Municipality's representative on the Board of the Tri-County Housing Authority was expiring. It stated that Mr. LeBlanc could be re-appointed for a third term or a replacement could be appointed.

CAO Saulnier stated that she spoke with Mr. LeBlanc and he was willing to serve another term, should Council make the recommendation. Council discussed and the following motion was passed:

MOVED BY Councillor Danny Hill and **SECONDED BY** Councillor Arnold LeBlanc that the Municipality of the District of Clare re-appoint Mr. Leo LeBlanc to represent the Municipality of Clare on the Tri-County Housing Authority Board of Directors for a third term beginning April 21st, 2011.

MOTION CARRIED

10.3 Motion to Name a New Road: *Chemin Sylvio* in Meteghan

A map and copies of a letter sent to property owner on an unnamed road located off of Michael Road were provided to Council. The following motion was passed:

MOVED BY Councillor Arnold LeBlanc and **SECONDED BY** Councillor Russell Comeau that the Municipality of Clare accept the motion that a road in Meteghan, located off of "Michael Road" in the Municipality of Clare, in the County of Digby, Nova Scotia, be named "*CHEMIN SYLVIO ROAD*".

MOTION CARRIED

10.4 Names of Committees and Members on Municipal Website – Councillor Brian Comeau

Councillor Brian Comeau stated that he had been asked if the names of all the members of the Planning Advisory Committee (Councillors and citizens), and those of the other municipal committees, could be posted on the website.

Council discussed and indicated it did not see a problem with listing the committee members. CAO Connie Saulnier stated that, due to the Privacy Act, it would be best to first obtain the permission from each citizen who serves on the committees. CAO Saulnier stated she will check into this.

10.5 Request from Linda Belliveau Re.: Water at Former Tourist Bureau

CAO Saulnier read a request from Linda Belliveau (copy attached), who rents the former Tourist Bureau in Belliveau Cove. Ms. Belliveau is asking if running water could be piped into the former VIC part of the building, at her expense. Currently, there is running water to the washrooms connected to that building. Ms. Belliveau sells fruits, vegetables, jams and pickles during the summer and would like to have running water to be able to prepare her preserves on-site.

Councillors discussed and were all in favour, stating that the hook-up would be done at her cost. It was also noted that Ms. Belliveau will require permission from the Department of Health to prepare food on sight.



10.6 Petition, Published Letter of Opinion, and Media Coverage

Warden Melanson explained that a petition was circulating in local businesses regarding “the direction that the Municipality of Clare is taking with tax payers’ money” (copy attached). The petition addresses issues related to the *Rendez-vous de la Baie* and the former E.M. Comeau Sawmill. A copy was provided to each Councillor. Warden Melanson clarified parts of the petition that were incorrect and explained specific issues related to certain statements in the document.

Rendez-vous de la Baie (RVB)

With regards to the *Rendez-vous de la Baie*, Warden Melanson pointed out that consultations had been held with various community and business representatives, such as the Clare Chamber of Commerce and nearby businesses. Warden Melanson invited people to visit the *Rendez-vous de la Baie*, to see all the components of the Cultural and Interpretive Centre, to get a better idea of what Council and the RVB Advisory Committee have planned for this facility.

Comeau Lumber

Regarding the former Comeau Lumber saw mill, Warden Melanson stated that the funds used to purchase the power plant and associated equipment came from the Federal Gas Tax program, and not from property tax dollars. He clarified that it is not the Municipality’s intention to run Comeau Lumber; that the Municipality is in negotiation with a company that is interested in possibly reopening the mill.

The Warden listed key features of the property: approximately 50 acres of land, with several buildings, municipal sewer service, 3-phase power and a power plant. He stated: “Frankly, what we are buying is an Industrial Park already built”.

Councillor Brian Comeau pointed out that during the public consultations regarding the municipal planning strategy an Industrial Park was talked about on numerous occasions. He stated: “People said an Industrial Park was something they wanted to see in the community, to attract businesses to Clare”.

Councillor Russell Comeau reiterated that it was a good decision by Council to purchase the equipment at Comeau Lumber. He confirmed “Council is waiting for an answer from a company interested in reopening the mill and the power plant.”

Councillor Brian Comeau indicated “Some people wondered why Council did not share the information”. He explained that if Council had an idea and spoke about it before knowing if it would become a reality, it could provide false hope to the community. Warden Melanson added that “nothing was done secretly”. Council shared information as it was confirmed, and the information was transmitted at the public televised Council meetings. As well, the Warden indicated that he is meeting with two groups next week, one of them being Clare Woodlot Owners, to discuss possible future use of the equipment and the property at the former Comeau Lumber Saw Mill.



Councillor Arnold LeBlanc stated that this appears to be a case of a lack of information. He indicated that once people know that:

- bankruptcy proceedings included selling the assets, auctioning-off the equipment piece by piece, would prevent the possibility of reopening the mill;
- Council was able to use funds from the Federal Tax Program, and not from property tax dollars, to buy the equipment at a fraction of its value;
- it would permit the assets to be kept in Clare;
- it would create an opportunity of having a business come to Clare and possibly reopening the mill;
- it could create new jobs in Clare;
- it would provide opportunities for the Municipality, such as an Industrial Park;
- by not acting, the community could have lost a very valuable asset.

“Once people know all this information, they will realize it was a good decision”, Councillor LeBlanc added.

Deputy Warden Ronnie LeBlanc pointed out Councillors used both the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Clare Energy Concept as a guide to make the decision. “This falls directly in-line with the ideas in both of these documents, which had input and direction from the public”, stated the Deputy Warden.

Councillor Danny Hill reiterated that it was the right decision. He stated that if anyone wanted more information, the minutes of March 16th Council meeting explains very well the facts and all the information that led to Council’s decision regarding the purchase of the equipment at Comeau Lumber.

Councillor Hill added that the petition could be misleading due to the fact that it contains two different topics. “Some may have signed it for one topic and others, for the other topic.”

In conclusion, Warden Jean Melanson stated that he awaits for the group that prepared the petition to come and present it to Council.

11) DATE AND TIME OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

The next Council Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 18th, 2011 at 7 pm.

12) ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by

*Colette Deveau King – Administrative
Assistant to the CAO*

Approved by Council on May 18th 2011