



ROTHESAY
PUBLIC MEETING
Accommodations Levy By-law 1-23
Rothesay Town Hall Common Room
Monday, February 13, 2023
5:15 p.m.



PRESENT: MAYOR NANCY GRANT
DEPUTY MAYOR MATT ALEXANDER
COUNCILLOR HELEN BOYLE (*arrived at 5:25 p.m.*)
COUNCILLOR DAVE BROWN
COUNCILLOR PETER J. LEWIS
COUNCILLOR BILL McGUIRE
COUNCILLOR DON SHEA

TOWN MANAGER JOHN JARVIE
TOWN CLERK MARY JANE BANKS
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT (DPDS) BRIAN WHITE
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS (DO) BRETT McLEAN
DIRECTOR OF REC/PARKS (DRP) CHARLES JENSEN
TREASURER DOUG MacDONALD

JILLIAN MACKINNON VP MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS and
STRATEGIC INITIATIVES – ENVISION SJ
ANN RICKMAN DIRECTOR OF FINANCE – ENVISION SJ
HEATHER LIBBEY VP and BOARD LIAISON – ENVISION SJ

ABSENT: COUNCILLOR TIFFANY MACKAY FRENCH
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT LIZ HAZLETT

PUBLIC MEETING Accommodations Levy By-law 1-23

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| 1. Call to Order | Instructions |
| 31 January 2023 | Public notice (Town Hall and website) |

Mayor Grant called the public meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

Mayor Grant welcomed all in attendance and noted the public meeting is to consider a draft Accommodations Levy By-law 1-23. She listed the documentation and the dates the notice was posted to the website. She also noted affected property owners were contacted and invited to attend the meeting. Mayor Grant explained the format of the meeting and noted Council will discuss the matter further during the Open Session Council meeting to follow at 7:00 p.m. She introduced the Envision Saint John representatives and invited them to give their presentation.

Jillian MacKinnon thanked Mayor Grant for the opportunity to appear before Council. She gave a presentation that highlighted the following: the definition of Tourism Accommodations Levy and its history in the Saint John region and how the levy is used. Tourism Marketing and Promotion focuses on awareness, conversion, engagement, Community Ambassadors, strategic partnerships and sales. There was a brief discussion with respect to accommodations that are subject to the levy and the required processing and record-keeping associated with the By-law. Ms. MacKinnon concluded by noting Envision SJ representatives are happy to meet with anyone who may have questions or want more information.

Counc. Boyle arrived at 5:25 p.m.

Mayor Grant thanked Ms. MacKinnon for her presentation and asked if Council members had any questions. Counc. Shea asked if the levy is the last item to be applied to the bill, if BandBs are included and the amount of revenue generated. Ms. MacKinnon noted it is charge on the accommodation portion only. She also noted that BandBs are included and the anticipated revenue from Saint John only is about \$1.2 million. Deputy Mayor Alexander requested clarification on reporting

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requirements, regardless of sales. Ms. Rickman advised the reporting process is very simple and not onerous. Further clarification was requested with respect to when the levy is applied (double tax). Ms. MacKinnon advised she was not sure and would have to confirm.

Mayor Grant called upon members of the gallery who wished to speak. The following people spoke: Mary Ann Kneeland (Board Chair Villa Madonna Retreat House), Mr. Paul McLellan (Head of School Rothesay Netherwood School {RNS}), Martin St-Denis (Shadow Lawn Inn) and Kevin Kang (owner Rothesay Motel).

Clarification was requested with respect to the following: Villa Madonna provides retreats that include accommodations but an individual cannot contact them and simply book a room; it was noted the By-law indicates “for the public” and RNS provides occasional camps for minors that include accommodations but an individual cannot contact them and simply book a room; there is an exemption for post-secondary schools and perhaps regular secondary schools should be included as well; clarification was requested with respect to applicability for AirBnBs and the challenge of providing accommodations at Shadow Lawn but AirBnBs can collect cash and are not included in the levy; most clients at the Rothesay motel are workers and family attending funeral services and the challenge associated with collecting an extra fee.

Counc. McGuire requested clarification with respect to AirBnBs and the unfair playing field. Ms. MacKinnon advised the strategy to deal with AirBnB (corporation) needs to be managed at the provincial level as it is a complaint across the province and it’s a large corporation with individual properties that are difficult to track. Counc. McGuire suggested they are readily accessible online. Ms. MacKinnon commented they “come and go” and are challenging and onerous to track. Ms. MacKinnon noted she sits on the provincial Tourism Advisory Committee and AirBnBs are a hot topic.

Counc. Shea asked if the levy would apply to homeless shelters, as some do require a nominal charge per night.

Mayor Grant thanked those in attendance and noted there is additional research required in the areas of: retreats at the Villa Madonna, camps at RNS and the provincial strategy to manage AirBnBs.

Town Manager Jarvie noted the agreement between the Members and Envision Saint John refers to enactment by 31 December 2022 and there remain some outstanding questions but there it is anticipated to have the By-law in place before the approaching tourism season. He advised there will be further discussions with Envision Saint John representatives, as well as the property owners represented at tonight’s meeting.

The draft By-law is included on the Council agenda with a recommendation for First Reading, to allow for the further discussion to take place. It is likely Second and Third Reading will be recommended at either the March or April meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Original signed by Mayor
MAYOR

Original signed by Clerk
CLERK