

EXECUTIVE STANDING COMMITTEE  
MINUTES

July 22, 2013

PRESENT:

Mayor Mike Savage, Chair  
Deputy Mayor, Reg Rankin  
Councillors: Linda Mosher, Vice Chair  
Russell Walker  
Matt Whitman  
Bill Karsten  
Steve Craig

STAFF:

Mr. Martin Ward, A/Director Legal Services  
Ms. Cathy Mellett, Municipal Clerk  
Mr. Matt Godwin, Legislative Assistant  
Mr. Chris Bryant, Senior Advisor, Government Relations &  
External Affairs

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Savage at 10:00 a.m. in Council Chambers, Halifax City Hall.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 24, 2013**

**MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Walker that the minutes of June 24, 2013 be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS**

**MOVED by Councillor Craig, seconded by Deputy Mayor Rankin that the agenda be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE**

**5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE**

**6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

**6.1 Update – Governance Review**

Mr. Chris Bryant, Senior Advisor, Intergovernmental Affairs and External Relations made a presentation to the Committee outlining a proposed approach to the Governance Review directed by motion of Halifax Regional Council June 25, 2013.

Mr. Bryant reviewed the motion, which provided the mandate for oversight of the review by the Executive Standing Committee. The presentation went on to propose a structure, roles and responsibilities tasks and benchmarks for the review.

Following the presentation Mr. Bryant asked for feedback from the members of the Executive Committee as to whether the proposed approach was acceptable to the Committee and if the issues to be addressed in the review had been appropriately outlined.

In regard to the role of Standing Committees Councillors Mosher, Walker and Karsten indicated that, while not all members of Council concur on the role of Standing Committees there is general agreement by Council that there is a substantial role for Standing Committees. It was noted that there is some interest in having regional wide matters coming to Committee of the Whole of Council but that is difficult, at times, to determine what those issues would be. Councillor Craig and Deputy Mayor Rankin noted that, while Regional Council is recognized as the ultimate authority, Standing Committees are required to deal with the variety and depth of issues in a large

municipality and dig more deeply into issues, recommend actions and provide an opportunity for input and discussion.

Members concurred that one of the outcomes of the governance review should be a better delineation as to when Committee of the Whole should be used and how to address any overlap on matters that bridge two or more committees. Deputy Mayor Rankin suggested that the Mayor and agenda review can play a role in that determination.

A discussion followed as to how the 2013-2014 budget deliberations had occurred, as an example of the challenges in determining the best approach to significant and regional wide issues. Deputy Mayor Rankin noted that addressing the budget process through the Audit and Finance Committee over a series of meetings and with an invitation to all members of Regional Council to attend, had helped the budget debate. Councillor Karsten noted that up to twelve (12) or thirteen (13) members of Council had attended the Audit & Finance budget meetings.

Councillor Walker raised the issue of whether non-committee members of Council should be allowed to speak at Standing Committee meetings and noted that this had been an issue during the budget and should be addressed in the review process. It was noted that, whether the 2014-2015 budget deliberations are conducted through the Audit & Finance Committee or through meetings of Committee of the Whole, it should be the only item on the agenda for that meeting.

Members agreed that, with the reduced number of Councillors, consideration should be given to the number of Councillors on each Standing Committees, the workloads of the various committees and any adjustments required to the Terms of Reference to address those matters. Councillors Walker, Craig and Deputy Mayor Rankin indicated it would be important to review the role of the Executive Committee.

Councillor Mosher raised the matter of how to improve communications on matters before Standing Committees.

In regard to Councillors sitting on external boards, members of the Executive Committee agreed that this needs to be reviewed to determine what the focus should be and to review current appointments in light of that decision/direction. Councillor Karsten raised the example of whether three (3) members of Council need to be sitting on the Bridge Commission. Mr. Martin Ward, Acting Director of Legal Services, noted that some changes to external regulations, by-laws or legislation may be required coming out of the review.

In regard to providing further direction as to what should be "in scope" for the governance review and what is "out of scope" there was general agreement expressed that a review of the number of members of Council, the terms of reference and authorities, roles and responsibilities of Standing Committees and the focus, nature and number of Councillor appointments to external committees, along with specific

questions such as the role of the Executive Committee and matters related to how the overall agenda setting priorities are managed in regard to the role of the Mayor, CAO and Committees are important matters for the review.

Councillors Craig, Walker, and Deputy Mayor Rankin noted the importance of ensuring that all members of Council were consulted and had the opportunity to express their views during the review process. Mr. Bryant noted that the project team understood that consultation with members of Council was critical and that, as staff-lead working with the Mayor's office, they would ensure that consultation occurred.

Councillor Craig noted that he was pleased to see that the review was being proposed as a project with charter, scope and terms of reference as that is how he is used to seeing projects and indicated that, if a member of the Executive Committee was needed on the project team he would be pleased to put his name forward.

Mayor Savage asked what the next steps in the process would be with Mr. Bryant replying that, based on the input received from the Committee; the project charter would be brought back to the Committee at the meeting of September 23<sup>rd</sup> for review and approval.

## **7. REPORTS**

### **7.1 Response to Request for Feedback – UNSM Revised Structure.**

A report dated July 16, 2013, on behalf of the sub-committee established by the Executive Committee to examine the revised caucus structure for UNSM, was before the Committee.

The report provided the background to the proposed new caucus structure and discussed a number of matters the Executive Committee might consider in making a recommendation to Regional Council.

**MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Mosher that the Executive Committee recommends to Halifax Regional Council that they support UNSM retaining the population-based structure which groups Nova Scotian municipalities into three categories: Regional, Towns and Rural. MOTION PUT AND PASSED**

- 8. COMMITTEE MEMBERS – None**
- 9. ADDED ITEMS - None**
- 10. NEXT MEETING DATE – September 23, 2013**
- 11. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Cathy Mellett  
Municipal Clerk