



MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF ARGYLE
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, JULY 25, 2024

Council Members Present: Warden Danny Muise, Deputy Warden Nicole Albright, Councillor Gordon Boudreau, Councillor Guy Surette, Councillor Glenn Diggdon, Councillor Ted Saulnier, and Councillor Kathy Bourque

Absent with Regrets: Councillor Richard Donaldson, Councillor Calvin d'Entremont

Staff Present: Chief Administrative Officer Alain Muise, Deputy CAO Scott Surette and Director of Protection Services Rene Jeddry

Public Hearing – Application for Development Agreement – 1006 Argyle Sound Road

Council has received an application to enter into a development agreement with the property owner of 1006 Argyle Sound Road (PID 90062019) to permit a carpentry shop on this property.

Rene Jeddry, Director of Protection Services made a presentation to council explaining the Development Agreement. Very little questions from Council and no one opposing the Development Agreement. Applicant was present at the meeting.

1. **Call Meeting to Order**

Deputy Warden Nicole Albright called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m.

2. **Invitation to Stand and Move**

Deputy Warden Nicole Albright reminded Council that they are permitted to stand and move as they need to during the meeting. This is an initiative by Argyle Recreation which normalizes movement in meetings.

3. **Approval of Agenda-**

By consensus, the agenda was approved with the following amendments:

- Moved 5 l. to 5.b
- Added 5 c. Question period for the ADA only
- Added 7 b. Financial Request – Argyle Farmers Market

4. **Approval of Minutes**

a. **July 4, 2024 – Executive Council Meeting Minutes**

By consensus, the July 4, 2024, Council Meeting Minutes, are approved as presented.

5. **For Decision and Discussion**

a. **Second Reading – Development Agreement – 1006 Argyle Sound Road**

It is MOVED by Warden Danny Muise and SECONDED by Councillor Guy Surette to approve the Development Agreement for 1006 Argyle Sound Road as presented.



b. ADA Update

Councillor Surette talked about the eight regulated factors guiding aquaculture in Nova Scotia. He also advises he did a short survey with 25 residents in his district with 3 questions being asked about the ADA

- Question #1 Have you heard of the proposed ADA. - 22 of 25 had heard of the ADA. 3 did not know anything
- Question#2 How did you find out - 17 Facebook -5 news /website
- Question#3 Suggestion to move forward or not to move forward. – 10 had no issue, 8 wanted more public engagement and 7 had no opinion

Councillor Surette expressed his resident are not against economic development or aquaculture.

Deputy Warden Albright stated that economic development has been a main topic of conversation all her 3 terms and for that reason she supports the ADA due to its potential for economic growth. She was pleased to see young residents at the open house at the Aquaculture Association of Nova Scotia and part of the gallery today. She also mentioned that she does not support pausing the six ADA sites, as all resident concerns have been communicated to the province, which has advised that they would not pause the six sites. Deputy Warden Albright stressed the importance of economic development and support for the project, despite pressures and opposition from some residents. The long-term benefits for the community, especially considering the unpredictable future of the fishing industry, and concludes that while residential concerns are valid, they fall outside the council's control and criteria for decision-making

Warden Muise expressed that ADA (Aquaculture Development Areas) sites are not pre-approved, rather pre-assessed; applicants will still need approval from the Department of Agriculture, which will conduct studies. Without the ADA, farms could still appear in these areas as anyone could apply to start an oyster farm. Previously, the public would only be notified 30 days before lease approval. With the ADA, there's much more notice, and concerns can be voiced early.

Warden Muise also states the ADA does not guarantee that all 47 sites will become oyster farms; they are potential sites where oysters can grow. The government will still follow the same approval process, except the preliminary work, which previously took up to five years, has already been done. The ADA benefits both farmers and the public by providing advance notice and more time to express concerns. The process followed all provincial protocols, and while not everyone was reached during public consultations, all necessary steps were taken. Therefore, a motion to pause the six sites is not supported, as the ADA is seen as beneficial for both the farmers and the public.

Councillor Saulnier shared his thoughts on the ADA, stating the municipality strives to serve its communities and residents, but it operates under provincial legislature, meaning it cannot introduce an ADA or other legislation in its waters without provincial approval. The province has the authority to legislate coastal waters, similar to Crown Land, without municipal consent. The municipality collaborated with the province to improve the aquaculture industry by reducing barriers and red tape,



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following all required notifications and protocols. Despite this, some residents felt uninformed or misled, while others praised the initiative for economic development.

The improved application process benefits marine plant or oyster farming by cutting down time, though the municipality acknowledges the need for better public communication. Residents also share the responsibility to stay informed about public notices. The municipality is committed to continuous improvement in communication and has received feedback from residents on how to enhance this.

Councillor Saulnier also stated that while the municipality may not have control over the original six sites, it could potentially make a motion regarding the remaining 47 to mitigate resident concerns. However, legislative constraints limit the municipality's ability to alter the process significantly.

It is MOVED by Councillor Guy Surette and SECONDED by Councillor Glenn Diggdon to send a letter to the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture requesting a pause on the 6 aquaculture site leases and to have further consultation with residents before any leases are approved.

MOTION DEFEATED (1 in favour - Councillor Guy Surette, 6 against)

Councillor Diggdon stated that the situation has been difficult for the council, especially those councillors with sites closer to residential areas. The province will not pause the six existing sites, so those upset should direct their concerns towards provincial officials rather than the municipal council, as we cannot override provincial legislation.

We support economic growth and believe we have not done anything wrong as a municipal council. If evidence is presented showing any wrongdoing or information withheld from us, it will be raised in a public council meeting.

Despite receiving minimal feedback, we recognize the need for improved consideration of residential proximity to proposed sites. However, we are not the right target for complaints; people should approach provincial officials instead. No matter what happens hope all fishers can work together.

Warden Muise stated, as elected officials, we understand that our decisions won't please everyone. When the ADA decision came up, it was unanimously supported by the council as a beneficial move. We make decisions based on what we believe is right for the municipality, even if it means risking re-election. I believe more people support this decision than oppose it, so I feel confident we made a good choice.

Councillor Surette stated that he is uncertain about whether we had all the necessary information when we voted for the ADA. He noted that when the map was finally presented on April 15, residents began to voice concerns, which led to the council having second thoughts about the ADA.

Councillor Boudreau stated he is support of the ADA as he supports economic growth.



c. **ADA Question Period**

Jamie Simmons, Chair of the Western Regional Enterprise Network, praised the municipality for launching the ADA. Simmons emphasized the ADA's role in promoting investment, simplifying regulatory processes, and supporting local industries like seafood processing and aquaculture. Simmons also highlighted the ADA's potential to create an investment-ready environment and stimulate economic growth.

Chris Thibedeau, resident of the Municipality of Argyle, opposes the ADA framework, expressed concerns about its impact on tourism, lobster fishing, and recreational activities. Thibedeau acknowledged support for aquaculture but stressed the need for balance to avoid disrupting other industries and residential enjoyment of the coastline. Thibedeau requested further consultation and consideration of non-residential areas for ADA expansion to avoid conflicts.

Jimmy Conrad, a local commercial fisherman, advocated for cooperation between aquaculture and fishing industries, emphasizing the importance of consultation with local fishermen. Conrad raised concerns about corporate leases and the need for local involvement in decision-making processes. Conrad also highlighted potential issues with site locations and the need to balance economic growth with existing fishing activities.

Armond d'Entremont, a local commercial fisherman, stated that kelp farms take carbon out of the water to help to de-acidify the ocean.

Nick d'Eon, commented on the proposed pause affecting six oyster farming sites. He emphasized that any delay would impact local business owners and others wanting to start their businesses. d'Eon highlighted that the sites were selected based on thorough research rather than opinions and stressed that the choice was made to ensure proper growth conditions for oysters. He noted that while conflicts with neighbors have occurred, they have been managed effectively. D'Eon expressed his support for moving forward with the sites and working collaboratively with the community to avoid further issues.

Susan Savriga, a resident of St. Anne du Ruisseau, voiced concerns about the stakeholder engagement process for the ADA pilot project. She criticized the engagement efforts, noting that many residents were unaware of the ADA until recently and that the communication from the municipality and councillors was insufficient. Savriga, stated that the process did not meet necessary standards and that errors were acknowledged in the discussions. She expressed frustration that residents were not given enough time to understand and provide input on the project. Savriga called for a pause to allow residents to better understand and contribute to the ADA project, emphasizing that local knowledge is crucial for balancing interests and addressing concerns.

Connor Greene, a local resident, addressed recent comments about public awareness of the ADA program. He stated he has been aware of the program and the proposed sites for over a year, including a map published in April. He believes that while some frustration about the program's visibility is understandable, it might be due to a lack of early engagement from some people. Greene expressed his preference to proceed with the pilot program without pausing it. He noted concerns about the feasibility of some proposed sites, particularly those in areas prone to harsh weather conditions, based on his experience as a fisherman. He stated that not all 47 proposed sites will be effective due to



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environmental factors and local fishing activity. He also highlighted the need for careful consideration of site placement to avoid conflicts with existing fishing practices.

Janine Muise, resident of the Municipality of Argyle, expressed worries about how ADA will affect recreational activities like boating and kayaking.

Discussion took place regarding the setup of proposed sites for the ADA program and the necessary considerations for emergency access. One person inquired whether councillors had consulted with the Department of Fisheries and Agriculture about ensuring passable ways through the sites. They mentioned that a representative from New Brunswick had indicated that every 400 meters, there needs to be a navigable route for emergencies, which may vary depending on the site.

In response, it was acknowledged that while specific distances weren't confirmed, assurances were made that access would be provided both for recreational users and for the needs of farmers. It was clarified that the hexagonal outlines on the map are only preliminary assessments and not indicative of the final lease sizes. The provincial government has committed to further examining the sites, including considerations for coexistence between fishermen and farmers, as part of the review process.

Councillor Saulnier appreciate everyone's presence and comments, especially Jimmy Conrad's remarks about the 47 sites and fisheries. CAO Muise addressed most of my concerns about ensuring existing fisheries are consulted and not sidelined. Councillor Saulnier propose we contact the province to ensure transparency and hold public sessions about the paused 47 sites. We should ensure there are no conflicts with existing fisheries and that public input is thoroughly considered. Also, when considering the remaining 47 sites, Councillor Saulnier stated that some lease sites are in the Tusket River, with some locations being more troublesome than others. It's unclear how these will affect fishermen, but everyone should have a say. Councillor Saulnier suggested making a motion to ensure that the public and concerned parties can provide input on these 47 sites.

It is MOVED by Councillor Glenn Diggdon SECONDED by Councillor Guy Surette to ask the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture to work closer with residents that may be affected by the other 47 potential sites and prior to issuing these leases and achieve a balance between economic growth and protecting the stakeholders involved.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

d. **Lettre de demande à Municipalité d'Argyle**

It MOVED by Councillor Guy Surette and SECONDED by Warden Danny Muise to fund the Jeux de l'Acadie regional games 2025 for \$15,000 divided in the two fiscals' years (2024/25 and 2025/26).

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

e. **Article P16 - Christmas Bonus**

It is MOVED by Councillor Guy Surette and SECONDED by Councillor Ted Saulnier to approve the amendments made to Article P16 – Christmas Bonus.



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MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

f. **Veterans Project in Community Halls**

It is MOVED by Councillor Gordon Boudreau and SECONDED by Councillor Kathy Bourque to purchase the 36 X 26 Veterans Project Poster and fully fund the request for all Community Halls in Argyle up to \$2,275 that were included in the attachment and wish to display this poster in their hall.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Deputy CAO advises that the Legion in Wedgeport has already received one of these posters.

g. **Summer Meetings 2024**

By consensus, there will be one meeting in August and regular meetings will resume in September.

h. **Article C9 - Property Auctions and Tenders**

It is MOVED by Councillor Guy Surette and SECONDED by Councillor Kathy Bourque to approve the amendments made to Article C9 - Property Auctions and Tenders.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

i. **Article C14 - Healthy Eating in Recreation Settings**

It is MOVED By Councillor Kathy Bourque and SECONDED by Councillor Ted Saulnier to approve the amendments made to Article C14 - Healthy Eating in Recreation Settings.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

j. **Article P26 - Workplace Wellness**

It is MOVED by Warden Danny Muise and SECONDED by Councillor Glenn Diggon approve the amendments made to Article P26 – Workplace Wellness.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

k. **Yarmouth Arts Society – AGNS Gallery in Yarmouth**

It is MOVED by Councillor Ted Saulnier and SECONDED by Warden Danny Muise to send a letter of support for the AGNS Gallery in Yarmouth that was closed by the provincial government.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

l. **Subscription Model Proposal and Staff Report for Oakhill Community Solar Project**

CAO Muise discuss the Solar project and all its advantages and disadvantages.

It was moved by Councillor Surette and seconded by Councillor Boudreau the following motions

- 1) "That the Municipality of Argyle Council supports the Oakhill Community Solar Project's subscription administration plan as detailed in the July 19th staff report".
- 2) "That the Municipality of Argyle Council supports the Oakhill Community Solar Project and will enter into an intermunicipal service agreement created to own and finance the Oakhill Community Solar Project and will guarantee 25.2% of the intermunicipal service agreement's capital debts up to a maximum of 4,410,000. These commitments are contingent upon the following conditions precedent:
 - The successful awarding of the Power Purchase Agreement by the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables.
 - The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing's approval of the intermunicipal service agreement's temporary borrowing resolution and the Council's guaranteeing of 25.2% of the intermunicipal service agreement's capital debts, to a maximum of \$4,410,000
- 3) Council direct its CAO to collaborate with the other partner municipalities associated with the Oakhill Community Solar Project, to ensure that AREA submits a competitive and economically viable Project application to the Community Solar Program.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

m. **Legal Services Tender**

It is MOVED by Councillor Glenn Diggdon and SECONDED by Councillor Kathy Bourque accept the recommendation of the CAO to hire Hood Fraser d'Entremont as the new Legal services firm for a 5-year term.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. **For Correspondence and Information**

a. **Public Works – Brush Cutting Response**

Council received correspondence from Minister Masland of Public Works regarding the letter sent by the chair of Waste Check, Warden Linda Gregory on the topic of brush cutting on secondary roads.

It is MOVED by Councillor Saulnier and SECONDED by Councillor Bourque to write a letter to the local Department of Public Works regarding, brush cutting, wood chipping and mowing the sides of roads.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

b. **Correspondence from Hear! Here! Society**

Council received correspondence from the Hear! Here! Society thanking Council for their generosity and the \$400 grant they received from the Grants to Organizations, they will be using this grant for music students and new Canadians to attend the Symphony Nova Scotia Concert next March.

c. **CCBF Letter to Mayors and Wardens**

Council received correspondence from Honourable John Lohr, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing informing that the province has signed a new 10-year agreement with the federal government under the Canada Community – Building Fund.

It is MOVED by Councillor Kathy Bourque and SECONDED by Councillor Guy Surette to send a letter to NSFM regarding their thoughts about the new 10-year agreement recently sign by the Province of Nova Scotia and Federal Government under the Canada Community – Building Fund.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

d. **Correspondence from Honourable John Lohr re: Emergency Alerts**

Council received correspondence from Honourable John Lohr, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing regarding coordination on the Emergency Alert System.

7. **Financial Requests – District Community Grants**

a. **District 3 Community Grant**

It is MOVED by Councillor Boudreau and SECONDED by Warden Danny Muise to approve a District Community Grant in the amount \$700 for the following organizations in District 3:

- Wedgeport Legion

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

b. **District 1 Community Grant**

It is MOVED by Warden Danny Muise and SECONDED by Councillor Gordon Boudreau to approve a District Community Grant in the amount of \$700 for the following organizations in District 1:

- Argyle Farmers Market

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

8. **Agenda Topics for the next meeting/Notice of Motion by Councillors**

9. **Question Period**

Many Comments on social media but difficult to retrieve.

There was a question regarding the Sidewalk in Plymouth, CAO Muise gave a response.

10. **In-Camera**

Consensus to move In-Camera at 9:18 p.m.

a. **Section 22:2 (e) – Personnel Matters**



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It is MOVED Councillor Kathy Bourque and SECONDED by Councillor Gordon Boudreau to approve the application to the Joint Policy Advisory Committee.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

It is MOVED by Councillor Guy Surette and SECONDED by Warden Danny Muise to approve the new position in the Department of Protection Services.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

11. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:34pm

DRAFT



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Date Approved

Chair

Clerk/Recorder

DRAFT