

POSTING #1

AGENDA

Administration Offices Committee

Thursday, August 23rd, 2019
4:00pm – Fire Hall

1. Call to Order
2. Consent to Agenda
3. Appointment of Vice Chair
4. Review of Terms of Reference
5. Review of Discussion Paper #1
6. New Business – (issues to be addressed at next meeting)
7. Next Meeting Date
8. Adjournment

Terms of Reference for Committee

- Review the needs of the Administration *and Council*
- Review the terms of the insurance claim from the former Montague Town Hall
- Review the space needs of comparable municipalities
- Review basic space needs for the short term (10 yrs) and the longer term (10-25 yrs)
- Define the basic criteria for space, location, property size, parking, etc.
- Identify property with buildings and vacant properties
- Examine short term needs and define options
- Make recommendations on the most appropriate course of action for the replacement of administrative offices in the former Montague community

DISCUSSION PAPER - ADMINISTRATION OFFICES

This DISCUSSION PAPER is designed to be a starting point for the Committee. It provides background and core information that will assist the Committee in ultimately recommending a solution to the Council. The Committee may want additional information or more in-depth investigation as discussions continues which I will happily provide.

As the Committee can appreciate the location for a suitable administration complex for the Montague area is a pressing issue and must be addressed in the immediate future. The construction trailer is a convenient short-term solution (\$60,000/year rental covered by insurers till August 2020) but as the municipality continues to staff up to a reasonable level, the space within the construction trailer is grossly inadequate. The space shortage is now a crisis situation that cannot continue.

DECISIONS TO DATE:

- An Administration office is to be provided in both Montague and Georgetown as per MOS Section 6.6 “Georgetown and Montague shall maintain full time administrative services and current hours of operation for its residents”. This adds obvious administrative challenges of proper working conditions, communication issues between staff, and most importantly, inefficiencies in the delivery of services.
- Montague and Georgetown Offices to be open to the public 37.5 hours/week
- Both offices to provide *customer service* for residents for the full-time hours. This level of service for residents includes bill payments, access forms and information about permits, and an individual that can direct residents on how to find out more information.
- Office hours may be adjusted by 1 or 2 hours on a weekly basis to allow staff to have full staff meetings. Any adjustments to regular fulltime hours will be posted and communicated to residents on a regular basis.
- No staff member will be scheduled at one location on their own on a regular basis
- Other specialized staff will make themselves available to residents by appointment in either the Georgetown or Montague locations.
- Town to own property in Montague (area)
- Building new or renovating existing space in Montague is acceptable

INSURANCE CONSIDERATIONS:

- Montague has received \$650,000 from insurers and will receive a further \$278,000 if build within 2 years of loss (August 2020) TOTAL: **\$928,000**
- The difference of \$278,000 will be paid out once a decision has been made
- Insurance settlement to be technically applied in the former Montague municipality (N.B. Cowan will allow flexibility to this stipulation in the coverage)

MONTAGUE ADMINISTRATION OFFICES

The size of the Montague Administration Offices is dependent on the need to accommodate the Council, the administrative staff and the general public along with the associated amenities that are part of an office environment.

The basic needs should include the following:

- Location in Montague (and area) to be prominent, accessible by means of major roads and on fully serviced land
- Exterior construction or renovation, landscaping, signage etc. to reflect a sense of community pride and be a focal point for Three Rivers
- Decisions on office space should be with a minimum 25-year horizon in mind (i.e. space should include opportunity for expansion, construction/renovations should be quality and lasting)
- Any space must be fully accessible (i.e. access/egress, parking areas, general office space, hallways, washrooms, all floors etc.)
- Off street Parking on site to accommodate General Public, and ideally employees, Councillors.
- High speed internet capability with cell phone availability

The architectural standard for a typical single person office is **160 square feet** which includes the actual size of the office and the associated hallways/stairways. The other amenities would include such spaces as washrooms, meeting rooms, reception area etc. It should be noted that certain offices would be larger in size. A summary of suggested space needs is outlined below and is broken down further in Appendix "A".

Square footage requirements for foreseeable future:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------|
| • Office space for 11-12 | 2,360 |
| • Copy/Print Room | 200 |
| • First Aid Room | 160 |
| • Lunch Room | 300 |
| • Vault | 100 |
| • Accessible washrooms | 500 |
| • Reception area | 250 |

• Elevator/Stairway	250
• Council Chambers	750
• Committee Room #1	500
• Committee Room #2	<u>500</u>

Total space needs +/-'ly **6,000 sq. ft.**

The above space requirements would be subject to a review and ultimate design by an architect and is provided only as an indication of the magnitude of need.

Council Chambers

The need for a recognized Council Chambers deserves special mention. Council Chambers were traditionally the showpiece of any Municipal building. The Chambers for Charlottetown and Summerside are both good examples whereas the Chambers in Stratford and Cornwall are more functional and less architecturally significant in comparison. The importance of the room should not be lost however and it is highly recommended that it be formally designed. As to where the Chambers should be situated, it is suggested that either Montague or Georgetown be the designated site so that it becomes a consistent location for public meetings.

The above space needs for Montague for the short term shows approximately 6,000 square feet with a Council Chambers included. If it were to be in Georgetown, then the second floor would have to be renovated and made accessible by means of an elevator. Consideration should also be given to using the Board Room and public hall at the King's Playhouse or the Wellness Centre for Council meetings and larger public meetings. This consideration would save the need of 750 sq. ft. for the Montague facility.

Parking

Parking is an important consideration for the general public, the Council and the employees of Three Rivers. In the interests of providing appropriate public service and reducing the impact on adjacent businesses, accessible and standard parking should be provided on or in close proximity to the chosen site. For instance, convening a public meeting without accommodating attendees would be a disservice and taking the public spaces for those doing business with the municipality or Council/staff would have a negative impact on the private sector.

Subject to the zoning provisions and the advice of the architect, it is suggested that the minimum parking requirements be 5 spaces for public use and one accessible space. Parking for public meetings, councillors and employees is optional but should not be easily dismissed. A further minimum of 15 to 20 spaces in close proximity is not unrealistic.

MUNICIPAL COMPARISONS

As the 2nd largest Town and the 4th largest municipality in PEI, it is reasonable to draw a comparison with the largest Town and the 5th most populated municipality of Stratford and Cornwall respectfully. The services being delivered are relatively comparable.

The following table represents a snapshot of relevant statistics:

<u>Town</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Operating Budget</u>	<u>Assessment (N-C/Comm)</u>	<u>Office Size (sq. ft.)</u>	<u>FT Staff</u>
Stratford	9,700	\$6.7M	\$829M/31M	8,900 *	28
Three Rivers	7,200	\$2.8M	\$490M/57M	TBD	14
Cornwall	5,400	\$3.7M	\$314M/13M	7,000	15

* Stratford shares Chambers and Committee rooms space with the School Board.

Both Stratford and Cornwall built new complexes which opened around 2006. It is understood both municipalities wished they had built larger buildings. For instance, Stratford administration was looking to add a few additional positions in this year's budget subject to affordability but are pressed to find them office space.

A conclusion can be drawn therefore that a reasonable projection of space needs for Three Rivers would be in the order of **8,000 sq. ft.** in total. The Georgetown offices are approximately 2,500 sq. ft. and the argument can be made for approximately **5,500 - 6,000 sq. ft.** for the Montague office. A review of space needs addressed later in this report and summarized in Appendix A confirms the square footage of this magnitude.

PRELIMINARY SITE INVESTIGATIONS TO DATE (internal ONLY)

Section DELETED

INTERIM SOLUTION

Without detracting from the need for a location, it important to recognize there is a lead time to achieve the new administration office. The importance of Council addressing this matter in the immediate future cannot be over emphasized.

The timeframe required to buy and renovate is in the neighbourhood of 12 - 18 months from the date of Council authorization. The time frame to buy and build could be in the range of up

to 24 months. These time frames allow for the preparation of architectural plans, tendering and construction.

As noted, the construction trailer was intended to be a short-term solution but is now untenable on its own and extremely costly. To bridge the time from now until occupying the “new” space, some options have been identified as follows:

- Lease another trailer for the existing site
- Contact school board at end of September and investigate availability of a portable classroom
- Rent space in the core on the basis that the location is not intended to be the final while renovations are being undertaken

GEORGETOWN ADMINISTRATION OFFICES

The Georgetown offices was an existing building that was converted in 1985. After renovations, there are approximately 2,500 sq. ft. on both floors combined and perhaps up to 500 sq. ft. in use by the Library (actual square footage to be determined). Please review Appendix “B” for a breakdown of that space.

As an aside, a building assessment was undertaken by RGM Home Inspection Services in June 2019. The report identified a number of deficiencies that either must be (as they are safety issues) or should be (as they are preventative measures) undertaken to prevent further deterioration of the building. This work should be done regardless of what services are provided in this office. As well, certain items in the report are matters of routine maintenance. For the Committee’s and eventually all Council’s information, RGM has been asked to summarize the needs of each of the municipality’s 14 facilities for the purpose of developing a master plan for repairs. A report will be forthcoming on the extent of the work required, approximate cost and strategy to compete all needs. As with the Montague area office, all renovations to the Georgetown administration office are to reflect a sense of community pride and remain a focal point for the Georgetown area and vicinity.

IMPACT OF TWO ADMINISTRATION FACILITIES ON ADMINISTRATION

For the Committee’s information the following is a consensus summary of the comments from a staff session held with all administrative employees:

- Service to the Three Rivers community is of paramount importance
- Residents need a consistent “face” at the municipality for interactions
- Coordination of staff efforts compromised with more than one location
- Employees feel a definite lack of being “in the know” and connectivity with one another
- Formal and informal exchange of information is more difficult

- Difficulty in working as a team
- Efficiencies are strained and redundancy can be avoided
- Staff are fielding constant enquiries from residents on “new” Town Hall in Montague
- Image of the municipality suffers without a proper Town Hall
- Camaraderie amongst staff suffers with separation
- Propensity for matters to get inadvertently lost increases
- Communications are difficult
- Travel time adds to a workday
- Sharing knowledge and skillsets less convenient
- Difficult to have the natural collaboration between staff

To address the above valid concerns, staff are making the extra effort to share and inform and use technology wherever possible.

NEXT STEPS

1. Council review summary report based upon discussions at this meeting and approve in principle as a starting point the preliminary space needs and the criteria identified herein
2. Approval to place the recommended advertisement for either vacant land or land with existing buildings based on the approved site criteria *(N.B. Committee refined this recommendation)*
3. Following the responses to the advertisement for sites, engage an architect through an RFP process to examine either the preferred existing building for renovation or the vacant parcel including the property owned by Three Rivers to formalize the space needs and provide cost estimates for either option.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **that an advertisement be placed in the Eastern Graphic for property owners to indicate IN CONFIDENCE either their vacant land or existing building/land that meets the criteria with the willingness to sell to the Town within the predefined area.** *(N.B. N.B. This recommendation was refined at the second meeting of the committee)*

APPENDIX “A”

SPACE REQUIREMENT NEEDS

Current Needs: (now to 5 years hence)

<u>Space</u>	<u>Sq. Ft.</u>
Mayor	300
CAO	300
Manager of Corporate Services	200
Manager of Community Services	200
EA to CAO	160
Accountant	200
Recreation and Events Officer	200
Planning and Development Officer	200
AA to Accountant	160
AA to Planner	160
Reception Area	250
AA/Receptionist	160
Copy/Print Room	500
First Aid Room	160
Lunch Room	300
Vault	100
Accessible Washrooms	500
Council Chambers	1,000
Committee Room #1	500
Committee Room #2	<u>500</u>
Total	6,000 sq. ft.

Future Needs: (5 years to 10 years hence)

EA to Mayor	160
AA to Recreation and Events	160
Jr Planner	160
Communications Officer	160
IT Officer	160
Economic Development Officer	200
Building Inspector	160
Plans Examiner	<u>250</u>
Total	1,400 sq. ft

APPENDIX "B"

**GEORGETOWN ADMINISTRATION OFFICE
(approximately 2,500 sq. ft.)**

Space currently within the Georgetown Office:

- Three (3) offices
- General reception area/office
- Council Chambers
- Meeting Room
- Accessible washrooms on ground floor
- Non-accessible washroom on second floor
- Second floor is non-accessible without elevator (or possibly chair lift)
- Ground floor accessibility improvements required