

MINUTES

APRIL 13, 2021

GRAND FALLS

MEETING

The Grand Falls Municipal Council held a regular monthly meeting in the Council room at the Grand Falls Town Hall at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 13, 2021, following the notices required by law. This meeting is being streamed live on the municipal Facebook page.

PRESENCE

His Honour the Mayor:

Marcel Deschênes

Councillors:

Renaud Ouellette
Jean Réal Michaud
Jean Maurice Gagnon
Denise Lagacé Rioux
Michel « Rocky » Ouellette

as well as the CAO-Clerk, Peter Michaud and the Deputy Clerk, Lise J. Ouellette.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Deschênes welcomes spectators on Facebook. This meeting is the last regular meeting before the municipal elections. This Council could hold other public meetings if elections are delayed in other provincial zones.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There are no conflicts mentioned.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Jean Maurice Gagnon/ Michel "Rocky" Ouellette,

2021-019 That the agenda is accepted as presented. Carried

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

Denise Lagacé Rioux /Jean Réal Michaud,

2021-020 That the minutes from the March 16, 2021 regular meeting, and from the March 23, 2021 special meeting, which copies were distributed to Council members, are adopted as received. Carried

DRINKING WATER

All potable water analyses since the last meeting show « potable water » results.

Renaud Ouellette /Jean Maurice Gagnon,

2021-021 That the potable water analyses are received and filed. Carried

MOTIONS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

PUBLIC WORKS

A new part is needed for the street sweeper. It should be repaired and in use soon. It's pothole season. Please use caution while repairs are ongoing. The department has bought new equipment to clear roots inside pipes. The equipment works very well and we will save money by doing the work ourselves.

Broadway Boulevard

Renaud Ouellette / Michel "Rocky" Ouellette,

2021-022 That motion number 2021-004 is amended to read Northern Construction Inc. instead of Falls Construction Ltd. Carried

PLANNING

Twelve permits were given in March for an added value of \$187,689.

ENVIRONMENT

Residents are encouraged to participate in the spring-cleaning event and to send in their photos and coordinates. Next Saturday, bags can be left at the roadside and a town employee will pick them up. Its incomprehensible that people throw their litter on the ground.

FIRE

There has not been a major fire in a while. The tender for the new fire station closes April 21. The sketch of the building is presented.

RECREATION, TOURISM AND CULTURE

Councilor Gagnon thanks all volunteers working at the RTC including volunteers for the vaccination clinics. Skateboard park – the sketch of the park is presented. The parc will be constructed behind the John Caldwell School.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Tourism and Special Projects Coordinator

Jean Maurice Gagnon/Renaud Ouellette,

2021-023 That Josée Gagnon is hired as Tourism and Special Projects Coordinator at the salary per the established salary scale and with benefits per policy 2006-10 on working conditions for non-union personnel, starting on April 19, 2021. Carried

Accounts Receivable/Payable Clerk 3

Jean Maurice Gagnon/Renaud Ouellette,

2021-024 That Chantal Rioux is hired as Accounts Receivable/Payable Clerk 3 at the salary per the established salary scale and with benefits per policy 2006-10 on working conditions for non-union personnel. Carried

Administrative Support 2 - administration

Jean Maurice Gagnon/Renaud Ouellette,

- 2021-025 That Sophie Marceau is hired as Administrative Support 2 at the salary per the established salary scale and with benefits per policy 2006-10 on working conditions for non-union personnel. Carried**

The Mayor explains the re-organization at the Administration Department to replace a retiring town employee. He thanks the CAO for his work on this re-structuring.

POLICE

Councilor J. R. Michaud notes that all members of the force have been vaccinated against COVID-19.

Several police operations were done with more to come.

The date to take off studded tires is May 1st.

Alain Rioux – constable II

Jean Réal Michaud/Denise Lagacé Rioux,

- 2021-026 That the temporary position of constable II for the Grand Falls Police Force, held by Alain Rioux, become a permanent position. Carried**

FINANCES

The Deputy Mayor thanks the staff for the good management of town finances and for their collaboration with Council. She mentions the following comparisons since the municipal elections in 2016.

	2016	2021
Tax rate	1.47	1.51
Property assessments	\$528,750,000	\$558,000,000
Total annual budget	\$12,400,000	\$12,900,000
Debt ratio	13.68%	9.4%
Water and sewer taxes	\$44 per month	\$47 per month

She also mentions that approximately \$1,400,000 was paid from the operations fund for capital projects.

DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

The Deputy Mayor thanks the committee and the President, Denis Durepos, for their work. She notes that student jobs have been filled for 2021.

NEW BUSINESS

2021 Financial Audit

Lucie Nadeau Frenette of the Nadeau Picard accounting firm presents the 2021 audit.

The consolidated surplus is at \$825,000.

There is a total of 4.11 million dollars in reserves.

A surplus of \$20,000 is noted in the General Fund and of \$13,000 in the Water and Sewer Fund.

The debt in 2019 was at \$8,600,000. In 2020, the debt had decreased to \$7,670,000.

Debt reimbursement accounts for 11% of the budget.

Denise Lagacé Rioux/Jean Maurice Gagnon,

- 2021-027 That the Town Council accepts the financial audit ending December 31st, 2021, as presented. Carried**

The Deputy Mayor thanks the team at Nadeau Picard and remarks on the good work relationship between the firm and the Town.

The Mayor also thanks the business for always being available to help the staff in these difficult times.

He thanks town management and the Council for 15 consecutive years without a deficit.

Recycling program

Council members ask that residents pay attention to the items going in their recycling bin. 25% of the last recycling pick-up was garbage. This can cause an entire truck to be rejected and all content sent to the dump.

Still, residents are congratulated for their efforts. The Town is studying the possibility that the garbage and recycling would be picked-up on alternating weeks.

The pick-up schedule and the list of recyclable materials can be found on the Town's website.

2021 spring clean-up

Several individuals participated last week which was very nice to see.

People are encouraged to send in their pictures as there are prizes to be won.

The Mayor supports Councillor R. Ouellette's comments that throwing garbage on the ground it is unacceptable. These people could be fined.

Organ donation

Mayor Deschênes proclaims the National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week from April 18th to the 24th.

OTHERS – Council, public and media interventions

- Council intervention

COVID-19: Best wishes to the people under lock-down. The Mayor is communicating regularly with Public Health concerning the situation and the red recovery phase currently in our region. He encourages residents to remain patient. The recovery level should change soon if things remain positive.

He reminds everyone that the Town is under the direction of the Province and must follow the order in place. The Town does not have the power to do otherwise.

Any questions or worries the public has should be brought to the attention of Public Health.

Broadway Boulevard: The project will begin May 1st. In the meantime, more information will be distributed to merchants. An information session will be organised when it is possible to do so.

Elections: Councillor M. Ouellette announces that, after 13 years of service, he will not be a candidate in the next elections. He thanks his committee members, the Farmers' Market and Fire Department, as well as the municipal administration.

The Deputy Mayor also extends her thanks as she will not be a candidate either. She wishes success to the new Council.

The Mayor thanks outgoing members, including Councillor Long who is absent tonight because of his health. He congratulates the members elected by acclamation and wishes luck to Councillor J. R. Michaud who is up for re-election.

This meeting should be the last for this Council. The last year has been difficult for everyone including the staff. The Mayor thanks staff for their adaptation to the numerous changes. He thanks Council and mentions his pride for the good work accomplished during the last five years.

ADJOURNMENT

Denise Lagacé Rioux/Michel "Rocky" Ouellette, that the meeting is adjourned at 8:20 p.m.
Carried

Marcel Deschênes
Mayor

Lise J. Ouellette
Deputy Clerk