

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

HRM GRANTS COMMITTEE MINUTES

January 17, 2011

PRESENT: Councillor Russell Walker, Chair
Councillor Barry Dalrymple, Vice Chair
Deputy Mayor Brad Johns
Councillor Peter Lund
Councillor Jim Smith
Councillor Jennifer Watts
Mr. Geoff Baker
Ms. Gina Byrne
Mr. Andrew Higdon
Mr. David Khokhar
Mr. David Woo

REGRETS: Ms. Monica Jordan

STAFF: Ms. Peta-Jane Temple, Team Lead, Tax, Grants and Special
Projects
Mr. André MacNeil, Financial Consultant
Mr. Bruce Fisher, Manager, Fiscal and Tax Policy
Ms. Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m. in the Finance Boardroom, 3rd Floor Duke Tower.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – November 15, 2010

Corrections: Page 4 – “tax exemptions” not “taxi”
Page 5 - “organizations” not “organization”
Page 7 - remove “Mr.” in front of “Dr. John

MOVED by Mr. Andrew Higdon, seconded by Mr. Geoff Baker, that the minutes of November 13, 2010, as amended, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Addition: 8.1 Status of the Grants Committee - Deputy Mayor Smith

MOVED by Councillor Dalrymple, seconded by Councillor Johns, that the Order of Business, as amended, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS - NONE

5. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

6. CORRESPONDENCE – NONE

7. REPORTS

7.1 HRM Community Grants Program 2010-2011: Request to Reassign Capital Grant to Village Green Society

A report dated December 13, 2010 was before the Committee.

Ms. Peta-Jane Temple, Team Lead, Tax, Grants and Special Projects, presented the staff report.

MOVED by Councillor Dalrymple, seconded by Mr. Andrew Higdon that the Grants Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council approve re-assignment of a capital grant in the amount of \$15,720 to the Village Green Society as per the terms and conditions set out in the Discussion section of the December 13, 2010 staff report.

In response to a concern raised by Deputy Mayor Smith in regard to potential uses of the Church Hall that may result in a revenue being generated that could impact the

Village Green Society's charitable registration, Ms. Temple advised that the activities of the Church Hall have been card games and seniors activities. She noted that the facility may, in future, be considered as a possible comfort centre in case of emergency.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.2 By-Law T-200 Proposed Program Re-Design

Mr. André MacNeil, Financial Consultant, assisted by Ms. Temple, presented a verbal update on the proposed phased approach for the review of HRM's Non-Profit Tax Exemption Program. A copy of their presentation was circulated at this time.

Councillors Lund and Watts entered the meeting at 2:02 p.m.

Staff provided the following information in response to concerns/questions raised by the Committee:

- staff will request that Property Valuation services review the groups/properties that appear to have been incorrectly assessed and confirm the assessment
- the survey is assisting in defining the definitions and what type of housing should be included/excluded from the program
- properties/groups found to be in the "wrong" category may be referred to another grant program
- information on the provincial role and their contribution will be provided to the Committee
- the issue of nursing homes and Co-op Housing will be addressed as part of the review in regard to their operational definition as the intent of the program is to assist low income households
- another matter to be considered during the review would be how much assistance would be provided to a private home owner versus helping lower income occupants of a home where they have no equity position

MOVED by Councillor Johns, seconded by Mr. Andrew Higdon that the Grants Committee form a By-Law T-200 Program Re-Design Sub-Committee to work with staff who will report back to the Grants Committee with a proposed By-Law T-200 Revised Program for consideration. The appointments to the Sub-Committee to be deferred pending confirmation of the Grants Committee membership appointments. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

In response to concerns raised by Councillors Lund and Watts in regard to public consultation/engagement for this initiative, Ms. Temple explained that there would be some public consultation during the process, however; the majority of public input would take place during the public hearing at Regional Council. The objective of the review is to ensure fairness, equity, and transparency of the program. The goal to present Regional Council with the revised program by the end of 2011.

Councillor Dalrymple retired from the meeting at 2:31 p.m.

7.3 2011 Proposed Grant Committee Meeting Schedule

MOVED by Mr. David Woo, seconded by Mr. David Khokhar that the Grants Committee approve the following 2011 meeting schedule with the understanding that additional meetings will be called as required: February 7, March 7, April 4, May 2, June 6, July 4, August 8, September 12, October 3, November 7 and December 5, 2011. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

8. ADDED ITEMS

8.1 Status of the Grants Committee

The Legislative Assistant advised that the Councillor appointments to the Grants Committee would be considered by the Audit and Finance Standing Committee at their January 19, 2011 meeting. Citizen appointments would be made by the Standing Committee once all applications have been received. The Volunteer recruitment advertisement was placed in the Saturday, January 15th newspaper. All appointments are to be completed by March 31, 2011.

Councillor Watts noted that the deadline for volunteer applications was January 31, 2011.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE – February 7, 2011

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:43 p.m.

Chris Newson
Legislative Assistant

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Response to Nova Scotia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Metro Branch, Request for Increase in Tax Exemption Level: HRM By-Law T-200
2. Response to Shubenacadie Canal Commission: Fundraising Campaign
3. Response re: Tax Appeal: Anglican Diocese of PEI & Nova Scotia – St. Paul’s Church, Seabright
4. Regional Council Information Report dated November 25, 2010 re: Tenancy Plan – 1588 Barrington Street, Halifax
5. Response to Titans Gymnastics & Trampoline Club dated January 12, 2011

INFORMATION ITEMS

September 13, 2010

1. Correspondence to Ross Cantwell, Housing Trust of Nova Scotia, re: Request for Waiver of Application Fees: 2183 and 2215 Gottingen Street, Halifax.