



Rural Municipality of Belfast (RMB)

Mayor: Garth Gillis; Chief Administrative Officer: Bob Brooks; *Incorporated 1972*

COUNCIL MEETING - AGENDA

Wednesday, March 20, 2024, at 7:00 PM
Upstairs Hall, Wood Islands Market

Council:	Mayor Garth Gillis (<i>Chair</i>)	Deputy Mayor Lynn Docherty
	Councillor Katherine Bryson	Councillor Trisha Carter
	Councillor Billy Gamble	Councillor Charley McGivern
	Councillor James Kinnee (Regrets – unable to attend)	
Administration:	CAO Bob Brooks	Ashley Feschuk
Guest Speakers:	RCMP – Staff Sergeant Robinson	

Please Be Aware: RMB Council Meetings are Livestreamed to facebook.com/belfastpei

Item Order of Business

1. **Call to Order** – Council Meeting to be called to order by Mayor Gillis at 7:00 PM.

“In the spirit of Reconciliation, we acknowledge that the land upon which our organization stands is unceded Mi’kmaq territory. Epekwitk (PEI), Mi’kma’ki, is covered by the historic Treaties of Peace and Friendship. We pay our respects to the Indigenous Mi’kmaq People who have occupied this Island for over 12,000 years; past, present, and future.”

2. **Declarations of Conflict of Interest** – Do any members of Council have a conflict of interest with any items on today’s Agenda? *(Council Members involved in any Community Grants Applications on today’s Agenda will need to declare a Conflict; if they are an Organizer, if they are a Board Member, or if they have Monetary Involvement. Those Council Members that are merely participants or that have family members that are participants, fall under Community-of-Interest and are not in a direct Conflict of Interest. Those members MAY step out if they feel they have a ‘Perceived Conflict of Interest’ (if they wish). Council Members in Conflict will need to step out during any discussion about their individual Community Grant Application, but may remain and vote on any other application, and on the Community Grants Recommendations as a block)*
3. **Approval of Agenda** – Any other suggested Agenda Items for today’s meeting? *(to be placed under Item 14)*

Moved by _____ and seconded by _____
to adopt the agenda as presented/amended.
Votes for: ____ Votes against: ____ Result: _____

4. **RCMP Report for the Month of February** *(presented by Staff-Sergeant Robinson)*
5. **Public Presentations (if any)** – *(Members of the public are offered five minutes to make a presentation to Council. After the five minutes are up, the Presenter may ask for an extension – only granted if UNANIMOUS consent of Council is given. Following the presentation, Council may or may not ask questions)*
 - a) ??? _____

6. **Adoption of the February 21, 2024, Council Meeting Minutes** (*attached - previously distributed; all changes incorporated*).

Moved by _____ and seconded by _____ to approve the Minutes of the February 21, 2024, Council Meeting as presented.
 Votes for: _____ Votes against: _____ Result: _____

7. **Business arising from the February 21, 2024 Council Meeting Minutes** (*already addressed in today's agenda – no other items*).

8. **CAO Report** (*presented by CAO - Bob Brooks*)

a) **Financial/Variance/Planning Report**

i. **Provincial Credit Union Account Balances @ March 6, 2024:**

a. Share Acct 001	\$5.44
b. Chequing Acct 010	\$85,816.61
c. Gas Tax (CCBF) Acct 011 (<i>for approved projects</i>)	\$125,617.18
d. Reserve Savings Acct 020	\$37.45
e. Gas Tax (CCBF) GIC Acct 040 (<i>for approved projects</i>)	\$52,016.24
f. Reserve Savings GICs; Acct 041 & 042	\$66,288.49

(Breakdown as approved)

1. RMB Expansion Reserve	\$25,000.00
2. Emergency Preparedness Reserve	\$5,000.00
3. 2 nd Warming Ctr Generator Reserve	\$5,000.00
4. Remaining*	\$31,288.49
<i>(*to be considered during March 20, 2024 Budget Deliberations)</i>	
5. Remaining Funds in ShopBelfastPEI Program	\$523.01
<i>(There are also 12 T-shirts left to be sold or gifted)</i>	

CAO – Other Matters dealt with/involving the CAO:

- b) **Generator Funding/Installation** – The Generator for the Wood Islands Warming Centre funded through the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency is now on-site at the Wood Islands Market. RMB has already received 50% of the funds and have paid-out those funds to the supplier. The remaining funds can now be dealt with in a similar fashion. Funding for the installation through the Regional Growth Initiative Fund should be in place in early April. Many thanks to our funders and to the Wood Islands and Area Development Corporation for hosting the Secondary Warming Centre.

CAO – During the First Reading Budget deliberations - the CAO was asked to elaborate on a few items:

- c) **Evolution of a Municipality** – The Rural Municipality was incorporated in 1972 to operate as a Community Government, or what was called a Community Improvement Committee or (CIC). Until January 1, 2019, it was administered by one person, typically out of their basement on average 10 – 20 hours per month.

After many years of consultation, the Government of PEI (the Province) enacted new legislation called the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) that came into force on December 23, 2017. All CIC's were required to transition into the many pieces of legislation, bylaws, financial infrastructure/reporting, administrative procedures and practices and requirements of the MGA within five years.

In January of 2019, the Council of the day, brought on the current CAO to assist in the 5-year transition of adhering to the MGA requirements. RMB, successfully completed that transition in December of 2022. One requirement that was not completed, was the adoption of an Official Community Plan and Development Bylaw – that requirement was paused after the Province gave an extension, and it was felt that RMB residents and the incoming (new Council) wanted an opportunity for additional consultation; prior to accepting a, Official Community Plan and Development Bylaw proposal (or not).

RMB is currently in full compliance with the MGA as it relates to legislation, bylaws, administrative duties and office requirements.

- d) **RMB Office** – As Council is aware, having a fully accessible office operating five days per week and open to the public at minimum four hours per day, is a requirement of the MGA. Due to projects like the Official Community Plan and Development Bylaw, and the newly adopted RMB Strategic Plan and workload it presents; these tasks are driving the current workload and potential further growth for RMB; along with the newly added Annexation Exercise.

The recognition of possible or eventual growth of the office space requirements was also the driving factor for RMB to set up a RMB Expansion Reserve. At that time, it was expected that the expansion would not be required for a couple years. That said, it was unexpected that a larger office facility, one that would be suitable for RMB's needs for many years to come, became available for April 1, 2025. The new space being referenced, is the Old Train Station, that was being used as a restaurant. The previous restaurant tenant chose not to renew their lease.

WIADC is currently upgrading the facility and has offered RMB first choice, before they offer it to someone else. If RMB does not take WIADC up on its offer, it is unknown if that larger facility will become available to RMB again.

RMB has seen significant growth, ever since RMB decided to transition into the MGA requirements. That said, during the Budget discussions, RMB Council is now left to decide:

1. To continue on the path of growth that RMB is currently on; and lease the new space that WIADC is offering for April 1, 2025 (as described in the Capital Plan portion of the budget); or
2. Pause on the expansion plans until a later date, for when the expansion is then fully required.

With either scenario, there will be no effect on the 2024/25 budget; however, there will definitely be an effect on the 2025/26 budget and beyond. It is up to Council to decide in this budget, when we get to the budget in today's Agenda.

- e) **Official Community Plan and Development Bylaw** – In a recent meeting with Municipal Affairs and Lands; RMB had a chance to ask questions for clarification and describe the current premise that RMB is working under.

Moving forward, it is planned that RMB will continue with the process to conclusion, and that once all Council and Public consultation is complete; Council will decide as to whether to move forward with the end product or not. Just a reminder that the Plan and Bylaw contract was already awarded and is being paid for by the Infrastructure Secretariat.

In that same meeting, it was asked if it was advisable to include the Annexation Exercise in the same process? RMB was advised that it would be better in parallel – RMB is looking into that. ASC Chair – Councillor Katherine Bryson will cover the RMB Annexation Exercise update in the next item on the Agenda.

9. **Annexation Exercise - Update** (*presented by ASC Chair – Councillor Bryson*). Councillor Bryson will detail the recent Municipal Affairs and Lands meeting and the confirmation of the process moving forward.
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10. **Community Grants Committee – Recommendation(s) to Council** (*presented by Committee Chair – Councillor Gamble*):

On March 8, 2024, the Community Grants Committee deliberated on 20 Grant Applications for this year’s 2024/25 Community Grants cycle. Following the deliberations Committee Members approved three recommendations for Council consideration.

With these Community Grant allocations, Committee Members also recognized that by providing these Community Grants to the various community groups, volunteer groups, facilities, sporting groups, and numerous miscellaneous groups; RMB is able to help support many integral services to the RMB residents. Recommended Grants/Services for this year’s funding cycle include:

(1) Recommended 2024/25 Grant Allocations as follows:

1. Belfast Rural Fire Department	\$115,000
2. Belfast Rec Centre (GPEI Rink Grant)	\$8,500
3. Belfast Rec Centre (Operations)	\$26,000
4. Belfast Rec Centre (Warming Centre)	\$1,208
5. Belfast Area Watershed Group (BAWG)	\$7,000
7. Belfast Days	\$7,500
8. Belfast Historical Society	\$4,000
9. Belfast Minor Hockey	\$3,000
10. Belfast Wrestling Club	\$1,500
14. Pinette Raceway Inc.	\$2,000
16. Point Prim Lighthouse Society	\$3,000
18. Vernon River/Belfast Community Pantry	\$2,400
19. WIADC – Warming Centre	\$1,208
20. WIADC – Wood Islands Market Operations	\$10,000
21. WIADC – Wood Islands Lighthouse	\$3,000

Total 15 Allocations Recommended \$195,816

(2) Addition of one question to next years' Grant Program Applications and ongoing:

The Community Grants Committee is recommending that next years' applications and beyond, contain a question about financial need for the community grant; i.e. any other funders involved and % of funds from RMB.

(3) Move Warming Centre allocations to RMB Operational Line-Item:

The Community Grants Committee felt; that as the Warming Centre allocations are for operations and maintenance of RMB's 1st and 2nd Emergency Warming Centres, the annual allocations more appropriately belonged as RMB Operational Line-Items and out of the Community Grants Program. Recommended to be reallocated in the RMB budget allocations.

For Council Consideration...

Moved by _____ **and seconded by** _____ for Council to approve the three recommendations of the Community Grants Committee, for inclusion into the 2024/25 RMB Budget as presented.

Votes for: ____ Votes against: ____ Result: _____

11. **2024/25 Budget, Financial Plan and Capital Plan – 2nd Reading** - (*presented by CAO Bob Brooks*) (*attached*). RMB completed the First Reading Budget deliberations on February 21, 2024. At that meeting, Council decided to defer any Amendments to the Budget, Financial Plan, and Capital Plan until Second Reading. Council also decided to allow the Community Grants Committee to do its work, and to present to Council any recommendations, without the restriction of a spending CAP (*recommendations as presented above*).

Today the CAO will present amendments to the Budget, as required from the Community Grants Committee; amendments required as a result of updated BAWG projection numbers; and an amendment to the Capital Plan section, giving greater detail to the RMB Expansion Project and direction from Council.

The CAO will also be looking for direction from Council regarding the use of the Reserve Funds; will be including any other amendments that Council wish to bring to the Budget; and an amendment to confirm the \$0.03 increase to the mill rate (or other).

The Mayor will then be seeking approval for Second Reading as amended; and final approval of the RMB 2024/25 Budget, Financial Plan and Capital Plan.

Any questions from Council, before moving to the Amendments?

AMENDMENT 1.

An amendment to accept or amend the 2024/25 Community Grants Recommendations from the Community Grants Committee...

Discussion?

Moved by _____ and **seconded** by _____ to accept the 2024/25 Community Grants Recommendations as presented/or amended above.

Votes for: _____ Votes against: _____ Result: _____

AMENDMENT 2.

An amendment to accept the updated BAWG in/out projection numbers as presented....

Discussion?

Moved by _____ and **seconded** by _____ to accept the updated BAWG in/out projection numbers as presented.

Votes for: _____ Votes against: _____ Result: _____

AMENDMENT 3.

An amendment to accept the updated Capital Plan description on the RMB Expansion Project as presented/or amended....

Discussion?

Moved by _____ and **seconded** by _____ to accept the updated Capital Plan description on the RMB Expansion Project as presented/amended.

Votes for: _____ Votes against: _____ Result: _____

AMENDMENT 4. – Other?.

Discussion?

Moved by _____ and **seconded** by _____ to _____.

Votes for: _____ Votes against: _____ Result: _____

AMENDMENT 5.

An amendment to allocate the Reserve Fund Balances as follows:

- RMB Expansion Reserve: \$45,288
 - Emergency Preparedness Reserve: \$10,000
 - 2nd Warming Centre Generator Reserve: \$11,000
- \$66,288**

Discussion?

Moved by _____ and **seconded** by _____ to accept the Reserve Allocations as presented/amended.

Votes for: _____ Votes against: _____ Result: _____

AMENDMENT 6.

An amendment to accept the \$0.03 Mill Rate Increase for 2024/25 as presented....

Discussion?

Moved by _____ and **seconded** by _____ to accept the proposed Mill Rate Increase of \$0.03 for the 2024/25 fiscal year as presented/amended.

Votes for: _____ Votes against: _____ Result: _____

Having had 1st Reading of the 2024/25 RMB Budget, Financial Plan and Capital Plan, and having had the acceptance of various Amendments; the 2024/25 RMB Budget, Financial Plan and Capital Plan; RMB is now ready for 2nd Reading as Amended and Final Approval.

Moved by _____ and **seconded** by _____ to approve 2nd Reading of the 2024/25 Rural Municipality of Belfast Budget, Financial Plan and Capital Plan, as amended: and give final approval.

Votes for: _____ Votes against: _____ Result: _____

12. **Planned Promotional/Educational pieces being developed for the RMB Website** (presented by Admin - Ashley Feschuk). As described in this year’s Budget deliberations, RMB have a number of large projects on the go. To help residents understand where we came from; where we are now; and some of the major projects and timelines; RMB is planning to include on our website; the following:
 - a. **Evolution of a Municipality;**
 - b. **Official Community Plan and Development Bylaw** – Process and Timelines; and
 - c. **Annexation Exercise** – Process and Timelines.

13. **Events and Social Media Report** (presented by Admin - Ashley Feschuk)
 - a. **EMO Training Reports** _____
 - b. **MEMP Special Council Meeting** _____.
 - c. **Christmas Decorations Clean-up – Picking a date?** _____.

14. **New Business for the Agenda** (*as discussed in Approval of Agenda, Item 3 above*)
- a) **Belfast Consolidated School Report Update** (presented by Deputy Mayor Docherty)
 - b) **Community Pantry Update** (presented by Councillor Bryson)
 - c) **Belfast Days – Save the Date** (presented by Deputy Mayor Docherty)
 - d) **Wood Islands Ferry Update** (presented by Councillor Bryson)
 - e) **IONA Park Revitalization** (presented by Councillor McGivern)
 - f) ??? _____.
 - g) ??? _____.
15. **Next Meetings:**
- a. **Regular Council Mtg** – Wednesday, March 17th @ 7:PM – Upstairs Meeting Hall, Wood Islands Market
16. **Adjournment** – As there is no further business...
- Moved** by _____ to adjourn the meeting at: _____

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