



**EXECUTIVE STANDING COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
August 10, 2015**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Mike Savage, Chair  
Deputy Mayor Lorelei Nicoll, Vice Chair  
Councillor Jennifer Watts  
Councillor Russell Walker  
Councillor Steve Craig  
Councillor Linda Mosher

**REGRETS:** Councillor Bill Karsten

**STAFF:** Mr. Richard Butts, Chief Administrative Officer  
Mr. John Traves, Director of Legal Services  
Ms. Cathy Mellett, Municipal Clerk  
Ms. Phoebe Smith, Legislative Assistant  
Ms. Cathy Collett, Legislative Support

*The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.*

*The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to the Executive Standing Committee are available online: <http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/SCadmin/index.php>*

*The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m., and adjourned at 11:15 a.m.*

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 22, 2015**

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Walker

**THAT the minutes of June 22, 2015 be approved as circulated.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

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

The Order of Business was approved as presented.

**4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES**

**5. MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION – NONE**

**6. MOTIONS OF RESCISSION – NONE**

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

**8. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS**

**8.1 Correspondence**

The Clerk's Office received correspondence in reference to item 9.2.1 and this was distributed to all Committee members.

**8.2 Petitions – NONE**

**8.3 Presentation – NONE**

**9. REPORTS**

**9.1 STAFF**

**9.1.1 Design Review Committee Membership Criteria**

The following was before the Executive Standing Committee:

- A staff recommendation report dated June 16, 2015

MOVED by Councillor Mosher, seconded by Councillor Craig

**THAT the Executive Standing Committee direct staff to review the membership criteria of the Design Review Committee as part of the five-year review of the Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and the Downtown Halifax Land Use By-law.**

Councillor Walker questioned if this would constitute a review of the present Committee composition. Mr. Jacob Ritchie, Urban Design Manager responded in the affirmative.

Councillor Walker questioned if there were any issues that indicated the need for review. Mr. Ritchie replied that it was suggested by stakeholders that requiring membership from the professional organizations should be considered.

Councillor Watts indicated that she was unwilling to take away the membership of the public on the Committee. She questioned if staff perceive that there is a problem.

Mr. Ritchie replied that no concerns have been brought forward by staff. He indicated that some stakeholder groups have noted that conversations at the Design Review Committee sometimes tends to drift away from design related matters to more general matters.

Councillor Watts indicated that she does not want to limit residents' involvement in the Committee and suggested that as an alternative to replacing residents with professionals, better orientation could be provided to the citizens who put their names forward.

Councillor Craig commented that the membership criteria for this Committee has been reviewed in the past and he sees no issue with conducting another 5-year review. He emphasized that it is possible that the review may not change the recommended membership criteria.

Councillor Mosher indicated that she is in favour of the review and of shifting to a model of competency-based boards and committees. She commented that a competency-based board is a more fulsome board and it is important for members of boards and committees to have relevant experience and expertise.

Mayor Savage clarified that the motion only directs staff to review the membership criteria as part of the more general review of the downtown plan, not necessarily to change it.

#### **MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

##### **9.1.2 Bi Annual Workforce Report**

The following was before the Executive Standing Committee:

- A staff information report dated July 13, 2015
- A copy of the staff presentation dated August 10, 2015

Ms. Catherine Mullally, Director of Human Resources, introduced her colleague, Ms. Helga Wolf-Billard, Manager of Health and Safety, and they provided a presentation of the Bi-Annual Workplace Information report for the third and fourth quarter of the 2014/2015 business cycle.

Responding to questions of clarification, Ms. Mullally explained that on average about 8% of positions at HRM are vacant, which is within the expected range in most large organizations.

Councillor Walker responded that he would like more information on the vacancies, specifically the number of vacant positions, the length of the vacancies, when a position is declared redundant, and why employees leave HRM.

Councillor Watts echoed Councillor Walker's request and questioned if the increased number of slips and trips during this reporting period was due the winter weather. Ms. Mullally replied in the affirmative.

Councillor Craig questioned why the office of the Auditor General was not included in the report. Ms. Mullally responded that she would consult with the CAO on whether this could be included in future reports.

In response to questions from the Committee regarding the increased absenteeism and grievances in Halifax Fire, Mr. Roy Hollett, Deputy Chief of Halifax Fire responded that the increased number of grievances are related to vacation time and that Halifax Fire is waiting for a decision from an arbitrator on the matter.

Committee members thanked staff for the presentation.

### **9.1.3 Campaign Finance Reform**

The following was before the Executive Standing Committee:

- A staff recommendation report dated May 27, 2015

MOVED by Councillor Craig, seconded by Councillor Watts

**THAT the Executive Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council request the Province of Nova Scotia amend the *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter* to grant Regional Council the power to enact a by-law to:**

- **establish disclosure requirements respecting election campaign contributions and expenses;**
- **set election campaign spending limits and the maximum amounts that a contributor may contribute to an election campaign; and**
- **determine who is eligible to contribute to an election campaign.**

**Then, should the authority be granted, Council direct staff to develop a by-law which deals with issues like those raised in the “Discussion” section of the staff report dated May 27, 2015.**

Committee members noted that the report did not indicate what would be included in a proposed bylaw should such authority be granted. In response, Ms. Maggie MacDonald, Managing Director of Government Relations and External Affairs, explained that the first step is to receive the mandate from Council to engage with the Province on the subject.

Councillor Mosher suggested that it would be helpful if the report used the same cities for the comparison of electoral practices as are used to determine Councillor compensation. She commented that it is important to work with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) on this matter.

Responding to Councillor Mosher, Ms. MacDonald advised that campaign finance regulations are not currently a priority for most other Nova Scotia municipalities, and, in discussion with UNSM, they have no issue with HRM taking the lead on this matter.

Mayor Savage reiterated the importance of HRM, as by far the biggest municipality in the province, taking the lead on the issue. He acknowledged that every member of Council will have his or her own point of view on the subject, and that if the permission to enact campaign finance reform is given, then that will be the time to move forward with a fulsome discussion on the specifics of the matter.

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

## **9.2 COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

### **9.2.1 Extending Municipal Electoral Rights for Permanent Residents**

The following was before the Executive Standing Committee:

- A Councillor Request for Consideration Form
- Correspondence dated July 23, 2015 from the Hon. Mark Furey, Minister of Municipal Affairs, Government of Nova Scotia

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Craig

**THAT the Executive Standing Committee request a staff report outlining the implications of extending the right to nominate candidates or run for office in municipal elections to Permanent Residents.**

The Committee discussed the correspondence from Minister Mark Furey and expressed surprise that the provincial department of Municipal Affairs questioned whether the right to vote could be extended without also extending the right to run and nominate.

Committee members expressed concern with the addition of the other two elements considering the motion of Council has specifically been in regard to extending voting rights to permanent residents.

The Committee indicated a willingness to receive further information on the subject in the form of a staff report, particularly regarding whether it is common practice to combine all three elements in the cities that have extended voting rights to permanent residents.

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

10.       **MOTIONS – NONE**
11.       **IN CAMERA – NONE**
12.       **ADDED ITEMS – NONE**
13.       **NOTICES OF MOTION – NONE**
14.       **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** - Monday, September 28, 2015 at 10:00 a.m., Council Chamber, City Hall
15.       **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Cathy Collett  
Legislative Support