

**HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
SOLID WASTE/RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF MEETING
APRIL 19, 2000 @ 2:00 P.M.
Council Chambers, 2750 Dutch Village Road**

Present: Councillor Reg Rankin, Chairman
Councillor Jack Mitchell
Councillor Sheila Fougere

Others: Councillor Russell Walker
Mark Bernard, Manager, Waste Resources
Jim Bauld, Operations Coordinator
Barbara I. Moar, Assistant Municipal Clerk

Regrets: Deputy Mayor John Cunningham
Councillor Gordon R. Snow

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The Chairman called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The following items were added to the Agenda:

- Councillor Fougere asked to have Information Item #4 brought forward to the Regular Agenda
- Staff asked to have Information Item #2 brought forward to the Regular Agenda
- Budget Report re By-law Enforcement

As indicated on the Agenda, Information Item #3 was circulated to the Committee

2. PRESENTATIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

2.1 John Kline re Outdoor Source Separators

Mr. Kline gave a presentation on *Outdoor Source Separation Stations with Advertising Proposal* which is an initiative to provide an enhanced program to the waste resource management goals in HRM.

Referring to written material, Mr. Kline suggested objectives, partnerships and responsibilities in the use of these recycling containers. He also reviewed two possible options for HRM to recover costs and derive a revenue stream.

In concluding his presentation, Mr. Kline stated that the company he represents utilizes local resources and expertise, which results in retaining more economies in the local, provincial and regional economy.

Councillor Fougere thanked Mr. Kline for his presentation and asked staff to look at the potential for using this product. Mr. Kline stated that these containers are currently being used in Wolfville located on Main and Front Streets. The containers were abutted to the sides of buildings in front of a variety of stores, placed in cement/or bolted on the sidewalks. In some cases, there is access to both sides of the containers. Mr. Kline stated that the containers can be put on rollers, metal bars, etc., and suggested that HRM could place them in parks and on the waterfront. The containers measure approximately 44 ½" to 53" high.

Councillor Mitchell suggested that the containers could be placed in schools and on beaches as well as in parks. Mr. Kline stated that corporate sponsorship could be considered under the financing revenue approach. The containers are made of 20 gauge steel, fire and rust resistant, at a cost ranging from \$365 - \$700, and can be used year

round. The issue of graffiti was discussed with concern expressed by Councillor Walker on the difficulties experienced in his District. The Chair suggested this could be addressed in the staff report.

It was agreed that Regional Operations should take the lead on this report because they have the responsibility for litter control, and also to analyse the potential for revenue sharing similar to the parking lots.

MOVED by Councillors Fougere and Mitchell that staff be asked to prepare a report to consider the use of Outdoor Source Separation Stations with Advertising Proposal throughout HRM. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Bauld reported that Toronto had these containers in place, and he will follow up and see what progress has been made.

3. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 24, 2000 MINUTES

MOVED by Councillors Mitchell and Fougere that the Minutes of February 24, 2000 be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. PUBLIC NOTICE - COMPOSTING OPEN HOUSES

A Notice of *Composting Open Houses* to be held on Saturday May 6, 2000 at New Era Farms and Miller Composting was included with the Agenda as Information Item #4.

Councillor Fougere stated that in other years HRM had offered free compost to HRM residents, and asked if there was an opportunity to make a similar offer at these open houses. Mr. Bauld reported that this was an initiative of Parks & Natural Services several years ago conducted at a Cowie Hill location. But, due to numerous complaints received from farm markets/ garden centres that sell compost, staff have been very sensitive about initiating a similar offer. Mr. Bauld pointed out that compost is sold through arrangements with HRM's partners, New Era Farms and Miller Composting, which is a totally different program than the compost processed by Parks & Natural Resources.

The Chair asked staff to prepare a form letter to Members of Council to clarify that Parks & Natural Services would not be offering free compost from its Cowie Hill location as was conducted previously. The Chair suggested that discussions be held with New Era Farms and Miller Composting on the possibility of offering compost for sale at their Open Houses.

5. BIODEGRADABLE PLASTIC BAGS

Mr. Bernard reported that operators are against the use of biodegradable plastic bags, and

contractually they are not obligated to do so.

Councillor Mitchell reported that following the Committee's February meeting, he had purchased several biodegradable plastic bags to test them in green carts. The Councillor stated that it took six weeks for them to fall apart.

Councillor Walker said he was still not happy with staff's recommendation that biodegradable bags not be considered for use in HRM's curbside residential organics program at this time. In response to a question from Councillor Walker, Mr. Bernard responded that the bags tested were the same bags presented at the SWRAC's February meeting.

Councillor Walker asked to have this issue deferred until the next Committee meeting. The Councillor pointed out that he is doing a pilot project in his District with a biodegradable company through Miller Composting and would like to bring back these results to the Committee. In response to questions from the Chair, Councillor Walker said he was doing this through the co-operation and consent of Miller Composting, but until today had not advised staff.

In response to further comments from Councillor Walker, Mr. Bernard stated that the reason the ICI sector is allowed to use the bags is because the material is coming from an isolated area, and they pay a \$5.00/tonne surcharge. Mr. Bernard pointed out that it is not a question of whether certain bags are biodegradable or not, there is also the question of whether they can be accepted through the mechanical and biological processes. Mr. Bernard stated that both composting companies have indicated to staff that they most definitely do not want to accept these bags from normal residential areas.

Councillor Walker responded that 82% of the people that replied to a survey in his District stated that they would not use the green carts during the summer months, unless they are picked up weekly. For the record, Councillor Fougere responded that she had a problem with Councillor Walker's comments, pointing out that it should be kept in mind that only 5% of the residents in District 15 responded to the survey. This means that 82% of the 5% that responded to the survey will not use the green carts during the summer months.

Mr. Bernard referred to the nuisance problems for green cart use pointing out that there is an Information Item attached to today's Agenda that addresses this issue. Mr. Bernard said this is a top priority for staff. Councillor Walker stated that he does not believe that rodents can get into the green carts, but many of his residents are not convinced. The Councillor asked staff to provide a paper or statement to support him on this problem. It was agreed that staff would provide Councillor Walker with information to be placed in a District 15 Newsletter. The Chair pointed out that a study had already been carried out on bi-weekly and weekly collections and the results were presented to Council. Council refused to accept the additional minimum cost of \$1.0M to have a weekly collection.

Before continuing with any further discussion, it was agreed that staff would give an overview of Information Item No. 2 that addresses the issue of reduced nuisance for green cart use.

6. ISW/RM SYSTEM: ENHANCED DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Using overheads, Mr. Ken Donnelly, Vice-President, LURA Consulting, gave a presentation on the organic program as detailed in the April 13th staff report, specifically as related to reduced nuisance for green cart use. Mr. Donnelly stated that the main issues have been related to odours, fruit flies, flies and maggots. Mr. Donnelly said other municipalities that have been running these programs longer than HRM have reported that these are not major issues. Last year was the first year for the green carts and it does require some time for people to learn the proper use of the green carts.

Mr. Donnelly stated that there are a number of preventive measures to eliminate these problems, and staff is dedicated to doing a better job of communicating these measures to the residents of HRM. This includes 8 weeks of TV advertising beginning on June 19, and 9 weeks of radio advertising beginning on July 3. A brochure is also being prepared to include tips on how to use the green carts. Staff will be providing three levels of support based on telephone calls, written material and, if necessary, visits to the home. Mr. Donnelly said Council's support is needed and staff will ensure that Council Members are provided with text versions of TV and radio ads, copies of printed material and quick reference cards. There would also be a continuance of on-going communication in schools and at events.

In concluding his presentation, Mr. Donnelly stated that staff will be delivering information to the people that need it, and reducing the nuisance complaints. Staff are confident that they can make a big dent in the number of complaints HRM receives.

The Chair thanked Mr. Donnelly for his presentation, and suggested that Council have a 15 minute presentation on these issues before the summer months, with focus on the most common questions. Councillor Fougere suggested, and the Committee, agreed that this presentation be made on June 20th.

7. BY-LAW ENFORCEMENT OF ILLEGAL DUMPING

The Chair referred to the Committee's recommendations to Council re illegal dumping, including the budget implications of \$75,000 for a part-time Coordinator and cleanup of identified sites, and the hiring of three By-Law Enforcement Officers at a cost of \$156,000/year. Council accepted the Committee's recommendations and approved a motion at its March 7th meeting. The Chair stressed the need to have a report from the CAO identifying when Council's resolution would be put in place.

MOVED by Councillors Fougere and Mitchell that staff be instructed to impress upon the Chief Administrative Officer that the SWRAC has asked that this issue be resolved by mid-May. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Staff agreed that they would follow through on this issue with Messrs. Meech and Smith.

8. DISCUSSION RE PROVINCIAL ENVIRONMENT ACT REVIEW

The Chair reported that the Province had invited stakeholders from across the Province, including HRM, to comment on a review of the Environment Act, and staff are preparing a submission to DOE on this request. Mr. Bernard stated that HRM's submission will focus on stewardship agreements towards an effective process.

Mr. Donnelly said stewardship is very important, and has to be addressed by the Province. He pointed out that municipalities are paying a much higher cost for waste management than previously because of the current strict regulations imposed by the Province. But, generally the manufacturers of products are not paying for the stewardship of their products.

Mr. Donnelly used the example of a piece of carpet that goes to the landfill, pointing out that the manufacturer does not have to pay anything for the cost of the disposal or recycling of the carpet. Manufacturers have sole control over the packaging of their products, and if there is no financial reason for them to choose their packaging one way or another, many do not care if the packaging is recyclable. Mr. Donnelly suggested that there has to be some financial factors when the manufacturers are trying to decide what kind of packaging to use.

Under the Act, Mr. Donnelly stated that the current process used for developing stewardship agreements allows the Resource Recovery Fund Board (RRFB) the mandate to develop **voluntary** stewardship agreements. The NSDOE has the authority to create **mandatory** stewardship agreements, but to date, the Department has only developed mandatory stewardship agreements for the deposit and tire deposit systems.

Mr. Donnelly reported that the proposed process would be:

- That the NSDOE take back the mandate of developing voluntary stewardship agreements instead of leaving it with the RRFB.
- That the NSDOE should make mandatory stewardship agreements, if the voluntary agreements fail.
- That there should be time limits placed on putting voluntary stewardship agreements in place.
- That back drop regulations must be put in place to create a level playing field.

Mr. Donnelly stated that it is being recommended that when the stewardship agreements are put in place, the money should go into the Resource Recovery Fund to be distributed to the municipalities. Mr. Donnelly stressed the importance of the money being protected from being absorbed in the Province's General Revenues, and to ensure that the money is used to support municipal programs of waste diversion and disposal.

The Chair strongly recommended that HRM ask for joint management of the funds from stewardship agreements. The Chair pointed out that the Province has taken \$500,000 out of the Resource Recovery Fund, raising the question as to whether this money was going to be put into General Revenue, and he suggested that this could happen again. The Chair asked that points be included for a stewardship agreement. Mr. Bauld said a letter was sent to the Minister on this issue but a reply had not yet been received.

MOVED by Councillors Fougere and Mitchell that the Committee endorse staff's submission to DOE re stewardship agreements, including a request for joint management of the funds.

For clarification, the Chair agreed that the intent of joint management would be with the UNSM, with HRM bringing it to the table.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Bernard introduced the Project Managers describing their responsibilities for the various programs. Mr. Bernard stated that the cost of all these programs, except for illegal dumping, will be totally paid for if HRM diverts an additional 3,500 tonnes away from the landfill.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting will be **May 24, 2000, @ 2:00 PM.**

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 PM.

Jim Bauld
Operations Coordinator