



**COMMUNITY PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
STANDING COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
July 24, 2014**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Lorelei Nicoll, Chair  
Councillor Wayne Mason, Vice Chair  
Councillor Jennifer Watts  
Deputy Mayor Darren Fisher

**REGRETS:** Councillor Gloria McCluskey  
Councillor Tim Outhit

**STAFF:** Ms. Karen Brown, Senior Solicitor  
Mr. Brad Anguish, Acting Deputy CAO  
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

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

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

*The meeting was called to order at 2:01 p.m. and moved into an In Camera session at 3:26 p.m. and reconvened at 3:38 p.m. The Standing Committee adjourned at 3:39 p.m.*

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 8, 2014 and June 12, 2014**

**MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Mason that the minutes of May 8, 2014 and June 12, 2014 be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

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

There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

Councillor Mason indicated that items 9.1.1 and 9.2.2 dealt with matters that were interconnected and, at his request, the Committee agreed to deal with these items collectively.

**MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Watts that the agenda, as amended, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

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

**5. MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION – NONE**

**6. MOTIONS OF RESCISSION – NONE**

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

**8. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS - NONE**

**9. REPORTS**

**9.1 STAFF**

**9.1.1 Economic Strategy Year End Update**

The following was before the Standing Committee:

- A staff recommendation report dated June 6, 2014.

This matter was discussed in conjunction with agenda item 9.2.2. See page 4.

**9.2 MEMBERS OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**9.2.1 Councillor Mason – Gymnasia Analysis Information Report dated May 2, 2014**

The following was before the Standing Committee:

- A staff information report dated May 2, 2014.

Councillor Watts advised that she and Councillor Mason brought the information report forward for discussion because of comments they have heard about the implications for gyms on the Peninsula, and that these issues are not reflected in the information report. She noted that with the recent closing of St. Patrick's Alexander School, the St. Pat's High School, the Bloomfield School, and now with the YMCA closing, there is a lot of concern in the community in regard to access to school gyms and the costs

associated with booking new facilities, particularly on weekends and times when there is no custodian available. Councillor Watts also noted there were other concerns expressed such as: 'hard to house' users, like ball hockey and roller derby, which had been accommodated at the Bloomfield gym; the size of gyms, for e.g. adult sports programs cannot be accommodated in a gym designed for children; and she added that she has heard from a basketball group who played at the Bloomfield gym, and are still having challenges in finding space that is practical and on the Peninsula.

Councillor Watts questioned the status of the joint use agreement with Citadel High School, adding that she has heard HRM has indicated it is seeking a change in the agreement to have the use of the gym during the day. Councillor Watts explained that the concern is that if this occurs then the School may, in turn, come back to the City advising that they want access to other gyms for their use.

Ms. Denise Schofield, Manager, Regional Recreation & Culture, responded. She advised that several of the groups using the gyms were not local, and when facilities became available in their own communities they relocated. She added that most of the groups have found alternate space and that staff have offered and found space for everyone, but not all accepted the space which was offered. With regard to the joint use agreement with Citadel High School, she noted that there has been no change in the agreement but recently staff has been enforcing the agreement as it was initially negotiated.

In response to the concern expressed by Councillor Watts that she was still hearing that some groups are not accommodated Ms. Schofield assured the Committee that staff have found space for all groups, however, it was the group's choice whether to accept or not, and some have not accepted what was offered. She suggested that Councillor Watts contact her directly if there were specific groups she was concerned about.

Ms. Schofield also advised that there are joint use agreements with several facilities and staff are reviewing the service exchange agreement and are in the process of renegotiating that agreement as well as the other joint use agreements

Councillor Mason also expressed concern that the information report suggests that the gymnasium needs on the Peninsula are met. Councillor Mason noted the following concerns: some of the gyms on the Peninsula are quite costly to rent; there is additional pressure on the Peninsula because many churches that have gyms are closing and being sold; the joint use agreement with Citadel High School references the Indoor Facility Study which noted that there is a lack of quality gyms on the Peninsula. He also pointed out that he had received concerns from parents about the joint use agreement HRM has with Citadel High School.

Mr. Brad Anguish, Acting DCAO explained that the fundamental issue with the joint use agreement with Citadel High School was that HRM is supposed to be doing the scheduling. He advised that HRM does this elsewhere and there have been no concerns.

In response to concerns from Councillors Mason and Watts that, going forward, the information report may be used by Council as a basis for decision-making, Mr. Anguish indicated that this was not the intent of the report and advised that the information report was meant to provide some baseline analysis for discussion. He added that the Community Facilities Master Plan will help verify where the needs are and what the gap is.

During discussion it was noted that there is an HRM/HRSB working group on this matter, and Councillor Watts indicated it would helpful for the Committee to receive an update from the group.

**MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Mason that the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee receive a written update from staff on the HRSB/HRM working group. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**9.2.2 Councillor Mason – Now or Never: An Urgent Call to Action for Nova Scotians – The Report of the Commission on Building our New Economy Information Report dated June 3, 2014**

The following was before the Standing Committee:

- A staff information report dated June 3, 2014.

Mr. Chris Bryant, Senior Advisor, Government Relations and External Affairs provided an overview of the information report. In his remarks Mr. Bryant noting that the title gives a sense of urgency, advised that the report highlights economic challenges that have been presented in various past reports. He noted that because the Commission's report is about the Province as a whole, HRM needs to be clear on its issues and goals because the economy and economic challenges of HRM are quite different compared to other municipalities across the Province.

Mr. Bryant advised that there is good alignment between the Halifax Economic Strategy and the Commission's transformative goals, and that there is a leadership role the Municipality can play. He added that the Municipality can't solve the problems some businesses are facing, but if it is seen to be supportive it could lead to an improved business climate.

With regard to the goals of the Commission's report, Mr. Bryant noted that an ad hoc group of City staff have come together and met. He added that the big picture issues are well laid out in the report, but the details require further work.

Councillor Mason pointed out that the Municipality is doing well in a number of ways and it would make sense for the Municipality to forge ahead on its own and provide the leadership as it is the largest municipal government in Atlantic Canada. Councillor Mason put forward the following comments for consideration:

- HRM has the best funded rural municipality in the Province, and there should be a discussion on how to maximize development in rural HRM.
- There should be more emphasis on partnering in regard to the goal on immigration.
- Referencing the goal of retaining international students, as well as local students, HRM needs to have a presence on campuses, e.g. provide information to include in Frosh kits.
- A discussion should be held on whether the Municipality is doing enough with the African Nova Scotia Office and whether additional resources are needed.
- The Municipality should pursue building a relationship with the Mi'kmaq nation.
- The Municipality should show more support for the 'by local' movement.
- The Municipality can do more to build confidence within the community
- Council needs to see information based on five-year trends, and not just one-year trends.

Councillor Watts put forward the following comments in regard to the issue of initiatives that promote economic growth in the Municipality:

- HRM has made a big step forward in its work on Bylaw Review and the creation of administrative orders.
- For individuals wanting to start up a small business, the Municipality needs to be clearer upfront on its requirements for starting a new business.
- Being on top of the latest technology and applications and being supportive of this will help small business.
- Need to understand and advocate for programs sponsored by community groups for those less fortunate in our City.
- It is important to retain programs designed to train youth and the City's contribution to allow that to happen is key.

Deputy Mayor Fisher advised that the common themes he sees in the report are partnerships and changing attitudes and that he feels that partnerships are key to reaching our goals, and that he believes a change in attitude is well underway in Halifax.

Councillor Mason referred to the Economic Strategy Year End Update report and advised that he would have liked to have seen more in-depth analysis in regard to trends (i.e. show five-year trends vs one-year trends) in the report. He added that he did not want to delay the report going to Council but he requested that staff, in future reports, consider including five-year trends along with one-year trends.

**MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Watts that the Information Report dated June 6, 2014 RE: Economic Strategy Year End Update, and the Information Report dated June 3, 2014 RE: Now or Never: An Urgent Call to Action for Nova Scotians – The Report of the Commission on Building Our New Economy be forwarded to Council for information. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**10. MOTIONS- NONE**

**MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Mason that the Committee convene in camera. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

At 3:26 p.m. the Committee convened an in camera session.

**11. IN CAMERA**

**11.1 Minutes – May 8, 2014 and June 12, 2014**

Minutes were approved in the in camera session.

**11.2 PERSONNEL MATTER – Nomination – Halifax Explosion 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Advisory Committee**

This matter was dealt with in the in camera session.

**12. ADDED ITEMS:**

**12.1 Presentation Request – Chair**

The Chair advised that she has received a presentation request from Bell Aliant. She explained that they would like to provide a presentation to the Committee to raise awareness on their investment in the community. There was consensus to approve the presentation for an upcoming meeting.

**12.2 PERSONNEL MATTER – Nomination – Halifax Explosion 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Advisory Committee**

This matter was dealt with in camera and was now before the Committee for ratification.

**MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Mason that the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee recommend Halifax Regional Council approve the Citizen Nominations to the Halifax Explosion 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Advisory Committee as attached to the private and confidential staff report dated June 6, 2014. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**13. NOTICES OF MOTION - NONE**

**14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Committee agreed to cancel the August 14, 2014 meeting.

September 11, 2014 is the next regular meeting.

**15. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 3:39 p.m.

Sheilagh Edmonds  
Legislative Assistant