
Meeting Minutes

Meeting: Board of Directors

Date: March 27, 2015

Attendees

Russell Walker, Jimmy MacAlpine, Alex Morrison, Brian Cullen, Raymond Tynes, Kevin Saccary, Doug Sabeau, Amanda Whitewood, Greg Keefe

Regrets

Betty MacDonald, Michele McKenzie

Staff Attendees

Kathy Gillis, Dwayne Phillips, Meredith Buchanan, Rebecca Vorstermans, Tracy Williams

Guest Presenter

David Dudka

The Chair, Russell Walker, called the meeting to order.

1. Review of Agenda

The draft agenda was reviewed for any additions or deletions.

**Moved by Jimmy MacAlpine, seconded by Doug Sabeau that the agenda be accepted.
Motion carried.**

2. Review of the Minutes

The draft minutes of November 28, 2014 were reviewed.

**Moved by Jimmy MacAlpine, seconded by Kevin Saccary that the Minutes be accepted.
Motion carried.**

3. Update from Committees

Audit & Finance Committee

The Audit & Finance Committee Chair, Greg Keefe, noted that the Committee met on February 19, 2015. The following update was provided:

(a) Investment Policy Annual Review

As per the annual investment policy review, there were no needs identified for changes. The policy requires an investment manager review every five years, therefore a performance review of JFL (Jarislowsky Fraser Limited) will be conducted in October 2015.

(b) Investment Report for the Quarter ended December 30, 2014

Investments themselves are on target. The quarterly returns are down a bit, mostly affected by the drop in oil prices.

(c) Audit Plan 2014/15

The external auditors presented their audit plan for the 2014/15. Audit Partner, Jerry Hutchings of Grant Thornton will be retiring and PVSC's new audit partner is Katrina Beach. The audit strategy and terms of engagement was reviewed with the Audit & Finance Committee. It was identified that the audit partner will present the audit plan and audit report to the Committee (and then the Committee to the Board) and not directly to the Board of Directors unless the Board wishes otherwise.

(d) Permit Data Exchange (PDX)

The Audit & Finance Committee did approve recommendation of the PDF Business Case. (This initiative will be discussed in more detail.)

(e) HST Ruling from Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)

An HST ruling was received from the CRA in December 2014. It ruled that eDelivery is subject to HST – PVSC will have to charge and collect HST on amounts charged to municipalities for eDelivery services.

Governance Committee

The Governance Committee Chair, Russell Walker, indicated the Committee met on February 19, 2015. The following update was provided:

(a) Board Recruitment Update

As per the Board recruitment and selection process that was approved by the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM), we will be creating a competency matrix that will be used for the Board Recruitment Process. The Chair noted that Dr. David Detomasi (Queen's University) will be assisting with this and that the survey has already been sent out, which he encouraged Board members to complete. The Chair also noted that Tracy Williams will work with the Board members to arrange phone interviews with Dr. Detomasi as a follow-up to the survey. The full Board session will take place on April 15th with Dr. Detomasi.

In addition, Kingsbridge Robertson Surette will assist with the process, once the Competency Matrix is finalized, in terms of posting an expression of interest twice a year for newly interested candidates, these names will become part of the roster, and working with the Governance Committee to review the prospective candidates. Following that, a recommendation will be made by the Board to the UNSM for final appointment.

(b) Board Development

Will be welcoming Dr. David Detomasi back for a second module of the Queen's governance training (on risk). The tentative dates are November 19th (evening) and November 20, 2015.

(c) Governance Manual

The Governance Manual is being updated, mostly housekeeping items. The updates will be reviewed at the next Governance Committee meeting.

(d) Committee Membership

The Chair noted that his three-year term as the PVSC Board Chair is ending.

Quality & Client Service Committee

Jimmy MacAlpine, Quality & Client Service Committee Chair, advised the Committee met on March 26, 2015. The following update was provided:

(a) 2015 Call Management

The new call management software was implemented in November 2014. PVSC staff not only managed the calls during the regular period but also the busy period – during the appeal inquiry period. Some software issues were encountered during the appeal inquiry period but were quickly resolved. Staff are continuing to monitor the software to ensure stability.

(b) Municipal Units Survey Results

PVSC conducts a survey every two years to measure satisfaction with the products, and quality of service it provides to municipalities. Overall, the 2014 satisfaction scores have shown improvement. PVSC will continue to explore opportunities for continuous improvement. In addition, staff will be looking at options with the Quality Committee to increase survey participation from the municipal units as only 16 units responded to the survey even though follow-up contact was conducted encouraging their participation.

(c) Quality Framework & 3rd Party Certification/Audit

Through various initiatives PVSC has undertaken to continuously improve its Assessment and Valuation operations. They have entered into a formal agreement with the International Property Tax Institute (IPTI) to attain a measure of certification for PVSC's core business. The IPTI Certification will recognize PVSC with jurisdictional excellence. PVSC will endeavor to implement IPTI's Best Practice recommendations in areas where changes are appropriate for PVSC and are economically feasible.

In addition to the copy of the presentation previously provided to the Board, Kathy Gillis & Russell Walker gave the Board an update on the March 17, 2015 meeting with the Department of Municipal Affairs regarding Quality and Compliance.

(d) Integrated Property Services Council (IPSC)

- The eDelivery Service is doing well and there are no issues with delivery. The Bundle # 1 adoption rates for Halifax Water & Tax are good. PVSC's rates for Assessment Notices are a bit low – they are working with Canada Post and the Municipalities using the service to consider ways to increase rates. Bundle # 2 implementation is underway with SAP users for both tax and utility billings.

- The Open Data Council was formed to serve as an advisory group for the membership of the former Property Innovation Council to investigate the potential of open data. During the latter part of 2014, the Open Data Council agreed to collaborate on a Request for Information (RFI) with regard to creating an operational enterprise to house and maintain Open Data – a single source portal. The Open Data Council is moving along with the RFI that may be issued next week looking for vendors to build a portal.

- External IT Audit
Last summer, PVSC moved from the provincial CIO (Chief Information Office) hosting environment to an external IT hosting provider – Bulletproof Solutions Inc. Now that Bulletproof has been in place for about six months, PVSC has engaged Deloitte to conduct a third party IT quality and compliance audit of Bulletproof Solutions. Deloitte's draft report is being prepared.

4. **2015 Assessment Period Survey**

405 surveys was conducted with randomly selected property owners who placed a call to PVSC during the 2015 inquiry period. David Dudka presented the detailed results of the survey. Overall, the service delivery during the 2015 inquiry period was successful, particularly in light of the new call management software implementation. The service delivery trend over the past five years has been consistently stable.

5. **Permit Data Exchange (PDX)**

Greg Keefe reviewed the PDX presentation. The PDX is a shared data repository where municipalities and PVSC can share current data relating to building permits, inspections, and other information for a property. Basically, it is a process where you collect data once but use it multiple times. Basically, it would be the same infrastructure as for eDelivery. As per the business case, the payback period for the project is two years. The initial funding for the PDX project will come from PVSC's Technology Advancement Fund, the investment recovery principles are consistent with the eDelivery project. The recovery amounts, as per Option B, were reviewed – the total investment would be \$1,045,264: PVSC's portion \$522,632, HRM's portion \$439,011 and CBRM's portion \$83,621. HRM and CBRM have already committed to contributing their portion to PVSC, and HRM has approved in principle the PDX initiative (to have it in the budget when approved).

**It was moved by Greg Keefe, seconded by Amanda Whitewood to proceed with the Permit Data Exchange project based on the Option B Recovery Model be accepted.
Motion carried**

6. **Presentation & Media Debrief**

Rebecca Vorstermans presented the 2015 Assessment Roll Media and Outreach Summary. She provided an overview on the media coverage & corrections required, media trends, and a summary with regard to Assessment Roll outreach presentations and meetings. In terms of next steps, will be planning for advanced notification and media engagement, and the development of good news stories (ie. professional designations, key initiatives, etc).

To Do: Rebecca to track balanced media coverage (negative/positive).

Kathy Gillis acknowledged Rebecca's efforts with regard to the preparation of and during the assessment roll media coverage; a great job.

7. **CEO Report**

There were no questions regarding the CEO's report.

8. ***In Camera* Session**

An *in camera* session was held. Jimmy MacAlpine is the newly appointed Board Chair and Russell Walker is the Vice Chair.

Meeting adjourned