

Northeast Avalon Joint Council Meeting

MINUTES

Wednesday, November 23, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.
City Hall, Mount Pearl, NL

ATTENDEES:

- Mr. Craig T. Williams, Conception Harbour (Chairperson)
- Mr. Joedy Wall, Pouch Cove
- Mr. Steve Tessier, Conception Bay South
- Ms. Peggy Roche, Torbay
- Mr. Sam Whelan, Colliers
- Mr. Jim Joy, Holyrood
- Mr. Bert Hickey, Logy Bay-Middle Cove-Outer Cove
- Mr. Bradley Power, Eastern Regional Service Board

PROCEEDINGS:

1. **CALL TO ORDER** - The meeting was called to order by Chair Craig T. Williams at 6:42 p.m.
2. **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

MOTION: It was moved by Ms. Roche, seconded by Mr. Whelan, that the Agenda of the NEAJC meeting of November 23, 2016 be adopted as tabled. Motion carried.

Ref#: NEAJC2016-001

3. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES – October 19, 2016**

Members noted the Motion introduced at the October 19 meeting related to ‘banning single use plastic bags’ should have read that “Joint Council will write all members to determine their interest in supporting a province-wide ban on single use plastic bags.”

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Whelan, seconded by Mr. Hickey, that the Minutes of the October 19, 2016 meeting be adopted with the noted change. Motion carried.

Ref#: NEAJC2016-002

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- a. **2017 NEA Joint Council Membership Invoices:** Mr. Williams noted the 2017 membership invoices will be sent out to all communities in January.
- b. **Meeting with Members of Parliament:** Mr. Williams noted letters were sent to MPs Whalen, O'Regan and McDonald requesting meeting. He has yet to receive a reply. Mr. Power will reach out to the offices of each MP to follow-up on the requests.

Action Item(s)	Person Responsible	Deadline
Follow-up with Members of Parliament regarding meeting with the Joint Council.	Bradley Power	January 2017

- c. **Regulation and Licensing of Trout Fishing:** Mr. Williams indicated he has not received any additional information on the issue of government potentially regulating trout fishing throughout the province. He will keep everyone informed when more information comes available.

Action Item(s)	Person Responsible	Deadline
Distribute information about the regulation and licensing of trout fishing.	Bradley Power	When available.

- d. **Methylmercury:** Mr. Williams indicated he has sent a letter on behalf of the Joint Council to the Honourable Perry Trimper, Minister of Environment, Conservation and Climate Change, and copied the Honourable Siobhan Coady, Minister of Natural Resources. No reply has been received.

- e. **Appeals Board Vacancies:** Mr. Williams confirmed will be sent to the Honourable Eddie Joyce, Minister of Municipal Affairs, on the issue.

Action Item(s)	Person Responsible	Deadline
Draft a letter regarding the importance of vacancies on the Appeals Board being filled as soon as possible.	Bradley Power	For review at January 2017 meeting.

- f. **Plastic Bag Ban:** A discussion took place about single use plastic bags and their impact on the environment. Mr. Williams indicated the issue is of importance to many communities throughout the province. He also sits on the Municipalities

Newfoundland and Labrador Environmental Committee where a discussion on the issue is taking place.

The group noted Councillor Sheilagh O’Leary from the City of St. John’s has been a strong advocate on this issue.

Mr. Hickey noted that a potential ban seems to be more about reducing the use of plastic bags versus switching to an alternate product (such as paper bags).

Ms. Roche noted she observed a store in the St. John’s area recently utilizing biodegradable plastic bags. Mr. Williams, who is familiar with the retail sector, said even those bags take an extensive period of time to decompose. He believes reusable cloth bags are going to be the way of the future for many retailers.

It was noted that the Town of Torbay recently approved a motion on a plastic bag ban, led by Councillor Craig Scott.

Mr. Tessier questioned what the enforcement of a potential ban would look like. Mr. Whelan suggested it would have to be a top-down approach, led by the Provincial Government.

Mr. Whelan asked those in attendance if they were aware of where the ‘recycled’ bags go when dropped off to Dominion and Sobeys. Mr. Williams said that based on his experience they are recycled into new bags.

Mr. Williams noted the City of Montreal will implement its ban on single use plastic bags on Earth Day 2018.

Mr. Tessier said he is surprised the industry is not fighting back more on the issue. He also noted in Ontario, garbage audits were done to enforce similar laws. He believes Newfoundland and Labrador would be better to go down the road of recycling versus a ban.

A Motion was introduced at the last Joint Council meeting for a letter to be sent to all member communities asking their position on the issue. If a majority of communities are onboard, a letter will be sent to the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Climate Change supporting a province-wide ban.

Action Item(s)	Person Responsible	Deadline
Draft a letter to all member communities asking their position on a ban on single use plastic bags.	Bradley Power	For review at January 2017 meeting.

- g. Library Closures:** Mr. Wall noted the towns of Torbay and Flatrock have written the Honourable Dale Kirby, Minister of Education, regarding library closures affecting their communities. He also explained how the Town of Pouch Cove has written numerous letters as its library is slated for closure.

Ms. Roche noted it is truly unfortunate that libraries have to raise money to support themselves.

Mr. Tessier said it's difficult to class all libraries together, as many facilities have different levels of demand. Closures should have been based on an assessment.

Mr. Joy indicated the regional library in the Town of Holyrood is quite active. It is used by individuals from as far away as St. Mary's Bay.

Mr. Tessier said over 6,800 people are registered at the library in the Town of Conception Bay South. He went on to suggest maybe government should provide funding, in lieu of library closures, for a community or community group to purchase e-books for residents. Mr. Wall believes an e-book approach won't support seniors who find it difficult to travel if they still have to attend a library outside of their community to get a copy.

Mr. Wall said there was no consultation on library closures, which was very unfortunate. He said the decision was undertaken haphazardly. He also noted the only cost to government to operate a library in his community is the cost of a librarian. His town covers rent, heat/light, etc. He concluded, and the group agreed, the approach for closing libraries was completely wrong.

As library closures are on hold until public consultations conclude, members were asked to report back to the Joint Council in the future with ideas on how to improve the current system, and alternatives to closure that could be pursued the government. The idea is to suggest solutions instead of simply stating the Joint Council is against the closures. These ideas will formulate a letter to the Minister of Education in the future.

Action Item(s)	Individual(s) Responsible	Deadline
Suggest ideas on how to improve the current library system, and alternatives to closure that could be pursued the government.	All Members	For further discussion at January 2017 meeting.
Compile all suggestions/input and draft a letter to the Minister of Education.	Bradley Power	For review at the February 2017 meeting.

5. **CORRESPONDENCE** - There was no correspondence to review.

6. **FINANCIAL REPORT** - Mr. Williams presented the Financial Report.

As of November 23, 2016, the Northeast Avalon Joint Council bank balance was \$7,973.62. He reiterated that 2017 invoices will go out in January. The annual membership fee is \$300. The funding raised by the membership fees is intended for use on a project of some sort in the future (i.e. hiring a student).

7. **EASTERN REGIONAL SERVICE BOARD UPDATE** - Mr. Whalen provided an update on activities of the Eastern Regional Service Board (ERSB).

Mr. Bradley Power, a former member of the Northeast Avalon Joint Council representing the Town of Logy Bay-Middle Cove-Outer Cove, is now the new Board Clerk/Outreach Coordinator for the ERSB after having served with the Provincial Government for the last decade. Mr. Power is providing coordination support to the Northeast Avalon Joint Council as an extension of his new role. He will also expand the outreach efforts of the Board in other areas throughout the Eastern Region.

The Robin Hood Bay Budget was presented to the Board at its recent meeting. It will be further discussed at the next meeting. The draft budget keeps standard tipping fees the same for the upcoming year, with a slight change in mixed bag waste fees. The 2017 Fee Schedule has now been set to all communities.

The Sunnyside Waste Recovery Facility will now close for the winter months. The Board made this decision when no one applied to the recent snow clearing tender for that site. It will close in December 2016 and re-open in April 2017.

The Board is working diligently to ensure unincorporated areas and Local Service Districts pay their waste management fees as required. While it is a challenge, ERSB staff is working very hard to identify property owners and bill them accordingly for the waste collection service they now received from the Board. Other areas will be included as time goes on and service is expanded.

The Board has an expanded mandate with the inclusion of fire protection services. He noted ERSB is working on a contract with the Town of Holyrood for the provision of fire protection in unincorporated areas off Salmonier Line.

The next meeting of the ERSB is November 30 in St. John's.

8. **OTHER BUSINESS**

a. **Joint Council Laptop:** Mr. Tessier will acquire the laptop belonging the Joint Council from the former recording secretary.

- b. Meeting of All Joint Councils:** Mr. Tessier suggested the Northeast Avalon Joint Council host a meeting of all other joint councils (Southern Shore Joint Council and the Joint Council of Conception Bay North) in the future to discuss issues of a provincial importance. A travel stipend could be considered or requested of the municipalities to be represented. Further discussion will take place on this issue and a potential Agenda in the New Year.
- c. Strategic Plan Update:** Mr. Joy asked where the Joint Council stands in terms of its Strategic Plan. He asked that members revisit the plan as soon as possible, as it is important the group push forward on the strategic items identified as priorities in the past. Mr. Power will distribute a copy of the Plan before the next meeting.

Action Item(s)	Individual(s) Responsible	Deadline
Distribute a copy of the Northeast Avalon Joint Council Strategic Plan	Bradley Power	In advance of the January 2017 meeting.

- d. Ministerial Meeting Follow-up:** Mr. Joy asked if there was any follow-up in regard to the issues presented at the recent meeting with ministers Joyce and Hawkins in Conception Bay South. Mr. Williams indicated no follow-up has occurred. Mr. Power will write a letter requesting a response on all items brought forward at the meeting. Mr. Tessier suggested including something in the letter about safety on by-pass roads, in particular having areas along the network where vehicles can pull over to change a tire, use a cell phone, etc. He also suggested the Joint Council remind Ministers in the letter that the Joint Council presents approximately 40 per cent of the province's population, and issues raised in this forum are of great importance. Mr. Joy agreed that messaging expressing the Joint Council's significance should be used in all correspondence. The group agreed. Mr. Joy concluded by saying the letter should prioritize issues and demand an action plan be developed. This can be done during an additional discussion at the next Joint Council meeting.

Action Item(s)	Individual(s) Responsible	Deadline
Prepare for a discussion on issues presented to ministers Joyce and Hawkins by the Joint Council in May 2016.	Bradley Power	In advance of the January 2017 meeting.
Draft a letter to ministers Joyce and Hawkins on priority issues identified by the Joint Council, including the issue of safety on by-pass roads.	Bradley Power	For review at the February 2017 meeting.

9. ROUNDTABLE

- a. **Canadian Waste Water Fund:** Mr. Tessier noted that the Town of Conception Bay South has been proceeding with water and sewer upgrades resulting from funding announced under the Canadian Waste Water Fund earlier this year. He highlighted that municipalities with funding must spend it by March 31, 2018. The challenge will be availability of the contractors. He concluded by stating the Provincial Government is lobbying to get an extension on the new regulations.

Ms. Roche reminded Joint Council members of a company that had a booth at the recent Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador Convention. Clarity Aquatech offers alternative methods for waste treatment, specifically bio filters. Mr. Power will send around information to the group about this company.

Action Item(s)	Individual(s) Responsible	Deadline
Send out information to Joint Council members about Clarity Aquatech.	Bradley Power	As soon as possible. http://www.clarityaquatech.ca/how-clarity-biofilters-work.html

- b. **Save Our Society Action Committee:** Ms. Roche provided an update on the Save Our Society Action Committee (SOPAC), of which she is a new member. She noted a new executive was elected recently for the group, and some past and present members of the Joint Council recently joined as well. Ms. Roche highlighted there were over 700 moose-vehicle accidents on the Avalon Peninsula this year alone. SOPAC is also seeking support for the construction of a memorial for those impacted by moose-vehicle collisions. She went on to outline how funding from the Provincial Government was recently spent – SOPAC distributed information cards at Visitor Information Centres and at weigh scales throughout the province, and undertook advertising on radio stations and the Internet. She concluded by thanking VOCM for the donation of two pop-up marketing banners. She suggested the Joint Council meet with SOPAC in the future to identify opportunities to partner.

10. MEETING REQUESTS:

Group/Individual	Status
Fire Commissioner Derek Simmons re: Family Fireworks	Request Confirmed – Will be present at the January meeting.
Members of Parliament	Request Outstanding
Community Sector Council	Request Rescinded
Minister Dale Kirby re: Libraries	Request Pending
Save Our People Action Committee (SOPAC)	Request Pending
Sean Martin, Municipal Assessment Agency	Request Rescinded

11. DATE FOR NEXT MEETING – The group decided to host its next meeting and a small Christmas social on Wednesday, January 18, 2017 in the Town of Conception Bay South at 6:30 p.m.

12. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Wall, seconded by Mr. Hickey, that the meeting adjourn. Motion carried.

Ref#: NEAJC2016-003

APPENDIX A

NOVEMBER RECORD OF DECISIONS (MOTIONS)

MOTION NUMBER (Ref#)	MOTION TYPE	DETAILS
NEAJC2016-001	Agenda	It was moved by Ms. Roche, seconded by Mr. Whelan, that the Agenda of the NEAJC meeting of November 23, 2016 be adopted as tabled. Motion carried.
NEAJC2016-002	Minutes	It was moved by Mr. Whelan, seconded by Mr. Hickey, that the Minutes of the October 19, 2016 meeting be adopted with the noted change. Motion carried.
NEAJC2016-003	Adjournment	It was moved by Mr. Wall, seconded by Mr. Hickey, that the meeting adjourn. Motion carried.