



**HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES  
February 12, 2014**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Mike Savage  
Deputy Mayor Darren Fisher  
Councillors: David Hendsbee  
Lorelei Nicoll  
Gloria McCluskey  
Waye Mason  
Jennifer Watts  
Russell Walker  
Stephen Adams  
Reg Rankin  
Matt Whitman  
Brad Johns  
Steve Craig  
Tim Outhit

**REGRETS:** Councillors: Barry Dalrymple  
Bill Karsten  
Linda Mosher

**STAFF:** Mr. Richard Butts, Chief Administrative Officer  
Mr. John Traves, Municipal Solicitor  
Ms. Jennifer Weagle, Legislative Assistant  
Mr. Liam MacSween, Legislative Assistant

*The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.*

*A video recording of this meeting is available:  
[http://archive.isiglobal.ca/vod/halifax/archive\\_2014-02-12\\_live.mp4.html](http://archive.isiglobal.ca/vod/halifax/archive_2014-02-12_live.mp4.html)*

*The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to Council are available  
online: <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/140212cow-Agenda.html>*

*The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. and adjourned at 11:43 a.m.*

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Deputy Mayor Fisher called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – None**

**3. Proposed 2014/2015 Planning & Infrastructure Budget and Business Plan**

The following documentation was before Committee of the Whole

- A staff report dated January 8, 2014
- Correspondence from Ben Buckwald, Bicycle Nova Scotia, dated January 13, 2014.

Deputy Mayor Fisher invited Ms. Jane Fraser, Director of Planning and Infrastructure to present on the budget.

Ms. Jane Fraser began her presentation by noting a change to the Planning and Infrastructure Mission Statement to “plan, build, and grow”. She commented that the mission statement is a good theme for viewing and understanding the budget.

Ms. Fraser provided an overview of the various divisions of the Business Unit and noted that it is comprised of 82 full time employees.

Ms. Fraser provided background information with respect to the 2013-14 progress update on the following projects:

- Complete Regional Plan 5 Year Review
- Regional Centre Plan
- Asset Management
- Active Transportation
- Streetscaping Projects
- Canal Greenway Park
- Burnside Park Phase 12-4, 12-5, and 12-6
- Solar City Project
- LED Streetlights

With respect to Asset Management, Ms. Fraser commented that staff is currently working on a Data Asset Registry database which is 50% complete. She noted that the asset registry will be used to ensure full life cycle management of all of HRM’s assets.

Ms. Fraser stated that the Canal Greenway Park tender has been awarded and that work on the Shubie Canal portion of the project will begin in 2014-15. She commented that the expansion of the project to the Dartmouth Waterfront will be done in conjunction with work that will be undertaken by the Halifax Water Commission and Transportation and Public Works intersection improvements.

Councillor Hendsbee entered the meeting at 10:08 a.m.

Ms. Fraser gave an overview of the 2014-15 Budget highlights and commented that there is a great deal of emphasis on “State of Good Repair” with respect to the capital budget. Ms. Fraser commented about increased expenditures due to the absorption of compensation and benefit increases, inflation and growth. She noted efficiency savings in the reduction of office expenses, the consolidation of office locations, and the elimination of a redundant position which amounted to \$347,700.

Ms. Fraser provided an overview of the operating budget and noted that the total budget for 2013-14 is \$6.2 million. She commented that the total budget for 2014-15 is targeted at \$8.48 million due to the transfer of revenue from real-estate. With respect to the Service Area Budget, Ms. Fraser commented that staff had consolidated a number of budget items which fall under administration, such as consulting fees.

Ms. Fraser provided information with respect to 2014-2015 Priority Alignment for Economic Development. She noted \$125,000 to work on the Heritage cultural plan and inventory analysis which works closely with the Open Space Plan.

Ms. Fraser provided updates on the Road Network Priorities Plan, green belting initiatives and the Open Space Plan. With respect to the Centre Plan, Ms. Fraser noted that staff is currently undertaking a GIS analysis of low density residential areas which will be coming forward to Council in March with a number of planning amendments. Ms. Fraser commented on ongoing work in the South Barrington Street and Smitville Heritage Conservation Districts.

Ms. Fraser commented that staff is currently assessing the Ragged Lake and Aerotech industrial parks as potential areas for industrial development. She noted progress on the LED street lighting project and provided commentary on funding for the Herring Cove Streetscaping project.

Ms. Fraser noted that the Solar City project is 50% complete and that there has been a 400-500% increase in community uptake for the program. She commented that Solar City is fully funded by participants and the Municipal Green fund. She reiterated that there is no impact on taxpayers with regard to Solar City.

Ms. Fraser commented that Planning and Infrastructure is proposing a \$260,000 Budget for Accessible needs in HRM. She noted that the funds will be used to get an understanding on how accessibility improvements can be addressed in HRM buildings. She further commented that this work will be separate from work being undertaken by Transportation and Public Works and Metro Transit in assessing accessibility for their assets.

Ms. Fraser provided commentary on upcoming initiatives related to Active transportation. She commented on \$1.48 million to be spent on infrastructure improvements such as bike lanes and trail improvements. She stated that staff in Planning and Infrastructure will be re-examining the 2008 downtown parking strategy through a feasibility study. She remarked that staff will be

holding public consultation sessions in relation to this initiative and will assessing the impact that Active Transportation infrastructure has on parking in the downtown core.

Ms. Fraser concluded her presentation by stating that she would be happy to answer questions from Committee of the Whole.

Deputy Mayor Fisher thanked Ms. Fraser for her presentation and asked for questions from the Committee.

**MOVED by Councillor Watts and seconded by Councillor Walker that the Committee of the Whole direct staff to prepare the 2014/15 Planning & Infrastructure Budget and Business Plan as proposed in the accompanying presentation, incorporating additional direction provided by motion of Committee of the Whole for inclusion in the proposed HRM 2014/2015 Budget and Business Plan documents.**

Councillor Watts commented that she is glad to see progress on some of the down town initiatives. She noted that the Accessibility Needs Budget has traditionally been in the \$200,000 range and that the increase to \$260,000 is encouraging. She noted that \$100,000 of the funding in that budget will be utilized to commission a study and that the remaining \$160,000 will be used for accessibility initiatives. She noted that an increase to the Accessibility Needs budget is warranted and that it would ensure that staff's ongoing work in the area of Accessibility is able to continue.

**MOVED by Councillor Watts and seconded by Councillor Mason that the Committee of the Whole request a staff report on an increase to the Assessment of Accessibility Needs budget to \$400,000 for budget year 2014/2015.**

Councillor Mason expressed his support for Councillor Watts' motion. He commented that it is important to ensure that there is an adequate amount of money behind the Mayor's Healthy Communities initiative.

Councillor Craig stated that he is not sure if he can support the motion without more information. He noted that accessibility is very important but so is fiscal responsibility. He requested further information around the budgeted number.

Ms. Fraser stated that the budgeted amount in the Accessibility Needs budget is primarily for small infrastructure improvements like push button doors and washroom improvements in HRM owned facilities. She noted that that for scheduled renovations and new projects, accessibility concerns are included in the planning. The budgeted funds in this instance are used for "one off" projects that are easy to do and are smaller in nature. With respect to the study, Ms. Fraser noted that the purpose of which will be to provide an assessment to see what needs to be done with respect to addressing accessibility concerns in HRM.

Councillor McCluskey asked what would be done with the extra money in the Accessibility Needs Budget if it were approved.

Ms. Fraser noted that facility development staff would use the funds to assist in upgrading facilities owned or programed by HRM to meet accessibility standards. She noted that any work to be completed would be based on a need and that a proper assessment would take place.

Mayor Savage expressed his support for Councillor Watts' motion and noted that he conquers with Councillor Craig in terms of needing to be fiscally responsible. He noted that there is a great deal of work to be done in the area of accessibility and that a staff report is warranted.

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

With respect to the main motion, Councillor Walker inquired if the developer will be responsible for funding the trail head at the entrance to the Bayers Lake Industrial park.

Ms. Fraser commented that she would provide the Councillor with that information after reviewing the file.

Councillor Walker asked if there is funding in the budget to acquire the Highway 102 Corridor lands for the Bayer's Lake expansion.

Ms. Fraser noted a \$100,000 allocation that is being proposed to fund a land analysis to determine a fair market price for those lands. She noted that a report outlining this will be coming to Council to seek direction in that regard. Ms. Fraser commented that there is no money on the capital side for the acquisition of the Highway 102 Corridor lands in 2014/2015.

Councillor Nicoll entered the meeting at 10:44 a.m.

Councillor Mason requested further information on the Greenbelting and Open Space plan.

Ms. Fraser noted that staff is developing the framework for the Greenbelting/Open space plan and that staff will be adding more detail to those plans as they work through the list.

Councillor Mason requested further information with respect to the Cogswell Plan.

Ms. Fraser noted that it will be a capital item in 2014-2015 budget year. She stated that staff is looking for funding for consulting services and for studies in the event that Council wishes to move forward with the Cogswell plan.

Councillor Mason requested further information with respect to Parking Strategy Review. He requested further commentary on the pay by plate initiative.

Ms. Fraser, with respect to the Parking Strategy Review, stated that it became apparent that a number of the questions regarding feasibility of the project arose that could not be answered in isolation. She commented that the project is very complex and that there is not one Business Unit that is not touched by parking in some way. She noted that it was determined by staff that a better solution going forward would be to look at all aspects of the parking plan at once to help

determine a governance solution for the project. She remarked that work is ongoing in this regard.

With respect to the pay by plate initiative, Ms. Fraser noted that staff had conducted a great deal of research in the technology component of that project as well as the project plan. She stated that as the project progressed it became apparent that consultations with other Business Units and stakeholders would have to take place before work could continue. As such, she remarked that staff will be continuing work on the initiative as part of the new Parking Strategy Review.

Councillor McCluskey requested further information of the value of land sold in the Burnside Industrial Park. Ms. Fraser noted that she did not have the specific values available and would provide that information to the Councillor. She commented that with respect to phase 12-4, 25% of the land is sold and the model that is used is that of cost recovery.

Councillor McCluskey further inquired about other phases of land sale that may take place in the future. Ms. Fraser commented that Phase 13 will be closely linked with work that the province is doing on the Bypass.

Councillor McCluskey inquired when the Old Dartmouth City Hall will be up for sale. Ms. Fraser replied by stating that staff is working on the next round of surplus properties under Administrative Order 50. She commented that the old Dartmouth City Hall will be part of that package and should be before Council in the near future.

Deputy Mayor Fisher inquired as to the timeline of the night time work being undertaken in the Burnside Industrial Park. Ms. Fraser responded by noting that the work is substantially complete and will follow up with individual Councillors on the matter.

Councillor Craig noted that he is very pleased with the presentation and inquired about the plan of action for flood plain areas and the Stormwater Infrastructure Program.

Ms. Fraser stated that there have been some policy statements put in the RP+5 regarding flood plains. She provided commentary on ongoing conversations with the province regarding funding opportunities for flood plain areas. She noted mapping work of known flood plain areas to assist with development. With respect to Stormwater Management, she noted that staff is currently working on policy initiatives for a Stormwater By-Law and that a report will be before the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee in the spring addressing this matter. She further stated that staff hopes to have a policy in place by the end of the fiscal year.

Councillor Watts inquired if there is a vacancy for a staff person to work on trails in HRM.

Ms. Fraser stated that there are four positions in the Trails Service Area and that currently there are three staff persons filled in that division. She noted some challenges with respect to construction of trails and issues related to high liability and that a position for project manager with an engineering background is intended to be filled to help oversee trails. She commented that it is not her intention for the project manager to be solely dedicated to trails but it would be a significant component of the job.

Councillor Watts expressed concern brought forward to her by Trails Groups that there are not enough staff resources to manage and maintain trails in HRM.

Ms. Fraser stated that having the trails staff working collaboratively with parkland planners and landscapers will help significantly in the effective management of trail systems in HRM. She commented that if there is a challenge with a Trails Groups, staff would certainly look at ensuring that a collaborative approach is utilized to leverage all resources that are available to them.

Councillor Hendsbee requested that he would like to see more detail on the LED streetlight program, more information on the facilities which are targeted for improvements in the State of Good Repair Capital plan, and an update on the Road Network Priorities Plan relating to the acquisition of properties.

Ms. Fraser, speaking on the LED Street Lights program noted that staff is working with a consulting firm to look at the best method of conversion. She noted that staff should have the consultants recommendations back around March or April and are looking to have a tender on the street by the fall of 2014 to begin work on the conversion to LED lighting. She commented that staff is looking at converting approximately 8000 street lights to LED per year over the five year plan.

With respect to the \$20 Million State of Good Repair Capital plan, Ms. Fraser noted that it will be coming forward in greater detail during the Capital Budget on February 26, 2014. She noted that the Road Network Functional plan came out of a motion from Committee of the Whole during the Regional Plan review, and that public consultation sessions will take place with the purpose of determining capacity and growth requirements to determine a cohesive Road Network Plan.

Councillor Nicoll expressed her support of further use of the Geographic Information Systems to support analysis and stated that the data that is used by HRM is very good. She remarked that she is glad to hear about the project manager position for work on trails and inquired about the Multi District Facility project.

Ms. Fraser noted that Community and Recreation Services will be bringing Multi District Facility project forward and that Planning and Infrastructure staff is working with Community and Recreation Services as our client and investing in HRM assets.

Mr. Brad Anguish, Director of Community and Recreation Services noted that every year there is an allocation toward Multi District Facilities. He noted that information with respect to the program which will go before Council on February 26, 2014.

Councillor Watts inquired if the budgeted amount for Active Transportation projects represents an increase from that of previous years. Ms. Fraser replied by stating that \$1 million out of the \$1.5 million Active Transportation fund has been carried over from the previous year.

Asking a follow up question, Councillor Watts inquired if there is enough staff to effectively implement upcoming Active Transportation projects. Ms. Fraser commented that the underlying theme with respect to Active Transportation is that of connectivity. With respect to staffing levels, she commented that staff is actively working with Business Improvement Districts and Community Groups to ensure that the necessary work is being completed.

Councillor Mason requested further information with respect to the downtown parking strategy.

Ms. Fraser stated that the review will look at the existing inventory of parking spaces available in the Downtown. She commented that there is no issue with respect to the amount of spaces but rather in finding the spaces that are available. She asserted that a re-examination of the parking space inventory will be an integral part of the strategy.

Councillor Hendsbee inquired if staff has explored partnership opportunities with the Province with respect to funding for Active Transportation. Ms. Fraser commented that those discussions will be a part of the Capital Budget Presentation which will be before Committee of the Whole on February 26.

Councillor Adams, on behalf of Councillor Mosher requested if there was funding available in the budget to complete work on the North West Arm Seawall. Ms. Fraser replied in the affirmative and commented that the work for that project will be funded under the state of good repair in the budget.

Councillor Watts asked if there was an approximate timeline available for the parking strategy in terms of public consultation and implementation.

Ms. Fraser commented that staff is currently working on providing a time line for the project. She noted a great deal of work and coordination that would need to be completed between Planning and Infrastructure and Finance and Information Communication Technology. She commented that she could not give specific dates at this time but she will communicate the information to Council as soon as it is available.

Councillor Watts noted a decrease of \$200,000 in funding in the line item for the Community Energy Plan.

Ms. Fraser noted a change in the funding formula for the Community Energy Plan and commented that there was no actual cut to the program. She stated that instead of funding the program entirely through the budget, a portion of the program will be funded through reserves, and the portion of the project related to consulting fees will be funded out of the administrative budget. She reiterated that the core funding for the project will remain unchanged.

Councillor McCluskey inquired if the portion of the trail leading to the Dartmouth Waterfront close the Maple Hurst apartments will be completed in the near future. Ms. Fraser commented that there is funding available for the project in the Active Transportation Plan and that completion of the work on the trail is a priority.



Councillor McCluskey requested further information with respect to the Development of Dartmouth Cove.

Ms. Fraser commented that work in relation to this matter is being conducted by Development Approvals staff and that an update will be before the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee in March.

Councillor Hendsbee requested an update on work being undertaken by the Province relating to the Burnside Expressway Connector project to Sackville. He further inquired if HRM's funding commitment to install an Active Transportation Corridor as part of the Burnside Connector project will be sufficient.

Ms. Fraser commented that the Province has requested that Phase 13 of the expansion of the Burnside Industrial Park lands be delayed while redesign work is being conducted on the Burnside Expressway project. She commented that it is too soon to determine if there will be a request for an increase to \$1 million funding commitment for the Active Transportation Corridor as a result of the redesign work. She noted that that information will be communicated to Council by way of a staff report once it has been determined.

Councillor Adams requested further information regarding time lines for development applications.

Mr. Brad Anguish, Director of Community and Recreation Services, noted that there are service standards for each type of development agreement. He commented that there is a standard of a 18 month turn around for planned amendments and development agreements.

In response to a follow up question from Councillor Adams, Mr. Anguish noted that Development Approval staff is currently re-assessing the resource requirements to bring Development Agreements to completion in a more efficient manner. He further commented that Members of Council should contact him if they are experiencing delays with respect to development cases in their districts.

Further discussion ensued.

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Deputy Mayor Fisher thanked Ms. Fraser for her presentation and for answering questions from the Committee.

**4. Public Comments**

Deputy Mayor Fisher called for members of the public to come forward to speak on the budget.

Ms. Janet Barlow, Active Transportation Coordinator with the Ecology Action Centre, stated that she is here to speak to the need for better support of Active Transportation initiatives in HRM as part of the Planning and Infrastructure budget.

Ms. Barlow commented that residents are showing that walking and cycling is a priority particularly when it comes to safety. She stated that the Crosswalk Safety Advisory Committee, of which she is a member, has been working very hard and that Council should fully implement the recommendations outlined in the Crosswalk Safety Work Plan, particularly those dealing with infrastructure improvements. She noted the upcoming consultation sessions regarding the Mayor's Conversation on Healthy and Livable Community and commented that she is looking forward to taking part in those discussions.

Ms. Barlow stated that it is the goal of the Active Transportation Plan to double walking and cycling in HRM over the coming years. To do so, she stated that she would like to see the Active Transportation budget increased to reflect the work that needs to be completed in achieving this goal. She commented that she would like to see funds allocated to the planning and design of bridge bike ramps on the McDonald Bridge as part of the re-decking project. She remarked that a cost sharing agreement could be pursued with the Halifax Harbour Bridges and the Province of Nova Scotia.

Ms. Barlow stated that she would like to see an increase in staff resources for Active Transportation, particularly with respect to trails but also to increase the staff compliment to help realize the goals of the Active Transportation Plan. She concluded that she would like to see the implementation of a fund for Active Transportation programs which could be accessed by community groups.

Deputy Mayor Fisher thanked Ms. Barlow for her comments and called for additional members of the public to come forward with comments on the budget. There were no further speakers.

## **5. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:44 a.m.

Cathy J. Mellett  
Municipal Clerk