

Town of Channel – Port aux Basques
1817th Regular Meeting
January 13th, 2021

The 1817th Regular Meeting of Council convened at 6:00 pm Mayor Spencer presiding. Present were Deputy Mayor Strickland, Councillors Battiste, Blackler, Coffin, Keeping and Lane. Also present were the Town Manager and the Town Clerk.

Mayor Spencer called for a moment of silence for the former Mayor Aneitha Sheaves.

Adoption of Minutes: It was moved by Councillor Battiste and seconded by Councillor Blackler the 1816th Regular Minutes of December 8th, 2020 be adopted as circulated and discussed. MC Unanimously

Grand Bay Bottom Sanitary Sewer Project: The Town Manager said we are waiting for approvals of an easement for NL Power to install the service for the above ground lift station.

84A Grand Bay Road – Town Retaining Wall & Access Ramp: The Town Manager said this is installed but it's not acceptable as the grade is too steep. He noted the grade needs to be 1/12. He has asked the staff to remove this and install it properly.

Budget 2021: Councillor Keeping asked if the budget was put on our website as people are asking him if there will be a mill rate increase. The Town Clerk said she will put a write up she did for the Mayor on the budget on our website and our Facebook page.

Correspondence: It was moved by Councillor Lane and seconded by Deputy Mayor Strickland the correspondence be accepted and dealt with where necessary. MC Unanimously

Don's Taxi re Additional Taxi Service: Correspondence was received from the owner of Don's Taxi requesting Council reconsider the expansion of another taxi in town.

Councillor Keeping said there is not much we can do as it's a free enterprise for other likewise businesses.

Councillor Coffin said we had three (3) taxi operators many years ago. There is no way we can stop a business from operating.

It was agreed by all that we are here to promote business not stifle it.

Kerstin's Cab Request to Expand: Correspondence was received from the operator of Kerstin's Cab requesting approval to expand his fleet. The Operator noted he will only be parking one cab at 5 Main Street, however has ample parking at other locations. A copy of a letter from the owner of 45 Lakeshore Road was presented confirming allowance for parking of additional cabs.

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Strickland and seconded by Councillor Battiste we approve Kerstin's Cab application to expand on their taxi service given the fact he has additional parking and provided he meets all government approvals. MC Unanimously

Department of Digital Government and Service NL re Provincial Weigh Scales:
Correspondence was received from Minister Sarah Stoodley in response to Council's correspondence of December 11th, 2020 regarding the operation of the Provincial Weigh Scale Inspection Station located on the Trans Canada Highway at Port aux Basques.

The letter outlined the purpose of the inspection station and current staffing levels.

The Town Manager said originally they had two individuals employed and one in training who works 13 weeks and then he is laid off for 13. He said he's not sure if the third person is now full time.

It was noted that there are twelve lights in that area not working.

Councillor Battiste said the traffic camera on the post is now gone as well.

The Town Manager will check into this, the lighting and staffing levels.

Public Works Committee Report: Councillor Keeping presented the Public Works Committee Report of January 11th, 2021.

The Public Works Committee met on Monday, January 11th, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. Present were Councillors Keeping, Coffin, Lane, and the Town Manager. The following items were discussed and sites visited:

1. **Hilltop Lane and Young's Lane** – In response to correspondence received from residents in this area regarding the condition of the street, the committee visited the area. It is evident the street is in need of repair and we recommend that it be included in our Municipal Capital Works 2021 Priority list for paving and upgrades. Also, the residents are to be written and advised of same. (Temporary repairs will be undertaken by the Town Workforce this spring and summer).
2. **Seaview Lane** – The committee discussed the correspondence received from the residents regarding the work that was undertaken to their water connection. It was agreed that any input from Councillors can be made during the Finance Committee Report.
3. **68 Grand Bay Road** - The Committee discussed information from past records and meetings with the property owner. The Town Manager will contact the owner to arrange a site meeting in the near future.
4. **A.T.V Trallway In the Area of Tim Hortons**– The Committee visited this site to assess the concrete block wall that was installed during the installation of the Grand Bay Bottom sewer

upgrades. These upgrades, along with a double guardrail which will be installed in the spring, will safely accommodate the trailway access through this area.

5. **Old Town Garage** – The Committee discussed the plans for removal of this structure. It was decided that this issue should be discussed by Council as a whole in a factual meeting.

6. **Outdoor Skating Rink** – The Committee discussed this and felt that given the issues of public congregation and the issues with COVID, the question was raised should we delay this until next year. To be discussed by the whole Council.

Old Town Garage – Mayor Spencer said we need to have a meeting to discuss where we are going with this, it would be nice to have a plan in place.

Councillor Lane said there are a lot of things in that building that can be reused elsewhere.

The Town Manager said the building needs to be dismantled in a proper manner.

Outdoor Skating Rink – Councillor Lane said as a volunteer he doesn't have any issues with doing this but worries if some child contracts the virus as kids have a tendency to interact more. In all seriousness he doesn't feel we should do it this year.

Mayor Spencer said he doesn't want to encourage gatherings.

Councillor Keeping said without the large piece of plastic we will not be going ahead however it will be ordered but he is not comfortable with this either.

Councillor Blackler said he has no issue with this. He doesn't see it as an increased risk.

The general consensus was we not go ahead this year.

Potholes/Paving – Councillor Lane said he had a question for the Town Manager, he noticed the last couple of days that we were doing some asphalt repairs so he is wondering if we can do some work at Hilltop Lane. The Town Manager advised this is out on work order.

Discussion followed on the potholes around town in particular the one on Main Street below Citadel Street. Councillor Lane said he's wondering if surface water is coming off the hill causing this. He asked the Town Manager if there was any way we can look at this to avoid this common issue. The Town Manager said we would have to dig up the road.

Deputy Mayor Strickland said he thinks the state of the roads up by the hospital is negligent on our part. He said they cut out the pavement to patch it and put cones in that were not visible in the night. Moving forward we should have flashing lights there to make it more visible.

It was noted that there are several areas of town where it is very dangerous trying to get through with people parking. The areas noted were across from Main Street Convenience, near Collier's Lane and on Caribou Road across from the Bar & Billiards. The Public Works Committee will review these areas.

It was moved by Councillor Battiste and seconded by Councillor Lane the Public Works Committee Report of January 11th, 2021 be accepted as presented and discussed. MC Unanimously

Finance and Human Resources Committee Report: Mayor Spencer presented the Finance and Human Resources Committee Report of January 6th, 2021.

A meeting of the Finance and Human Resources Committee convened at 1:30 pm Mayor Spencer presiding. Present were Deputy Mayor Strickland, Councillor Coffin, the Town Manager and the Town Clerk. The Committee reviewed the following issues and made recommendations as needed.

#1. Residents of Seaview Lane Request for Reimbursement for Repairs to Their Waterline:

A letter was received from the four homeowners on Seaview Lane requesting a 50% reimbursement for work carried out to repair their waterline as they felt the problem was created by Council years ago.

Discussion followed on whether Council should accept liability for work that was done over thirty (30) years ago. It was noted that from the curb stop in to the homeowners residence is their responsibility and this leak was inside the curb stops. The Town Manager said we did agree to replace the asphalt that was torn up during repairs and we also provided 20 ft. of municiplex and labour to have the leaks repaired. The Town Manager said we have been in this area a number of times for leaks and will in all likelihood continue until all lines are properly repaired.

It was recommended by the Committee that we not cost share this cost with the homeowners as the work is already done, it was a repair not the installation of new services, this work was apparently done over thirty (30) years ago and it was done with a product that was available at the time. As well by approving this request, the Town would be setting a precedent for future claims.

#2. Resident of Hilltop Lane Request for Relief and Comfort Due to a Trip & Fall: A letter was received from a resident of Hilltop Lane who tripped in the pavement that was deteriorated on Hilltop Lane and hurt herself.

Discussion followed on risk management. The Town Manager said the pavement is in a deteriorated condition and once it was reported by this individual we sent work crews to assess the area and carry out repairs.

The Committee recommends we respond to the resident and advise of Council's actions to address area issues and provide the Town's apologies for any discomfort she may have experienced.

#3. Business Tax Adjustments: The Town Clerk presented a Business Tax Adjustment Plan to assist local businesses because of hardships with shut downs and reduced services due to COVID 19.

The Committee discussed the various provincial and federal programs that are available to assist businesses with the fallout of COVID 19.

The Committee recommended that a list of available programs be compiled to assist businesses with any funding that is available. As well we can sit down with businesses that are having difficulty to see where we can assist.

#4. Waste Management Fee Structure for Commercial Garbage: The Town Manager outlined a new commercial fee structure for waste collection and disposal that he has compiled based on number of bags being picked up at commercial establishments. The Town Manager noted that unless this fee structure is put in place the Waste Management Committee will be struggling financially as they have had a deficit two years in a row.

The Committee recommends that the Town Manager present this fee structure to the Marine & Mountain Zone Waste Management Committee for their approval and implementation.

Seaview Lane – Councillor Lane said he'd like to provide a bit of history of Seaview Lane. Back some time ago the Town moved the water stops belonging to these residents who had all plastic lines going to the stops and when the Town moved them they replaced a section of the plastic pipe with copper pipe. Where the recent leak took place on this lane is in the copper section that the Town put in. The residents are asking the Town to share 50% of the cost they incurred to have the line repaired as have been done in the past.

Mayor Spencer noted that the receipts are not provided as per cost listed and he can't in all good conscience approve something like this with no backup. As well he said he doesn't agree with it at all.

Councillor Coffin said he seconded the motion in the last meeting so that discussion could take place on this. At first he was of the opinion that we pay the 50% but after finding out our men repaired the line and supplied the pipe he feels we did our part in helping them out.

Councillor Battiste reiterated Councillor Coffin's views as did Deputy Mayor Strickland.

Councillor Keeping said he can't agree with the first sentence in the second paragraph. What do you mean we can't accept liability for work done over thirty (30) years ago? He said he doesn't understand why Local Improvement Assessment wasn't offered to the residents in the first place. We can't run away from the fact that years ago we didn't have a planned subdivision so services were put in wherever there was room to do so. Councillor Keeping said if we put a manhole in someone's property and it collapse we'd have to replace it because we put it there. He said he can't arbitrarily support this recommendation.

The Town Manager said this was repair work and the residents didn't come back to us for reimbursement until after the fact. We have invoiced others for repair work and recently won an appeal case regarding an invoice for repairs. Mr. MacIsaac reiterated that the plastic they have their now is not municiplex and therefore they are looking at more leaks if they don't replace it. He said did some research and municiplex did not come out until the 1990s so copper was the common used material back then. Whatever you use will break down after a period of time.

Councillor Lane said if Council don't agree to reimburse them he'll help them write their appeal which the Town Clerk told him he can't do.

The Town Clerk said you can help them write the appeal, she helps people write letters all the time but she doesn't get involved in the issue. She said Councillor Lane said he was going to contact the Town's lawyer to discuss this and you can't be doing that to get information to help with their appeal. She noted she tried to tell him that but he was shouting in the phone at her.

Councillor Lane said he wasn't shouting and he can prove it because he records all his phone conversations. Councillor Lane said he will do what he wants. Councillor Lane said him and the Town Manager were going to talk to the lawyer to see if there was any liability to the Town that's all.

The Town Clerk said she is just trying to tell him what Municipal Affairs advised. Councillor Lane said he can deal with Municipal Affairs.

After a heated debate Mayor Spencer called for a motion to either adopt the report or not.

Waste Management Fee Structure for Commercial Garbage – Councillor Keeping said the Southwest Coast Waste Management Committee met last night to discuss the new fees that were supposed to be implemented last year but because of COVID we didn't move forward. The Committee all agreed with the structure as set out. Councillor Keeping said this will come into effect April 1st, 2021. Councillor Keeping said the rate of \$160.00 per household will be the same but multi-unit buildings such as apartments will pay per unit. The Town Manager read out the new rate fee structure.

Councillor Keeping said we have been very fortunate thanks to the MHA that we have two new trucks. The second new one is due November 2021. He noted that the poor road conditions have caused considerable damage to the trucks which have amounted in very high cost for repairs. Councillor Keeping also said the tonnage rate at the Transfer Site remains unchanged or 2021.

It was moved by Councillor Battiste and seconded by Councillor Lane the Finance and Human Resources Report be accepted as presented and discussed with the exception of Item #1 Seaview Lane. MC Unanimously

Fire Department Report: Councillor Blackler presented the Fire Department Report of January 6th, 2021.

The following is the key points that came from the departments meeting on the date mentioned above:

Members In Attendance: 21 members in attendance

Councillor(s) In Attendance: Blackler

New Items:

Business arising:

- Fit testing for members almost complete (2-3 members left). To be done by the end of January.
 - Lack of communication with the fire commissioner on sanitizing SCBA equipment. Seeking direction but no reply.
- Positive feedback on the Santa Drive around before Christmas.
 - Who's taking it on next year?
 - Can we explore a Trophy for the winners of the Lighting Contest?
- Six members attended a session on alternative fuel vehicles (i.e. electric cars)
- Honorarium process is done and ironed out. Faster than years in the past
 - New Honorarium system in effect as of January 1, 2021

Financial:

- department is in good financial standing
- Year-end statement at next meeting

Correspondence

- general correspondence discussed (magazines and mail)

New Business

- budget announced
 - \$7000 less than last year.
 - Department requesting a heads up on the last minute spending for needed items before the financial year is over
 - What happens to the money not spent (i.e. supper and convention)
- Hazmat meeting
 - Meeting was held with the Council to ensure they are aware there is no active hazmat team. Town is now well aware that we are not "ready to respond". We need to meet as a council and get ideas organized before full group meeting
 - We need a date for the next meeting with the department. Mayor to set the date.
 - Five trained members in the department but little training over the years. More trained to the technician level needed.
 - 9-10 trained members needed to be operational.
- Prank Calls
 - Still continuing (2 a day morning and evening)
 - Under investigations with RCMP
- New hoses.
 - New hose and nozzles purchased
- Training for new truck
 - FES did some training on the air brakes course.
 - Need a program for getting drivers experienced with the new truck. Theory and hands on training

- Cluster Panel for the fire truck
 - Sent off for repairs. Return unknown
 - Old truck is going to be assessed once everything is done here.
- New firefighters
 - Looking for 3 (maybe more) new members.
 - 32 on department right now.
 - Is it in the town site? Ad closes on the 14th-15th

The Town Clerk said in reference to spending before the financial year is over she gives this to the Chief every year.

The Town Clerk explained if monies are not spent i.e. supper and convention as in the past year the Fire Chief came in and wanted to know if it was okay to order some things. They went over budget on supplies and equipment but were under budget in other areas. This happens within all departments of the Town. She said just because you budget a figure and it doesn't get spent doesn't mean you have to ensure it gets spent. It's a working budget.

Councillor Lane asked about the new requirements for the honorarium. Will a report be bought back to Council? Councillor Blackler said he can ask that question.

Mayor Spencer vacated the chair and Deputy Mayor Strickland assumed chair of the meeting.

Prank Calls to the Fire Department: Mayor Spencer said he has an issue with Aliant that we had a major position transfer out of here. The morning of the prank calls he tried to get a hold of someone and was very frustrated trying to get someone. He said when he finally got someone they did tell him that a meeting had been set up with the Fire Chief, RCMP and Aliant.

It was suggested we send a letter to Aliant requesting a meeting to discuss who we contact with Aliant if we have an issue and is the Manager's position being filled.

Mayor Spencer said we need to contact East Link as well about their poles. It was noted that Rodgers shut their office down as well.

Councillor Keeping said when talking about positions the local NL Power Manager has relocated to Grand Falls. We need to invite them in for a meeting to discuss this.

Petition Railway Link Cape Breton: Mayor Spencer said there was a good paper written with a great article to send to the Premier which paints Newfoundland as one of the best places to live and notes Nova Scotia as the worse. Part of it is a fight to get the railway back. There is a petition available on site that the Town should sign to show our support for them to get the railway back so they can go back to a container shipping port.

It was moved by Councillor Keeping and seconded by Councillor Lane that we go online to sign this petition. MC Unanimously

Mayor Spencer resumed chair of the meeting.

Farmers Market: Deputy Mayor Strickland said he put this on the agenda because we discussed this three (3) months ago for roadside vendors to go to the Train Site and possibly put up a few kiosks or

free to clear up traffic congestion. He has been told this is not a good location. One thing he is suggesting that we take the digital sign down, there is no power on it and use the structure to advertise the farmers market.

Mayor Spencer said stalls with roofs work well, an open area just a roof on it. Deputy Mayor Strickland will give this idea to the Economic Development Committee to discuss further.

Deputy Mayor Strickland said he was looking for some leniency from the Town to use this sign structure. Mayor Spencer suggested he take it to the Recreation Committee for discussion.

Councillor Blackler said we need to make this attractive. Deputy Mayor Strickland said two kiosks would be plenty. Mayor Spencer suggested one structure but ensure it is colorful.

The Town Manager noted that the Town of Stephenville put one in on Main Street.

Climate Change Plan: The Town Manager said the Climate Change Plan is part of the Transition 2050 plan that he and the Town Clerk were part of with Fundamentals Inc. This is Phase 3. The original plan when we started was with six other municipalities and the Federal of Canadian Municipalities. Mr. MacIsaac said we recently received 1.4 million for the Bruce II and \$140,000.00 for the Centre Fire Hall. Program Milestones one and two are complete, Milestone 3 is the current document and Milestone 4 is future projects. This matrix is meant to be a living document for climate change initiatives. He read the initiatives from the plan.

Mayor Spencer said this is a fantastic document and thanked the Town Manager and Town Clerk for their work on it.

Councillor Lane asked about where we are with wind power to save at our Water Treatment Plant. We need to check out on the East Coast to see what they are doing.

The Town Manager said the consultant had this researched and right now there is an initiative in there for solar panels for the Bruce II as the experts felt this was a better fit than wind power.

Councillor Keeping asked about proposal for Bruce II with replacing propane and oil. The Town Manager said at this stage the consultant will be doing the work for this. Mr. MacIsaac said by 2023 you should see an annual savings of \$173,000.00.

The Town Manager said in relation to the electric car chargers NL Hydro is going to be putting one in here and there is already one at St. Christopher's.

Councillor Keeping asked in relation to water conservation program are we looking at metering? The Town Manager said a lot of municipalities are doing this but it's very costly.

It was moved by Councillor Lane and seconded by Councillor Battiste we approve the Living Document Climate Change Plan as presented. MC Unanimously

PET Scanner Western Memorial Hospital: Councillor Battiste said that with all that's going on in the media lately on this not being put in the new hospital he feels we should send a letter to the Minister voicing our disapproval.

Councillor Keeping asked isn't Corner Brook mounting a petition. Mayor Spencer said this is a political thing by a candidate running in the provincial election. Mayor Spencer said he talked to Mayor Parsons and they are demanding the liberal government keep the promise made previously by the former Premier.

Councillor Keeping said he recommends we send the letter to the Premier, Cc the MHA, Mayor of Corner Brook and Dr. Haggie. Councillor Lane suggests we cc all LSDs and other municipalities.

It was moved by Councillor Lane and seconded by Deputy Mayor Strickland we write the Premier and cc it to the noted individuals opposing government's decision. MC Unanimously

Dextron Unit Bruce II Sports Centre: Councillor Keeping asked where this is at now. The Town Manager said we are waiting on the local contractor to finish the building. He had problems getting cement because of issues with the truck. Mr. MacIsaac said the tender has gone out.

Councillor Keeping asked the Town Manager to arrange a meeting with Marine Atlantic as soon as possible.

Adjournment: With no further business It was moved by Councillor Battiste and seconded by Councillor Lane the meeting be adjourned at 8:30 pm. MC Unanimously


John Spencer
Mayor


Julia Ingram
Town Clerk