

# HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

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## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES OCTOBER 8, 2002

### PRESENT:

Mayor Peter J. Kelly  
Deputy Mayor Robert P. Harvey  
Councillors: Steve Streach (1:40 p.m.)  
Gary Hines (1:40 p.m.)  
Keith Colwell  
Ron Cooper  
Harry McInroy (1:50 p.m.)  
Brian Warshick  
Condo Sarto  
Bruce Hetherington  
Jim Smith  
John Cunningham  
Jerry Blumenthal  
Dawn Sloane  
Sue Uteck  
Sheila Fougere  
Russell Walker  
Diana Whalen  
Linda Mosher  
Stephen Adams  
Brad Johns  
Len Goucher  
Reg Rankin  
Gary Meade

### STAFF:

Mr. George McLellan, Chief Administrative Officer  
Mr. Wayne Anstey, Municipal Solicitor  
Ms. Vi Carmichael, Municipal Clerk  
Ms. Julia Horncastle, Assistant Municipal Clerk

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The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - OCTOBER 1, 2002**

**MOVED** by Councillor Blumenthal, seconded by Councillor Cunningham that the minutes of October 1, 2002, be approved. **MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

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

**MOVED** by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Fougere, that the Order of Business be approved. **MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**3. DISTRICT BOUNDARIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

- A copy of the report from the District Boundaries Advisory Committee, dated September 4, 2002, was before Council.
- A copy of the Minority Position Paper, dated September 24, 2002, was before Council.
- Correspondence from Mr. David Hendsbee, MLA, dated October 8, 2002, was circulated to Council.

**MOVED** by Deputy Mayor Harvey, seconded by Councillor Whalen that:

- 1. A regional council comprised of 20 polling districts with an average population of 18,000 citizens per district be established for the next civic election.**
- 2. The significant imbalance in voter parity per district be rectified by a redefinition of district boundaries.**
- 3. The role of Councillor be a full time commitment with appropriate compensation.**
- 4. Administrative support and compensation for councillors will need to be reviewed if councillors are to be able to operate effectively with this increased average number of citizens per district.**
- 5. Council approve these recommendations so the work of the committee can move forward in a timely manner to complete the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the mandate which is to work “on the delineation of the appropriate district boundaries in**

anticipation of a recommendation to Regional Council”.

6. **The Terms of Reference be amended to provide that the second stage of the review process (ie. the delineation of the appropriate district boundaries) be carried out by the District Boundary Advisory Committee with the assistance of staff rather than by staff assisted by the Committee as presently stated;**
7. **The recommendation of District Boundary Advisory Committee respecting the delineation of the appropriate district boundaries be forwarded to Regional Council on or before February 4, 2003.**

Discussion was held with the following comments, questions and suggestions being put forward:

- Most residents who went to the public meetings felt there should not be a change;
- If there is going to be a change, it should be big enough that additional changes do not have to be made in the next few years;
- Certain areas of the Municipality are growing and the population numbers will change over the next few years which may affect boundaries;
- A question was raised as to the costs of making changes;
- It was suggested the recommendation going forward to the URB be for 23 with a suggestion that a different configuration be examined in two to three years;
- The turnout at the meetings is an indication that the public is not dissatisfied with the way things are at the present time even though there is a perception that the present Council may be too large;
- The recommendation of 20 should go forward to the URB as is;
- Concern was expressed with using the  $\pm 25\%$ ;
- Concern was expressed that a reduction to 20 districts would adversely affect Community Councils;
- It was noted the population base in Halifax increases during the school year as a result of enrollment at the universities;
- There is no explanation or justification put forward for the recommended reduction to 20 districts;
- Council should not get involved in the detail of the decision as it did not limit the criteria in determining the number of districts;
- Council should be looking at whether the number of districts recommended is a reflection of a fair and reasonable representation to the public;
- There is a great variation in terms of population from district to district which must be reexamined;
- The boundaries impact communities of interest and it is important to people where the lines are drawn and where they feel their community of interest is;
- It was suggested that when the boundary lines are examined the committee not draw the lines through subdivisions, rather there be clear cut boundaries;

- It was suggested compensation and staffing be considered in phase two of the report;
- It was noted that there is potential for growth in some areas such that the numbers could change dramatically over the next few years;
- It was noted there are a number of Councillors with more than 20,000 people per district and a suggestion was made that perhaps an internal review be undertaken to look at how support is provided to the Councillors whose district population is 30-40% above the average;
- Before the next review it has to be determined what it is the people of this municipality expect from the municipal government and the people that represent them;
- Not only the growth numbers be looked at but also the growth pattern;
- A smaller number of Councillors will not provide dollar savings nor any increase in efficiency.

Following discussion, Council agreed to break the recommendations down into individual motions.

**MOVED by Deputy Mayor Harvey, seconded by Councillor Whalen that a regional council comprised of 20 polling districts with an average population of 18,000 citizens per district be established for the next civic election. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**MOVED by Deputy Mayor Harvey, seconded by Councillor Whalen, that the significant imbalance in voter parity per district be rectified by a redefinition of district boundaries. Further, Communities of Interest be kept together when considering boundaries. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**MOVED by Deputy Mayor Harvey, seconded by Councillor Whalen, that the role of Councillor be a full time commitment with appropriate compensation. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**MOVED by Deputy Mayor Harvey, seconded by Councillor Whalen, that administrative support and compensation for councillors will need to be reviewed if councillors are to be able to operate effectively with this increased average number of citizens per district. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**MOVED by Deputy Mayor Harvey, seconded by Councillor Whalen that:**

1. **Council approve these recommendations so the work of the committee can move forward in a timely manner to complete the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the mandate which is to work “on the delineation of the appropriate district boundaries in anticipation of a recommendation to Regional Council”.**

2. **The Terms of Reference be amended to provide that the second stage of the review process (ie. the delineation of the appropriate district boundaries) be carried out by the District Boundary Advisory Committee with the assistance of staff rather than by staff assisted by the Committee as presently stated;**
3. **The recommendation of District Boundary Advisory Committee respecting the delineation of the appropriate district boundaries be forwarded to Regional Council on or before February 4, 2003.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mayor Kelly, on behalf of Council, thanked Mr. Hyland and members of the Committee for all the hard work and dedicated effort they have put towards ensuring the residents of HRM will have the best possible representation.

4. **MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ACT DISCUSSION PAPER**

Due to time constraints, Council agreed to defer this item to October 15, 2002.

5. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Vi Carmichael  
Municipal Clerk