

**Town of Channel – Port aux Basques
1834th Regular Meeting
February 1st, 2022**

The 1834th Regular Meeting of Council convened at the Fire Hall at 6:00 pm February 1st, 2022 Mayor Button presiding. Present were Deputy Mayor Mark Andrews, Councillors Davis, Ingram, Keeping, Lane and Strickland. Also present were the Town Manager, Town Clerk and Incoming Town Clerk Nadine Osmond.

Adoption of Minutes: It was moved by Deputy Mayor Andrews and seconded by Councillor Lane the 1833rd Regular Minutes of Council be adopted as presented and discussed. MC Unanimously

Business Arising from Minutes:

Resident of 16 Main Street regarding Lighting on Grand Bay West Causeway: The Town Manager advised that the poles are now installed. The work will be completed as soon as the weather allows.

Public Works Committee Report Nov 3 & 8, 2021:

Grand Bay West Gabion Cages Installation to Prevent Sea Erosion along the Trail way in the vicinity of the Matthew's Farm – The Mayor advised there were some more major damages in the last storm of Jan 18, 2022.

Fire Department Report November 3, 2021:

Fire Training Courses – The Town Manager advised the Fire Chief was informed of the status.

Rain Storm:

The Town Manager advised that the Public Works Committee have documented the damages from the recent storms and the Town Office have received some letters from residents regarding damages as well that will be included with the application for funding request.

It was moved by Councillor Strickland and seconded by Councillor Lane the Special Minutes of January 19th, 2022 be adopted as presented and discussed. MC Unanimously

Letter from resident of 27 Bay Street regarding new activity on the Fixed Link: The Town Manager advised he has sent a meeting request by email to the MP and the Minister of Transport but has not heard back yet. The Mayor commented that the Ministers are still working from home offices and it is possible that the protest activity in Ottawa may be causing a delay in their response.

Letter from Department of Justice & Public Safety regarding our Municipal Emergency Management Plan: The Mayor asked if we have contacted Judy Brake and the Town Clerk advised that she had and that Ms Brake will contact us after February to have a discussion on emergency training.

Public Works Committee Report December 15:

Caribou Road: The Town Manager looked into the cost of a permanent speed indicator sign. The most appropriate model is not available right now but Canoe Procurement is still sourcing availability.

21 Knox Avenue: The Town Manager advised that any work required will be done once the snow is gone.

8A Bungay's Lane: The Town Manager advised that letters were sent regarding garbage in this area.

Correspondence for February 1, 2022: It was moved by Councillor Strickland and seconded by Deputy Mayor Andrews the correspondence be accepted and dealt with where necessary. MC Unanimously

Honourable Gerry Byrne, Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills re "Across the Cabot Strait; The Impact of a Rise in Ferry Service Fees on Newfoundland and Labrador's Economy: Correspondence from the Honourable Gerry Byrne, Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills enclosing copies of a special investigative report concerning the significant and undeniable importance that ferry operations supplied by Marine Atlantic have for the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, both in terms of Gross Domestic Product and in terms of consequences of increasing ferry rates has on job losses and lower consumer spending in our province.

The Mayor pointed out that all Councillors were provided with a copy of the report to review. Councillor Keeping commented that this is good information related to our discussions on cost recovery with Marine Atlantic and can be used for us to push this issue in further discussions with the Minister. The Mayor said this issue not only affects the travellers it affects everyone that goes into a grocery store. The Mayor said this is our chance to present our stand; the report is a good start when we approach the Federal Government. Minister O'Reagan seems to have the ear of the Prime Minister and this is a good time to try to meet with him. Councillor Lane said it should be a face-to-face meeting with Minister O'Reagan and Mayor Button agreed. Councillor Strickland pointed out that some of the tables and stats in the report are dated and too bad it didn't have more current stats. The Mayor asked everyone to review so we can prepare a response to Minister Byrne and also to prepare for discussions in our next meeting.

Go Western Newfoundland re Partnership for 2022 Series of Wayfinding Maps: An email was received from Go Western Newfoundland requesting the Town consider participate as a partner for the 202 Summer Wayfinding project. They are proposing a \$550.00 level of participation for the Town.

It was moved by Councillor Keeping and seconded by Councillor Lane the Town participate in the 2022 Wayfinding project at a cost of \$550.00. MC Unanimously

Councillor Strickland asked how the cost was determined. The Town Clerk advised she believes the amount is based on population.

Storm Surge Property Erosion: Letters were received from six (6) residents seeking assistance in restoring their properties due to erosion from the storm surge on January 18th, 2022. Letters were from 30 Water Street East, 18 Water Street East, 20 Water Street East, 94A LeGallais Street, 24 Water Street West and 19 Kyle Lane. Further discussion on these letters in the Public Works Committee Report.

Applications to Set up Business at 12 Baird Street and 34 Main Street: Two applications were received to set up a business at 12 Baird Street and 34 Main Street. No discretionary use advertisement is necessary. Both locations had commercial businesses over the years. Councillor Keeping advised that even though there was no discretionary use for these locations, it should still be brought to Council. It was moved by Councillor Keeping and seconded by Councillor Strickland the Town approve the operation of these businesses. MC Unanimously

Finance and Human Resources Committee Report: Councillor Davis presented the Finance and Human Resources Committee Report of January 20th, 2022.

The Human Resources and Finance Committee met at 4:00 pm Thursday, January 20th, 2022 Chairperson Councillor Davis presiding. Present were Mayor Button, Councillor Lane, the Town Manager, Town Clerk and Incoming Town Clerk.

Employee Dental Plan: The Town Clerk presented the financial information related to adding a dental plan to the Town employees' current insurances as per discussions during contract negotiations. We received two quotes however The Cooperators were lower and it was a better plan. This was discussed with all employees who were 100% in favour of adding this to the current plans. The employees understand the cost share ratio for this is 60/40 Town/Employee the same as our other insurances.

It is recommended that the Town move forward with the additional cost to add dental to the Town employees' health plan.

Tax Write Offs: The Town Clerk presented a list of write offs for Poll Tax, Business Tax and one Miscellaneous invoice that we have exhausted all attempts to collect. The Town Clerk went through each one of the reason for the write off. Mrs. Ingram said the auditor advises it is better to write off uncollectable poll and business tax than to have it as bad debt on our books.

Discussion followed on ways and means of collection. It was agreed we get a legal opinion to see if we have the ability to shut down a business should they not pay their business tax.

Councillor Lane asked if we have any other recourse for those that are now closed and didn't pay their business tax should they apply to start up another business.

It is recommended we write of Poll Tax in the amount of \$31,185.85; Business Tax in the amount of \$13,929.37 and one Miscellaneous invoice in the amount of \$4,174.54.

Waste Collection Fees: Outstanding waste collection fees were discussed. The Town Clerk advised notices were sent out on January 12th to three places about their outstanding waste collection fees with a note on them that if not paid water services and/or garbage collection would be suspended. One of the businesses came in the next day, one other had correspondence in which discussed at the Council meeting on January 19th and we have not heard from the other business to date. The Town Clerk noted all notices were received because we had the sheriff hand deliver them.

After much discussion it was agreed to stop waste collection to this business effective January 21st, 2022 until all outstanding fees have been paid.

Property Auctions due to Tax Arrears: The Town Clerk presented a list of twelve (12) properties that have outstanding taxes owing for quite some time. She noted some are vacant parcels of land, some are in the estate of those that left no wills and the rest are vacant. It was noted one of these properties is built on crown land that was never obtained by the owner. This may have to go to auction to be removed from the property. As well one is now being used as a shed.

It is recommended we move forward with sending out notices of outstanding taxes with the intent to auction off if not paid in full in sixty (60) days of the date of the notice.

The Town Clerk advised she did not need a motion of Council for these notices but after the sixty (60) days if not paid she will need a motion of Council to proceed with the auction for each specific property.

Tax Write Offs: The Mayor pointed out that the amounts written off were not from just the past year but from a number of years. The Mayor also advised that our percentage of Poll Tax collection for every year is very high but the auditor recommends that we get these old balances off our books.

Employee Dental Plan: Councillor Keeping reminded Council that when the dental plan was first discussed it was a negotiation item with the union that we would consider. Councillor Keeping asked for clarification on cost and the Town Clerk advised of same. The Mayor advised that when the annual budget was planned the cost of the dental plan was included as it was a possibility that it would be approved.

Waste Collection Fees: Councillor Strickland asked if there has been any correspondence with the outstanding business and the Town Manager advised there was written correspondence sent out to the property owner's last letter to council and there has only been a verbal conversation since.

The Town Manager advised that upon approval of the Finance and Human Resources Committee Report the Dental Plan would be approved as well.

It was moved by Councillor Lane and seconded by Deputy Mayor Andrews the Finance and Human Resources Committee Report of January 20th, 2022 be adopted as presented and discussed.
MC Unanimously

Public Works Committee Report:

Councillor Keeping presented the Public Works Committee Report of January 27th, 2022.

The Public Works Committee met on January 27th, 2022 at 1:00 pm. Present were Councillors Ingram, Keeping and Lane and the Town Manager. The following items were tabled for discussions and the noted sites visited.

#1. Resident of #10 Lillington Avenue Request to Install a Memory Bench in a Location off Read Street near the Royal Canadian Legion.

The Committee visited the area and determined a suitable location and will check to determine if it will infringe on a private property. If there are no issues, we recommend a concrete pad be installed there to place the memorial bench the resident will supply.

#2. #34 Currie Avenue – Water Issues in Backyard.

The Committee visited the area and met with the homeowner and discussed the problem. It was determined there is a constant flow of water. The Committee recommends that the Town Manager take steps to install a drainage system to connect with the existing drainage system in this area. Also, if water continues to flow we will have to further investigate for leaks in the area.

#3. #6A East Avenue - Resident's Concerns Regarding Town's Storm Drainage System in the Vicinity of their Home and Shed.

The Committee visited and met with the homeowner who explained the issues with the culverts. We recommend that during our construction in the spring the culvert be inspected, flushed and extended to the shoreline.

#4. Love of Paws – Efforts to Establish a Shelter in Port aux Basques.

The Committee again discussed this issue and will arrange a meeting with their executive within the next week to discuss a possible way forward for them to achieve their goals.

#5. Town's Storage Depot #320-326 Grand Bay West Road.

The issue of security for this yard was discussed and we recommend the Town Manager take immediate steps to have security lighting installed on the front and rear of the building.

#6. Property at #96 Grand Bay Road.

The Committee discussed this property and recommends that the Town acquire this for future plans related to the Grand Bay Bottom sanitary sewer upgrades project.

#7. Grand Bay West Beach.

As a follow up to the recent damages to the parking lot and entrance to the beach area, the Committee again visited the area. The Committee recommends that during this construction season that interlocking concrete blocks be strategically located in the entrance area to prevent future erosion on the beach and parking lot area. This will also include steps and an access ramp to the beach.

#8. Letters of Request and Concerns from Residents Regarding Damages caused by the Recent Storm Surges and Waves around their Properties.

The Committee held a lengthy discussion regarding these more frequent storms and the impact they are having. We also visited and viewed the properties of the aforementioned residents. We discussed a number of steps that Council could consider and will present these to Council before moving forward on any initiative we propose.

Love of Paws – Efforts to Establish a Shelter in Port aux Basques: Councillor Keeping advised that there was a meeting today, Feb 1, 2022. It was a good meeting with some good ideas discussed. Before anything goes ahead it will be presented to Council for approval.

Grand Bay West Beach: Mayor Button asked about the placement of the concrete blocks. Councillor Keeping advised the blocks would be placed where the fence begins at the current entrance to the beach and extend over to the boardwalk. It will be a protective barrier so that any high seas that come in, it should block the parking lot. Deputy Mayor Andrews asked if the entrance location to the beach is changing. The Town Manager said yes it would have to change once the blocks are in place and may be combined with the entrance to the boardwalk.

Town's Storage Depot# 320-326 Grand Bay West Road: Councillor Strickland asked if we are having any issues there. Councillor Keeping responded no but the yard is wide open and this will add security if anyone is there after dark. The Town Manager has asked for quotes for installation of security lighting. The Mayor said this makes sense because we just upgraded the building.

Letters of Request and Concerns from Residents Regarding Damages caused by the Recent Storm Surges and Waves around their Properties: The Town Clerk advised that there were two more letters received since the visits were made. Councillor Keeping said some of the areas that were checked already have some armour stone in place. There will be a lot of follow up with these residents. The funding program is not yet in place but we will work with the residents and this will all depend on the success we have when discussing with government. The Mayor asked about some of these areas having out falls and Councillor Keeping confirmed they did. Councillor Lane advised that the ideas that Public Works have would be presented to Council.

It was moved by Councillor Lane and seconded by Councillor Strickland the Public Works Committee Report of January 27th, 2022 be adopted as presented and discussed. MC Unanimously

Amber Light by Scotiabank: Councillor Ingram asked if the Town would consider installing an amber light at Martin's corner because the traffic there can often be bad. A flashing amber light may caution people to slow down when entering this area. Councillor Keeping said we did have something like this in place years ago at Read Street by the Courthouse. Councillor Ingram thought this would be

especially helpful during the summer especially for this summer when we have Come Home Year. Mayor Button agrees this area can be confusing to people new to our town. Public Works will research this and report back.

Adjournment: With no further business it was moved by Councillor Lane and seconded by Councillor Strickland the meeting be adjourned at 7:00 pm. MC Unanimously



Brian Button
Mayor



Nadine Osmond
Income Town Clerk