

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

ENERGY AND UNDERGROUND SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
September 2, 2009

MINUTES

PRESENT: Councillor Debbie Hum, Vice Chair
Councillor Jennifer Watts
Councillor Barry Dalrymple
Councillor Jackie Barkhouse
Councillor Sue Uteck

ABSENT: Councillor Stephen Adams

STAFF: Mr. Angus Doyle, Manager of Utilities Coordination
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	CALL TO ORDER	3
1.1	ELECTION OF CHAIR	3
2.	APPROVAL OF MINUTES	3
3.	APPROVAL OF ORDER OF BUSINESS / ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS	3
4.	BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/DEFERRED ITEMS	3
5.	REPORTS:	
5.1	Staff:	3
5.1.1	Presentation - Creative Solar - Solar Panel Systems	3
5.1.2	Presentation- Managing Overhead Wires Utility Infrastructure - HRM	4
5.1.3	Above Ground Heritage Gas Equipment on the HRM Right-of-Way	5
5.1.4	DSM Hearing Decision - Update	5
5.2	Committee Members:	6
6.	ADDED ITEMS:	6
7.	NEXT MEETING DATE:	6
8.	ADJOURNMENT	6

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 11:04 a.m. in the Media Room, City Hall.

1.1 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Hum noted that she was not able to take on the position of Chair, but was willing to continue to be Vice Chair. She called for nominations of Chair.

MOVED by Councillor Dalrymple, seconded by Councillor Watts that Councillor Uteck be nominated for Chair. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

The Chair called for other nominations; there being none, **she declared Councillor Uteck as Chair for 2009/10.**

Councillor Hum then turned the Chair over to Councillor Uteck.

At 11:06 a.m. Councillor Barkhouse entered the meeting

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED by Councillor Hum, seconded by Councillor Dalrymple that the minutes of July 2, 2009 be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. APPROVAL OF ORDER OF BUSINESS / ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

There were no additions or deletions to the agenda; the agenda was accepted as presented.

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/DEFERRED ITEMS: None

5. REPORTS:

5.1 Staff:

5.1.1 Presentation - Creative Solar - Solar Panel Systems

Councillor Hum introduced Mr. Richard Vinson, a representative from Creative Solar, and advised that he had requested to make a presentation to the Committee in regard to the solar panel systems his company makes.

Mr. Vinson addressed the Committee and noted that he wanted to share his thoughts with the Committee on what he would like to see in HRM regarding one aspect of

renewable technology. Mr. Vinson provided background information on his company, noting that it was located in the Bayers Lake Business Park, and has been in business for 20 years. He added that he always been interested in renewable energy.

He advised that his company is working on three areas—hot air systems, domestic hot water and swimming pool heaters, and noted that they have done some municipal pools. Mr. Vinson advised that they had sent a proposal to HRM in the summer.

Mr. Vinson noted that their hot air solutions are the simplest of the solar applications and that HRM staff would probably be able to do the installation. Some of the potential applications in HRM are as follows:

- outbuildings
- portable schoolrooms
- temporary structures
- community centres
- maintenance sheds

The Chair thanked Mr. Vinson for his presentation.

5.1.2 Presentation- Managing Overhead Wires Utility Infrastructure - HRM

Mr. Phil Francis, Manager, HRM Right-of-Way provided a PowerPoint Presentation updating the Committee on HRM's intention to move from overhead wiring systems to underground systems.

In his remarks, Mr. Francis noted that overhead wiring systems have been increasing in existing areas and that there has been little progress in moving to underground systems in the Capital District. He also advised that new developments continue to be constructed with overhead wiring systems. Mr. Francis explained that issues which are allowing this to continue are the lack of current bylaws and that there is no annual budget funding identified.

Mr. Francis pointed out that this increased activity of overhead wiring has led to safety and aesthetic impacts on residential streets, it has impacted on trees, curb appeal is lost, and there are new installations over sidewalks. Aspects that are driving the continual overhead wiring as follows:

- Nova Scotia Power has system deficiencies it is trying to fix;
- increase in telecom activities has been a huge driver, as each of the telecom companies want their own systems.

Mr. Francis advised that within the Capital District the opportunities to move wiring underground have been missed, and he cited a new development on Cunard Street as one such example,. He also noted that new subdivisions continue to develop with overhead wires and anchors.

Mr. Francis concluded his presentation by reviewing the four directions that staff were

recommending the Committee approve.

MOVED by Councillor Hum, seconded by Councillor Dalrymple that the Energy and Underground Services Advisory Committee recommend staff:

- **be directed to prepare a strategy for removal of overhead wiring in pole free areas.**
- **develop a policy to manage the increase of overhead wiring systems in existing areas.**
- **bring forward an information report regarding a subdivision bylaw amendment to request that new subdivisions to be pole-free.**
- **prepare a policy requiring that underground wiring be included in all new development agreements.**

A discussion ensued with staff responding to questions. The following points were noted:

- HRM is approximately 18 months away from carrying out its first 5-year review of the Regional Plan - and it was suggested that this is an opportunity to capitalize on some of these outstanding issues.
- the increased cost per lot of undergrounding wires is \$7,000 - \$8,000 (this is the same with the common trench concept).
- staff are receiving approximately ten encroachment requests per week; it was noted that Eastlink is rebuilding their system in HRM, and are starting on the Peninsula.
- generally, municipalities west of Quebec City do not allow overhead wires, and these areas include jurisdictions with that the geography includes a lot of rock.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Hum that staff be directed to include this issue in the upcoming Regional Plan exercise. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Dalrymple that in moving forward, staff ensure that Regional Council is aware that funds will have to be allocated towards this strategy. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5.1.3 Above Ground Heritage Gas Equipment on the HRM Right-of-Way

A staff report dated August 11, 2009 was submitted.

MOVED by Councillor Barkhouse, seconded by Councillor Hum that the Energy and Underground Services Advisory Committee endorse the document "HRM

Guidelines for Encroaching Sidewalk Natural Gas Risers” as attached to the August 11, 2009 staff report. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5.1.4 DSM Hearing Decision - Update (verbal)

A document entitled, Review of NSUARB DSM Hearing Decision was submitted.

Mr. Angus Doyle provided a summary of the Utility and Review Board’s decision in regard to Nova Scotia Power’s application for its Demand Side Management Plan for 2010. He advised as follows:

- the Board sided with Nova Scotia Power’s suggested formula for cost allocation, i.e. 25% on system basis and 75% borne by the rate classes
- with regard to HRM’s view that it be allowed to self administer the DSM programs which meet the necessary cost/benefit analysis and that the holdback by the system administrator be reduced from 30% of the total allocated funds to 10%, the Board directed that the ESA be continued in the 2010 DSM programs, and it agreed with NSPI and the interveners and denies the change for 90% to 70%.
- in regard to Greenhouse Gas Credits, the Board found in favour of the Utility and indicated that credits would remain with the DSM Administrator for the benefit of all.

5.2 Committee Members: None.

6. ADDED ITEMS: None

7. NEXT MEETING DATE:

The Chair advised that she and Councillor Barkhouse had a conflict with the date/time of this Committee’s meetings, because the Bridge Commission also met on the last Friday of the month. She asked if other members would have any difficulty if the meeting were moved to another Friday. No one had any objection to moving the meeting date, and the Chair asked the Legislative Assistant to contact the Councillors’ Office to determine which Friday of the month (10:00 a.m.) would be suitable for all members.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:04 p.m.

September 2, 2009

Sheilagh Edmonds
Legislative Assistant