

Staff Report January 8, 2019

CAO – Alain Muise

Aquaculture *Council Priority 2016

See Charlene's report on her progress, nothing significant to report since December from the CAO.

Wedgeport Septic tank project *Council Priority 2016

The three septic tanks are still outstanding, and installation shall be completed in early 2019. Hans Pfeil is leading the application for ICCI funding for a third phase of this project, and we will be submitting the application in January prior to the deadline.

Municipal Administration Building *Council Priority 2017

We received word that we did not qualify for a small grant we applied for under the Low Carbon Communities Fund. There is a second funding option under this program that we will apply for if we qualify. No other news on this front. Wildsalt is set to return to working mode on January 7th and we expect much movement after that date.

Affordable and Alternative Housing *Council Priority 2017

See Charlene's report on housing. There is an in-camera request for land acquisition that requires consideration from Council.

Rural Internet – WREN *Council Priority 2017

Nothing significant to update. We will have Evan Nemeth update the Council in the future via presentation.

Yarmouth International Airport Corporation *Strategic plan objective

I have asked the staff to identify projects that could be undertaken by the engineer regiment that is seeking work in this region. We are compiling a similar list internally for work that could be done by this team from the Canadian Forces.

Also, we have selected a casual position to take on the airport manager position, who will work closely with me to execute projects. My work at the airport, while resigned as manager, is still not complete. It has simply risen to the level of the accountable CAO for the organization we collectively own. I will continue to lead the board meetings to ensure they obtain the information in a way consistent with my personal expectations.

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Yarmouth Area Industrial Commission (YAIC)

Nothing significant to update since December.

Eel Brook Fire department – new fire hall

No word on whether the land has officially been sold, verbally it was confirmed that a price was negotiated, and an agreement was struck.

East Pubnico water tank

Nothing significant to update, we have to submit an application for funding to ACOA which has not yet commenced. Likely will be assigned to Hans to complete, as he has much of the technical information on the project in hand. I will attempt to engage with the provincial government to ask for additional funding as a recent engineering estimate to repair was considerably higher than the report presented to us at the time of divestiture. Ideally, it would be to double the original divestiture of \$260,000. Council will be asked to contribute to the tank replacement project. This amount has not yet been confirmed and will be ready for the COW in January.

Dispatch – volunteer fire departments

The Town of Yarmouth is likely going to cease service in January. We met with the volunteer fire chiefs on December 24th, and they agreed we must move to the Digby Dispatch if we want to have a continuous dispatch service. The fact that the Town is also in union negotiations has had a negative impact on communication, as they are legally bound to keep negotiations confidential. We have received a warning from the Town that the service elimination could be eminent, and as early as January 11th, 2019.

Provincial Work, AMA and other

The interviews for the NSFM CEO are completed, and the NSFM will make their selection official in the coming days.

The deadline for the Municipal Clerk position is January 5th, we have received 29 applications thus far (January 4th) and I am confident we will select one from the group. The interview and selection team are comprised of Charlene LeBlanc, Hans Pfeil, Marsha d'Eon and I.

Regional EMO document will be reviewed by the CAO in late January, with the expectation that the CAO's will come to an agreement before the end of February. The schedule is dependant on the other CAO's to some extent.

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We have received an appeal for the Sea Cucumber Facility in Tusket from a number of residents in the general vicinity of the potential development. During the holidays, I sent any and all information supporting our position to our solicitor firm, Cox Palmer.

We received a tender ready drawing set for the Dewatering truck Garage from WSP Canada Inc. We anticipate having the new garage available for spring 2019. In the meantime, we found storage space for the truck over the winter at Comeau's Seafood in Middle East Pubnico.

We had received a third connection request for the Dennis Point Road section and installation was completed for all three connections just before the Christmas Holidays. No other issues to report otherwise.

Finance & Taxation Department – Marsha d'Eon

With 9 months of the fiscal year over, I will be comparing budget to actuals and figures, making sure all is in order prior to March 31st year end and beginning preparation work for the upcoming 2019-2020 budget season.

Bonnie is continually working on our annual Tax Sale which will be held on February 14th, 2019. First ad will be published in the January 9th Vanguard.

Tax reminder notices have been mailed out to residents with outstanding balances from 2018.

The 2019 Tax Assessment Roll has been completed by PVSC and will be downloaded and available on our Townsuite system in the near future.

Sheila is working on payroll year end and will be issuing T4's in the near future.

All other services, including monthly reconciliations, accounts payable, and monthly financial reporting to staff and Council continues and is on schedule.

Community Development – Charlene LeBlanc

1. Shared water quality info with a new client.
2. Met with a WREN connected interested in aquaculture employment
3. Mailed scholarship applications to both schools
4. Assisting with a housing funding application
5. Meeting with CMA (congress Mondiale) as deadline approaches
6. Seeking funding for a business
7. Researched funding for businesses
8. Preparing to submit a few applications for the 4 Engineer support program
9. Working with a small social media committee to do advertising more efficiently

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Department of Public Works – Hans Pfeil

West Pubnico Sewer Treatment Plant (WPSTP)

Plant Operations

The plant operates at a high level of efficiency and is compliant with NSDoE guidelines. Operations are running smoothly and within budget so far.

All 12 pumping stations are being monitored on a regular interval and everything seems to work normal. The holidays were pretty quiet, and we did not experience any interruptions.

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Past Initiatives

The Mobile Dewatering truck is fully operational, and we are getting close to optimize the process as good as it can get for us. We identified one key issue why the truck is not achieving the anticipated dryness of 18% and are trying to work out a solution. The sludge in the holding tank is not aging long enough and the still active bacteria causes issues with the chemical process of binding the solids within the sludge. Nevertheless, the truck is performing well in all other duties and will be a great backup tool during power outages and cleaning tasks.

Future Initiatives

To further optimize our operation, we may look into testing of different polymers to help with the dewatering process or re-purposing the drainage pads for further sludge holding and aging

Tusket Sewer Treatment Plant

Plant Operations

The operation of this system continues in a relatively orderly basis, with our permit good until 2024. We are in compliance with NSDoE operating parameters. We hired a Level 1 operator and engineer from CBCL to help us with a comprehensive review of our system in November 2018. We are awaiting the report very soon, which will have recommendations for improvements and minor changes in operation. Currently high-water flows are giving us a hard time with flooding risks inside the plant and some grease traps not working properly, which can result in breakdowns at the sewer plant. The report will help us to eliminate the issues immediately.

The system performed well over the holidays without any issues or interruptions.

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This month we did not receive any connection request.

Past Initiatives

Louis improved the surface water run off at the sewer plant in Tusket to avoid surface water infiltration into the influent tank. So far this has been proven to work well and water flows are easier to control. This is vital during heavy rain events and can avoid overflows, especially during winter months when the ground may be frozen.

Future Initiatives

Staff is preparing to fix the overflow at the plant to avoid future flooding and breakdowns.

Municipal Administration Building

Before the holidays we supported the CAO with meeting one of the contractors and Architects to review the bid in detail to understand the higher cost. Further negotiations are needed, and we are ready to fully support the next steps. Priority is to get construction initiated as soon as possible. The FCM loan and grant were secured successfully and contracts have been signed in December 2018.

Policy and By-Law Working Group

Due to a high priority on construction projects we postponed the process of registering our By-Laws for the use of SOT's. We are still recommending reviewing our by-laws in close coordination of an experienced lawyer before starting the registration process. This task is scheduled for summer/fall 2019. We started preparing a new policy for the dangerous and unsightly by-law to better assist our residents with the clean-up efforts and cost relief considerations. This policy may be the first of its kind in NS and will take a bit of time to complete due to its complexity and new context. We developed a snow removal policy to have proper guidelines in place to protect our staff and clarify the process for residents in affected areas and hope to have the policy approved soon. As requested by council we are supporting the CAO with the development of a Civic Sign By-Law and provided feedback to the first draft.

East Pubnico Water Utility

System Operations

Staff continues to monitor and make repairs as necessary. Meter readings are performed on a regular basis. This month we didn't experience any issues and both systems are performing well. We engaged WSP Canada Inc. from Dartmouth, NS for the repairs of Popes Road Pumping station. Design work and equipment recommendations will be provided soon in order for us to tender out more comprehensive repair work.

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Past Initiatives

Staff finalized the service agreements in close coordination with the users and our legal team. We met with two users and agreements have been signed. We still need one signature and will be meeting the user separately.

Future Initiatives

As soon as the agreements are signed the East Pubnico Water Utility Committee should be formed and continue to meet at least once a year to review budgets and operations.

We are in the process of finding additional funding for the Willet Road Tank replacement. ACOA and users will be contacted to see the level of commitment. Once funding is secure, we will be preparing the replacement of the 500,000GAL water tank. Further updates will follow soon

Wedgeport Sewer Improvement Program

System Operations

This month all systems are operating well.

Past Initiatives

39 Systems have been installed and are operational.

Future Initiatives

Staff is committed to support the owners of the new systems with the lawn re-instatement and will provide help with over-seeding some sites to ensure even grass growth. These efforts will be performed during spring 2019. In addition, we are in the process of installing 3 more systems on properties that are in real need for the sewer upgrade. Test pits have been dug and soils analyzed. We are awaiting approvals from NSDoE very soon and construction will proceed immediately after. We are also actively pursuing another funding application in order to initiate a second construction phase for all 38 residents on the waiting list. So far, we are happy to report that by March 2019 we will have 42 completed sites out of 44 proposed under the first funding program.

Animal Control

We didn't receive any complaints over the last few weeks and it seems that the residents are keeping good care of their animals. With the loss of the Yarmouth Dispatch center we also lost the service for dog control issues. The SPCA can be directly reached under 902-307-0475 in case of any dog issues.

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Garbage Handling

This month all pickups were performed as per schedule. Waste Check and PW staff are working on ideas to improve future garbage handling and pick up practices to lower the environmental effects of blown away garbage or rodents spreading household garbage.

Building Inspection Report

This past year's building season turned out to be very busy with 109 building permits issued and 29 Development Permits issued. This is in line with 2017 permit numbers. Note that a Demolition Permit is tallied under the Building Permit numbers.

This year there was more activity in commercial and industrial projects than usual.

Fire Inspections

We are currently working on a shared service solution with neighboring municipalities to fill this position and offer the full range of service to our residents again. The CAO should have more information on this topic.

Sub-Division Activity

We had 21 sub-division files on the go in 2018, with a few waiting for more information to proceed. The type of subdivision, be it Instrument of Subdivision or Final Plan of Subdivision, is pretty well equal again this year. This year we had several multi lot subdivisions with the largest being 40 lots. All this activity was on or just off Route 308, north of the 103. The majority of subdivision activity is 2-3 lot subdivisions or consolidation of existing lots.

Unightly or Dangerous

In 2018 we had a total of 30 new cases and 2 still open from 2017. We were able to close most of the cases but still working on several newer ones. The house in Sluice Point was fully demolished and the case closed. The case on the Argyle Head Road is being handled by Environment NS officers due to the Wetland is being infilled with unsuitable material which may cause contamination to water courses. The order of remedy for the property in Pleasant Lake has ben expired without actions by the owner. Gary d'Entremont Excavating has been awarded the contract to proceeded with the cleanup. Most of the other cases have been resolved or are under review due to safety issues. We are working on the dangerous situations first with unsightly complaints receiving attention later.

The new dangerous and unsightly committee is actively involved and is helping with reviewing several cases that need attention and a long-term strategy for full clean up. This includes the property in Glenwood and one in Comeau's Hill.

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The dangerous and unsightly committee is working on ideas to help people in need to stay on top of property maintenance or litter clean up to help with community beautifications. A proper policy is in the works.

Maintenance

Winter season is upon us and the final pieces of gear are being gathered. The old mower from our West Pubnico Sewer Plant is working great as a plow for our Tusket sidewalks. The winter has been good so far and staff is providing excellent services to our residents.

Industrial Park

Several lots are pending sales and staff is actively supporting the CAO with the process. 3 lots are under review by the UARB and development on hold for now. There are a few lots left for sale and more interest from developers is existing. More updates will follow once the UARB review is over and a decision is made.

Staff

Louis Boudreau passed his Operator Level 1 exam and is now fully licensed to run our Tusket Sewer Plant and Wedgeport sewer district.

Kim Rowley is taking over more responsibility coming partially from the Municipal Clerk position and received a promotion to be our Executive Assistant. With this promotion she will be helping all of our managing staff with project work and regular office duties.

During our JOHSC meeting we identified several safety training deficiencies and staff will be following up on the missing certificates very soon.

Software

All software is up to date and working good for us. The PC to run the SCADA software for our plant will be replaced soon and the issue of manually restarting after a power outage resolved.

Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee

The Municipality initiated a new Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee at the end of October 2018 as required by Provincial regulations. A special bulletin board has been established in the Kitchen of the Municipal Admin. Building and information about the regulations, local inspectors, committee members, first aid staff, agendas and meeting minutes are being posted on a regular basis. Any safety related issues should be reported immediately to your supervisor or committee member!

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We are actively working on our Safety Program and will report back once the program is completed and ready to be rolled out. During our first safety inspection for the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee report we came across a long list of deficiencies and are working on rectifying the issues in a cost-effective way. This work will continue over the next few weeks and will be in need of some additional funding as we have to replace some life safety equipment and other gear that is not in compliance at the moment.

Miscellaneous

1. Staff are working on the New Administration Building committee as well by providing guidance and explanations to committee members during the project.
2. Staff are also helping out with Project Management work at the Yarmouth International Airport on a case by case basis and is also helping YIAC staff with resolving drainage issues on runway 15-33 (parallel to Highway #3) to allow for a better stormwater runoff.
3. Staff and CAO attended an Asset Management training course partially funded by FCM to help with the establishment of a local policy and better understanding of assets and operation. The training will continue over the winter/spring 2019 and could have a great outcome to future operation and service providing strategy. We established a new policy and are actively refining our level of service in order to better serve the community and use our resources more effectively. More info's will follow as we progress.

Court House & Archives – Judy Frotten & Kaitlin Wood

Grant applications

The first order of business for 2019 is completing the applications to secure funding for summer students. We are working on these now and will submit applications to Young Canada Works (in Heritage Organizations), as well as to the Province of Nova Scotia (SKILL), and Federal program, Canada Summer Jobs. YCW deadline is January 15th and we will submit all applications by that date.

The Argus

The winter 2018 issue was sent to the printer in Dec., but the printer could not finish the job until early Jan. This issue includes a retirement message from Peter Crowell, which may be of interest to MODA staff and Council. AMHGS membership has been holding at approximately 500 members and ended 2018 with 507 members. The Argus is our most important program and allows us to maintain that Argyle connection with our members from Canada and the US.

MODA Newsletter

We decided to wait until the new year to send out the winter issue of the newsletter. An email with new due date for content is going out to staff/Council shortly.

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AMHGS

The Historical Society's next board meeting will take place January 21st, 2019.

Professional Development

Judy had a conference call meeting for Association of Nova Scotia Museums (ANSM) regarding Strategic Plan development, on Dec. 14th. The next Board meeting is scheduled for Feb. 8th.

Kaitlin met with Council of Nova Scotia Archives (CNSA), Archives Advisor Sara Hollett, for a site visit, on Dec. 6th. Kaitlin also joined CNSA's Education Committee and attended her first meeting by conference call on Dec. 18th.

Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee

Judy will attend the next JOHSC meeting, which will take place on January 8th. In the past weeks, we have been trying to address as many items on the site inspection report as possible. We really appreciate all the work that Louis and Wayne have done to address many of these items for us at the Court House & Archives! JOHSC minutes are posted at the Archives.

Promotional materials

The new Christmas card of the Archives, with a beautiful photo donated by Zelaina Strug-Zelmer, was available for sale as of Nov, and sold quite well. We are pleased to be able to offer this in our Gift Shop moving forward. We are also updating ads for 2019 publications, such as Par-en-Bas school yearbook, Doers and Dreamers (French and English), and YASTA (French and English).

Steeple Project

AMHGS received the final instalment from the provincial Heritage Unit, Dept. of Communities, Culture and Heritage for the conservation grant for work done to the steeple of the Archives building, bringing the total received to \$3,000. AMHGS launched a fundraising campaign in Nov. to help replenish funds used to pay for the work, and as of the end of December had raised nearly \$8,000. The cost of repairs came in at \$15,755, which means that we have been successful in raising more than two thirds of the cost so far.

CMAP

AMHGS participates in Community Museum Assistance Program (CMAP) and receives annual funding for the museum, through the Dept. of Communities, Culture and Heritage. A requirement of this program is completing two reports per year, one to set the budget and another to report on "actuals." Judy completed and submitted the *Annual Report & Statement of Operations* for the 2017/2018 fiscal period by the Dec. 15/18 deadline. This report is quite extensive and combines all the financials from MODA & AMHGS.

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Forum Acadien 2019

Judy/ATCHA has been asked to join a committee representing heritage groups in our Municipality, along with individuals from *Musée des Acadiens des Pubnicos*, and members from Wedgeport (Tuna Museum). This committee is being led by Cyrille LeBlanc. Cyrille submitted a proposal to “Réseau acadien, histoire et patrimoine” to host their annual conference/meeting for 2019 in Argyle region. The proposal has been accepted, and we expect the Acadian conference will take place in our Municipality on Oct. 11-14, 2019. The group’s 2nd meeting to continue planning will take place at our Archives on Jan. 10th. More information will be shared as it becomes available.

Recreation Programming and Active Living – Ginette d’Entremont

Grant applications

I am in the process of applying for funding from the Young Canada Works program and the Canada Summer Jobs program for positions in the Recreation Department and the Argyle Minor Soccer Club.

South Shore Active Communities

As part of the committee for SSAC, we will be meeting on January 7th to work on module 3 which is the Adult Role in Child-led Play.

Recreational gym activities

Our drop-in programs at École Pubnico-Ouest will resume on Tuesday January 8th and at École Belleville on Thursday January 10th.

After the Bell

The After the Bell program will run for another 10 weeks starting on January 9th until March 13th.

I will be meeting on January 10th and 24th with the planning committee to continue the work on the Girls Leadership Forum.

Winter activities

We have 2 scheduled hikes planned for the month of January. The first one will be on Saturday January 19th and the next one will be Thursday January 31st. Both of these hikes will depend on the weather.

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Municipal and Provincial Volunteer Banquets

I will be sending out letters along with nomination forms to volunteer organizations within the Municipality of Argyle. The deadline for organizations to nominate a volunteer for the Municipal banquet is February 8. The deadline to nominate a Municipal Representative for the Provincial Banquet is February 25.

Facility Access Workshop

I will be attending a workshop on Access Attitudes and Behaviors on January 22.

Director of Recreation Services – Natalie d’Entremont

On vacation, no report.