



**Village of Chester
Public Forum Meeting
February 25, 2015**

Attendance: Brenda Mulrooney, Commissioner; Bill Nauss, Commissioner; Bill Zinck, Chair; Michael Heisler, Vice-Chair; Shawn Wagg, Village Coordinator/Acting Clerk Treasurer

1.0 Call to Order

Chair Zinck called the meeting to order at 7:05 and thanked the public for coming out to this meeting. This is the first Public Forum meeting and topics will be what you bring forth. Chair Zinck asked for a show of hands for who has a topic to discuss.

- ◆ Carol Nauss suggested that maybe the Commission would take on a project, as New Ross did for their 200th Anniversary, would be a good idea of places/things, etc., that could be marked throughout the Village to identify important history of the Village. Blandford has already marked a number of places in their area. Jo-Ann Grant suggested a QR Code, and scan it with a smart phone, as most people have now-a-days. Carol wondered who would supply the money to do this; perhaps a grant would fund this project. The Heritage Society would be willing to videotape the interview sessions. It was suggested that some community members could do this.
- ◆ Derek Delaware questioned who are the electors that can sign the Town Status Petition? Commissioners stated that the electors are Village residents who are 18 years of age, live in the Village for 6 months. Brenda Mulrooney stated that this time there must be 1/3 of residents to sign the petition. And then a plebiscite, public vote which will take place on the issue of township or not.
- ◆ Jim Barkhouse questioned the Boundary for the Village. It was agreed that the Village boundary was unclear.
- ◆ Cynthia Lamson questioned when the number of signatures needed. Brenda Mulrooney stated that they were hoping prior to March 26/15, when the Provincial Legislature begins spring session. Cynthia also stated that she felt the meeting notice wasn't prominent on the website so not many folks knew about this meeting. Commissioners stated it was a mailed out, on the website.
- ◆ Derek Delaware stated that applying for town status could give the Village new life. Brenda Mulrooney stated that is not necessarily true as MODC has stated that they want the increase in the threshold assessment and base population to increase.
- ◆ Jo-Ann Grant stated that the UNSM, who made the recommendations to eliminate Villages
- ◆ Jim Barkhouse stated that the amalgamation in the Region of Queens has happened, money has been saved, and it has worked since they amalgamated. Brenda Mulrooney said it has worked, and there are others which amalgamation hasn't worked for the areas.
- ◆ John Pece questioned the representation levels. Jo-Ann Grant stated that the town kept most of their representation.
- ◆ Derek Delaware asked how can residents, who are away, how do they sign the petition. VOC is going to check into legalities of how they can sign. Barb Grigsby stated they could have them notarized.
- ◆ John Pece suggested putting the document on our website and people can download it and sign and then mail back.
- ◆ Wording of the petition was questioned by several public members. Wording of the petition will be looked into.
- ◆ Township may not be sought, the petition can be signed, but the Commission may not seek Township.

- ◆ Jim Barkhouse questioned what the reason was for the petition. Brenda Mulrooney and Bill Zinck stated that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) wants the Villages shut down.
- ◆ Kerry Keddy asked what would happen with the assets and the Fire Department if the Village is dissolved. Chair Zinck noted that all assets that Village of Chester owned would go back to MODC.
- ◆ John Dimick asked if there would be financial hardship on outside areas if the Village becomes a Town. Brenda Mulrooney stated an RFP was advertised for this information to be gathered. Jo-Ann Grant stated that there is an increase of revenue going to MODC in relation to the wind farm, as was reported in the papers today.
- ◆ Jim Barkhouse questioned what would happen to the sewer tax rates. Chair Zinck stated that the Municipality of Chester would have to answer that if amalgamation happens.
- ◆ Nancy Hatch questioned what qualifications are being looked for with regards to the RFP and is there a budget for this to be done. Bill Zinck stated that is why the RFP is being done, to find out the price of the study.
- ◆ Ray Cambria questioned the Fiscal Review and MODC's response. Brenda Mulrooney stated that MODC agreed to the Fiscal Review in its entirety, whereas Kings County stated #13 and #14 should not be included in the Review
- ◆ Dolly Harnish asked what the Village does that MODC doesn't do. The Village looks after the Fire Department, Lido Pool, Flowers, Wreaths, Extra green bin pickup in summer months, and Crossing Guards.
- ◆ Dereck Delaware questioned the boundaries, this would have to be clarified
- ◆ Barb Grigsby questioned a press release. Brenda Mulrooney stated that is presently being worked on.
- ◆ Jim Barkhouse felt the population base is smaller than before and questioned if individuals outside could apply to be included. Individuals who live outside but near the boundaries have to ask to become part of the Township if/when applied.
- ◆ Jo-Ann Grant suggested a community committee, volunteers being residents of the Village.
- ◆ Derek Delaware felt communication needs to be improved.
- ◆ Add a place on the website where individuals can add their emails for enhanced communication
- ◆ Barb Grigsby asked of the petunia costs, signal flags, etc. could be an alternative

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm

William Zinck
Commission Chair

Maxine Veinot
Administrative Assistant