



Municipality of the District of Argyle

Item: MOU – Aquaculture ADA

Date: January 13, 2020

VISION

We see Argyle as home to a healthy and thriving rural population. Our municipality promotes and supports economic and social opportunities for the region and engages in the active expression of our unique Acadian heritage. We are a place of choice for rural living and are widely recognized for our warm hospitality and joie de vivre. Surrounded by fresh air and cool ocean breezes, we work and play in the great outdoors. People choose to live in Argyle because of our commitment to each other, to our community and to our neighbors. Argyle is a place we are proud to call home.

Background:

Staff has attached a draft MOU for your consideration. The MOU was developed in conjunction with eh staff at the Department of Fisheries and Agriculture and is designed to clarify our intentions and respective roles for the first ever Provincially supported Aquaculture Development Area (ADA)

Why are we entering such an understanding, you may ask? The designation of an ADA allows for the Municipality to engage in much of the preparatory work to designate a lease for aquaculture development. In other words, prior to an ADA, the application would be fairly onerous and time consuming before an approval would be given to a prospective investor. Furthermore, there is no assurance that an approval would be received. Oyster aquaculture is particularly difficult, as investors have to wait 2-3 years before the oysters are ready for market. That requires patient capital – simply put, someone already with money that is willing to be patient.

Having an ADA means that many of the regulatory items would be analysed before investor applications, saving valuable time and energy to the investor and making it more attractive to do business in Argyle.

We would be responsible for the public engagement – which is appropriate, given that we know our community better than our provincial counterparts, and we have built trust relationships with our residents. At our last meeting regarding aquaculture, there was a tremendous positive response to our work.

Finally, being in an ADA does not put us in the position where we accept or reject applications. That function remains with the other levels of government. We are enabling a more efficient delivery of regulatory services.

MGA considerations:

N/A – MOU with the Province is allowable.

CAO's Recommendation:

Request Council approve the MOU as presented

Suggested motion:

Move that the MOU between the Province of NS and the Municipality of Argyle respecting the development of an Aquaculture Development Area be approved as presented, and that staff work alongside our provincial counterparts to move this initiative forward.