



Municipality of the District of Clare

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, March 16, 2011

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

ABSENT: Councillor Arnold LeBlanc.

1) CALL TO ORDER

Warden Jean Melanson called the Council Meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

2) APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOVED BY Deputy Warden Ronnie LeBlanc and **SECONDED BY** Councillor Danny Hill 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 February 16th, 2011 Regular Council Meeting

MOVED BY Councillor Danny Hill and **SECONDED BY** Councillor Nil Doucet that the minutes of the February 16, 2011 Council Meeting be accepted as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

4.2 March 2nd, 2011 Council-in-Committee Meeting

MOVED BY Councillor Russell Comeau and **SECONDED BY** Councillor Simon LeBlanc that the minutes of the March 2, 2011 Council-in-Committee Meeting be accepted as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

5) BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

5.1 Laptop computers for Council Members

Councillors have discussed acquiring laptop computers for Council members to be able to have electronic correspondence and documents close at hand for reference. Council is in agreement with the positive aspects of laptops, such as eliminating paperwork; saving money, postage and time; being more 'green'; using a more affective and efficient means of communication. Council is in agreement to add the purchase of municipal laptops for Council in the upcoming budget.



6) WARDEN'S ACTIVITY REPORT

Warden Jean Melanson attended the following meetings and functions:

- Forum on Public Transportation in Clare organized by *Transport de Clare*;
- Hosting a group from Val d'Or (Québec) who visited Acadians and Francophones in Nova Scotia through the federal program *Les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie*;
- Open House Meet and Greet with the Honourable Greg Kerr;
- meeting in Yarmouth by "Scotia Cruise";
- gave speech at Banquet organized by *Société acadienne de Clare* to celebrate the *Semaine de la Francophonie* and 100th anniversary of the International Year of Women;
- Meeting with Stan Surette to discuss a trip organized by *RANE*, a provincial seniors group, who will attend a twinning event with seniors in Québec. Warden Melanson stated it would be good to have representatives from the Municipality of Clare, especially at the booth, to help promote our area.

6.1 Proclamation: 2011 Year of the Entrepreneur (CIFB)

Warden Jean Melanson read a proclamation that proclaimed that the Municipality of Clare declares 2011 as Year of the Entrepreneur in Clare.

6.2 Earth Hour: Saturday 26 March

Warden Jean Melanson informed everyone that March 26 at 8:30 pm will be Earth Hour and encourages residents to participate in reducing energy consumption during that hour and throughout the year.

7) OFFICIAL STATEMENTS FROM THE MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

There were no official statements from the members of Council.

8) CORRESPONDENCE

8.1 Request re. extending Municipal Sewer into rest of Meteghan River

Council discussed a letter dated March 15, 2011 that readdressed a request by the group in Meteghan River, presided by Germaine Comeau (see attached), requesting that the Municipal Sewer be extended from AF Thériault up to Placide Comeau Road.

MOVED BY Councillor Brian Comeau and **SECONDED BY** Councillor Simon LeBlanc that the Municipality acquire a quote for the cost of extending the Municipal Sewer from A.F. Thériault, across the Meteghan River Bridge, as far as Chemin Placide Comeau Road.

MOTION CARRIED

8.2 Letter from Transport de Clare requesting a Councillor to be part of board

A letter was read regarding the Transport de Clare Society requesting if Council wished to appoint a member to sit on its Board of Directors (see attached). Council discussed and it was pointed out that it could be considered a conflict of interest to sit on the board as a voting member. CAO Saulnier will obtain information for the next Council meeting as to whether this would be viewed as a conflict of interest.



8.3 Financial request from *Conseil de développement économique de la N.-É.*

A request was received from the *Conseil de développement économique de la N.-É.* (CDÉNEÉ) asking for a financial contribution of \$500 for an Information Session it is organizing in Clare in April (see attached). Council discussed and the following motion was made:

MOVED BY Councillor Nil Doucet and **SECONDED BY** Councillor Danny Hill that the Municipality grant the amount of five hundred dollars (\$500) to the provincial organization, *Conseil de développement économique de la N.-É.* (CDÉNEÉ), to organize an Information Session it is organizing in the Municipality of Clare in April for businesses and non profit organizations.

MOTION CARRIED

8.4 Letter from *Transport de Clare* related to Federal Gas Tax Funds

A letter was read regarding the Transport de Clare Society requesting funds from the Federal Gas Tax Funds to purchase a bus or a van (see attached). Council discussed the request and decided to invite Claredon Robicheau to speak with Council in greater details regarding the project.

9) COMMITTEE REPORTS

9.1 Planning/Development/Building

Councillor Danny Hill reported on the committee's activities. He indicated that Mary Guptill has been hired to conduct research for public access roads to beaches, lakes and rivers. The meeting on public transportation in Clare was well attended. The PAC will look into a watershed grant for the next year and coast line protection was also discussed at the last PAC meeting.

Building Permits Report (2-Year Comparison)

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

<u>Year</u>	<u>Permits</u>	<u>Value of Construction</u>
2011	4	\$ 75,000.00
2010	7	\$260,000.00

9.2 Clare Municipal Recreation Committee – Councillor Brian Comeau

Councillor Brian Comeau indicated there was no Recreation Committee meeting.

Lifeguard at Mavillette Beach

Councillor Brian Comeau informed Council that the Recreation Department had put in a request to the Province for financial assistance, in full or in part, for Lifeguard Service at the Provincial Park Mavillette Beach. The service is for a 10-week period on weekends only. Currently, Clare is the only Municipality that pays 100% of the costs for such a service, and it has been doing so since 2001. Councillor Comeau informed Council that the Province refused the request.



In order to provide the service again this summer, the Recreation Department is required to secure the contract with Nova Scotia Lifeguard Service in early April, before the 2011-2012 budget is approved. The Recreation Department is requesting that Council approve this expense to be able to proceed with ensuring this service at Mavillette Beach for summer 2011. Council discussed and the following motion was made:

MOVED BY Councillor Nil Doucet and **SECONDED BY** Councillor Simon LeBlanc that Council approve the expenses to provide Lifeguard Service at Mavillette Beach for a 10-week period, on weekends only, during summer 2011.

MOTION CARRIED

9.3 Tourism – Councillor Arnold LeBlanc

9.3.1 Clare Municipal Tourism Committee

In Councillor Arnold LeBlanc's absence, CAO Connie Saulnier stated that no meeting had been held.

9.3.2 Yarmouth and Acadian Shores Tourism Association (YASTA)

In Councillor LeBlanc's absence, CAO Saulnier Councillor indicated that Jean LeBlanc was stepping down as representative of Clare in the industry sector. She stated that Councillor Arnold LeBlanc had recommended that Larry Peach sit on the Association. Council discussed but questioned the fact that Mr. Peach was an employee of the Municipality and Mr. LeBlanc was a business representative. Council decided to wait for the next meeting during which Councillor LeBlanc could explain the reasons for his recommendation.

9.4 Villa Acadienne – Councillor Brian Comeau

Councillor Brian Comeau informed Council regarding various issues and events related to the *Villa Acadienne*.

9.5 Waste Check – Warden Jean Melanson

Warden Melanson informed Council that Waste Check is looking at the possibility of implementing a recycling plant in the Municipality of Clare to process the recyclables. The recycling contract with Scotia Recyclers will be over at the end of December 2011.

9.6 Clare Energy – Warden Jean Melanson

There was no report.

10) NEW BUSINESS

10.1 Repairs to Cenotaph in Saulnierville

CAO Saulnier informed Council that a request was received from the Royal Canadian Legion Saulnierville Branch to repair the cenotaph located next to the Legion. The costs for the repairs are estimated at \$1,600.00. The Legion directors indicated that the cenotaph is owned by the Municipality, therefore the Municipality will pay the costs to have the monument repaired.



10.2 Financial request from Maple Grove Memorial Club Ceremony

A request was received from the Maple Grove and Yarmouth High Schools Memorial Club for a donation towards the Silver Cross Ceremony to be held on April 16th. The event honours the soldiers of Nova Scotia that dies in Afghanistan.

MOVED BY Deputy Warden Ronnie LeBlanc and **SECONDED BY** Councillor Russell Comeau that the Municipality of Clare donate the amount of \$500.00 to support the Silver Cross Ceremony, an event that honours the soldiers of Nova Scotia that dies in Afghanistan, organized by the Maple Grove and Yarmouth High Schools Memorial Club, to be held on April 16th.

MOTION CARRIED

10.3 Bladder Scanner for Clare Health Centre: Belliveau Motors Golf Tournament – Councillor Ronnie LeBlanc

Deputy Warden Ronnie LeBlanc informed Council that each year Belliveau Motors sponsors local charities by hosting a golf tournament. This year, as well as next year, they have agreed to support the Clare Health Centre for the purchase a bladder scanner as one of the charities they will support. Deputy Warden LeBlanc added that a congratulations and thank you letter should be sent to the representatives of Belliveau Motors for this generous contribution.

10.4 Motion to purchase Power Plant Equipment at Comeau Lumber using Federal Gas Tax Funds

Warden Melanson explained that it had been a couple of years since Comeau Lumber closed its doors and that the property was now in the hands of Green Hunt Wedlake, a bankruptcy trustee. Warden Melanson further explained that Green Hunt Wedlake had received offers on the property but that the offers were too low and that they now wanted to dispose of the assets. They had 2 auctioneers prepared to auction off the equipment on the property.

Greg Shay, the past proprietor of Comeau Lumber, had informed Warden Melanson that \$1,000,000.00 - \$1,300,000.00 of upgrades had been done on the power plant and that the power plant had been selling electricity to Nova Scotia Power at 7 ¢ per kilowatt and had been able to make a bit of profit at that price. Warden Melanson explained that the Utility Review Board was mandated to come up with Comfits and Feed-in Tariffs and that would mean that N.S. Power would be forced to pay more for green energy, electricity produced by wind, sun, water, or wood/biomass, and the tariffs would be 15.4 ¢ per kilowatt (double what Comeau Lumber was getting).

Warden Melanson also explained that he had contacted one of the boiler engineers and had been informed that every possible precaution had been taken to preserve the equipment and that everything was working well. He also stated that he had learned from Green Hunt Wedlake that a company from New Brunswick (Marwood) had shown an interest in purchasing Comeau Lumber and reopening the mill. Last summer, they had conducted a Level 1 Enhanced Environmental Assessment of the site and had contacted logging contractors from Shelburne,



Yarmouth and Digby. They stated that there was no other comparable mill in the region and that there was a potential to re-establish the mill. They had made an offer to the Trustees but the offer was too low and was not accepted.

“But even if the mill cannot be re-established”, stated Warden Melanson, “the land and buildings are still a valuable asset.”

The Warden also reported that in talking with the trustees, they had told him that if the Municipality wanted to purchase the equipment, they would not proceed to auction and if they could recover \$225,000.00 for all the equipment related to the power plant, then they would let the property go to the tax sale.

Warden Melanson said that he recommended that the Municipality purchase all the equipment through the Federal Gas Tax program, which qualifies for this sort of equipment, and also recommended that we continue to negotiate with the trustees for the land. He suggested that we continue to talk with Marwood or other companies about reopening the mill and the power plant. He further commented that if the Municipality was unsuccessful in finding a company to reopening the mill, then the Municipality would still own a very valuable piece of land with approximately 50 acres of land with several buildings, a sewer serviced site with 3-phase power and a power plant; the start of an industrial park. Warden Melanson stated that there are industrial parks in Digby and Yarmouth but none in Clare.

Deputy Warden Ronnie LeBlanc commented that as a councillor, when trying to make large decisions such as this one, we always have to consider what could go wrong (the worse case scenario) but at the end of the day it is Council’s decision to make. He stated that when you look at the price for which we can obtain the property and that the money would come from the Gas Tax Fund, which doesn’t come from the Municipality but from a different level of Government.

Deputy Warden LeBlanc stated “The worse case scenario is that we would obtain a nice big piece of land that doesn’t cost us very much! The best case scenario is that the Municipality can maybe profit from this decision. If we, as Councillors, decided to sit back and do nothing; if we didn’t take a chance, they would have gone to auction and sold off all the equipment on the site. After that, there would have been no chance of reopening the mill. This way, at the very least, we would have an industrial park.”

Councillor Russell Comeau agreed with Deputy Warden LeBlanc, stating that we could not let this opportunity go by and that the Federal Gas Tax will pay for the purchase. He also commented that in the past there might have been businesses that came to Clare to see if they could set up here and there was no place to go. “I support this decision” stated Councillor Comeau, “if we do nothing, we will lose everything. We cannot let this opportunity go by.”

Councillor Simon LeBlanc stated that he believed a wood mill was needed in this part of the Province and stated that all the wood has to be exported from the other end of the Province and that a mill would be good for the economy in Clare.



After considerable discussion, Council agreed to proceed with the purchase of all the equipment associated with the co-generation power plant (produces heat and electricity) at Comeau Lumber using Federal Gas Tax funds.

MOVED BY Councillor Russell Comeau and **SECONDED BY** Deputy Warden Ronnie LeBlanc that the Municipality of Clare purchase all the equipment associated with the co-generation power plant located at Comeau Lumber in Meteghan, from Green Hunt Wedlake Bankruptcy Trustees, at a cost of two hundred twenty five thousand dollars (\$225,000.00).

MOTION CARRIED

10.5 Motion to transfer funds from Landfill Reserve Fund to Capital Reserve Fund

CAO Connie Saulnier stated that the municipal landfill was closed in December, 2005 and that work had been carried out at that time to cap off the old cells at the landfill. She further explained that as of March 31st, 2009, the Municipality had recorded a liability in the amount of \$400,000.00 and the funds to fulfill this commitment were sitting in the Landfill Reserve Fund. The amount of funds required to remain in the Landfill Reserve Fund was derived from estimates received from the engineering firm of Horner Associates Limited. This was a generous estimate which including ongoing testing of the capped site, annual engineering reports to the province, as well as a cushion should repairs, etc. ever be required at the landfill. Mrs. Saulnier explained that there was currently approximately \$730,000.00 in the Landfill Reserve Fund and suggested that funds in excess of the required \$400,000.00 could be transferred to the General Capital Fund for future use on capital projects. These projects would be determined by Council.

Councillor Russell Comeau questioned if there had been a motion in the past to apply any excess money on the Medical Centre. Mrs. Saulnier explained that there was a motion on record to apply a previous year's surplus to the Medical Centre project but that the medical centre loan was now on a fixed term and lump sum payments could not be made at this time. She further explained that it might be possible to make a lump sum payment at the end of the first five (5) years of the loan.

MOVED BY Councillor Nil Doucet and **SECONDED BY** Councillor Danny Hill that the Municipality of the District of Clare transfer the sum of three hundred thirty thousand dollars (\$330,000.00) from the Landfill Reserve Fund to the General Capital Reserve Fund for future capital projects.

MOTION CARRIED

10.6 Motion to approve Mavillette Beach Lifeguard budget

This issue was discussed and a motion was carried at point 9, Committee Reports, under point 9.2.



10.7 Motion to re-nominate Councillor Arnold LeBlanc for another term as the Municipality's representative on Yarmouth Hospital Foundation Board of Directors

As per discussions during the last Council-in-Committee meeting, Councillor Arnold LeBlanc agreed to be re-nominated for another term as the Municipality's representative on Yarmouth Hospital Foundation Board of Directors. Council is in agreement with his re-nomination and proceeded to the following motion:

MOVED BY Councillor Danny Hill and **SECONDED BY** Deputy Warden Ronnie LeBlanc that the Municipality of the District of Clare re-appoint Councillor Arnold LeBlanc to represent the Municipality of Clare on the Yarmouth Hospital Foundation Board of Directors since his first 3-year term expires in May 2011.

MOTION CARRIED

11) DATE AND TIME OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

The next Council Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 20th, 2011 at 7 pm.

12) ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted by

*Jeannette Doucet - Deputy Clerk
JD / ck*

Approved by Council on April 20th 2011