



**HALIFAX EXPLOSION 100th ANNIVERSARY
SPECIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
November 12, 2014**

PRESENT: Mr. Craig Walkington, Chair
Mr. Dwight Dorey, Vice Chair
Ms. Marilyn Elliott
Mr. Jeffry Haggett
Mr. Will Robinson-Mushkat
Mr. David Sutherland

REGRETS: Ms. Renee Gruszecki
Ms. Pat Jessup

OTHERS PRESENT: Councillor Jennifer Watts

STAFF: Ms. Carolle Koziak Roberts, Landscape Architect
Mr. Billy Comer, Event Coordinator
Mr. Jamie MacLellan, Public Art Facilitator
Ms. P. J. Temple, Team Lead, Tax Grants and Special Projects
Ms. Jennifer Weagle, 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 Committee are available online: <http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/explosion/index.php>

The meeting was called to order at 3:07 p.m., the Committee adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m. at the Nova Scotia Community College, 5685 Leeds Street, Halifax.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 15, 2014

MOVED by Mr. Sutherland, seconded by Mr. Robinson-Mushkat that the minutes of October 15, 2014 be approved as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED

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

Additions:

7.1.2 Update on the Community Engagement Strategy for Fort Needham Park

MOVED by Mr. Haggett, seconded by Ms. Elliott that the agenda be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

6.1 Correspondence

6.1.1 Correspondence from The Mary Baker Eddy Library

The following was before the Committee:

- Correspondence from The Mary Baker Eddy Library, Boston Mass., dated October 21, 2014

6.1.2 Correspondence from Andrea Puszkur

The following was before the Committee:

- Correspondence from Andrea Puszkur, dated October 22, 2014

6.1.3 Correspondence from Shirley Trites

The following was before the Committee:

- Correspondence from Shirley Trites, dated October 26, 2014.

The Chair reminded the Committee that the correspondences would be recorded and put into a holding file until they will be considered at a later date. Mr. Haggett questioned whether the correspondents would be acknowledged and Ms. Weagle assured the Committee that she is replying to each correspondent and informing them of the Committee's work plans.

6.2 Petitions - None

6.3 Presentations - None

7. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

7.1 STAFF

Councillor Watts joined the meeting.

7.1.1 Development of the Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Fund

The following was before the Committee:

- The 2014-15 Community Grants Program guide.

Ms. Temple explained to the Committee that the process of establishing a Grants Fund is one of narrowing and focus. She informed the Committee that the province does not have plans for a program, and that other than the legacy fund proposed by the Federal Government, she is not aware of any other grants programs. Ms. Temple emphasized the impetus to make a distinction between commemoration and celebration and to keep the fund distinct from other municipal grant programs with clear direction given to potential applicants.

Ms. Temple continued her presentation by facilitating a discussion on the need for public impact into the development of funding priorities. The Committee discussed various methods for receiving feedback from the public, considering specifically the “Shape Your City” online resource and the possibility of strategic focus groups. The Committee considered the difficulty in making sure that the process is sensitive to the diverse abilities and resources of the potential contributors and considered the need for a forum that does not require computer literacy as well as a method for engaging youth. Ms. Temple discussed the financial implications of public engagement and recognized the pressures on the 2015 budget. She advised the Committee that in their deliberations, it is a good idea to focus on the outcomes and recommend that any requests to donate gifts or artifacts be sent to the appropriate place, most likely the Public Archives.

Ms. Temple explained that the next step is to establish a provisional budget and a three-year work plan, with March 31, 2015 as the closing date for the new program. She emphasized that the timeline is a difficult one and that she needs to give staff some indication now as to what kind of figure will be proposed, as well as a rationale for the figure that is decided upon. There needs to be a new program published in order for the Grants Fund to launch in September 2015 and allow time for substantial projects to get underway. Ms. Temple further suggested that if a funding threshold is set at \$5000.00, then it might be possible to fund 10-15 projects.

The Committee returned to a discussion of the method through which to seek public input and Mr. Haggitt questioned if a community open house would be better than a focus group from a best practise point of view. Ms. Temple responded that focus groups could be designed to overcome barriers. The Committee considered that a focus group might not be an entirely inclusive method for reaching the public, especially in the case of individuals who have difficulty speaking with government officials. The Committee continued to discuss ideas for reaching a representative constituency. Ms. Temple assured the Committee that, if needed, a focus group could be designed to include a specific sub-set of the population, such as youth, and that the groups could be conducted in conjunction with known non-profit organizations in order to create a comfortable setting for participants. Councillor Watts questioned whether the focus group is necessary or if the funds that would be used to conduct them could go into the grant program. Ms. Temple indicated that if the Committee decided that focus groups were not required, staff would work with that decision. The Committee acknowledged that this is a difficult decision and decided to return to it at the meeting following the November 22nd workshop.

Ms. Temple indicated that after the workshop the Committee will need to provide direction to the Grants Committee and establish the top three priorities to take away for drafted guidelines. She informed the Committee that by end of July 2015 the guidebook will be in the hand of Corporate Communications. She concluded by explaining that the Grants Committee will be the one fielding the grants, which will make recommendation to Regional Council.

7.1.2 Update – Community Engagement Strategy Fort Needham Park

Ms. Carolle Koziak Roberts informed the Committee that the Master Plan for Fort Needham Park is underway and that the consultant, Ekistics Planning and Design, has been retained. She explained that the project is currently in the early stages of development, which involves putting together a public engagement strategy and preliminary archaeological overview. As part of the public engagement strategy there will be a site going up on the Halifax website's Shape Your City portal, a tool that allows people to participate with the process. In addition, there is a public workshop tentatively scheduled for December 4th at the United Memorial Church to collect feedback at the early stages and provide direction and ideas to be used in further developments of the Park Master Plan.

Ms. Koziak Roberts outlined two established objectives: looking at the park as a regional destination and a site of commemoration, and looking at the park as local destination and a place for recreation. She emphasized that input from the Committee would be welcomed and that it would be helpful to have Committee members in attendance at the public meeting. Councillor Watts added that there has already been two public meetings about Fort Needham Park, not just around the 100th Anniversary of the Halifax Explosion, and that the Park Master Plan is the result of those meetings. The Chair requested the notes from the two past meetings and Ms. Koziak Roberts agreed that the request would be made to Staff to provide these. In addition, the Committee requested the information yielded by the online public input survey once the website has gone live. Mr. Hagggett acknowledged the important role of the "Shape your City" tool, but questioned whether other, potentially more inclusive methods, might also be used. The Chair requested that Staff report back on the potential of mailing list or something similar as a possible tool for updating the public. Ms. Koziak Roberts suggested using social media venues like Twitter or Facebook and the Committee agreed that these are good for engaging younger people. The Committee discussed the possibility of a Twitter Feed with "hash tags" for the commemoration project, similar to the Twitter Feed used in updating the public about the new Halifax library. The Chair requested that Corporate Communications discuss their role in the project at the next meeting.

Ms. Koziak Roberts explained that the Park Master Plan should be done in May or June and will inform the Capital Projects that will come forth for implementation. The Chair mentioned that some correspondence received by the Committee references Fort Needham, to which Ms. Weagle indicated that such documents would be shared with the appropriate staff.

Billy Comer left the meeting at this time.

7.2 COMMITTEE

7.2.1 Discussion on Workshop Planning

Ms. Weagle informed the Committee that, to date, only two presenters had confirmed their attendance at the workshop on November 22nd: Dan Conlin and Gary Shutlak. The Chair expressed concern that two presenters will not be enough to meet the established goals of the workshop. The Committee discussed alternative presenters and considered the possibility of moving the workshop to a later date in order to facilitate greater attendance. They ultimately decided that moving the workshop would be too difficult at this point and produced a list of alternate names, requesting that Ms. Weagle extend invitations to the first three and keep the Committee up to date on the feedback from the new invitees. Ms. Weagle informed the Committee that the workshop will be held at the NSCC IT campus and that refreshments have been booked. The Committee discussed what Staff would be present at the workshop and concluded their discussion by requesting Ms. Weagle to look into whether there is a final report from the 75th Commemoration of the Halifax Explosion.

7.2.2 Report on October 31, 2014 meeting with other Halifax Explosion Commemoration Stakeholders - Chair

The Chair informed the Committee that he had been contacted by Naval historian Dr. Richard Gimblett who was coming to Halifax to find out what was being done for the 100th Anniversary of the Halifax

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Explosion and what role the Navy might play in the event. The Chair explained that Dr. Gimblett had pulled together some potential stakeholders: Craig Walkington, Rick Sanderson, Mike Bonin, P.J. Temple, Dan Conlin, Kim Rhinehart, and Martin Hubely. Each group spoke briefly about what they would potential plans for the anniversary. The Chair explained that the meeting was valuable because it would help prevent duplication of projects and events and informed the Committee that they would be meeting again in three months. Councillor Watts cautioned Committee members to be careful with individual communication with other stakeholders. The Committee concluded by questioning how to avoid duplication of projects with other levels of government and decided that staff will ultimately be responsible for preventing this.

8. ADDED ITEMS - NONE

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – December 10, 2014, 3:00 p.m., NSCC – IT Campus, 5685 Leeds Street, Halifax.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

Cathy Collett
Legislative Support