

HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL  
SPECIAL SESSION  
MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 29, 2000

PRESENT: Deputy Mayor John Cunningham  
Councillors Steve Streach  
Gordon R. Snow  
Keith Colwell  
Ron Cooper  
Harry McInroy  
Jack Greenough  
Condo Sarto  
Bruce Hetherington  
Clint Schofield  
Jerry S. Blumenthal  
Graham L. Downey  
Sue Uteck  
Sheila Fougere  
Russell Walker  
Bill Stone  
Graham Read  
Stephen D. Adams  
David E. Merrigan  
Robert P. Harvey  
Peter J. Kelly  
Reg Rankin  
Jack Mitchell

REGRETS: Mayor Walter R. Fitzgerald

STAFF: Mr. Ken Meech, Chief Administrative Officer  
Mr. Wayne Anstey, Municipal Solicitor  
Mr. George McLellan, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer  
Ms. Vi Carmichael, Municipal Clerk  
Ms. Julia Horncastle, Assistant Municipal Clerk

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**1. INVOCATION**

Deputy Mayor Cunningham called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with an invocation.

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

Additions

- 4.1 Report - Spring Weight Restrictions
- 4.2 Ratification of In Camera Item re: Sempra/Sable Gas

**MOVED by Councillors Blumenthal and Hetherington that the Order of Business, as amended, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**3. TABLING OF THE 2000/2001 CAPITAL AND OPERATING BUDGETS**

- A copy of the proposed 2000/2001 Capital and Operating Budgets was circulated to Council.

**MOVED by Councillors Hetherington and Greenough that the 2000/2001 Capital and Operating Budget be tabled. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Ken Meech, Chief Administrative Officer, opened the presentation stating a team effort over the last two years, by both staff and Council, with respect to choices that had to be made, has enabled the Halifax Regional Municipality to reach the point it is at today. He noted this was the first year in which the requirement for a business plan had been a part of the process and a Peer Review Committee, comprising of Directors and General Managers, had been established to review all budgets.

Mr. Meech thanked all those who had been involved in this process specifically, Mr. George McLellan, Ms. Dale MacLennan, Ms. Betty MacDonald, Mr. Bruce Fisher and Mr. Brian Smith.

Ms. Betty MacDonald, Financial Analysis Services, presented the Operating, Capital and Reserves Budget outlining the following issues:

- Goals
- Environment
- Taking Care of Business Implementation
- Integration: Business Planning and Budget

Ms. Dale MacLennan, Director of Finance, presented the following budget highlights:

- Revenues
- Base Operating Expenditures
- Business Strategy Measures
  - Fiscal Accountability
  - Commitments
- Proposed Net Expenditures
  - Operating
  - Fiscal

Ms. MacLennan advised the proposed Operating Budget is \$462,609,809 gross expenditures, \$307,836,443 property tax revenues, and \$154,773,446 non-taxable revenues.

Ms. MacLennan advised the proposed Capital Budget is \$66.8 million, up from \$44 million in the previous year. She advised the net debt projection is \$320.5 million which is a reduction of \$10 million from the previous year.

Ms. MacLennan outlined gross expenditures under the proposed Capital Budget as well as advising of an increase of approximately \$9 million in the proposed Reserve Budget for an amount of \$73.6 million by the end of this fiscal year.

Mr. George McLellan, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, advised that there is a proposed decrease in both the residential and commercial tax rates of 1.2% for each rate.

In response to Councillor Walker, Mr. McLellan advised staff is suggesting the budget be presented by department with staff available to answer questions.

Councillor Mitchell requested a breakdown of the parks and playground projects that are going to be undertaken under the Capital Budget.

Councillor Kelly requested staff provide detailed backup documentation as well as the reasoning and rationale for the cap on the reserve funds.

Councillor Cooper requested the tax structure map be provided to Council.

In response to Councillor Downey, Mr. Meech advised there are no adjustments or provisions for layoffs in the proposed budget.

#### **4. ADDED ITEMS**

##### **4.1 REPORT - SPRING WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS**

- A report prepared for Mr. Ken Meech, Chief Administrative Officer, dated February 28, 2000, on the above noted, was before Council.

**MOVED by Councillors Sarto and Blumenthal that Halifax Regional Council:**

- (1) **approve temporary maximum vehicle weight restrictions (as per Schedule A) applicable to all HRM streets not listed in Schedule B. These restrictions would be in effect beginning March 2, 2000 with the tentative removal date being April 27, 2000.**
- (2) **authorize the Engineer to change the implementation dates, weight restrictions and list of exempted roads as conditions warrant.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**4.2 RATIFICATION OF IN CAMERA ITEM RE: SEMPRA/SABLE GAS**

- The motion as passed by Council during an earlier In Camera session was before Council.

**MOVED by Councillors Adams and Hetherington that Council agrees to a 5.47% gross revenue rate of taxation, over 20 years. If 20 years is not acceptable, the gross revenue rate of taxation will be 7% over 10 years. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Councillors Schofield and Blumenthal requested that it be noted, for the record, that they voted against the motion.

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOVED by Councillors Blumenthal and Hetherington that the meeting be adjourned at 7:10 p.m. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Vi Carmichael  
Municipal Clerk