

# **SOUTHWEST NEW BRUNSWICK SERVICE COMMISSION**

## **BOARD MEETING**

**6:00 P.M., Tuesday, August 25th, 2016**

**Administration Building,**

**Hemlock Knoll, Lawrence Station, NB**

## **MINUTES**

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

#### **BOARD MEMBERS**

Ken Stannix, Mayor of McAdam  
Winston Gamblin, Mayor of Harvey  
Carla Brown, LSD St. David  
Terry James, Mayor of Blacks Harbour  
Annette Townes, LSD St. James  
Doug Naish, Mayor of St. Andrews  
Joyce Wright, LSD Dennis Weston  
Allan MacEachern, Mayor, Town of St. Stephen  
Wade Greenlaw, LSD Dufferin  
James Tubbs, LSD Dumbarton  
Robert Moses, Village of Grand Manan  
Dennis Blair – LSD McAdam / St. Croix  
Heather Hatt – LSD Fundy Bay

#### **STAFF**

Frank Tenhave, Executive Director SNBSC  
Claudette MacLean, Secretary to the Board, SNBSC  
Mark Porter, Financial Officer, SNBSC  
Dan Harrington, Operations Coordinator, SNBSC

#### **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Three members of the public were in attendance.

## **Call to Order**

The Chair, Joyce Wright called the meeting to order at approx. 6:00 p.m.

She indicated that there were 13 Board members present at the table and thus a Quorum was declared. A check of the conference calling system showed that there were no members in attendance via Conference Call.

## **Conflict of Interest**

The Chair asked all members at the table to declare any conflicts of interest that they may be in. No conflicts of interests were declared.

## **Approval of Agenda**

The Chair asked for a motion to approve the agenda for the meeting that were previously circulated and found in everyone's Board package.

**16-42 It was moved by T. James, seconded by W. Greenlaw that the agenda be accepted as circulated. CARRIED.**

The Chair asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the last Board meeting held on July 28<sup>th</sup> as previously circulated and which is in everyone's Board package.

## **Adoption of Minutes**

**16-43 It was moved by J. Tubbs, seconded by W. Gamblin that the minutes of the July 28, 2016 Regular Board meeting be approved as circulated. CARRIED.**

## **New Business:**

The Chair then referred everyone to the next agenda item and asked the chair of the PRAC Vern Faulkner to come forward and provide his verbal summary of the report that was previously circulated to the Board and is in everyone's package.

## **Report on the Activities of the PRAC over the Past Year – V. Faulkner**

Vern Faulkner began by apologizing for not haven given a report at the SNBSC AGM. Basically, in all the confusion with various versions of the PRAC bylaws, that item simply got missed. He went on to provide a fairly lengthy presentation, sparked by interest and questions from the group present. He began by explaining what the PRAC is and how it is linked to both the Province and the SNBSC Board. He indicated that while the PRAC could have an important role in the region but thus far it has not been able to do so. He expressed hope that the province might soon get serious about Regional Planning,

(something that he explained by outlining how the Province had indicated Regional Planning was a key and urgent component/initiative when the RSC system was formed almost 4 years ago but then was quickly dropped), at which time this committee and the Planning Management Committee could play a much more important role.

During the question and answer period Vern opened a discussion regarding planning fees charged for rural land use permits and so on. These currently are for the LSD areas only in this RSC as we do not yet provide such services to any of our municipalities. He expressed great concern that these fees are being turned over to the Province. He indicated that as both a long service Board member and chair of the PRAC he found this practise unacceptable. Upon hearing the details of how this occurs, the members reacted negatively to this information that all permit fees are not kept by the Commission. This money is significant when compared to the overall budget of our Planning division.

Vern went on to discuss the two aspects of this that are very troubling;

- 1) Upon repeated inquiry into this issue with the Province, the Province indicates that these moneys are returned to the LSDs through a reduction in the rural population's tax bill. Vern and others at the table living in rural areas could see no evidence on their tax bill indicating that any type of rebate or credit has ever been given. Others spoke up and indicated that in other cases where something similar may have happened, it was always indicated on the tax bill. Given this, all questioned the veracity of the Province's explanation.
- 2) Secondly, even if it were true that such fees monies were being returned to the LSD population, it creates a revenue shortfall in the case where there is not adequate staff to provide the service that must be provided in order to gain the fees in the first place. This then leads to a situation where the RSC has to raise its budget for such services, probably more than the amount that was routed to the Province and then supposedly returned to the LSDs. This was viewed by those present as an unfair and unnecessary situation.

He went on to explain about a real world situation i.e. a developer considering a major development involving hundreds of homes decides to go forward. Currently this commission does not have the staff to provide the building inspection services that such a major development would need. In such a case, all the monies would go to Fredericton while this RSC would have to contract out in order to provide the needed service here. The Executive Director indicated that such a cost could easily go well over \$50 to \$75,000.00 a year depending on how far away the fully qualified/certified inspector has to come from, the cost of travel time, the number of inspections that can be done in a day, and so on. This new, extra cost not only would put the commission in a troubling deficit position, it would be required to in turn make a major increase in the taxes paid by the LSD residents to off-set this cost – even if it were true that they would get these fees back

in reductions to their tax bills (something is great doubt about and needs verification). Staff present confirmed that this was a real situation and a US investor was continuing to explore this possibility.

At this point the Executive Director indicated that this had been raised with the province via letters to the Minister on at least two occasions with no impact. Further it was a topic of discussion at provincial EDs and ELG meetings, but got little traction thus far. The irony of the situation is that a potential growth opportunity is a negative to the commission – a situation that makes no sense to Vern and others at the table.

Several ways to stop this from happening were discussed but none were agreed upon. Others (municipal members) raised the issue of the Province dropping the ball by not ensuring that there was an appropriate building inspector training program in place now to meet the current and the easily foreseeable future needs that are only increasing.

The group present urged the Executive Director to take up this issue at the upcoming EDs/ELG meeting being held here on the 8<sup>th</sup>. He agreed to do so and to seek some proof that those fees are actually coming back to the LSDs within the RSCs i.e. something from an auditor or some other credible source.

### **Committee and Staff Reports;**

The Chair then moved on to the next agenda item and asked Terry James to provide the report from the PMC (in David Szemerda's absence).

#### **Planning Management Committee Report – T. James**

T. James read the report from the recent PMC meeting. She reviewed the committee's most recent meeting. In brief, given the current situation this committee is recommending that the Finance and Audit Committee allocate \$60,000.00 within the Planning budget to pay for a full- time planner. The committee felt that this was a better use of funds despite the expected need in the near future of an additional building inspector. Lastly she outlined how this committee was educating itself about the coastal development policies and guidelines within the province. This is a key issue in this coastal region and a critical part of any future planning work.

The chair then moved on to the next committee report and asked Winston Gamblin to proceed with Finance and Audit Committee's report

#### **Financial and Audit Committee Report – W. Gamblin**

W. Gamblin utilized the written report that all had received and went on to highlight a number of items that this committee deal with. These included the current financial situation of the commission, the tipping fee structure, the potential cost of a new leachate treatment system, the recycling operation and costs, and so on. He went on to bring forward a motion from this committee. The chair then opened the floor to discussion. There was a lengthy discussion of tipping fee increases and how this fits in with the future estimates of costs, etc. The discussion centered on other variable that were being discussed which could impact the proposed increase. Additionally there was a discussion confirming the process for passing a budget was outlined such that all members have time to understand.

**16-44 It was moved by W. Gamblin, seconded by D. Blair that the Finance Committee recommends a \$ 5 per tonne tip fee increase (\$ 4 for waste disposal, \$ 1 for recycling fee) for 2017 for members and ICI. It is also recommended the Construction and Demolition rate be upped from \$ 30 per tonne to \$ 35. And that Valley Solid Waste Commissions rate be increased to \$ 61 per tonne. The rates to US customers would not change.**

**The chair acknowledged this motion by W. Gamblin had been put on the table from the F&A Committee and she asked for seconder. J. Tubbs seconded the motion. CARRIED**

The chair then asked the commission's Financial Officer, Mark Porter, to give his report;

### **Financial Report**

M. Porter reviewed in detail the financial documents that everyone had received previously and had in their Board packages. In summary, the commission was tracking along about as expected in the budget. He noted that there was a slight increase in tonnage which is always welcome.

The chair then asked the Executive Director to give his report to the Board;

### **Executive Directors Report**

F. Tenhave drew everyone's attention to his report that was in everyone's package and had been e-mailed previously. He reported the highlights which were;

The upcoming meeting on September 2, 2016 @9:30 am at the McAdam Train Station where the Premier would be speaking and looking for feed-back on economic development items he would be raising. He thanked the 13 members that attended the

New Board Member and Alternates Orientation and Training session. He indicated that the new Minister of Environment and Local Government, Serge Rouselle, would also be visiting all of the RSCs seeking feed-back on issues concerning governance. Lastly he outlined what the extra documents in the packages were and why they were included.

T. James asked that it be noted in the minutes that she was not happy with the arbitrary decision of the Premier's Office changing the time, date, and location of the Premier's meeting within our region. She believes that this change is designed to lessen attendance and participation, not to increase it.

**Report on Collaborative Activity:**

Nothing to report on at this time.

**Date, Time and location of Next Board Meeting:**

The Board agreed that the next meeting of the Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission will be;

**Thursday, September 22, 2016 at 6:00 at the Administration Building, SNBSC Solid Waste Division, Hemlock Knoll, Lawrence Station, NB.**

**Question & Answer Period with Public in Attendance**

Several questions were asked and answered.

**It was moved by T. James that the meeting adjourn (at approx. 7:30 p.m.)**

