

MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF WEST HANTS
Committee of the Whole
February 24 , 2015

In attendance:	G. Cochrane	Chair
	R. Dauphinee	Warden
	S. Pineo	Councillor
	R. Matheson	Councillor
	V. Swinamer	Councillor
	M. Campbell	Councillor
	T. Brown	Councillor
	J. Daniels	Councillor
	R. Allen	Councillor
	C. Osborne	CAO
	R. Sherrard	Director of Public Works
	K. Kehoe	Director of Recreation
	M. Laycock	Director of Finance
	K. Dempsey	Director of Planning
	R. Brown	Municipal Clerk
	J. Woodman	Administrative Assistant

There were 3 members of the public in attendance.

1. Approval of Agenda & Additions

There were no additions to the agenda.

2. Approval of Minutes of January 29, 2015

MOVED by Warden Dauphinee and Councillor Campbell that the Minutes of January 29, 2015 Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved as circulated, with any errors or omissions noted.

Motion Carried.

3. Presentations

There were no presentations.

4. Hearing (s) – Dangerous & Unsightly

There were no hearings scheduled.

5. Report of By-law Enforcement Officer

Deferred until March meeting.

6. Business Arising from Minutes

There was no business arising.

7. Report of Director of Recreation (2014)

Deferred until March meeting.

8. Report of Director of Planning (August/September 2014)

Deferred until March meeting.

9. Report of Director of Public Works

Deferred until March meeting.

10. Administrative Report

a. Vision Mission

A power point was presented and circulated. CAO Osborne reported during the past few months she has had the opportunity to review a few key strategic documents and interacted with Council and staff who determined that West Hants does have a strategic direction, however not formally structured. She noted in her search for clarity and direction she reviewed documents that were commissioned and created for West Hants which included the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan which was developed in compliance with the Federal Gas Tax Program, however noted some of the items can be found in other multiple documents after that. She explained she also reviewed the Municipal Planning Strategy, Land Use By-law, MCCAP Plan, Hants County Resource map under the RDA Program, Active Living Plan Strategy, West Hants Trail Plan, and draft version of the Avon Region Active Transportation Plan. She explained when reviewing these documents a theme was apparent, adding they have been developed with a great deal of community and public input.

She suggested the only thing absent from the results of all this work was the articulation of an apparent vision and mission for West Hants. She stated that senior staff met recently and through their own internal process developed a vision; mission and value statement which they believe reflects work that has already gone on and continues to point towards the future. She reported that this is being presented this evening and a request is being made for Council's input and a stamp of approval on this work or something similar.

She explained this exercise is important to West Hants because it provides a means to test Council's decisions and measure efforts to achieve the direction that has been set for staff to ensure the needs and desires are met of the citizens that the Municipality represents.

She determined that West Hants is interested in sustainable development and practices, with people wanting a safe community, well managed and livable with a good quality of life. She indicated that some people have said that West Hants is the best place to work and play, others say they are proud to call West Hants home and want to ensure it has a good representation, collaborative with the capacity to manage change. She asked at the end of the presentation that Council suggest any other words that would be used to describe West Hants to a stranger.

She clarified a vision statement describes what we would like the municipality to look like in a future successful state. She noted a mission statement explains our existence and describes what we do and our overall intention. She explained in other words it communicates purpose and direction to employees, citizens and other stakeholders. She added a value statement is what we believe in, and how we will behave as we strive to achieve the vision of the organization. She advised that senior staff want West Hants to be the most appealing, engaged, well-managed community in Nova Scotia.

She stated our values in our workplace will achieve our mission by: delivering services which are fair and equitable and applied consistently. She suggested that this could be achieved through a work place that is: professional, committed, supportive, balanced, accountable, welcoming, diverse, proud, engaged, respectful, healthy, safe and fully supported by West Hants Council.

She noted that staff came up with a mission statement; the best of everything – we will promote and protect our natural beauty, active lifestyle, sense of community and rural heritage through dedicated, effective and open government and robust community involvement. She advised that staff considered the environment that

they would want employees, Council, and citizens to work and play in. She added it was their desire as managers to ensure they have all the tools and skills necessary to reflect these values in themselves and staff and be fully supported by Council. She suggested these would be the key attributes to develop in Council and staff. She concluded by saying that staff welcome Council's feedback and suggestions.

Chair Cochrane felt that staff has worked hard in developing this direction. Councillor Campbell commended the CAO and staff for doing an excellent job. Warden Dauphinee agreed and commended staff and the CAO for a job well done and felt it represents the Municipality well. Councillor Daniels felt that it was amazing and suggested the one word that stands out is proud and she felt it was very apparent this is how staff felt and thanked them for their efforts in creating this vision.

Councillor Pineo echoed the comments but questioned how this would be accomplished. CAO Osborne stated that it needs to be accomplished jointly between Council and staff, and noted that dedicated means that staff would be encouraged to stay in West Hants and finish their professional careers. She felt this would be accomplished by setting clear objectives and goals, and noted that this community already has a very keen volunteer base which shows dedication to the community. She suggested such things as the Municipality proactively releasing documents that are already available through the development of a communication protocol.

Councillor Matheson reminded it is a mission statement and felt it needs to be a team effort to achieve in order to be true to the mission. CAO Osborne added that it also helps Council evaluate how staff are doing as it provides them with direction as well as helps the public understand how the Municipality is doing because they have something to measure.

MOVED by Warden Dauphinee and Councillor Daniels that a recommendation be made to Council that the Municipality of the District of West Hants adopt the vision, mission and values statements as presented.

Motion Carried.

b. Municipal Council Policy Review

MOVED by Warden Dauphinee and Councillor Campbell that the memorandum dated February 19, 2015 regarding Council Policy 2015 – replacement of Council Policy (amended 2013) be received and placed on file.

Motion Carried.

CAO Osborne reported that she committed with staff to review the various policies in regards to how Council operates and conducts business which was originally driven by the need to include a public input component and as a result staff has done an extensive search of past minutes and identified a need to consolidate issues together in one policy. She commended Rhonda Brown, Municipal Clerk for her work in the research. She confirmed there are ten separate policies that have been passed by this Council that relate to the operation of Council but have never been embedded into the Council Policy 2013, and staff has established some suggestions and changes. She stated they determined a complete rewrite of the policy was necessary to the format and applied suggestions under the AMA Best Practice template were adopted.

She noted the new policy includes all the amended motions passed by Council, current practices and any housekeeping changes will additional definitions and slight wording changes to improve readability and to help streamline processes. She clarified the policy would have no financial implications if adopted and has been vetted through the Municipal Solicitor.

She explained the document includes side margins with various comments from the Municipal Clerk and also includes comments from the Municipal Solicitor. She highlighted some of the new changes, the document refers to gender including masculine and feminine so it is clear, and the Municipal Solicitor suggested adding some clear delegated authority in regards to Dangerous & Unsightly in case a different approval process needed to be evoked. She pointed out they have taken the liberty to add that Committee of the Whole meetings will be held every month with the exception of December, due to practice of not meeting in many of the past years. She mentioned there was some confusion of what was to be provided to the clerk upon election or re-election and a clause was added in an attempt to make it clearer.

She explained there were two motions made about recording meetings and this rendition includes what made the most sense because there was some contradiction. She noted the AMA Records Manual adopted by Council as a standard which states that recordings are to be kept for seven years; however there is a motion on file that states they are to be destroyed after the minutes are approved. She advised they modified the section regarding the press and recording equipment and are recommending that audio and video recordings not be permitted without permission from Council.

She stated there is clarity on the section in the MGA which speaks to how the Deputy Warden is elected which the policy didn't reflect and also there was clarification on a quorum which allows it to be something other than what it is prescribed. She explained the new policy suggested making announcements at the beginning of the meetings to ensure it is recorded in the minutes. She confirmed there was never an agenda embedded in the policy for Committee of the Whole and they made some changes and suggested that all reports should be under the CAO and she indicated if this policy is adopted she would like to speak on modifying and improving on the information that staff provides to Council.

She reported that section 4.7 is new, adding the AMA has a recommendation should Council have new business that new items must be added at the beginning of the agenda or will not be included to follow the rules of order. She suggested the current policy doesn't speak to providing the CAO or staff the opportunity to speak and this ensures that Council, staff or an invited guest cannot speak anymore than ten minutes on any matter with the exception of formal presentations. She mentioned this ensures they can speak without someone calling them out of order.

Councillor Pineo stated most outside committees use Roberts Rules of Order; however the Municipality goes by Bourinots Rules of Order. CAO Osborne suggested it would be Council's decision what rules they choose to follow but agreed to provide clarification on the difference between the two and circulate the information.

CAO Osborne reported the policy refers to closed or private meetings instead of in camera session as the MGA specifically speaks to this and the wording was changed to reflect the legislation. She noted they added The Warden, Deputy Warden, Solicitor, CAO or Clerk shall have authority to brief one another or any councillor who is absent from a closed session. It was agreed that the chair of respective committees should also be included.

She advised an entire section has been included in the policy on Setting Direction Procedures which helps explain the process which council makes decisions. She noted in the near future she is going to present a formal document regarding the decision process that should be made when determining whether a policy should go to council or should it go under the CAO for review. She explained once council has approved policies as bylaws it often makes it difficult for the CAO to amend approved decisions and change actions.

She noted that she wanted to make an amendment to section 10.1 (c) Public Input "Formal presentations during Council or Committee of the Whole, requests which

have been received by the CAO and placed on the Agenda **by the chair**, prior to the meeting”

She explained under other Committees of Council staff has taken the liberty to identify the other committees of Council that are specifically focused and for which they have full authority around these committees. She advised after section 11.3 they are going to renumber and make an amendment to add a new statement that says “each committee member is to receive a copy of the terms of reference at the first duly called meeting” which administration will be working with the committees on and the terms of reference should include the role of the chair.

She reported there was a motion passed on June 14, 1998 about having written reports from the various committees and Council and she noticed that we don’t often receive written reports from every committee and suggested it should be followed.

CAO Osborne suggested if Council were to adopt the changes and policies then the Council Policy (amended 2013), the three motions passed in 1983, and in 1990, 1997, 2003, 2006, 2007, and 2010 would need to be rescinded.

Councillor Campbell asked how long minutes are left on the website, Rhonda Brown; Municipal Clerk responded that once the minutes are posted on the website they are permanent. She explained her intention as clerk is to keep them there indefinitely and also include historically minutes at some point. Councillor Matheson suggested that posting minutes to the website in draft form before they are approved could cause some issues if someone were to dispute a point and suggested waiting until the minutes are approved before posting them publically. CAO Osborne confirmed before the minutes are posted they are reviewed by all department heads and herself and reminded that Council has the opportunity to make note of any error or omissions when approving the minutes. Rhonda Brown, Municipal Clerk added by posting them in draft form you are allowing the public time if they want to present on a topic before council. CAO Osborne noted we currently share all the draft minutes between the three municipal units.

Councillor Matheson referred to the section about councillors checking e-mails daily, and questioned about residents who want to offer for a position on Council but do not have access to a computer. CAO Osborne reminded that there are alternative ways provided in which a councillor can be notified which doesn’t include computer access. She confirmed this ensures that administration carries out a proper process of advising council of meetings or issues of importance. CAO Osborne suggested staff could look for some wording that speaks to that administration will attempt to adapt another form of means of communication for notification. Warden Dauphinee suggested if a councillor is going on vacation they should relay the information to staff.

Councillor Daniels asked for clarification 4.1(e) that press are permitted to use audio without permission from Council. Rhonda Brown, Municipal Clerk confirmed this statement to be accurate, and any other audio or tapings by any other party must ask for permission from Council.

Warden Dauphinee stated he would like to see included in the policy that all agenda items must be submitted by noon on the Friday before Council with no exceptions other than an emergency. CAO Osborne advised it has been practice that the agenda is sent to the chairs and deputy chairs for approval and then the package is submitted to councillors by Friday with the full package being uploaded to the website on Monday afternoon, adding there is time for councillors to come forward if they wish. She cautioned that this should not be described in depth in the policy. CAO Osborne reported that a section called announcements have been included.

Councillor Matheson gave notice of motion for the next Council Meeting to rescind the:

- a. Council Policy (amended 2013)

- b. Motion passed April 18, 1983, re: Distribution of committee minutes.
- c. Motion passed June 14, 1983, re: Written reports by committee chairman.
- d. Motion passed June 14, 1983, re: Mailing of agendas.
- e. Motion passed August 14, 1990, re: Use of Microphones at Council.
- f. Policy Regarding tapes of meetings July 8, 1997.
- g. Policy re: In-Camera Meetings, July 8, 2003.
- h. Policy Statement September 12, 2006, re: Briefing of CAO and Councillors of in-camera sessions.
- i. Policy Statement Council Audio, Recording Policy October 9, 2007.
- j. Policy Passed August 10, 2010 re: Recording minutes during in-camera sessions of Council.

MOVED by Warden Dauphinee and Councillor Matheson that a recommendation be made to Council the adoption of the new Council Policy 2015 as amended.

Motion Carried.

11. Report of Director of Finance

- a. Reserve Policy

MOVED by Warden Dauphinee and Councillor Matheson that the memorandum dated February 18, 2014 regarding Reserve Policy be received and placed on file.

Motion Carried.

Martin Laycock, Director of Finance reported staff initiated a review of the current reserves and reserves policies. He noted the purpose of the policy is to establish reserves that contribute to the financial stability of the Municipality, support responsible reserve management, reduce debt servicing costs, and significant annual budgeting impacts. He explained there is only one reserve that is required through the MGA, capital reserve, but Council can establish other reserves as necessary. He explained the creation and use of a reserve fund would be established through a motion of Council.

He noted the policy explains budget surplus and how it would typically go into an operating reserve unless Council decides it could be used for unforeseen emergencies or to pay off debt.

He explained the purpose of the policy is to establish reserves that contribute to the financial stability of the Municipality; support responsible reserve management; reduce debt servicing costs; and significant annual budgeting impacts. He felt the policy outlined a way to begin setting aside funds for future expenses and for any unforeseen expenses that may arise.

Councillor Matheson felt that the policy is a great policy, however questioned the wisdom of including rates that can fluctuate. M. Laycock, Director of Finance agreed but remind the policy is reviewed every time Council is elected so it could be reassessed.

Councillor Matheson stated in his opinion the limits are very good but there are times when the funds must be used when truly needed and should not be saved. He suggested spending the money now and when the economy is better is when you begin to start putting into your reserves. Martin Laycock, Director of Finance explained there are two different types of contributions, annual which range from 2%-8% vary and are based on the total historic asset value. He added the other type of contribution is based on a minimum 8% of revenue of operations and would make up the Operations Reserve. This reserve is already partially funded and would be a rainy day fund that would cover operational and capital expenses.

CAO Osborne reminded it is Council's policy at this time to use the rate increases for items such as sewer and suggested consideration may have to be given to

where else to provide sewer support. She suggested that Council may have to decide in the future if they cannot build a reserve up to meet the needs of that particular facility what other options there are. She suggested Council has flexibility which is defined in the reserve policy.

Councillor Daniels thanked the Director of Finance for the policy and felt it provided clarity especially for the budget process. She felt this was prudent with the financial indicators and felt they could be stabilized, give control over the next few years, and follows the mission statement that staff has provided.

Martin Laycock, Director of Finance suggested this would affect four areas of the financial condition index, three of them being a yellow and one being a red, adding these weaknesses can be addressed by establishing reserves.

Warden Dauphinee felt staff did a tremendous job creating this policy, however suggested this year has been difficult for the Municipality with unforeseen circumstances but agreed that the guidelines were needed. Martin Laycock, Director of Finance suggested that Council could grow into the policy but strongly encouraged that it becomes the norm over time.

MOVED by Councillor Pineo and Councillor Campbell that a recommendation be made to Council to adopt the Reserves Policy for implementation for the fiscal year 2015/16.

Motion Carried.

12. Referrals from Other Committees

There were no referrals.

13. Fire Advisory Committee

CAO reported mediation continues and reminded Council that the agreement is set to expire on February 26 unless the parties agree to extend it.

14. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

15. Miscellaneous/New Business

16. Date of Next Meeting

There is a special meeting scheduled for March 2nd & March 24th, 2015 is the regular meeting.

17. In Camera Session

There was no in camera session.

8 Adjournment

MOVED by Councillor Matheson and Councillor Campbell that the meeting adjourn at 7:55 p.m.

Motion Carried.