

A regular monthly meeting of Middleton Town Council was held in-person at the Town Hall, via Facebook Live on Monday, January 15, 2024, starting at 6:42 p.m.

## **PRESENT**

Chairing the meeting, Mayor Sylvester Atkinson; Deputy Mayor Gail Smith, Councillors Michael Fairn, Bernadette Knapp, John Bartlett, Chad LeBlanc, and Gary Marshall; Chief Administrative Officer, Ashley Crocker; Director of Finance Ayeni Abiodun; Director of Public Works, Adam Verran; Planning Coordinator, Sharon McAuley (exited at 7:38 pm); and Recording Secretary, Krista Gear.

### **Regrets:**

**Also in Attendance:** Rob Leblanc (via Zoom), Chief Toole and two members of the Fire Department and three members of the public

## **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Atkinson called the meeting to order at 6:42 pm.

## **2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**240115.01** It was moved and seconded to accept the agenda as circulated. **Motion carried.**

## **3. SECOND READING**

### **3.1 RFD 003-2024: Subdivision Bylaw**

Planning Coordinator McAuley noted that Town Planner Sutherland explained the subdivision bylaw very clearly during the public hearing.

**240115.02** It was moved and seconded that Town Council, on recommendation of the Planning Advisory Committee and after holding a public hearing, gives second reading and approves the Town of Middleton Subdivision Bylaw dated December 13, 2023; and, further, agrees to repeal the Subdivision Regulations of the Town of Middleton, dated June 29, 1966. **Motion carried.**

Brief discussion held noting the inclusion of multiple exit routes based on the observations from last summer's wild fires.

## **4. PROCLAMATIONS**

### **4.1 Holocaust Remembrance Day**

Mayor Atkinson proclaimed January 27, 2024, as Holocaust Remembrance Day in Middleton.

## **5. MINUTES**

### **5.1 Council Meeting**

**240115.03** It was moved and seconded to approve the Minutes of December 18, 2023, as circulated. **Motion carried.**

**6. ANYTHING BY CITIZENS**

Citizen Diane McDonald noted an issue on Commercial St. where she was unable to park and exit vehicle safely because of a mound of snow between parking spot and sidewalk. She requested the Town investigate ways to remove this impediment for people with disabilities.

CAO Crocker noted that Public Works' plan is to remove this snow mound in the evening/night when there are no vehicles present and that this is also dependent on when snow falls.

Diane McDonald then requested that the Town post this to social media/website so that people can plan their travels/shopping.

Diane McDonald also noted that the Town has opportunity to designate heritage properties. Although some homes may not be physically/architecturally significant but will have historical/familial significance and requested that the Town explore ways to protect such properties.

It was noted that some Towns have Heritage Property Bylaws and that these bylaws generally look at the outer appearance/exterior of the heritage buildings. Provincial heritage designations may/can include interior as well as exterior.

**7. NEW BUSINESS**

**7.1 Presentation of Secondary Planning Strategy**

Rob Leblanc of Fathom Studio presented an overview of the process to complete the Secondary Planning Strategy and answered questions.

It was noted to mark February 1 on calendars to attend visioning sessions. Members of Council noted that they are pleased to see a six-month plan.

**7.2 RFD 004-2024: Well #2 Servicing/Pump Replacement**

DPW Verran noted that there was a previously approved budget amount to complete this work. After completion it was noted that there was an additional camera inspection that was required that was over and above the previously approved amount.

**240115.04** It was moved and seconded that Council approve a supplemental budget of \$1,045.0 (before HST) for the Well #2 Service and Upgrade project. **Motion carried.**

**240115.05** It was moved and seconded that Council approve utilizing an additional \$1,045.00 (plus HST) from the Water Utility Depreciation Reserve to fund the final camera inspection and additional labor required. **Motion carried.**

7.3 RFD 005-2024: Municipal Standards and Specifications Document

DPW Verran noted that the draft manual was included in the meeting package and that it ties into development and secondary planning. Currently the Town does not have any municipal standards, which are guidelines for engineers, contractors, developers, for infrastructure. The Town would take over once development is complete and having these standards would help to ensure that the Town receives quality-built infrastructure.

**240115.06** It was moved and seconded that Council approve the Town of Middleton Municipal Standards and Specifications Manual. **Motion carried.**

Brief discussion regarding whether there were any standards or specifications for future power lines to be buried. Power lines are owned by NS Power as such any specifications for this would come through NS Power.

7.4 RFD 006-2024: Accessibility Capital Project

CAO Crocker noted that in the 2023-2024 budget, there was an approved \$10,000 for capital upgrades for accessibility, as requested by the Accessibility Committee. A quote from Carleton Road Industries was included. Items must be delivered prior to year-end.

**240115.07** It was moved and seconded that Council approve the purchase of benches and accessible picnic tables to a maximum of \$10,000. **Motion carried.**

Councillor Fairn noted option regarding accessible benches and picnic tables made of composite materials, noting Lake City Wood Workers as a potential source, and requests consideration of this rather than wood as they would be longer lasting and aesthetically pleasing.

7.5 RFD 002-2024: Appointment of Development Officer

CAO Crocker noted Brighter Community Consulting has another staff, currently an assistant/junior planner/developer, and has requested that he also be included as a Development Officer for the Town.

**240115.08** It was moved and seconded that Council appoint Benjamin Croll as a Development Officer for the Town of Middleton, pursuant to Section 243 of the Municipal Government Act. **Motion carried.**

7.6 RFD 001-2024: 2024 Municipal Election

CAO Crocker noted the RFD was circulated highlighting that there are certain procedures that have to be approved by Council in order for staff to conduct all pre-election activities, election day activities and post-election activities.

**240115.09** It was moved and seconded that Council authorize expenditures for the October 2024 Municipal Election up to \$12,000.00. **Motion carried.**

**240115.10** It was moved and seconded that Council set the fee for the Returning Officer at a maximum of \$3,500.00. **Motion carried.**

**240115.11** It was moved and seconded that Council gives authority to the CAO to determine the Tariff of Fees and Expenses for the 2024 Municipal Election. **Motion carried.**

**240115.12** It was moved and seconded that Council gives authority to the CAO to appoint Assistant Returning Officer(s). **Motion carried.**

**240115.13** It was moved and seconded that Council agree to implement a fully electronic (telephone and internet) election with the electronic election platform provided by Intelivote Systems Inc. for the 2024 Municipal Election. **Motion carried.**

**240115.14** It was moved and seconded that Council set Nomination Day as Tuesday, September 10, 2024. **Motion carried.**

**240115.15** It was moved and seconded that Council set the dates for the Advanced Polling period from Thursday October 10, 2024, to the close of voting on Regular Polling Day of October 19, 2024. **Motion carried.**

**240115.16** It was moved and seconded that Council authorizes the use of the Nova Scotia permanent registry of voters provided by Elections Nova Scotia as the preliminary list of electors for the 2024 Municipal Elections in Middleton. **Motion carried.**

**240115.17** It was moved and seconded that Council agree that in addition to the methods mandated by the Municipal Elections Act to notify the public of the preliminary list of electors and revision methods, that it be left to the discretion of the Returning Officer to determine additional notification mechanisms that will improve the accuracy of the electors' lists. **Motion carried.**

**240115.18** It was moved and seconded that Council authorize election staff to continue to amend the electors' list database in conjunction with the electronic voting system up to and including Regular Election Polling Day. **Motion carried.**

**240115.19** It was moved and seconded that Council authorize the Returning Officer to conduct election education and offer information session(s) for potential candidates. **Motion carried.**

### 7.7 2023-2024 Capital Projects Update

Director of Finance Ayeni gave an overview of the 18 capital projects approved by Council. Currently approximately 50% are complete and the remaining are at various stages of completion and/or awaiting additional resources.

### 7.8 2023 Middleton Fire Department Highlights

Fire Chief Toole noted that calls for December were previously circulated and gave an overview of the report and answered questions. Total of nine (9) incidents for the month of December. The Fire Department held its AGM last week.

In 2023 it responded to 111 incidents, 48 in Middleton, 41 in the County and 22 mutual aid calls. 1472 hours of incident calls for firefighters. 7806 hours of total volunteer hours. As of December 31, the department has a total of 30 members.

Mayor Atkinson and Councillor Marshall extended a special thank you to the Fire Department.

## 8. **REPORTS**

### 8.1 Management Report

CAO Crocker gave an overview of the Management report noting:

- Awaiting responses to funding applications
- Union contract expired Dec 31. Bargaining to begin over the next couple of months – if not completed by March 31 will have to include some estimates in budget.
- DJ's Well Drilling purchase of the two PIDs in business development area is complete.
- Mould abatement and HVAC cleaning complete – issue of two small leaks in the roof to be addressed.
- Strategic Plan ends March 31-typically a five-year plan – will need to review and update and/or create new plan.
- JOHS Committee working on new policies, attended some training and suggested two new flags Mi'kmaw and Pride Progress to be hung in Council Chambers.
- Asset management software, originally built four years ago, training tomorrow for management team.
- Asset management plan does not include maintenance plan/schedule – to be created and included.

Director of Finance Ayeni noted that completed department reports and reconciliations are up to date, quarterly reports complete and on website.

- Recreation – local unhoused population is slowly increasing. There were several successful programs prior to Christmas. Free skating at rink – be sure to check it out.

- Planning – lots of development and potential development in the works, Development Agreements, Secondary Plan, notice of approval for MPS/LUB Housekeeping will be posted this week.
- Fire Department recently held AGM, and working on budgeting, planning.

DPW Verran – snow removal ongoing. Truck repaired (one that was stolen), Well #2 repaired, water main break on School St. near Marshall – third one on that street in as many months. Pinhole leak in sewage treatment line repaired. Water main break as you enter Town just past Big Scoop. Backhoe to arrive at the end of the month. Meeting with NSCC regarding inundation map for reservoir. LED crosswalk sign options being investigated.

#### 8.2 Middleton Fire Department Dispatch Report for December

As noted above by Chief Toole.

#### 8.3 Planning Advisory Committee Nov 22/23 Minutes

Mayor Atkinson noted the minutes were circulated.

#### 8.4 Annapolis County Inter-Municipal Working Group Dec 12/23 DRAFT Minutes

Councillor Fairn noted that the working group has three representatives from each Municipal Unit with a goal to find opportunities to work together. Working through a list of approximately 16 topics. December's focus was recreation services. Next meeting will focus on business development.

#### 8.5 IMSA Board – Dec 20/23 DRAFT Minutes

Mayor Atkinson noted that the minutes were circulated. There is a meeting this coming Wednesday.

#### 8.6 Accessibility Advisory Committee Jan 9/24 DRAFT Minutes

Councillor Fairn noted that the committee met last Tuesday where a new chair and vice chair were elected.

#### 8.7 Mayor

Mayor Atkinson noted that his report was circulated in the agenda package.

### 9. **ANTHING BY MEMBERS**

Round table opportunity for Council Members noting the following:

- Councillor LeBlanc noted that two members of community had reached out regarding School St. water main breaks inquiring about whether there will be a permanent fix. CAO Crocker noted that a recommendation will be going to

budget. Councillor LeBlanc also shared that on February 23-24 the High School will be hosting provincial hockey tournament.

**10. CORRESPONDENCE**

10.1 Annapolis Valley Regional Library

CAO Crocker noted that the correspondence was attached. Gist of the letter is regarding the library's financial challenges of little to no increases in funding/revenue. Staff to follow up with the library.

**240115.20** It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting and move to in camera at 8:21 pm. **Motion carried.**

**240115.21** It was moved and seconded to move out of camera at 8:27 pm. **Motion carried.**

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

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Mayor

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Recording Secretary