

COVID-19 COMMITTEE
Meeting Notes

DATE: May 12, 2020
TIME: 10:07 a.m. – 11:54 a.m.
PLACE: Zoom online platform

PRESENT: Deputy Mayor Gary Clow; Councillors Jill Burridge; Gail MacDonald; Steve Gallant; Derek Smith; Darren MacDougall; Robert Hughes, CAO; Jeremy Crosby, Deputy CAO and Director of Infrastructure; Wendy Watts, Community and Business Engagement Manager; and Mary McAskill, Recording Clerk

REGRETS: Nil

CHAIR: Mayor Steve Ogden

Mayor Ogden called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.

1. Approval of the Agenda

It was moved by Councillor Burridge and seconded by Deputy Mayor Clow that the agenda be approved as circulated.

3. Committee of the Whole Approach

Mayor Ogden noted that this item is to make sure we treat these meetings as official Committee of the Whole meetings. We will use the same approach such as asking for agreements for proposed resolutions for Council, follow Robert's Rules of Order and the Chair will recognize people to speak.

Robert stated that when we spoke about it last week he wasn't sure what Council was looking for; however, we would like to continue the way we have been doing it with the Zoom call by sending out an informal agenda. What happens is we have a management team Zoom meeting on Monday mornings and from that meeting we choose the agenda item for the Tuesday meeting. It wouldn't be possible to go back to using iCompass and preparing agendas, and meet the requirement of the bylaw for a formal meeting with three days notification and continue to have weekly meetings. So what we did was add the approval of the agenda and approval of minutes to the agenda, but we can't go back to the other way at this time. Robert noted that he was not sure what Council was looking for but if everyone is okay with this approach we can make it a little more formal by approving the agenda and having the minutes approved.

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Councillor MacDonald asked if the attachments could still be included with the agenda that Council needs to see, and Robert replied yes attachments can be sent. Councillor MacDonald asked if these meetings are considered public and Robert replied that the minutes are made public on the website under the Covid-19 section. Robert noted that it is not strictly meeting the requirements of the bylaw or of the ACT, but we have been told by Municipal Affairs right from the start do what you need to do and what we are doing is working well. It gives Council an opportunity to weigh in on a regular basis on the things that we need. Robert stated that we will be talking about committee meetings and when we want to resume them at some point in the future. Mayor Ogden took a poll and everyone was in agreement that we will continue on as we have been doing with the addition of calling the meeting to order and approving previous minutes.

2. Approval of Minutes from previous meeting minutes

Robert noted that Council would have reviewed all of the attached minutes. Following each meeting Mary circulated a copy of the minutes to everyone – with the exception of the May 5 minutes that were just sent out on May 11, 2020, so you may need a few minutes to review those. He also suggested that all sets of minutes can be approved together.

RESOLUTION

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Clow and seconded by Councillor Darren MacDougall that the Zoom Covid-19 Committee Minutes from March 25, 2020 to May 5, 2020 (seven sets), be approved with one correction to the April 28 set of minutes – page 3 – Councillor MacDonald's name should also be included where it states *was in favour of not opening the bylaw*.

Discussion: Mayor Ogden asked that business arising be added to future agendas.

Question: **CARRIED**

4. Operation Update

a) Pipe to Charlottetown Project

Jeremy stated that we were glad to hear that the drilling contractors arrived on the Island and they are in the process of being tested for Covid-19 now. We can now get back on track and we will only be about a month behind. He added that he will have a further update next week.

We are still trying to get the sludge removal program to go ahead. We were supposed to have it done before the fishery started but the contractor wasn't able to mobilize that quickly. We are still trying to get them in and the Department of

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Environment is working with us to get the program completed. It should help with odours and the effluent quality at the end.

Jeremy noted that the he has driven by a few times and the odours have started. They will likely get a little worse and we will put some chemicals in to try and alleviate some of the odour, but the good news is this will be the last year we will have to deal with it.

Mayor Ogden asked Jeremy if he thought the sludge removal would go ahead before June 1 and Jeremy replied that if it is going to take place, it will take place in May. Mayor Ogden noted that he saw in the media that the shell fishery is to be delayed until June 1.

b) Lift Station Cleaning and Valve Exercising

Jeremy gave a quick update on lift station cleaning and valve exercising. He noted that the Town has 29 lift stations and our utility guys are completing the maintenance – pulling the pumps to make sure the bearings are in good shape, checking the fluid levels and making sure that the stations are clean. Our seasonal staff coming back to work will help with the lift station cleaning and valve exercising.

c) Building/Development Permits

Robert noted that we have cleaned up the backlog of permits, but there are two that haven't been issued because we are waiting for additional information from the developers. Everything is up-to-date on the issuance of the permits. We have been able to do all of this remotely. We have been able to switch over to doing things electronically, with the exception of one person and what we did for him was layout the paperwork at the office and had him come in and sign it.

Robert added that last week after our call, he reached out to Samantha Murphy to see if she would be able to tell him when they think they are going to have legislative changes, or whatever may be required to allow us to do more electronic consultation, and she replied that it wouldn't be her department, it would be the land division. He asked her how long it would take them to get to it, or could she give him a contact that he can call and he didn't get a response yet. Robert noted that he would make a note to reach out to Samantha again.

Deputy Mayor Clow stated that we talked about Summerside having a public meeting. Robert noted that Kevin was off last week but he did follow the Charlottetown meeting. Robert noted that you had to register in advance if you wanted to submit a question and if a person didn't have internet they would go to a

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physical location in another room - not the Council Chambers - and ask their question that way. He felt that Summerside probably followed the same approach. Robert noted that our concern is if we go ahead and have a meeting and someone appeals it won't be upheld by IRAC because the province hasn't suspended the requirements under the Planning Act. Robert expects a legislative change will be necessary to enable the Minister to waive some of the requirements during situations such as this and they are planning on bringing the House back for a one day sitting. If they are going to address it, it would be on that day which Robert believes is May 30. That would probably be the earliest we could expect to see anything changed in terms of the regulations.

Robert asked Councillor Burrridge if she was able to reach the developer she planned to have a conversation with and she replied that she didn't, but she did have a long chat with the planning director Kevin Reynolds, and Kevin had talked to Alex in Charlottetown and Thane in Summerside. Councillor Burrridge noted that the province wanted the Charlottetown meeting to go ahead because it was almost deemed essential, because it was in relation to the Canada Games residence. Summerside did do their virtual meeting, but they had only one viewer on the live public meeting and she is not sure if anyone even came into the building.

Councillor Burrridge did try to hook-up with John Horrelt but she wasn't successful. Kevin Green has been emailing from Southside Greens, so he is still trying to get timelines to figure out if he can still make his project happen.

Robert did get some feedback from FPEIM; they did meet with Minister Fox on the issue of public meetings and they brought that up at the meeting. So we have also been lobbying FPEIM to help us out. John Dewey from FPEIM said that Minister Fox did commit that he would take it forward on their behalf. Robert believes that if it is the land division, it should come under Minister Thompson, but he will get that clarified. Robert noted that he will call the staff person responsible and maybe the Mayor could call Minister Thompson or Minister Fox. Robert added that he will clarify with Samantha Murphy today and let the Mayor know which Minister he should contact. Councillor Burrridge suggested calling Peter Kelly to see what he has to say.

Mayor Ogden noted that there was a criticism in the paper today regarding Charlottetown's public meeting. Just basically anyone who didn't have the internet would not be able to participate. He added that it sounds like it might be challenged and it would be interesting to see how that would turn out. He added that the problem with challenges is that it delays the whole process.

d) Canada Day

Robert reminded everyone that we are planning a Canada Day Ceremony, but it won't be a regular gathering and he asked if anyone has any ideas to please let Jeremy Pierce know. Mayor Ogden noted that once we have something concrete to propose, we should get it out to the people via media release. Wendy did note that our competition this year will be that Ottawa is having a country wide Canada Day all day on the television. We should be ready to share our ideas with everyone as soon as possible. Councillor MacDonald noted that we should involve the chief health officer if any of our proposed events are questionable. Councillor Gallant suggested that we could have the police cars and fire trucks too. It was noted that the government is also giving grants for their ceremonies. Mayor Ogden would like the item kept on the agenda for next week.

e) Essential worker top up program

Robert stated that this item is just for information purposes. He noted that the government announced last week that any essential workers making \$3000 or less a month are entitled to a top up program. Our finance director is looking into it because it is the employer who has to apply for it for their employees, and we may have a few employees who qualify. When we see these things we try to take advantage of them.

5. Process for Reporting violation of CPHO Gathering and Isolation Requirements

Robert stated that we are getting some mixed messages on who actually does the enforcing regarding gatherings and isolation requirements and he is concerned about putting staff in a type of situation of a big crowd that is gathering. We also need to know what to tell residents when they call. We are trying to find out what the protocol is so we can tell people when they call. Jeremy spoke with RCMP Officer Glen Dudley and he said to have anyone making a complaint to call the RCMP, but Jeremy will clarify this with the chief health officer and we will get back to Council once we have an official answer.

Mayor Ogden noted that the one thing we need to keep in mind is we need to differentiate between public land and provincial public land and Town owned spaces, and our obligation and responsibility for what we own. Mayor Ogden felt that we had a responsibility either to make sure that the rules are enforced or enforce them ourselves. He noted that he did speak to Corporal Glen Dudley who informed him that the process is that people are to report these infractions to the RCMP, who pass it on to Conservation who then open a file and do an investigation. Conservation has a large number of these complaints, but they only have seven people working for the whole Island and are not always able to get to things right

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away. Mayor Ogden appreciated the fact that Jeremy and Councillor Burrridge took the initiative to go and speak to these individuals. It is a communications issue and Mayor Ogden understands that the people didn't understand the rules in this case. Councillor Burrridge agreed with Mayor Ogden that we do have some of the responsibility when it is Town land. She also recognizes Robert's concerns that meeting of the young people could have not gone as well as it did.

Robert would like to clarify with the province what the actual protocol is; however, he doesn't believe it is our obligation to enforce the provincial violations. Councillor Burrridge stated that this process is so convoluted that it is not working in this particular instance. Robert will investigate and come back with some information next week. In the interim tell residents to call the RCMP.

6. Covid-19 Resumption of Service Plan

We talked a little about this last week. The chief public health officer of the province released their new PEI Together Plan. We combed through that plan to try and figure out what services we should be starting and in what phase. We thought that we would create one document and put everything in it if Council is okay with that strategy. We felt that it would be good for the public to see what our plan is in advance - knowing of course that things can change. We will update the document as required; however, it is still a work in progress

Robert reviewed the items that can open in phase 2 (May 22) as well as what can open in phase 3 (June 2) He also reviewed some of the things that can resume in phase 4 (all included with the agenda package).

Councillor Burrridge asked Robert if he is going to look at enforcement as she sees it can be a problem as these plans go forward and Robert replied no, as he doesn't see it as part of the Town's responsibility. Each organization is required to have an operational plan. Our plan is to have the facilities ready and safe with the restrictions posted. Councillor Burrridge said she is more concerned with unorganized play and maybe we need to sit down with the province and RCMP. If we do see things that are happening we have the 'hammer' to close the playground. The reason Councillor Burrridge doesn't agree is because you would be closing down for two bad apples. She thinks we should deal with issues as they arise so those who have done nothing wrong are not punished for what someone else did. Mayor Ogden suggested that Robert try to figure out how the responsibly can be in the operational plan. Mayor Ogden noted that Councillor Burrridge's point is an important one and needs to be in the operational plan and that process has to be

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clearly communicated to everyone. He added that it is our space and we have a responsibility to make sure people are safe, because there are legal liability issues if we are not upholding our responsibilities to protect people.

Robert noted that the chief public officer is recommending that people continue working from home. It is recommended that we don't open the office until phase 4. However, that doesn't mean we can't change it if we need to.

Robert noted that regarding the enforcement, the chief health officer said on the call they would be enforcing gathering limitations and the restrictions on people who are self-isolating.

Room rentals – Robert would suggest June 12 and after some discussion it was agreed that we should be very cautious. Mayor Ogden agreed that it is very important to be cautious, but also wherever possible we should try to provide the services and everything residents need. Mayor Ogden thinks there is a way we can balance the risks and he would like to see us resume normal operations as soon as possible. Councillor MacDonald feels there is no rush on room rentals as the cleaning aspect concerns her at this point.

Councillor MacDougall wanted to mention that the conservation officers are mandated to manage the self-isolators, and the police are mandated to respond to complaints of gatherings. He wanted to make sure everyone was clear on that. Conservation has the list of people who are self-isolating but the police do not. Gatherings at parks are the responsibility of the police.

Councillor Burrige stated that she is still going to push for the hybrid Planning Act to get some meeting going for our stakeholders.

Councillor Gallant stated that we must be very cautious. His wife works at Beach Grove and it would only takes one infected person to walk into the building to infect people.

Mayor Ogden agreed that we must be cautious, but at the same time open up the economy as soon as possible and make sure the services to residents are provided as much as possible. We should try to provide residents with everything they need. Mayor Ogden asked Robert and Jeremy to review everything and try to come up with a way for us to provide some services, but with an acceptable risk.

Mayor Ogden stated that in terms of staffing and work, he felt that if we could resume our normal operations as soon as possible he would like to see that happen.

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He added that he also recognizes that we need to keep the risk low. From a resident's perspective we need to look at what is important to them in terms of services and programs they receive from the Town.

Day Camp - Robert stated that the best we could do is 12 campers instead of 30 and that would cost the Town about \$1,800. He is looking for direction from Council – expenses may be recoverable, but he doesn't know for sure. Do you want to open the facility? Mayor Ogden stated that he would like things to get back to normal as soon as possible.

Councillor MacDougall noted that there is a *potential* to recover some of these costs and FPEIM and FCM has made representation to the government to provide support (but it is not a guarantee). He agreed with Mayor Ogden that he would like to get as close to normal as possible under the guidelines and he is in favour of the day camp. The gym is different. The down side would be the cost of the cleaning of the equipment, but he is in favour of opening. Jeremy noted that the fitness equipment would have to be moved as people could not social distance. Mayor Ogden stated that if people can't social distance they could wear a mask.

Wendy noted that she believes that Rachel has already filled the list for day camp. Councillor Burridge stated that the demand would weigh on her decision. Robert suggested that we will put the room rentals, day camp, and fitness area in phase 3 – June 12 because we do want to offer what the chief public health officer allows us to offer. Deputy Mayor Clow felt that he wouldn't rush into opening the fitness centre because it is going to be very frustrating and summer is coming. Councillor Gallant agreed with Deputy Mayor Clow on not rushing into opening the fitness centre. Councillor Smith wanted to know why we would open a day camp when Old Home Week is shut down for this year.

Robert stated that we will put the room rentals, day camp and fitness area in phase 3 and do an operational plan for them.

It was noted that this item will be brought back next week.

Robert would like to get us to June 12 (phase 3) before we consider when we are going to resume committee meetings. He stated that it would be a lot of work right now to try and resume them and we would not be able to have our weekly meetings.

Mayor Ogden noted that we will revisit this item next week.

7. Indigenous Instruments Program

Robert noted that Council asked us to go back and see if there was funding available, particularly from Mi'kmag Confederacy of PEI (MCPEI), but we haven't been able to touch base with anyone. Does Council want to make the decision without funding or continue to try to get funding?

Councillor BurrIDGE asked if there was a timeline and Robert replied that he expects there is a timeline, but it likely wouldn't be until the fall if school resumes then. She felt strongly that a big part of MCPEI's funding is for things like this.

Deputy Mayor Clow suggested we defer this item until we have additional information and everyone agreed.

8. Remuneration Bylaw Process

Last week we decided we would go ahead with the Remuneration review. Robert checked the Act and would suggest we set up a small committee to create a terms of reference (some Councillors and Robert) and discuss who we might want to appoint as commissioners. Councillor Smith suggested that anyone who wants to volunteer should send an email to the Mayor to let him know, and then he can appoint people from the list of emails. Councillor BurrIDGE asked how this was handled in the past and Robert replied that in the past Council appointed an outgoing Councillor to do a review. The new MGA sets out a process and we now need to appoint an independent commission to do the review – a one or three person commission. Mayor Ogden noted that the last time this was looked at was about three years ago and the tax change happened since the last review was done. Councillor BurrIDGE still doesn't know why we need to put our resources to it right now, and it has been only three years since the last one was done. She asked as a rule how often is a review done and Robert replied each term of Council is when it was looked at. However, his own personal opinion is that you shouldn't have to do it on a regular basis because the last time it was setup it was to increase with CPI and population, so it should keep up with the times. However the big issue was the federal government changed the tax rule. You once could claim a third of your remuneration as tax exempt but Council can no longer do that. Councillor BurrIDGE questioned why this has to come to the forefront right now. It has been three years and generally it has been every four years. Councillor MacDonald noted that because the federal government made this tax change in 2019, the vast majorities of municipalities across Canada made their change last year and we didn't. Councillor MacDonald felt there was no reason to reinvent the wheel and perhaps we could see if the Commission who did Charlottetown's review is available, and have one Stratford resident and one Stratford business person.

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Councillor Gallant stated that the reason we are bringing it up now is because Councillor MacDonald noted that we are behind the other municipalities who have already done it. Councillor Gallant also agreed we could ask the Commissioner who did Charlottetown's review, plus a resident and a business person.

Councillor Smith agreed that a committee should be formed to work with Robert and get a committee assigned to look at it and Councillor MacDougall agreed. Is this something that would be for next year's budget and Robert replied it would be Council's choice. It will require an amendment to the budget if it takes affect this year.

Deputy Mayor Clow agrees with the Mayor appointing a committee. He believes we need to get this behind us. Mayor Ogden asked anyone who is interested in being on the committee to email him and Robert, and please send your email before next week's meeting.

9. Cotton Park Renewal

Robert noted that Council Gallant received a complaint regarding the state of the grounds at Cotton Park. The management team agreed it would be great to have an independent contractor come in and rejuvenate the gardens and then have our staff maintain it. Councillor Burrridge agreed and added that some of our other parks need work. Her point is this might be a broader discussion than just Cotton Park. She felt it would be a good idea if you are contracting someone they could look at the Whole Town.

However, Robert will take the second suggestion from Councillor Burrridge under advisement for now. Everyone was in agreement to proceed with Cotton Park.

10. Covid-19 Operational Status Report

a) Status Report

The report is being sent out weekly and for the foreseeable future.

b) Community Garden Opening on May 15

For information purposes only.

11. Covid-19 Contingency Fund

No new recommendations today. Jeremy noted that we are keeping a separate account for any Covid-19 expenses and we are at about \$6000 at this point.

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12. Communications to Residents

Wendy took a moment to note that the e-billing signup on our website was the second busiest page on our site.

13. Council Inquiries

Councillor Gallant asked about the media sign and Jeremy replied that it was to be operational last Friday and we put additional pressure on them yesterday to get it done. He added that as soon as it is operational he will send out an email to Council to let everyone know. Wendy noted that one of the things we discussed internally was limiting what we put on the sign over the next little while, as we still have our own information we need to get out to residents. She added that there would not be any community events taking place at this time anyway.

It was noted that we received the first draft of the resident survey.

13. Date of next Meeting due to Victoria Day

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 20, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

15. Other Business

Financial Statements - Deputy Mayor Clow asked about the financial statements and if Kim has been breaking things down monthly, and Robert replied that she has and when you look at the financial statements they will be much more accurate.

Fire Company Lease – Robert spoke to Dave Swan and the committee rejected our idea of a one year lease, so we should have a 20 year lease for our June Council meeting. Robert suggested that Mayor Ogden call and speak with Dave Swan. Mayor Ogden asked Robert to set up a zoom call with him and Councillor Smith to review.

16. Adjournment

There being no further business the committee adjourned at 12:40 p.m.