Province of Québec

Municipality of L’Isle-aux-Allumettes

Regular meeting of the Municipal Council of L’Isle-aux-Allumettes held February 7th, 2023 at 7:00 P.M. at the Municipal Office.

The meeting is open to the public and present are his Worship Mayor Corey Spence and Councillors Mariette Sallafranque, Patrick Fleming, Ivan Schryer, Nancy McGuire, Brian Adam and Robert Chafe.

Alicia Jones, Director General, is in attendance.

* + 1. **Opening of meeting**

Mayor Spence welcomes everyone and declares the meeting to be open at 7:00 pm.

1. **Roll call**

All present.

1. **Recording of the sitting**

The current meeting is being audio recorded for administrative purposes.

**4. Adoption of agenda**

013-23/02 Moved by Councillor Adam, seconded by Councillor Schryer, to adopt the agenda as presented.

Adopted

**5. Adoption of minutes**

014-23/02 Moved by Councillor Fleming, seconded by Councillor Sallafranque, to approve the minutes from the last regular Council meeting of January 10th, 2023 as presented.

Adopted

**6. Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

None.

**7. Statement of the Mayor**

The Mayor makes his Statement.

**8. Questions from the public**

- Mr. Richard Lavigne:

- concerns following the recent power outages

- questions regarding public security planning

- requesting a generator be installed at the arena & hall

**9. Correspondence**

* *Letter from City of Pembroke requesting letter of support for their pool*

015-23/02 Moved by Councillor Fleming, seconded by Councillor Sallafranque, to approve a letter of support for the City of Pembroke for their pool project and to authorize the Director General to sign any required documentation.

Adopted

* *Emails from concerned residents regarding the Power outages*
* *Emails from concerned residents regarding poor cell phone service*

**Committee Reports**

**Land-use, Urbanism & By-Laws**

Councillor Mcguire, Chair of Land-use, Urbanism and By-Laws committee, gives a verbal report.

*Notice of Motion – ByLaw for Short-term rentals*

A notice of motion is given by Councillor McGuire and draft Bylaw is presented concerning short-term rentals of tourism accommodations.

*Notice of Motion – ByLaw Demolition Heritage buildings*

A notice of motion is given by Councillor McGuire and draft Bylaw is presented concerning the demolition and protection of heritage buildings.

**Public Works**

Councillor Schryer, Chair of the Public Works committee, gives a verbal report.

016-23/02 *Composting – MRC*

Moved by Councillor Fleming, seconded by Councillor Schryer, to request that the Municipality explore the option of taking charge the of the treatment of organic waste, while the Municipality will take care of their own collection, at this time.

Adopted

**Public Security**

Councillor Fleming, Chair of the Public Security committee, gives a verbal report.

017-23/02 *Emergency Shelter – UPSC & Harrington Hall*

Moved by Councillor Sallafranque, seconded by Councillor Fleming, that this Municipality approach the Upper Pontiac Sports Complex and the Harrington Hall to discuss partnering for the possibility of using their facilities as a second emergency shelter for the Municipalities Civil Security Plan.

Adopted

018-23/02 *Power Outages*

WHEREAS there is an Electrical power transmission grid owned by Hydro Quebec (HQ) where residents of Upper Pontiac (Sheenboro, Chichester, L’Isle- aux-Allumettes, Waltham) and some residents of Mansfield-Pontefract are clients;

WHEREAS this said grid is not integrated into Hydro Quebec’s Power Transmission

Network;

WHEREAS this said grid has no meaningful redundancy in the event of equipment failure leading to unnecessary and lengthy power outages;

WHEREAS this said grid relies solely on Ontario for surplus electricity during peak

demand;

WHEREAS in the event of a power outage, without timely and an accurate information from Hydro Quebec, residents cannot fully prepare for the situation;

WHEREAS a power outage on February 4-5th, 2023 left many residents of Upper Pontiac without power for a period of more than 36 hours in dangerously cold temperatures (-39 degrees Celsius);

WHEREAS during the outage on February 4-5th, 2023, communications from Hydro

Quebec to residents through the HQ App, Website or otherwise was false and misleading;

WHEREAS during this outage HQ failed to have timely and accurate communications with Municipal and local emergency services especially concerning the length of the outages, plans for restoration and the prioritization of areas/sectors to be restored;

WHEREAS this length of the power outage had direct cause in the failure of telephone and internet services, leaving the residents without means of communication for emergency services in potential life-threatening circumstance;

WHEREAS the Municipality and its residents suffered undue expenses, loss and damages, during this outage;

WHEREAS this outage is the only the latest in a series of lengthy outages over the past several decades;

WHEREAS with the provincial & federal incentives and programs for further electrification of heating systems, vehicles, etc.; the demand for power and the load on the grid will only increase exponentially;

THEREFORE, it is moved by Councillor Chafe, seconded by Councillor Fleming, that the Municipality of L’Isle-aux-Allumettes make a formal request to Hydro Quebec for the following:

* A Formal Plan, with timelines, to improve their infrastructure to fully integrate the Upper Pontiac into HQ Power Transmission Network ensuring redundancy for hydro services in our area;
* Improvements to communication with the Clients (residents) as well as with the Municipality, before, during and after an event;
* Compensation for the residents and Municipalities who may have suffered unnecessary expenses, loss or damages due to the outages;
* A public meeting hosted by the Municipalities, where HQ can respond to the three items requested above;

AND, that this resolution be forwarded and sent to ALL Municipalities within the MRC Pontiac, Warden Jane Toller and MNA André Fortin for their support; as well as to the Minister responsible for the Outaouais, Mathieu Lacombe; the Minister of Economy, Innovation and Energy, Pierre Fitzgibbon; the Minister of Public Security, Francois Bonnardel; and a that formal complaint be made to the Regie de L’Energie concerning the above.

Adopted

019-23/02 *Cell phone Services*

WHEREAS the Municipality of L’Isle-aux-Allumettes and its surrounding areas are isolated and therefore are poorly served or not served by an efficient cellular network;

WHEREAS during a power outage on February 4-5, 2023, the length of the power outage had direct cause in the failure of telephone (landline) and internet services, leaving the residents without means of communication for emergency services in potential life-threatening circumstance;

WHEREAS cellular coverage is now an essential service and a determining issue in rural Quebec and Canada to ensure the safety and development of rural communities;

WHEREAS the absence of complete cellular coverage is, not only a public safety issue, but a hindrance to the attraction of visitors and businesses and hinders the retention of families in communities with poor or no cellular coverage;

WHEREAS improved cellular coverage has been a priority identified by this Municipality in their recent Family & Seniors action plan; for all the reason indicated above;

WHEREAS communications, public safety and economic development are jurisdictions shared between the federal and provincial governments;

THEREFORE, it is moved by Councillor Sallafranque, seconded by Councillor Schryer, that the Municipality of L’Isle-aux-Allumettes make the following formal request:

* To ask the federal government and the ministers of the departments concerned to make a financial commitment to guarantee sufficient cellular coverage in all rural communities, including the Municipality of L’Isle-aux-Allumettes and others in the Pontiac;
* To ask the Quebec government and the ministries concerned, notably the Minister of Economy, Innovation and Energy, to coordinate with the federal government and to quickly commit to ensuring complete cellular coverage for all rural communities, as it has committed to do to complete the High-speed internet network;

AND, that this resolution be forwarded and sent to ALL Municipalities within the MRC Pontiac, Warden Jane Toller and MNA André Fortin and MP Sophie Chatel for their support; as well as to the Minister responsible for the Outaouais, Mathieu Lacombe; the Minister of Economy, Innovation and Energy Pierre Fitzgibbon; the Minister of Public Security, Francois Bonnardel; and a that formal complaint be made to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications (CRTC) concerning the above.

Adopted

020-23/02 *Bell Canada – Telephone & Internet infrastructure*

WHEREAS there is an ongoing and increased number of recent complaints from ratepayers regarding recurring problems experienced with Bell Canada’s services (telephone and/or internet);

WHEREAS Bell Canada has failed to provide proper maintenance to their landline infrastructure on Allumettes Island;

WHEREAS the lack of maintenance by Bell Canada has created a serious number of outages to their services;

WHEREAS the Bell Canada station on L’Isle-aux-Allumettes, which services several municipalities landlines, telephone and internet services, can only operate for a maximum of 6-8 hours without power to their building;

WHEREAS during a power outage on February 4-5, 2023, the length of the power outage had direct cause in the failure of telephone (landline) and internet services, leaving the residents without means of communication for emergency services in potential life-threatening circumstance;

WHEREAS it is recognized that numerous Bell Canada clients do not have cellular phone service as there is no or very restricted reception service;

WHEREAS the outages have created a serious public security issue where residents do not have access to 911 or internet services during the outages;

WHEREAS it is recognized that Bell Canada has conducted some maintenance to their service lines on Allumettes Island over the past few months, however, the problem continues to persist;

WHEREAS Bell Canada continues to collect their full rate of their monthly service charges despite the numerous outages.

THEREFORE, it is moved by Councillor Schryer, seconded by Councillor Adam, that the Municipality of L’Isle-aux-Allumettes make a formal request to Bell Canada for the following:

* A Formal Plan, with timelines, to improve their infrastructure to ensuring appropriate back-up power to their stations to maintain telephone and internet services in our area during an outage;
* Improvements to communications with the residents of and with the Municipality directly; before, during and after an event;
* A public meeting hosted by the Municipalities, where Bell Canada can respond to the concerns above;

AND, that this resolution be forwarded and sent to ALL Municipalities within the MRC Pontiac, Warden Jane Toller and MNA André Fortin and MP Sophie Chatel for their support; as well as to the Minister responsible for the Outaouais, Mathieu Lacombe; the Minister of Economy, Innovation and Energy Pierre Fitzgibbon; the Minister of Public Security, Francois Bonnardel; and a that formal complaint be made to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications (CRTC) concerning the above.

Adopted

**Community, Culture & Recreation**

Councillor Chafe, Chair of the Community, Culture & Recreation committee, gives a verbal report.

The annual IslandFest is discussed. A tentative date of August 12th, 2023 is scheduled.

**Revitalization**

Councillor Sallafranque, Chair of the Revitalization committee, gives a verbal report.

021-23/02 *FFR4 Funding*

Moved by Councillor Chafe, seconded by Councillor Sallafranque, to make a formal request to the MRC Pontiac to use the current grant funding, reserved for the Centennial Park, towards the improvement of or local emergency measures, as discussed.

Adopted

**Administration**

Councillor Adam, Chair of the Administration committee, gives a verbal report.

022-23/02 *Committee - Access to Information and Protection of personal information*

WHEREAS the Municipality of L’Isle-aux-Allumettes is a public body within the meaning of the Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the protection of personal information (c. A-2.1) (hereinafter called the "Access Act");

WHEREAS the amendments made to the Access Act by the Act to modernize the legislative provisions respecting the protection of personal information (2021, c. 25);

WHEREAS section 8.1 was added to the Access Act, which came into force on September 22, 2022, requiring public bodies to establish an access to information and privacy committee to support the Municipality in carrying out its responsibilities and obligations under the Access Act;

WHEREAS it is possible that a government regulation will exempt all or some public bodies from forming this committee or modify the obligations of a body according to criteria that it defines;

GIVEN that, to date, such a regulation has not been enacted, therefore the Municipality of L’Isle-aux-Allumettes must form such a committee;

Therefore, it is proposed by Councillor Adam, seconded by Councillor Sallafranque, and resolved:

* THAT an Access to Information and Privacy Committee be formed in accordance with Section 8.1 of the Access Act;
* THAT this committee be composed of the persons who hold the following positions within the Municipality:
  + Director General
  + Municipal Inspector
  + Administrative Assistant
* THAT this committee will be responsible for supporting the Municipality in carrying out its responsibilities and obligations under the Access Act;
* THAT if a regulation is enacted by the government, the effect of which is to exclude the Municipality from the obligation to form such a committee, this resolution will cease to have effect as of the coming into force of that regulation.

Adopted

023-23/02 *Work-from-home Policy*

Moved by Councillor Adam, seconded by Councillor Sallafranque, to approve the policy that precludes working from home, unless for extenuating circumstances and if approved by the Director General, as discussed.

Adopted

024-23/02 *Intermunicipal cooperation committee*

Moved by Councillor Schryer, seconded by Councillor Fleming, to approve the joint intermunicipal cooperation committee, with the Municipalities of Chichester and Sheenboro, and to name Councillors Brian Adam and Mariette Sallafranque as our municipal representatives, as discussed.

Adopted

025-23/02 *Bylaw 2023-001 – Taxation 2023*

### WHEREAS the Municipality is subject to the conditions of section 252 of the Act

respecting municipal taxation;

WHEREAS a presentation of the Draft By-Law was presented and a notice of motion was previously given by Councillor Adam at a regular meeting of Council held on January 10th, 2023;

CONSEQUENTLY, the members of the Council of having all voted in favor of the adoption of this By-Law;  
  
It was moved by Councillor Adam, seconded by Councillor Sallafranque, and unanimously resolved that this BY-LAW # 2023-001 entitled "By-law respecting the imposition of the rates of property tax and service taxes for the fiscal year 2023 and the conditions of tax collection" be adopted and enacted.

Adopted

**11. Review of monthly payables**

The list of accounts payables for the month of January is presented.

**12. Questions from the public**

None.

**13. Varia**

*- Discussion regarding the local newsletter.*

**14. In camera session**

026-23/02 Moved by Councillor Fleming, seconded by Councillor Chafe, to proceed with the discussions in-camera, at 9:30pm

Adopted

027-23/02 Moved by Councillor Sallafranque, seconded by Councillor Fleming, to return to the meeting in-progress, at 9:45pm

Adopted

**15. Date of next meeting**

The next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 7th, 2023 at 7:00p.m. at the Municipal office.

**16. Closing of meeting**

028-23/02 Moved by Councillor Schryer and seconded by Councillor McGuire that the meeting be adjourned at 9:50pm.

Adopted

Director General / Clerk-treasurer Mayor

I, *Corey Spence, Mayor*, certify that the signing of these minutes is equivalent to the signature by me of all the resolutions it contains, according to section 142 (2) of the Municipal Code.

*La version française est la version officielle - The French version is the official version*