

Minutes of the **special session of Municipal Council** held on Tuesday, May 7, 2019, at the Municipal Administration Building, 752 St. George Street, Annapolis Royal, NS, at 10:00 a.m.

Present: Warden Timothy Habinski, Deputy Warden Martha Roberts; Councillors Marilyn Wilkins, John A MacDonald, Wayne Fowler, Burt McNeil, Gregory Heming, Alex Morrison, Michael J Gunn, Wendy Sheridan, and Diane LeBlanc.

Absent: Councillor

Present: Chief Administrative Officer John Ferguson, Municipal Clerk Carolyn Young, and other staff. Approximately 20 members of the public.

New Business

Re: Annapolis County Municipal Housing Corporation (ACMHC) – The Warden invited Board Chair Joan McLean and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Joyce d’Entremont to the podium.

Chair McLean noted her appreciation for the opportunity to present to Council. A recent business decision has become an issue for staff as there is much controversy in the community. They hope to address questions regarding Board accountability. As the County had clarified in the past, the County has no place in ACMHC decisions. ACMHC is autonomous and takes its decision-making role very seriously. All discussions and decisions are based on the values of caring, respect, ethics, quality, and safety. She hopes that this presentation will dispel myths and misinformation that is in the community.

CEO d’Entremont thanked Council for allowing this presentation.

- ACMHC is licensed by two provincial departments – Department of Health and the Department of Community Services. It meets extensive standards in order to be licensed. License reviewers attend at both sites (Mountain Lea Lodge and the Meadows) twice annually. These reports will be made public.
- A year-end financial audit is sent to both departments. The Finance Audit and Risk Committee meets monthly and reports to the Board monthly.
- Abuse incidents at ACMHC are minimal, with most reports coming from staff (not the residents). Appropriate actions are always taken and all staff are trained to report abuse.
- Along with the two provincial departments, ACMHC adheres to regulations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, Department of Labour and Education, Fire Marshal, and food inspection agencies.
- The Board sets the strategic direction and moves it forward – the CEO reports of the four strategic directions at every meeting. They continue to meet and exceed all indicators of the strategic plan.
- There have been no reported care issues. An 800 number is provided for families of residents to submit any complaints. None have been received. A resident satisfaction survey is also circulated annually. 85 percent satisfaction has been achieved, and this is shared with families and staff and posted in the organization. Feedback shows superior care is provided.
- Mountain Lea Lodge is funded by the Department of Health; the Meadows is Funded by Department of Community Services; Outreach to Crosskill Court is provide through provincial funding. There are 175 staff, 165 residents, 25 tenants, 1 CEO, 4 Directors, 3 Managers. When Mountain Lea Lodge and the Adult Residential Centre amalgamated, staffing was cut
- Staffing is the biggest asset. The whole of the Western zone has the largest number of vacancies. A staff/nursing shortage also exists here.
- Approvals have been given to provide on-the-job training for Certified Care Assistants – there are 7 participating at Mountain Lea Lodge.
- Recruitment and retention is main staffing priority.

- Staff work closely with the four unions, following four sets of rules, and meet regularly with unions labour relations are much better than a few years ago. Issues have been solved collaboratively (once by tribunal). No managers are in unionized positions. ACMHC is regarded as a model among their peers.
- ACMHC has a respectful workplace policy, ensuring safe workplace for all. Would investigate any issue of bullying or harassment reported.
- Happy staff is apparent by much laughter.
- The recent Request for Proposals (RFP) – was focused on providing best care, and designed to provide a fair and competitive comparison based on standards to be met. The process is subject to many rules. Only one bidder has declared an issue. ACMHC is at a disadvantage to defend itself as it cannot disclose confidential information. A bidder can request information. Based on best practice, the provincial purchasing policy was followed. The selection has proven to be the right one.
- ACMHC has payroll of \$300,000 every two weeks. Local staff as well as from neighbouring areas.
- ACMHC continues to supports local business – restaurants, capital projects, local building materials, local venues, catering, coffee, donuts and flowers. They donate to the local Ciderfest festival, and participate in the parade. They have applied for funding to hire four students, received a grant to start community garden, and a grant to start a Youth day program. They continue to give back to the community.

Joan McLean introduced the Board members present.

CAO Ferguson thanked them for the presentation and noted that there are high emotions in the community. The parties need to find a way to work through issues and move forward. So many things come into play during a tendering process – standards, rules, regulations; and many things must be considered when making a decision. Room for constant improvement is good for both the organization and the community. He wished them all the best as they moved forward.

Joyce d'Entremont closed by highlighting the team at ACMHC. They lead and manage every day. They are dedicated. She thanked council for allowing time for this presentation today.

Warden – thanked for presentation and for all those who came under no obligation. Healing the rift in the community was the motivation and noted this is a way to begin this process.

Recess

A brief recess was held from 10:45 a.m. until 11:02 a.m.

Additions to the Agenda

It was moved by Councillor Heming, seconded by Councillor MacDonald, to add Forestry Advisory Committee and Economic Development Committee to the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Re: Forestry Advisory Committee – Councillor Heming read from a prepared statement:

The importance of the *Annapolis County Economic Development Strategy 2050* and *Annapolis County Forestry Report 2018* cannot be overlooked in light of [1] the most recent United Nations IPCC Report on Climate Change that emphasizes, in part, the need for emission-reducing policies to ensure “a just transition of the workforce” that creates “decent work and quality jobs; and a declaration on ‘forests for climate’ highlighting the important role of forests, including carbon offsets, in reaching Paris Agreement

goals” and an “e-mobility revolution” requiring high internet infrastructure, and [2] the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) report that states “nature is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history — and the rate of species extinctions is accelerating, with grave impacts on people around the world now likely.” I believe there can no longer be any reasonable argument against the fact that the world is now facing imminent and interrelated climate and biodiversity crisis.

• **Refer Item to Forestry Advisory Committee for Report to June COTW**

It was moved by Councillor Heming, seconded by Councillor McNeil, to refer the following to the Forestry Advisory Committee: The Forestry Advisory Committee will review all current and proposed forestry management practices on land within our municipal boundary using *Forestry Report 2018* and *An Independent Review of Forest Practices in Nova Scotia* (Lahey Report) as their guide and report back to June 11 COTW.

Deputy Warden Roberts moved, seconded by Councillor Sheridan, to amend the motion by striking ‘and report back to June 11 COTW’ and replacing it with ‘to bring back a terms of reference to May 21 council’. Motion carried 9 in in favour, 1 against.

The question was called on the motion as amended:

MOTION 190507.01 Refer Item to Forestry Advisory Committee for Review and Report to June COTW

It was moved by Councillor Heming, seconded by Councillor McNeil, to refer the following to the Forestry Advisory Committee: The Forestry Advisory Committee will review all current and proposed forestry management practices on land within our municipal boundary using *Forestry Report 2018* and *An Independent Review of Forest Practices in Nova Scotia* (Lahey Report) as their guide and to bring back a terms of reference to May 21 Council. Motion carried. 9 in favour, 1 against.

Councillor Heming withdrew the Economic Development Committee item and requested that it be added to next week’s Committee of the Whole agenda.

Adjournment I

Upon motion of Councillors McNeil and LeBlanc, the meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Warden

Municipal Clerk