

# Meeting minutes

**Meeting: Board of Directors**

**Date: March 28, 2013**

**Attendees**

Russell Walker, Lloyd Hines, Greg Herrett, , Alex Morrison, Amanda Whitewood, Darren Bruckswaiger, Dan McDougall, Betty MacDonald, Doug Sabean

**Regrets:**

Billy Joe MacLean, Bobby McNeil, Brian Cullen, Raymond Tynes

**Staff Attendees**

Kathy Gillis, Dwayne Phillips, Kim Ashizawa, Tracy Williams

**Guests**

David Dudka

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The Chair called the meeting to order.

The Chair, Russell Walker, welcomed Dan McDougall, Associate Deputy Minister, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, to his first official PVSC Board of Directors meeting.

**1. Review of Agenda**

The draft agenda was reviewed.

**Moved by L. Hines, seconded by G. Herrett that the agenda be accepted. Motion carried.**

**2. Review of the Minutes**

The draft minutes of February 22, 2012 were reviewed.

**Moved by D. Bruckswaiger, seconded by L. Hines that the minutes be approved. Motion carried.**

**3. Reports from Committees**

**Audit & Finance Committee**

**a. Investment Policy**

The Audit & Finance Committee Chair, L. Hines, reported that the Committee had been asked to review the Investment Policy in terms of consolidating investments, and ensuring that proper management and protocol was established.

At the March 27, 2013 Audit & Finance Committee meeting, the Committee was presented with and reviewed the combined Investment Policy - the combined policy consolidates PVSC's policies and investment strategies relating to the Benefits (non-Pension employee post-retirement benefits) Fund, Technology Advancement Fund, and medium-term and short-term investments. The Audit & Finance Committee recommended to the Board of Directors that the Combined Investment Policy be adopted.

**Moved by L. Hines, seconded by G. Herrett that the Combined Investment Policy be accepted. Motion carried.**

b. Audit Plan

Auditors from Grant Thornton attended the March 27, 2013 Audit & Finance Committee meeting and provided (for information purposes only) a high level overview of the Audit Planning report (an environmental scan). It was noted there are no changes in Auditing standards that would impact PVSC.

c. Request for Fund Transfer to Capital Budget

In preparation for the contract renewal with Tyler/CLT (iasWorld vendor), PVSC has identified areas to reduce costs (ie. purchase software from Tyler rather than renting it) and create opportunities to increase in-house IT support (have PVSC IT staff provide oracle system support). In order to move forward with the identified opportunities, a request to transfer funds from Operating to Capital was put forth to the Audit & Finance Committee for consideration. The Audit & Finance Committee brought forward a recommendation to the Board to allow for the remaining balance from the Operating IT budget to be transferred to the Capital budget for the 2012/2013 fiscal year.

**Moved by L. Hines, seconded by A. Whitewood that the remaining balance from the Operating IT budget be transferred to the Capital budget for the 2012/2013 fiscal year be accepted. Motion carried.**

d. 2013/14 Budget Reconciliation with New Collective Agreement

The budget reconciliation with regard to the 2013 Collective Agreement arrangements was presented.

4. **CEO Report**

K. Gillis gave an overview of the CEO Strategic and Operation Update report.

- The assessment appeal notification period increased this year from 21 days to 31 days. (January 14 – February 14, 2013). There was not much change in the total number of appeals received this year compared to last year (2013 - 11,481 and 2012 - 11,360). 10,770 inquiries were received from property owners during this period.

Note: It was noted that perhaps the appeal results, in terms of the number of appeals received versus the number of days to appeal, should be provided to the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations for information purposes.

- Pictometry Municipal Unit Implementation – municipal unit pictometry agreements have been provided to municipalities for signature by CAOs and once signed access to pictometry through iasWorld is set-up.
- Property Innovation Council – mailing address web portal developed, being moved to the CIO for testing, developing a roll-out strategy for the portal, and a business case for a centralized tax billing, payment & mailing service project planning is underway
- Open Data – the Open Data group continues as a forum to agree and advance open data principles among participants (Province – SNSMR, MUs – HRM & CBRM, and PVSC).
- K. Gillis noted that she and L. Hines (on behalf of the Board Chair) met with the Liberal Caucus to provide them with an overview of PVSC. A meeting invitation was also extended to the PC and NDP Caucuses.
- Municipal Client Engagement – The Municipal Unit Advisory Committee will hold their second meeting; it's working out well and they are working through various items.
- Website Review Initiative - Continuing to review PVSC's website; looking at mapping, and data disclosure.
- Facilities – Truro office relocation on target for June 1, 2013, and will be moving the Kentville office location – an RFP is underway.
- Land Data Quality Review – The Property Innovation Council has established a committee to review the recommendation of the review.

**Action: Staff to look at the CEO reporting structure and forum to ensure it relates risk matrix with strategic initiatives and associated mitigation strategy.**

## 5. Inquiry Period Survey Results

D. Dudka presented the results of the 2013 Assessment Inquiry Period Survey. The presentation details are the result of 400 surveys conducted with randomly selected property owners who placed a call to the PVSC during the 2013 assessment inquiry period.

The objective of the survey was to determine caller satisfaction with PVSC staff handling their call. The results of the survey are of those property owners who called the PVSC and are not reflective of the general population.

It was suggested to maybe include graph ratings in correlation to housing rates, household debt, etc.

#### 6. **Business Plan 2013/2014**

K. Gillis reviewed the history of strategic initiatives (2001-2013) with regard to the development of the Corporation. At some point, an evaluation may be beneficial.

The key priorities and initiatives for 2013/2014 in support of PVSC's strategic goals were presented as per the 2013/2014 Business Plan. In particular, the strategic areas of focus (2010-2015) were reviewed. Workforce development was added as an area of focus. It was noted that call management technology is an item that is being looked at (there would be a need to purchase software but would enable staff to handle calls during the appeal period internally and therefore eliminating the need to hire external resources).

#### Risk Management

The risk management process established through the strategic planning process allows PVSC to identify and manage risks which may present challenges to its organizational objectives and goals. The core business risks/mitigations were reviewed with the Board.

An internal white paper is being prepared on property tax reform / municipal income tax for the Board's review and discussion.

PVSC has instituted internal audit processes, modeled after externally conducted audits, through a Compliance / Quality Program.

It was noted that an audit cycle should be established.

**Action: Staff to provide Board members with the external audit summary document from Deloitte.**

#### 7. **Property Innovation Council – E-Service Delivery**

Through the Property Innovation Council (PI Council), Common Billing was identified as an opportunity to explore; that translated into an E-Service Delivery solution. As presented to the Audit and Finance Committee, the E-Service Delivery business case reflects enhanced partnerships with MU's on electronic billing, collection, and cost saving benefits.

The Audit and Finance Committee recommended that the Board review and approve to release phase two funding to access \$160,000 from the Technology Advancement Fund to begin the process.

**Moved by D. Bruckschwaiger, seconded by G. Herrett that funding from the Technology Advancement Fnd be released for phase two of the E-Service Delivery project be accepted. Motion carried.**

The next steps will include an update to the PI Council, and initiating phase two with the release of a Request for Proposal (RFP) for professional services.

**8. Other**

PVSC will hold an All Staff Event on April 3, 2013 and Board members were asked to advise if they are able to attend.

**Meeting adjourned**