

**HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY**

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**SPECIAL EVENTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

**May 21, 2008**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Sheila Fougere, Chair  
Mr. Douglas MacDonald, Vice-Chair  
Councillor Brad Johns  
Ms. June Buchanan, Cultural Advisory Committee  
Mr. Richard O'Beirne, Hotel Association of Nova Scotia  
Ms. Sally Camus, Cultural Advisory Committee  
Mr. Bill Mont, Citizen Representative  
Mr. Brad Smith, Greater Halifax Partnership  
Mr. Brian Rose, Halifax Chamber of Commerce

**REGRETS:** Councillor Dawn Sloane  
Mr. Stuart Jolliffe, Destination Halifax

**STAFF AND  
OTHERS:** Mr. Mike Gillett, Coordinator, Civic Events & Festivals  
Mr. Andrew Cox, Civic Events & Festivals  
Ms. Shawnee Gregory, Legislative Assistant

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 12:16 p.m. in the Media Room, City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax. The meeting moved In Camera at 12:25 p.m. The regular meeting reconvened at 12:32 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - April 23, 2008**

Amendments:

- 7.1 the Great Atlantic Blues and Beyond Festival *does not qualify* for funding rather than no longer qualified  
The line following the above noted sentence shall be omitted.

**MOVED BY Mr. O'Beirne, seconded by Ms. Buchanan, that the minutes of April 23, 2008, as amended, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

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

Additions:

- 8.1 Tourism and the Relevance to Reserve Revenue - Mr. Mike Gillett  
8.2 Application Deadlines - Mr. MacDonald

**MOVED BY Mr. MacDonald, seconded by Ms. Camus, that the agenda, as amended, be approved. 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 - None**

**6.2 Petitions - None**

**6.3 Delegations**

**6.3.1 Halifax International Buskers Festival - Ms. Gail Pierre-Jerome, Mr. Dave Stockall and Ms. Joanne MacKinnon**

C A Halifax International Busker Festival binder was before the Committee and will be considered an In Camera item.

**MOVED BY Ms. Camus, seconded by Mr. Smith, that the Committee move In Camera. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Committee members reviewed and received the confidential material.

**MOVED BY Mr. O'Beirne, seconded by Mr. MacDonald, that the Committee close the In Camera session. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Ms. Gail Pierre-Jerome, Mr. Dave Stockall and Ms. Joanne MacKinnon provided the presentation on the Halifax International Busker Festival. The following highlights were noted:

- C The new Board of Directors for the Buskers Festival will be moving forward and begin holding meetings as soon as possible;
- C There were currently fifty three (53) confirmed volunteers out of a required two hundred (200), however, these positions will not be difficult to fill;
- C This was a one time budget request to get the festival up and running for 2008 and it is an escalating sliding budget.

Councillor Johns entered the meeting at 12:44 p.m.

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

- C The festival was currently attempting to find additional sponsors, advertisers and vendors. Both Aliant and West Jet are already confirmed sponsors;
- C The Board will act as the festival manager;
- C The Board was currently in discussions with CTV and CBC to potentially televise performances;
- C The People's Bank is a staffing solution organization that provides to the entertainment world;
- C The festival will still be taking place on the waterfront;
- C The Board was also attempting to obtain federal funding via Rendevous Canada and Arts Presentation Canada;
- C The Board has revived an old society that has no debt.

The Chair thanked the presenters and they exited the meeting.

A discussion on the grant proposal ensued. Mr. Andrew Cox, Civic Events & Festivals, advised the Committee that the Buskers Festival had been inherited by the new municipality in 1996; noting that prior to that it had been funded by the City of Halifax and sometimes Dartmouth if events took place there. He stated that, in 1996, a total of fifty thousand (50,000) dollars was set aside for the festival with one half of the grant being allocated for municipal services and the other half being turned over to the organization. Mr. Cox noted that this grant was lost a couple of years later.

Mr. Mike Gillett, Coordinator, Civic Events & Festivals, stated that the festival had scored quite high and that the Committee had at least three hundred thousand (300,000) dollars left to allocate; also advising that several other events would be coming forward with requests soon.

Mr. MacDonald raised his concerns with company subbing for this and several other festivals and events as it raises questions when it comes to debt loads. The Chair advised that HRM would be looking into this issue in regards to who an applicant is and who the grants cheque goes to.

Mr. Rose declared a conflict of interest.

**MOVED BY Mr. Smith, seconded by Councillor Johns, that the Halifax International Buskers Festival be granted a total of fifty thousand (50,000) dollars.**

A discussion on the motion ensued. The following points were noted:

- C As several Committee members were concerned that this amount of funding would not adequately solve the festival's debt; staff advised that as a Committee of Council they had no legal grounds to advise how a grant would be spent;
- C The grant of fifty thousand (50,000) dollars for 2008 does not bind the Committee to allot the same amount for the next three (3) years based on the festival's Hallmark Status.

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**7. REPORTS - NONE**

**8. ADDED ITEMS**

### **8.1 Tourism and the Relevance to Reserve Revenue - Mr. Smith**

Mr. Smith advised that with gas prices increasing many people were wondering what effect it would have on the tourism industry. He stated that roughly seventy five (75) percent of hotel rooms in HRM were booked for corporate use with the remaining twenty five (25) percent being used, in order, for conventions, festivals and events and tourists who make up approximately three (3) percent. Mr. Smith noted that only 2.4 percent of the GDP was based on tourism. He also stated that the higher gas prices would impact rural tourism more so than within the urban areas of HRM. In closing, he noted that HRM's largest employers were the Department of National Defence and the financial services sector and not tourism as many people believed.

Mr. O'Beirne advised that although he did not disagree with Mr. Smith that he did not want that statement to give the impression that tourism did not matter in the area. He also noted that people were becoming accustomed to higher gas prices just as they had already done in places such as Europe.

### **8.2 Application Deadlines - Mr. MacDonald**

**MOVED BY Mr. MacDonald, seconded by Councillor Johns, that all applications coming to the Special Events Advisory Committee must be received during November, December and January in order to be granted funding and that the Committee may be free at any time to take further applications beyond the deadline, however, they would not have priority.**

The Chair advised that she had already requested a discussion with senior staff to look into a much improved process. She stated that she would also be consulting Ms. PJ Temple, Team Leader, Tax, Grants & Special Projects, and welcomed Mr. MacDonald to sit in on those meetings.

Mr. MacDonald advised that he would withdraw his motion as long as something was going to be done.

### **9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting was scheduled for June 18, 2008 at 12:00 p.m..

### **10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:02 p.m.

Shawnee Gregory  
Legislative Assistant

The following item was added as information:

1. SEAC Report as Approved by Regional Council - Civic Events Grants