

Memorandum of Understanding Steering Committee Meeting
Thursday, July 30, 2015 at 9:30am
Municipality of the County of Pictou - Council Chambers

In attendance:

Municipality of the County of Pictou	Warden Ronald Baillie Councillor Deborah Wadden Brian Cullen, CAO
Town of New Glasgow	Mayor Barrie MacMillan Lisa MacDonald, CAO
Town of Pictou	Mayor Joe Hawes Councillor Cam Beaton Scott Conrod, CAO
Town of Stellarton	Mayor Joe Gennoe Councillor Denise Taylor
Sean Lui, MOU Policy and Research Assistant	
NS Department of Municipal Affairs	Municipal Advisor Emily Pond
Regrets:	Councillor Jack Lewis Joyce Eaton, Town Clerk

Observers in Attendance:

Town of Pictou	Councillor Bob Naylor Councillor Lynn Vigneault
Town of New Glasgow	Councillor Nancy Dicks Councillor Trudy Vince
Municipality of the County of Pictou	Councillor Scott Johnston Councillor David Parker
Media	Sueann Musick, The News

Call to Order

Warden Baillie called the meeting to order.

Approval of Agenda

Motion: To approve the Agenda.

Moved: Mayor Barrie MacMillan

Seconded: Councillor Denise Taylor

Motion Approved.

Approval of Minutes – July 14, 2015

Motion: To approve the Minutes for July 14, 2015.

Moved: Councillor Deborah Wadden

Seconded: Councillor Cam Beaton

Motion Approved.

Correspondence

a. The Honourable Mark Furey

Committee members reviewed correspondence to the Honourable Mark Furey thanking him for his support during his time as Minister of Municipal Affairs.

b. The Honourable Zach Churchill

Committee members reviewed correspondence to the new Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Honourable Zach Churchill. The letter noted past support from his office and staff. Municipal Advisor, Emily Pond noted that the new Minister is very engaged in the Pictou County MOU process and the support from the Department of Municipal Affairs remains the same as the Provincial Government strongly supports the MOU work.

Business Arising from the Minutes

a. Communications Report

CAO MacDonald reviewed the communications report included in the package. Councillor Taylor noted that misinformation surrounding the MOU is present.

b. Governance Study

CAO Cullen reviewed the draft electoral boundary map and noted that he had not received any feedback from the Committee, outside of the Town of Pictou boundary comments made during the last MOU meeting.

Mayor Hawes inquired about what elected body would approve the remuneration recommendation. Warden Baillie requested that the MOU Steering Committee consider

recommending a specific remuneration schedule for the regional elected structure based on the Grant Thornton Report recommendations. Warden Baillie suggested the Regional Mayor role should be considered \$50,000.

Committee members noted that there may be a higher workload for Council members during the transitional years of the regional government structure.

CAO Conrod indicated that the Grant Thornton report would be filed as evidence as part of the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB) conditional application. Committee recommendations, different than those listed in the Grant Thornton report, would be used within the financial modelling to be presented to the NSUARB. Any differences between those recommended by the consultant and the committee will be noted for the NSUARB.

Motion: To approve the following elected official per annum remunerations for inclusion in the financial modelling:

Mayor \$50,000
Deputy Mayor \$27,875
Councillor \$25,000

Moved: Cam Beaton
Seconded: Mayor Barrie MacMillan

Approved.

CAO Cullen reviewed the various entitlements being proposed in the Grant Thornton Report such as RRSP and Health & Dental Program. There was a lengthy discussion about the benefits entitlement for elected officials. Mayor Gennoe asked what the RRSP program would entail and it was noted that it was proposed to be a dollar for dollar contribution up to 7%.

Motion: To not include the RRSP option from the Grant Thornton Report within the financial modelling.

Moved: Councillor Denise Taylor
Seconded: Mayor Barrie MacMillan

Approved.

Motion: To not include the recommendation of the Health and Dental Program option from the Grant Thornton Report within the financial modelling.

Moved: Mayor Barrie MacMillan Councillor Denise Taylor
Seconded: Councillor Denise Taylor

CAO Cullen noted that the overall cost of the proposed benefit of health and dental for the new government would be \$4,200 to cover elected officials.

Approved.

1 Nay vote recorded.

CAO Cullen noted the revised budget based on the changes approved by the Committee would be \$462,947 compared to the current collective costs of \$690,000 for the four municipal units. The committee's recommendation would see a potential savings of close to \$230,000. He noted the remainder of the budget relates to the potential technology costs and travel expenditures for Council.

Motion: To accept and file the Grant Thornton Governance Report with the NSUARB.

Moved: Councillor Denise Taylor

Seconded: Mayor Joe Hawes

Approved.

c. Governance & Electoral Districts – Public Consultation Plan – CAOs Cullen & MacDonald

CAO MacDonald circulated a recommendation report related to the MOU Governance and Electoral Districts Public Consultation Plan. It was recommended that the plan include a formal media launch and release of the report, four public consultation sessions in various locations, newspaper advertising, radio advertising, social media promotions, email distribution, Pictou County Chamber of Commerce Business Breakfast Series, Survey and Consultation Feedback opportunities. Councillor Taylor recommended that a consultation session be held at the NSCC in September after the students are back in school. She further recommended that the committee attempt to reach the large employers in the region so their employees can be engaged through a newsletter, etc. Councillor Wadden recommended that a morning, afternoon and evening session be held on each of the four consultation days to ensure that all demographics of our community are available to attend. It was agreed that the NSUARB conditional application being filed before August 31st include the Grant Thornton Governance Report and the Electoral Districts report would be filed in September following the public consultation.

Motion: To approve the public consultation plan as presented for the governance and electoral districts including a session at the NSCC in September; engagement of large Pictou County employers if possible; and the utilization of communications support from the Department of Municipal Affairs.

Moved: Mayor Barrie MacMillan

Seconded: Councillor Denise Taylor

Approved.

CAO Cullen reviewed the first draft of the powerpoint presentation for the public consultation sessions.

New Business

a. Updated MOU Profile Report

CAO Conrod circulated the revised Operational and Community Profiles document for the Participating Municipal Units. It was noted that this revised draft will be placed on the website.

b. Conditional Application – Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (UARB)

CAO Conrod noted the documents circulated prior to the joint Council meeting with the Minister are ready to be executed as all Participating Municipal Units are agreed to proceed with a conditional application to the NSUARB.

c. Scheduling of Next Meeting Date – Special Private Meeting

Thursday, August 13th at 9:30am in the Municipality of the County of Pictou Council Chambers

Motion: To go into the Private Session.

Moved: Mayor Joe Hawes

Seconded: Councillor Cam Beaton

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the meeting.

Moved: Mayor Joe Hawes

Seconded: Councillor Cam Beaton

Motion Approved.