
Meeting Minutes

Meeting: Board of Directors (via phone)

Date: September 25, 2014

Attendees

Russell Walker, Greg Herrett, Alex Morrison, Jimmy MacAlpine, Brian Cullen, Raymond Tynes, Betty MacDonald, Kevin Saccary, Doug Sabean, Amanda Whitewood

Regrets

Billy Joe MacLean, Greg Keefe

Staff Attendees

Kathy Gillis, Dwayne Phillips, Kim Ashizawa, Tracy Williams

The Chair called the meeting to order.

1. Review of Agenda

The draft agenda was reviewed. An *in camera* session was added to the agenda.

Moved by R. Tynes, seconded by K. Saccary that the agenda be accepted. Motion carried.

2. Review of the Minutes

The draft minutes of June 13, 2014 and June 20, 2014 were reviewed. A couple of corrections to the June 13th minutes were noted:

Governance Committee Update, Item 3 (a)

The Board of Directors Action Plan update should indicate “eight” recommendations (versus “nine”).

Audit and Finance Committee Update, Item 3 (b)

The three-year budget forecast update should indicate “there will be no budget increase for 2015/16” (versus the budget will increase but not by much).

Moved by J. MacAlpine, seconded by K. Saccary that the Minutes be accepted, with the noted corrections. Motion carried.

3. Update from Committees

Quality & Client Service Committee

J. MacAlpine, Chair of the Quality Committee indicated they met on September 24, 2014 and discussed the following items.

(a) Advanced Notification and Consultation

Through the Advanced Notification initiative, preliminary property assessment values for 2015 will be posted on PVSC's website for both residential and commercial properties beginning in October 2014. PVSC wants to be more transparent and provide more property data information in response to feedback from clients. PVSC requested and received a legal opinion that supports the posting of this data on the website as it is not considered data that is protected under any privacy legislation. A letter will be provided to Municipal Affairs outlining the upcoming changes to the information displayed on the 2015 Property Assessment Notice and on PVSC's public website.

(b) Call Management

PVSC will no longer employ the services of an external call centre for the 31 days appeal period. A Request for Proposal was issued for PVSC to purchase its own call management software and Telus was the successful vendor. The technology can be used province-wide.

(c) Quality Framework

One of the central objectives of this initiative is the establishment of a 3rd party certification of PVSC's valuation processes. Once developed this certification, which is an activity co-sponsored by PVSC and the International Property Tax Institute (IPTI), will be the first of its kind. It will be a process/program that certifies the valuation processes of PVSC. IPTI will be providing a proposal and our staff will work with them to build. The hope is to have this in place for the fall of 2015.

(d) Permit Data Exchange

The Municipal Advisory Committee, which provides ongoing input and advice into PVSC's municipal engagement strategy, identified an opportunity for greater standardization of the permit process throughout the province. The working group recommended the development of a business case for a Permit Data Exchange service. A business case is currently being created with a target date the end of 2014. If the business case is positive, to proceed with the Permit Data Exchange service, an ask will be put forward to the PVSC Board of Directors to use the Technology Advancement Fund to work with the municipal units to establish the service. As well, at that time, will look to replenish the Fund.

(e) PVSC IT Hosting - Third Party IT Service Provider Audit

PVSC's IT hosting arrangement transitioned from the province to an external service provider called Bulletproof Solutions Inc. PVSC, with the assistance of Grant Thornton, will identify risks and the controls that should be in place and create an external/internal audit framework.

K. Gillis noted this is the last “big move” operationally with regard to the transition from government. It is a great news story for PVSC and the work of staff; a celebration in itself.

(f) Shared Property Services Executive Authority

This new Authority is meant to replace the Property Innovation Council, and support shared services initiatives. Bob McNeil is the interim chair and Greg Keefe is the vice chair. The membership will include members from across the province, including representation from HRM and CBRM and other municipalities, UNSM, Service Nova Scotia, PVSC, and external stakeholder representation. The terms of reference for the Authority have been established, and the next steps include participants confirmed, a kick-off meeting, and a review of the Permit Data Exchange business case.

Moved by J. MacAlpine, seconded by R. Tynes that the Quality Committee update be accepted. Motion carried.

With regard to the call management initiative, it was asked if this process would eliminate time delays. K. Gillis advised service levels will be established to ensure calls are being taken and met at standard level, and that calls will be monitored internally to ensure staff are meeting that level.

Audit and Finance Committee

The Audit and Finance Committee Chair, G. Herrett, advised the Committee met on September 24, 2014 and discussed the following.

(a) Quarter 1 (Q1) Financials

The Committee received an update on the Q1 financials (ended June 30, 2013) and spending is within budget. The Corporation is expecting a positive balance to meet its commitment to replenish the Technology Advancement Fund for its portion on the eDelivery project.

(b) Investment

An investment report was presented to the Audit & Finance Committee by the Investment Manager. Returns are positive – long term returns on the investment funds are above benchmarks and short term returns are slightly trailing benchmarks due to market cyclical factors.

(c) CRA HST Ruling

An HST ruling request has been submitted by Grant Thornton on behalf of PVSC to clarify if PVSC’s eDelivery activities are subject to HST, and whether the services that are outside providing assessment information (utility bills) are exempt from HST. Hoping to hear back soon from CRA with a positive response.

(d) Budget Preparation

For the 5th consecutive year, the Corporation will maintain a municipal funding level of \$17.09 million. There will be modest budget increases, through cost reallocation and salary savings, for 2016/17 of 0.9% and 1.5% for 2017/18.

Moved by G. Herrett, seconded by D. Sabeau that the Audit and Finance Committee update be accepted. Motion carried.

4. Finalize Selection of Independent Board Member

Due to legislative amendments to the Property Valuation Services Corporation Act regarding Board of Directors membership, to remove the Deputy Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations and add a 3rd Independent Director, Knightsbridge Robertson Surette (KBRS) was engaged to support an Independent Director Search Committee.

The Independent Director Search Committee consisted R. Walker (Board Chair), A. Morrison, R. Tynes, A. Whitewood (Board members), and K. Gillis, D. Phillips, K. Ashizawa (ex officio committee members).

29 applications were received, reviewed and qualified candidates were recommended to the Committee by KBRS. Seven candidates were short-listed and three candidates were selected for interviews by the Search Committee. Interviews were held on September 3rd and 11th

The Search Committee met following the interviews to discuss each candidates fit along with the Set criteria for interview process. The Committee identified Michelle McKenzie as the candidate demonstrating the strongest fit.

The Independent Director Search Committee recommends that Michelle McKenzie be appointed as an Independent Director on behalf of the Property Valuation Services Corporation.

Moved by A. Morrison, seconded by A. Whitewood that Michelle McKenzie be accepted as the 3rd Independent Board Member. Motion carried.

R. Tynes noted he could not attend the first interview session and therefore removed himself from the Search Committee because he was unable to participate in the first round of interviews.

5. In Camera Session

An *in camera* session was not held as there were no issues for discussion.

Meeting adjourned