

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

**DATE:** Wednesday, September 16, 2020  
**LOCATION:** NWRSC Office  
 Conference Room  
 36 Court Street - Edmundston, NB  
**TIME:** 2:00 p.m.

### MINUTES OF MEETING

**1. Call the meeting to order and welcome**

Chair, Mr. Jean-Pierre Ouellet, called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

<b>Members attending</b>	
Mr. Jean-Pierre Ouellet, Chair	Mayor of Haut-Madawaska Community
Roger Levesque, Vice-Chair	Mayor of Sainte-Anne-de-Madawaska
Mr. Paul Roy	Representing the Local Service District (LSD)
<b>Staff attending</b>	
Mrs Catherine Dufour	Planning Director
Mrs Lise Bellefleur	Executive Assistant
Mr. Adrian Prado	Territorial analyst – Research and Sustainable Development

**2. Approval of agenda**

Mr. Ouellet read the agenda. It is moved by Mr. Paul Roy to accept the agenda as presented.

**3. Follow-up – Computer virus**

Mr. Adrian Prado explained the origin of the computer virus that targeted the NWRSC. It all started this past July 27 when an employee opened what looked like a legitimate email from one of our suppliers. On the same day, Adrian arrived to try to remove the virus. He noted that one of the infected computers didn't have an antivirus program, despite an agreement with Computech. Then Computech was contacted to remove the virus and install antivirus software on the computer that didn't have any. When we determined that the problem was persisting, we hired the firm Référence Systèmes Inc. to reduce the spam emails and remove the virus still infecting the network. After a few days they succeeded. Since then, the NWRSC has taken several steps to upgrade its software, antivirus, email server, etc.

On a positive note, during the pandemic the NWRSC had purchased Cyber Risks insurance. We asked our insurer for guidance in the matter and we are now in discussion with a law firm that has given us an overview of our legal obligations and is continuing to advise us concerning a possible data leak.

We will hold a teleconference with the law firm Fasken and the IT company Référence Système Inc. to talk about the work done to this point by Référence Systèmes Inc., our external experts, and to see if there is anything else we need to do to meet our legal obligations.

The Executive committee authorized the NWRSC to proceed with Fasken for the next steps to check whether any data had been stolen.

**4. Reflection on the tender call – Rental of 36 Court Street**

Further to the NWRSC Board's motion of September 9, 2020, asking that we put off renewing the rental contract "so that we can reflect on whether we should issue a call for tenders with all the NWRSC's needs", and further to various discussions and to data that we had previously studied (2015), our reflections are summarized on pages 3 and 4.

The Executive committee upholds the decision made at its meeting on August 26, 2020, that is, to sign the lease for a ten-year period as already adopted at the meeting of September 9, 2020.

**5. Other Businesses**

Mr. Ouellet informs the members of the executive committee that in the coming weeks, he wishes to meet in order to determine who, from the local service, would be interested in having the service of unsightly places.

**6. Adjournment**

Mr. Jean-Pierre Ouellet adjourned the meeting at 2:40 p.m.

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JEAN-PIERRE OUELLET, Chair

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ROGER LEVESQUE, Vice-Chair

## Reflection on the “Tender”

Further to the NWRSC Board's motion of September 9, 2020, asking that we put off renewing the rental contract “so that we can reflect on whether we should issue a call for tenders with all the NWRSC's needs”, (motion 6), here are the points that we want to put forward and that guided our reflection.

After discussions with staff and with members of the NWRSC and of the Executive committee, and further to data that we had previously studied (2015), here is a summary to shed light on a few of the issues and the costs/benefits that we see. We prepared a call for tenders.

However, we believe that:

1. We should respect the chronological order of the adoptions and motions during the last Board meeting on September 9, 2020. The minutes of the last Executive meeting on August 26, 2020, were adopted at point 6, and they state that: “Following discussions with the members of the Executive, the latter recommended that we sign the proposed rental contract.”
  - a. And that given the Executive committee's mandate in time of COVID (the Board having approved the decision if there was no budget impact), it thus became the mandate of the Executive Director to sign the rental contract, following all procedures, following this August 26 meeting.
  - b. And that the Board motion on September 9 (point 10) to go to a call for tender happened after the Executive minutes were adopted.
  - c. Decisions related to management of operations are also stipulated in the “Regional Service Commission Manual” as being within the mandate of the Executive Director.
2. Due to the instability and uncertainties for the next months or year with respect to the COVID situation and to changes in public health measures as the situation evolves, it would be difficult to go through changes and a move with all that they imply in terms of logistics. Adding another layer of profound changes is not good for the stability of the organization and could affect the quality of service delivery.
3. Considering the sharp reductions in the percentage of annual increase over a period of ten (10) years.
  - The contract for 2015 to 2021 called for an annual increase of 5% over a period of 5 years, for a total increase of 27.60%.
  - The new contract for 2021 to 2031 is proposing an annual increase of 2% over a period of 10 years, for a total increase of 19.74%.
  - In monetary terms, our current contract represents an increase of \$13,814 over a period of 5 years compared to our new contract, which calls for an increase of \$12,840 over a period of 10 years.
4. We cover a vast territory (7,984 km<sup>2</sup>) and our present position allows us to have an efficient strategy to cover all of it, including with the two satellite offices.
5. Moving would incur serious additional costs that are not currently budgeted for and would mainly impact the local development department budget, which pays 90% of the costs (costs for moving, configuration and connection of the IT system, reprinting all letterhead used for correspondence, business cards, corporate material to be change, costs of connecting the telephones, fees for changing our postal address, etc.).

6. Our current location reaches a large critical mass of related services and resources gravitating around our activities and fosters proximity of services among the professionals that we deal with (entrepreneurs, contractors, engineering firms, various Departments, surveyors, lawyers), as well as for the current employees at the workplace (distance, time, cost).
7. Should the services offered by the NWRSC ever be diversified, or if shared services are ever offered (unsightly premises, legal, engineering, other regional services, etc.), the area of the present location could be expanded into the adjacent office space.
8. Should a municipal entity, that is, other than a rental business, wish to offer premises to the NWRSC, a conflict of interest situation would be created because it would already have in its possession the sums currently spent on rent.
9. If we put out a call for tender, be aware that the whole area can participate in the process, including communities that aren't part of the NWRSC, because we are obliged under the *Act* to open it to them since we are looking for over 5,000 square feet. So we cannot set as a criterion that a community must be part of the NWRSC.
10. The current offices, since the Executive Director moved in in June 2019 and the latest resources were hired, required renovations. These were completed in early 2020. No investments had been made since we moved there in 2005. So it was with the wish to improve the NWRSC's corporate image and the customer experience that our premises have recently started to reflect positive a modern and dynamic image, and our employees are very proud of them.
11. This situation risks creating insecurity among employees. Some would question their role, considering all the changes that would be caused by relocating the office, additional costs and reorganizing family schedules in some cases (daycare, school, babysitter, etc.).
12. There is currently no rational irritant that justifies such an expenditure of money and human energy, considering all the aspects mentioned above.