

**MINUTES OF THE VILLAGE OF PORT WILLIAMS COMMISSION**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF JUNE 20, 2023**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Lewis Benedict, Debbie Graves, Kim Cogswell, and Ernie Hovell

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Philip Porter, Clive D-Souza, Geoff Muttart, Alex Parkinson, Mark Grotijohn, Brock McDougall & Darlene Robertson.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson, Lewis Benedict, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. REGRETS:** Joe Keddy

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

- a) It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Special Commission meeting of June 12, 2023, be approved. **MOTION CARRIED.**
- b) It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Special Commission meeting of June 15, 2023, be approved. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**4. CORRESPONDENCE**

a) Municipality of the County of Kings:

- Building activity report for the month of May 2023 received from the Municipality of the County of Kings.

b) Other Correspondence:

- None

**5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:**

a) Water Rate Study Status –

- Given the current review of water utility operating procedures it is recommended that the water rate study approved in May be delayed for at least one year. A motion to rescind the motion made, approving the water rate study at the May 16 Village Commission meeting was moved and seconded. **MOTION CARRIED.**

b) Collins Road Sidewalk –

- During the June 12, Special meeting it was determined that

the bid price for the Collins Road sidewalk project was over budget and that the Village cannot move forward with the project. Two options are currently being considered. The first were discussions with the NSDPW to see where costs could be reduced. Unfortunately, only 70 thousand could be reduced, which would still leave this project over what was budgeted. The second option is to retender the project for the sidewalk alone. A motion to reject the bid for this project was moved and seconded. **MOTION CARRIED.** Brock to check with NSDPW to see if they are still going to move forward with the road work.

- c) Re-Adoption of two policies (Hospitality; Mileage and Expense)
  - A motion to approve the re-adoption of Hospitality and Mileage & Expense Policy was moved and seconded **MOTION CARRIED.**

## 6. REPORTS

- a) **Municipal Councilor** – No report
- b) **Fire Department** – Chief Porter reported:
  - The department contributed to the Valley task force to help with the Barrington wildfire.
  - Two new members have been recruited.
- c) **LIONS Club** – Ernie Hovell reported:
  - Port Williams Days was successful.
  - Club will have their closing meeting for the summer on June 21, 2023
  - Catering is done for the year, with one potential catering event.
- d) **Recreation and Community Development** – Clive reported:
  - Summer program events will be on Tuesdays and Thursdays
  - Summer Camp is full.
  - Some donations were accepted.
  - Will be having a talent show in July and August – looking to get the word out.
- e) **Public Works** – Joe Keddy written reported read by Brock McDougall:

*Operations:*

  - Water meter readings & repairs
  - Water & Sewer inspections
  - Water reports (SAR & Annual)

- Heavy rain which caused a few backups, looking into solutions

*Alarms:*

- *None*

*Public Works General:*

- Splash pad complete, grand opening a success.
- Working on trails (signs, gravel)
- Preparing fields and greenspaces for summer month
- Story book walk signs installed; opening was successful.
- Regular duties
- Prepared for PW days
- Bridge installed.

f) **CAO/Clerk Report** – Brock McDougall reported:

**I. Committee Appointments:**

- Following Commissioner Leier's retirement from the Village Commission there are five Committee appointments to be made: Audit, Area Advisory, JAAC, FOAM and SWP. Brock asked if any Commissioners would be interested in taking on additional Committee responsibilities. Commissioner Hovell stated that he might be interested in the Audit Committee. Commissioner Cogswell stated that she might be interested in either the Area Advisory or the Source Water Protection committee. Once a new Commissioner is appointed the Commission will revisit Committee Appointments.

**7. FINANCIAL REPORT:**

- a. The written report of the previous month's financial activities was distributed.
- b. It was moved and seconded that the Commission approve the Village General Operating and Water Utility financial statements for May 2023, as submitted. **MOTION CARRIED**

**8. NEW BUSINESS –**

**a. Village Commission Vacancy:**

- Brock McDougall, CAO/Clerk explained, when a Commission position is not filled during the AGM, the Commission has 30 days to call a Special Meeting of the Village Electors to elect a Commissioner. The Commission agreed to Tuesday July 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 for a

meeting of the electors. It was mentioned that the last mail out of the AGM notification was not received by all residents, including those that are on the list to receive flyers. The Commission directed the Village office to send a formal letter of complaint to Canada Post.

**b. Proposed hospitality Expense – Commissioner Retirement:**

- Brock McDougall, CAO/Clerk, presented a hospitality expense for a dinner as celebration of Scott Leier's many years as a Village Commissioner. Commissioner Cogswell mentioned that normally we include significant others as attendees at the function. It was suggested to increase the expense allowed for this event. A motion to approve the hospitality expense for Commissioner Leier retirement not to exceed one thousand dollars plus applicable taxes and gratuity was moved and seconded. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**c. Request for joint letter RE: Taxing water properties:**

- Brock McDougall CAO/Clerk explained that he had been contacted by the Villages of New Minas and Canning regarding additional tax burdens on the Villages for property owned by their water utilities. Traditionally, these lands held tax exempt status through their assessment by PVSC. The new tax burdens brought on by the change in status to taxable will have a significant impact on budgets. The Villages are asking the Village of Port Williams if they would send a joint a letter to the Municipality of Kings regarding their discontent with the recent changes to the taxing of properties, where the Municipality has the power to exempt those taxes by policy. It was moved and seconded by the Commission to co-author a letter with the Villages of Canning and New Minas to express concerns to the Municipality of Kings and the Province of Nova Scotia regarding the implications of new tax burdens on small water utilities. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**9. IN CAMERA**

Upon a motion being made the meeting went in camera at 7:52pm for matters of Personnel and Acquisition of Municipal Property

The meeting returned to open session at 9:00pm

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

Upon a motion being made the meeting adjourned at 9:01pm

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Lewis R. Benedict", written over a horizontal line.

Lewis Benedict, Chairperson

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Brock McDougall", written over a horizontal line.

Brock McDougall, CAO/Clerk