



**Minutes
Town of Westville
Committee of The Whole
Council Chambers
February 22, 2022 – 6:00 pm**

1. Call To Order

Mayor White called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

2. Roll Call

Mayor Lennie White, Deputy Mayor Clarrie MacKinnon, Councillor Mitchell MacGregor, Councillor Meghan Bragg, Interim Chief Administrative Officer Sam Graham, Recording Secretary Kristen Reed, Denise Lynch Board Chair of Creative Pictou County, Joe MacEachern Vice Chair of Creative Pictou County, Sarah Santos Director of Creative Pictou County, Scott Ferguson CEO of Pictou County Regional Enterprise Network, 1 member of the public

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None

4. Presentations

a. Creative Pictou County

Ms. Santos and Mr. MacEachern presented about the strategic plan for Creative Pictou County. It is a non-profit that strives for collaboration and connection of local artists. The mission is to be a united voice for promoting and supporting arts and artists. They have a large board that is made up of councillors, fundraisers, grant writers, as well as others. They are proud of the group of people that they have working together.

Started in 2013 with a needs assessment project and Community arts and culture recognition awards. In 2018 it joined the Chamber of Commerce and in 2019 developed the Art Map. 2020 launched ArtFest and released Phase 1Hub of the website. In 2021 Creative Pictou County hired a full-time arts coordinator, completed the strategic plan and created a bucket list. The four areas that were identified in the needs assessment are sustainable non-profit, Support Economic development, community engagement and artist exposure.

Since 2013 they have received \$81,797 in Funding. 62.3% of that was Provincial funding for project grants and wages for summer students. Federal funding of 15.9% and Donors of 11.2% were the next largest sources. Municipal donations and revenue made up the other 10% but are the main sources for funding operations. The 2022 funds budgeted are for staff, 1 full time member and 2 summer students, Administration which includes software, phones, insurance and website fees, rent

and programming artist fees and supplies. The goal is to establish operational sustainability. Having resources available to not have to wait and rely on funding for staff makes staff retention much easier and helps with program continuity.

Programs and events planned for 2022 are Connection through Creativity, partnering with the Mental Health society and a Pet photoshoot fundraiser. They are planning summer programming and Makers Festival. As well as art shows and an art kiosk partnering with the Museum of Industry. Lastly there is a Halloween take over planned and a colouring book fundraiser with local artists. Each year the intention is to have 2 community events. This year it will be Read by the Sea. There are also monthly socials for artists to talk and share. These are held in various locations as well as virtually, and have had positive feedback from members attending.

Creative Pictou County is requesting financial support, endorsement/promotion of CPC initiatives and a liaison to connect with and share our progress with. In return of sponsorship they will offer Brand visibility on website, event communications and advertising materials. Event partnership opportunities collaborate within the creative sector and high profile events. Cross promotion would include banners and signage at events, marketing materials and newsletters.

To find out more information or sign up for the newsletter at www.creativepictoucounty.ca or follow them on Facebook or Instagram.

Deputy Mayor MacKinnon responded it was a great presentation and looks forward to working closer together than previously. Westville has many wonderful areas such as Acadia park, and the Mural on the Reims building that could be areas to collaborate. Suggested reaching out to local MLAs and MPs regarding funding options. CPC responded it's a wonderful idea but keeping budget at reasonable amounts as currently there is lots of competition for government funding.

Councillor Bragg asked about what they consider arts, and that Deputy Mayor MacKinnon is chair of the garden club. She stated that there could be some interesting items created by combining the gardening and the arts. Mr. MacEachern stated that they consider a wide range of items as art such as Culinary arts, musicians, artisan beer, and crafters. It also covers professionals, hobbyists and people just starting out.

Mayor White detailed how the Recreation department was expanded to be the Recreation, Culture and Leisure Services. The Art in the hall exhibit allows local artists to hang paintings and pictures to be viewed and are usually available for purchase. The Town doesn't have a lot of money but can do a lot of in kind and events.

Deputy Mayor MacKinnon was pleased that Councillor Bragg mentioned the garden club. They plant in numerous spots and had 28 people out to meetings prior to closing down for COVID. They are getting back together in March and would love to have CPC present at the meeting.

b. Pictou County Regional Enterprise Network

Scott Ferguson, CEO of the PCREN made a presentation regarding the 2022-2023 Business plan. He explained that he took the role back in November, and has since had conversations with the Board, Mayors and Wardens, and businesses. PCREN is in the last year of a five-year strategy. Three themes stood out. They were Immigration program due to shortage in workforce, Communications, and must win battles.

The new year launches on April 1st, but they are operating as if it's now. They are looking into moving the office to get a larger space to accommodate 3 staff members. They are also connecting with businesses. They have heard from a number of people that there has been a lack of communication. With COVID limits and not as much happening it has been hard to share. Also the Immigration program was a great success that has been talked about around the world, however they did not do a good job of explaining why it was so important and what the strengths were.

PCREN is a benefit because they can have a consistent message as the Mayor or Council when talking to Halifax. Also with collaboration the Province has 7 people representing all the areas. This makes it easier than reaching out to each community.

The Liaison and Oversight Committee (LOC) approved the strategy. The same PCREN are using the same 5 priorities but change the content.

1. Business Development- Digital growth, working with 15 local companies to ensure they are digital ready. Also working with businesses on Continuity planning. When owners want to retire, they sell or go out of business.
2. Workforce Development- helping businesses with skills attraction an offering a welcoming environment. Did well with the immigration project mining skills of refugees to help match refugees with Healthcare jobs. PCREN didn't do well identifying gaps. Need to look at other groups and skills that are under resourced groups in the community.
3. Business Navigation and Connections- Programs are not easy to find, access or apply for. They can help businesses navigate the process and work with clusters of businesses.
4. MIT REAP- Is a partnership with Massachusetts Institute of Technology which has a half dozen teams including one in Pictou County. Some of which is already a part of the business plan.
5. Communications- Will help with exposure and telling success stories. PCREN have asked businesses if they feel Pictou County is a good place to do business, and how can PCREN improve. One way improving is feedback scores from stakeholders, which will include 20 measures. This will give a formal way of gauging success and improvement. Also created a Digital readiness score to help assess businesses ability to do online business. On February 16th there was a Board meeting and on the 17th the LOC met. Mr. Ferguson has presented to Westville and will meet with Stellarton next week.

A discussion followed the presentation which included specific benefits to Westville in the past and if there is information about the past four years. Mr.

Ferguson said he would prepare the information for Councillors. Westville was one of three communities in the Mainstreeting program and were able to get a lot of info and public engagement. This happened in part through PCREN. Council have also discussed a need to get businesses together and PCREN could assist with that also.

5. Business

a. PCREN

No further discussion required. Will forward to Council meeting to make motion to approve plan, including funding.

b. Public Engagement Policy

At last Council meeting when Policy was referenced Councillor MacKinnon had issue with the limiting each person to five minutes. After a brief discussion it was suggested to reword policy to “try to keep comments to 5 minutes”. This was agreed and staff will update the wording and put forward at next Council meeting to approve.

c. Municipal Polling District (Boundary) Review

Every 8 years the Polling Districts need to be reviewed. This needs to be done in the 2022 calendar year. Last time it was done by the planning department, and recommend having Oliver Browning, as the Planning department do the review. After a brief discussion it was agreed to have the motion at Council to direct PDI Engineering to undertake the review and adhere to the requirements of the act.

6. Next Meetings

a. Regular Council Meeting

Westville Council Chambers
February 28, 2022 – 6 pm.

b. Board of Police Commissioners Meeting

Westville Council Chambers
March 15, 2022 – 6pm

c. Committee of the Whole

Westville Council Chambers
March 21, 2022 – 6 pm

7. Adjournment

The Meeting was adjourned at 7:58pm.

Mayor: _____

Chief Administrative Officer: _____

Date Approved: _____