ST. JOHN'S

Minutes of Committee of the Whole - City Council

Council Chambers, 4th Floor, City Hall

January 27, 2021, 9:30 a.m.

Present:	Mayor Danny Breen Councillor Maggie Burton Councillor Sandy Hickman Councillor Debbie Hanlon Councillor Deanne Stapleton Councillor Jamie Korab Councillor Ian Froude Councillor Wally Collins Councillor Shawn Skinner
Regrets:	Deputy Mayor Sheilagh O'Leary
Staff:	Kevin Breen, City Manager Derek Coffey, Deputy City Manager of Finance & Administration Jason Sinyard, Deputy City Manager of Planning, Engineering & Regulatory Services Lynnann Winsor, Deputy City Manager of Public Works Cheryl Mullett, City Solicitor Susan Bonnell, Manager - Communications & Office Services Elaine Henley, City Clerk Ken O'Brien, Chief Municipal Planner Shanna Fitzgerald, Legislative Assistant

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1. Call to Order

2. Approval of the Agenda

Recommendation
Moved By Councillor Collins
Seconded By Councillor Korab

That the agenda be adopted as presented.

For (7): Mayor Breen, Councillor Burton, Councillor Hickman, Councillor Stapleton, Councillor Korab, Councillor Froude, and Councillor Collins

MOTION CARRIED (7 to 0)

3. Adoption of the Minutes

3.1 Adoption of Minutes - January 13, 2021

Recommendation
Moved By Councillor Skinner
Seconded By Councillor Stapleton

That the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on January 13, 2021 be adopted as presented.

For (9): Mayor Breen, Councillor Burton, Councillor Hickman, Councillor Hanlon, Councillor Stapleton, Councillor Korab, Councillor Froude, Councillor Collins, and Councillor Skinner

MOTION CARRIED (9 to 0)

4. Presentations/Delegations

5. Finance & Administration - Councillor Shawn Skinner

6. Public Works - Councillor Sandy Hickman

6.1 Non-Profit Housing Capital Improvements – Funding Approval

Council reviewed funding approval for Riverhead Towers, 30 Hamilton Avenue.

Recommendation
Moved By Councillor Hickman
Seconded By Councillor Skinner

That Council approve the above noted project using current capital reserves for Non-Profit Housing.

For (9): Mayor Breen, Councillor Burton, Councillor Hickman, Councillor Hanlon, Councillor Stapleton, Councillor Korab, Councillor Froude, Councillor Collins, and Councillor Skinner

MOTION CARRIED (9 to 0)

7. Community Services - Councillor Jamie Korab

7.1 Membership for the Inclusion Advisory Committee (IAC)

Recommendation
Moved By Councillor Stapleton
Seconded By Councillor Hanlon

That Council appoint Ashley Gosse as representative for the Autism Society of Newfoundland and Labrador and reaffirm the membership of the following members to the Inclusion Advisory Committee:

1. Debbie Ryan, CNIB – extend until November 2022
2. Grant Genova, Public Representative - Universal Design – extend until November 2022
3. Joby Fleming, Empower NL – extend until November 2022
4. Kim Pratt-Baker, Canadian Hard of Hearing Association NL (CHHA-NL) – extend until November 2022
5. Megan McGie, Newfoundland and Labrador Association for the Deaf (NLAD) – extend until November 2022
6. Nancy Reid, Coalition of Persons with Disabilities (CODNL) – extend until November 2022

For (9): Mayor Breen, Councillor Burton, Councillor Hickman, Councillor Hanlon, Councillor Stapleton, Councillor Korab, Councillor Froude, Councillor Collins, and Councillor Skinner

MOTION CARRIED (9 to 0)

8. Special Events - Councillor Shawn Skinner

9. Housing - Deputy Mayor Sheilagh O'Leary

10. Economic Development - Mayor Danny Breen

11. Tourism and Culture - Councillor Debbie Hanlon

12. Governance & Strategic Priorities - Mayor Danny Breen

12.1 Final Report – Ward 2 By-Election

The City Clerk presented the Final Report for the 2020 Ward 2 By-Election and the proposed changes to the Vote by Mail (VBM) process during the City's municipal general elections. The Office of the City Clerk believes it is timely to consider procedural reform in this area more in line with practices in other major Canadian cities. Such reform is recommended to facilitate both democratic accessibility and enhanced efficiencies as noted in the report.

The following is proposed:

1. Mandatory registration for VBM kits (requiring revision to the Vote By Mail By-Law).
2. Increase the number of polling stations to enable more access to traditional voting.
3. Continue to lobby Province about alternative progressive voting methods.

During extensive discussion, the following points were raised:

- Residents must register to vote by mail for the Provincial Election. The process will be known by residents.
- Ballot insecurity is of concern for current practices.
- The option to vote by mail is essential this year due to the pandemic.
- Concern was expressed about restricted access to people who must register to vote and the impact on various demographics.
- Pre-registration will allow for people to receive a vote by mail kit. Voter cards would be sent out to residents to provide information about registering for vote by mail.
- There will be no significant cost savings due to the requirement for an extensive communications plan and an increased number of polling stations.
- The high rate of resident turnover requires an updated list every election. The voters list is inaccurate and privacy concerns restrict what methods can be used to facilitate updating the list.

- Reduced voter turnout is of concern.
- It was suggested that this change not be considered for the upcoming election and that there be an independent review of the voting system. Resulting information could then be considered for the subsequent election.
- It was requested that there be a more in-depth analysis on potential local impact and that more information be provided to Council on the average turnout to a traditional election versus vote by mail.
- It was recommended that this be referred to the Inclusion Advisory Committee for review.

Recommendation
Moved By Councillor Hickman
Seconded By Councillor Hanlon

That Council approve the recommendations proposed in the Final Report – Ward 2 By-Election and further that the following action be taken to facilitate the recommendation for mandatory registration to receive a Vote by Mail Kit:

1. Vote by Mail By-Law to be amended as per the attached chart and subject to Legal review. Should this revision be problematic in time for the 2021 municipal election, ministerial approval should be considered as per section 4(2) of the Municipal Elections Vote by Mail By-Law cited below:

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the returning Officer, may, with prior Ministerial approval, vary the procedures from time to time as he deems appropriate to ensure the efficiency and integrity of the municipal election.

2. Extensive communications plan developed to advise the general public of changes in VBM process, i.e. mail out cards, social media, etc.

For (6): Councillor Hickman, Councillor Hanlon, Councillor Stapleton, Councillor Korab, Councillor Collins, and Councillor Skinner

Against (3): Mayor Breen, Councillor Burton, and Councillor Froude

MOTION CARRIED (6 to 3)

13. Planning & Development - Councillor Maggie Burton

13.1 58 Arnold Loop - Interpret Zone Boundary - INT2100002

City staff will amend the Zoning Map to show one land-use zone (Apartment Low Density or A1) on the subject property at 58 Arnold's Loop, in line with Section 3.4 "Boundaries of the Zones" in the St. John's Development Regulations.

13.2 Galway Decorative Lights

This matter was deferred from Committee of the Whole on January 13, 2021.

Council approved the proposed decorative LED lights in the first phases of Galway due to analysis provided at that time that there would be potential savings to the City that would offset the cost of future ownership when compared to the standard Newfoundland Power installation. After the lights were installed, Dewcor requested that any savings the City realized from the decorative LED lights be passed on to Dewcor. Staff's position is that the City is not obligated to remain revenue/cost neutral and may use any savings for the benefit of all taxpayers. Furthermore, staff feel that Dewcor should have included this condition in its initial request to Council to use decorative lights.

During discussion, it was recommended that consideration be made for incentives for developers to encourage them to be creative in developing beautiful neighborhoods within the City.

Recommendation
Moved By Councillor Burton
Seconded By Councillor Korab

That Council retain any savings realized from the use of decorative street lights in Galway.

For (8): Mayor Breen, Councillor Burton, Councillor Hanlon, Councillor Stapleton, Councillor Korab, Councillor Froude, Councillor Collins, and Councillor Skinner

MOTION CARRIED (8 to 0)

14. Transportation and Regulatory Services & Sustainability - Councillor Ian Froude

15. Other Business

16. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 10:37 am.

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Mayor