

**Property Valuation Services Corporation  
Board of Directors  
Minutes  
January 30, 2009**

**Attendees**

Carroll Publicover  
Mervin Hartlen  
Jimmy MacAlpine  
Trudy LeBlanc  
Gloria McCluskey

Debbie Kampen  
Darren Bruckschwaiger  
Billy Joe MacLean  
Bobby McNeil

**Regrets**

Kevin Malloy  
Lyle Goldberg (for K. Simpson)

**Staff Attendees**

Kathy Gillis, Russ Adams, Tracy Williams

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**1. Agenda**

- The draft agenda was reviewed and the Capped Assessment Program (CAP) was added to the agenda for discussion.

**2. Minutes**

- The draft Minutes of December 18, 2008 were reviewed.  
**Moved by B. MacLean, seconded by M. Hartlen that the Minutes be accepted. Motion carried.**

**3. Business Arising**

HST Status Update

In December, PVSC sent a letter to CRA seeking a decision on municipal designation and advising that if an answer was not forthcoming within 30 days, PVSC would be seeking legal action to resolve the issue.

The week of Jan 19/09, M. Singer spoke with his contact at CRA who advised a recommendation was being put forth to designate PVSC municipal status. As of Jan 30/09, Mark was advised by CRA that a letter will be forthcoming next week confirming municipal designation for PVSC.

The Board congratulated staff on their efforts to resolve this issue and as well, suggested that the efforts of others be recognized (ie. L. Hines, G. Keefe, etc).

**Moved by B. MacLean, seconded by G. McCluskey that once the CRA letter is confirmed, those who provided their support in helping to resolve the HST matter receive a thank you be accepted. Motion carried.**

**4. Reports from Committees**

Audit & Finance

T. LeBlanc provided an update on the Audit & Finance Committee meeting held January 29, 2009.

### Draft Accounts Receivable Interest Policy

The Committee recommends as a standard business practice that the Corporation adopt an interest policy on outstanding accounts receivable. The rate will be set each year as the budget is approved. It is recommended this year that it be set at a monthly interest rate of 1% on late payments. The Committee discussed the idea of offering an incentive discount for those that pay their entire account for the year but felt that it would be difficult to administer and could negatively impact the budget. Therefore the committee does not recommend this as part of the policy.

**Moved by T. LeBlanc, seconded by B. McNeil, as recommended by the Audit & Finance Committee, that a 1% monthly interest rate be charged to municipalities on overdue accounts effective next year, which is to be reviewed each year in the budget process. Motion carried.**

### Investment Policy

An investment policy is needed for the funds transferred from the Province to the Corporation, and the Corporations ongoing contribution towards the Long Service Awards and the Post Retirement Health Benefit premiums. The Committee recognizes external professional advice is required to develop such a policy. Two firms with pension and investment policy experience were approached for proposals. The Committee reviewed both and is seeking some further clarification from one of the firms. The Committee agreed that, depending on the clarification sought, they will meet with both firms for a summary presentation. The Board agreed that the Committee should come back with the analysis and a recommendation.

### 3rd Quarter Financials

R. Adams reviewed the 3rd Quarter financials (up to Dec 31/08) and noted that the current forecast is that the Corporation will be at, or just slightly under budget. There are a number of large expenditures (distribution of assessment notices) that need to be managed in the forth fiscal quarter.

C. Publicover indicated that funds for Board development and strategic planning should be specifically set out in the budget. A visual depiction of the PVSC plan should also be available and distributed to each PVSC office.

The possibility of electronic assessment notices was raised. Staff noted that the feasibility and effectiveness of an electronic transmission is something that will be considered in future plans.

## **5. New Business**

### Overview of Yearly Agenda

It was noted during the December governance workshop, led by L. Comeau, that the Board agendas should be established around the business and planning cycle. A calendar of key items has been drafted for the Board's review or action as it relates to the strategic plan and scheduled for the year. There are periods

when the Board as a whole is not required to meet but the various committees will continue their work in preparation for full Board meetings.

It was indicated that not having a meeting in December and January (which would mean no meeting until the end of February) may not be appropriate timing, especially when new Board members join in December. It was agreed that a January meeting would be included and not a February meeting. If need be, a Board meeting could be held via conference call.

It was agreed that the yearly plan / schedule will work as an outline of upcoming items. The Board will evaluate the schedule over the course of the year.

## **6. CEO's Report**

K. Gillis noted that on January 25th almost 600,000 assessment notices were mailed out to property owners. In order for the public to be aware of the PVSC and the new look of the notices, TV and newspaper ads were run prior to the notices going out. Press releases were issued the day the notices were mailed. The Minister of SNSMR was briefed on the 2009 Assessment Roll and presentations were given to party caucuses so that MLA's had contact information to forward inquiries from constituents. Client Services provide an overview of the Roll to HRM Council on Jan 26<sup>th</sup> and are arranging presentations to various other councils.

K. Gillis noted there have been several positive news articles this year including the Halifax Herald article which featured an interview of G. McCluskey and several CBC Radio interviews with PVSC staff. Appeals are coming in at approximately 300 per day but at this point it is too early to know if appeals will be up or down this year.

As in previous years, calls are routed through an external call centre for the duration of the appeal period in order to handle call volume. During the first day of the appeal period, there was an issue where the lines were not opened up and callers were getting a busy signal. This has been corrected and callers are being serviced by the call centre.

## **7. CAPPED ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (CAP)**

B. McNeil indicated that CBRM ran test bills to get an idea of what their revenue would be at market value without the CAP. It was determined that much higher assessed properties save more with the CAP in place than the average home owner. He noted that HRM has concerns around the impact of the CAP program and also, if an exit strategy from the program is developed, what its impact would be on municipalities and the administration of the assessment system.

T. LeBlanc suggested that perhaps more municipal units / towns should do the same exercise as CBRM and provide the analysis to the UNSM.

**Moved by J. MacAlpine, seconded by B. MacLean that the PVSC Board Chair write a letter to the UNSM President recommending that a committee be struck in preparation for the Government's review of the cap in 2010, and indicate the PVSC would be willing to sit on the committee in keeping with its role as administrator of the assessment system. Motion carried.**

**8. Board *in camera* Session**

Discussion on the CEO's evaluation took place.

**Meeting Adjourned  
Next Meeting – Fri., February 27, 2009**