

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES
November 4, 2003

PRESENT: Mayor Peter J. Kelly
Deputy Mayor Harry McInroy
Councillors: Steve Streach
Ron Cooper
Brian Warshick (2:10 pm)
Jim Smith
Jerry Blumenthal
Dawn Sloane (2:30 pm)
Sue Uteck (3:25 pm)
Sheila Fougere
Russell Walker
Linda Mosher (2:10 p.m.)
Stephen Adams
Brad Johns
Robert Harvey
Len Goucher
Reg Rankin (2:45 pm)
Gary Meade

ABSENT
WITH REGRETS: Councillors: Condo Sarto
Bruce Hetherington
John Cunningham

STAFF: Mr. Dan English, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Mr. Wayne Anstey, Municipal Solicitor
Ms. Sherrill Murphy, Legislative Assistant
Ms. Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	CALL TO ORDER	3
2.	APPROVAL OF MINUTES - September 23, 2003 and October 7, 2003	3
3.	APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS	3
4.	RECREATION FACILITIES MASTER PLAN	3
5.	SIGN BY-LAW	5
6.	ADJOURNMENT	6

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - September 23, 2003 and October 7, 2003

MOVED BY Councillor Blumenthal, seconded by Councillor Goucher that the minutes of September 23, 2003 and October 7, 2003 be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

MOVED by Councillor Blumenthal, seconded by Councillor Harvey, that the Order of Business be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. RECREATION FACILITIES MASTER PLAN

- An Information Report dated October 29, 2003 was before the Committee.

Mr. Bob Nauss, Regional Co-ordinator, Recreation, Tourism and Culture and Mr. Peter Bigelow, Manager, Real Property and Asset Management, presented the PowerPoint, presentation and staff report.

The following comments resulted from the ensuing discussion:

- Reference to St. Margaret's Bay Arena should be St. Margaret's Arena - no "Bay".
- Reference to West Chebucto should be Prospect Road.
- Was the 1999 Recreation Committee study referenced for the current study as the 1999 study also included swimming pools?

Mr. Bigelow responded that he has seen the study and it will be noted.

- In June 2001 a petition was presented regarding equity policy for ice time for women and children's Ringette. Will this issue be part of the current study? Suggest that the petitioners be informed of the public meeting.

Mr. Nauss responded that due to the petition, any hours that become available are set aside for use by women and children.

- To host multi-sport events, would HRM not require a multi-sport facility?

Mr. Bigelow responded that HRM's current facilities are not up to standards for single sporting events. He added that HRM is reviewing current facilities and what could be augmented to handle single or multi-sporting events. Mr. Bigelow advised that a Venue Operations Consultant, explained that facilities in other communities are not special facilities but local community facilities augmented to host the events. Mr. Bigelow added that HRM is very close to meeting the requirements.

- Concern with no meetings or insufficient meetings scheduled for the following areas:

Lake Echo/Preston/Cole Harbour/Eastern Passage/Peninsula Halifax and request that they be considered.

- How do staff plan to liaise with Private and Public groups such as the Rocky Lake Recreation Association/Nova Scotia Soccer Association?

Mr. Mike Labrecque, Director responded that the intent of this study has to do with capacity of delivery needs.

- Concern that a dangerous precedent could be set in regards to a Community or Community Group obtaining a recreation facility by raising money to contribute to the project. The studies done by these groups should also be considered as a contribution as there is a cost involved for the studies.

Mr. Mike Labrecque responded that there are some delivery deficiencies that have to be addressed. He further advised that HRM encourages fundraising by the community/groups themselves otherwise more funds would be required for HRM's capital budget.

- Meeting schedule is very close to Christmas season and the report is due in March 2004 - near the end of budget. Concern that another year will be missed as the Province cannot be contacted (for funding support) as it will be too late.

Mr. Mike Labrecque responded that this is not a project that will lead to fund infrastructure change. He further added that the study is on schedule.

- Consideration should be given toward a new events centre as HRM has had to turn away larger conventions due to our limitations.
- We have to take care of the facilities we have but new facilities are also needed in the downtown area.
- If a facility requires reconditioning/expansion or construction of a facility, will there be a requirement for a needs assessment or will this study cover that?

Mr. Bigelow responded that a needs assessment would progress faster due to this study as much of the work will have been done.

- When future growth is considered, think about the Peninsula area as many who have moved out of the Peninsula are moving back. Land is currently being purchased on the Peninsula for residential development.
- Suggest that HRM contact DND (Department of National Defence) regarding their property at Windsor Park as it is not utilized enough by the public. Also, regarding retired facilities - there was a facility built by the North End Community and handed over to the city for \$1 - the North End has an eye on it.

Mr. Bigelow responded that HRM has met with DND.

- note - on the Schedule for Public Meetings - the December 8 meeting scheduled for the Madeline Simon Middle School - this school is not in Tiimberlea as indicated.

Mr. Bigelow responded that the meeting is at Ridgeville Middle School in Beechville.

- Recently sport facilities have been able to balance their books but due to the effects of Hurricane Juan, there may be deficits to be dealt with.

Mr. Mike Labrecque responded that the financial position of a facility is a management issue. Further, that maintenance is an operating issue and is part of the operating budget therefore not part of the current study. He added that the impact for this fiscal year is on the radar.

- Consideration of future development with province to make the QEH (Queen

Elizabeth High School) area a multi-purpose recreational area in relation to the QEII Health Sciences Centre - perhaps a rehabilitation centre with public facility access as well.

- Would like to see outdoor skating rinks in Peninsula area. Mr. Bigelow responded that outdoor rinks are not within the scope of this Master Plan.

Mayor Kelly thanked staff for their presentation.

5. SIGN BY-LAW

Mr. Mitch Dickey presented a PowerPoint presentation. A copy of the slide presentation is available in the Municipal Clerk's Office.

The following comments were raised by the Committee during the ensuing discussion:

- correction on slide entitled "Regional Sign By-Law: Fees" - under second bullet the Administrative Order should be number 15 not 1 as shown.
- Question on why Election Signs were not dealt with under this proposed by-law as they are a safety concern when placed on medians or too close to intersections as they block the drivers view.

Mr. Paul Dunphy advised that a separate draft by-law is being prepared regarding Election Signs.

- Regarding retention of community specific signs - Capital District and Downtown i.e: Spring Garden Road area, does not want neon signs, is it possible to meet with this group.

Mr. Dickey commented that there have been requests from other areas and this will be addressed.

- Enforcement of this by-law will be necessary if it is to succeed.
- What consideration is given in regards to process and fees for Charitable/Community Groups/Schools for one time event signage?

Mr. Mitch Dickey explained that the Signs By-Law would include guidelines for such groups and the fees would be waved.

- If a sign is on private property, does HRM have the authority to seize the sign if the owner is in violation of the By-Law?

Mr. Dickey explained that the MGA does give authority to the Municipality to enforce By-Laws. He further explained that it would have to be a flagrant violation of the By-Law and that notification would be given to the owner. Mr. Wayne Anstey added that the By-Law Rationalization Committee has discussed this matter as well.

- If a property owner is the victim of vandalism and the vandalism causes a violation of the Sign By-Law, would the property owner be required to pay the fines?

Mr. Dickey advised that this issue will be reviewed and the possibility of checking for a police report or complaint from the owner (through Hanson) could be incorporated into the process.

- If the By-Law is adopted in January 2004, how long before fines can be handed out?

Mr. Anstey responded that it has been taking up to six months. He further explained that

it would still be possible for the By-Law Enforcement Officer to swear and serve a summons.

- Will HRM check placement of the sign before it is placed, specifically in the case of the permanent planter box type signs or before a mobile sign is secured, as the placement could affect site lines?

Mr. Dunphy explained that when a person applies for a sign permit, a plot plan is required and then HRM can approve it from there.

- Suggest that a handout be prepared for the property owners regarding the options to mobile signs.
- Black background on signs with varying colours of letters - will any of this be restricted?

Mr. Dickey advised that there will be some restriction but for now it is left up to the owners taste.

- How will the 60 day placements be tracked?

Mr. Dickey explained that HANSON will provide a daily report of permits that are expiring and that a sticker will be issued with each permit with an expiry date to enable By-Law Enforcement to verify.

- Will the entire cost of this Signs By-Law be covered by the permit fees and fines?

Mr. Dickey explained that it is expected to be fully covered as per information obtained from previous sign permits issued.

- If this new Sign By-Law is to standardize signage throughout HRM, does this mean that signs that were once not permitted in certain areas will now be permitted?

Mr. Dickey advised that there may be some inconsistencies but there is a need to have some community variations. Mr. Paul Dunphy added that this is an important topic to consider before moving forward. He explained that each community is different and, for example, no one has ever heard that planning should be consistent throughout HRM - each area is distinct and the planning process differs in each region. He further explained that Bedford has decided that they do not want mobile signs and if other regions want to ban the signs, this will be dealt with at a later date.

- Clarification on Ground Signs versus Ground Mounted Signs, in the Westphal/Cole Harbour area mobile signs are not wanted but permanent ground signs are acceptable.
- Clarification on Fascia Signs.

Mr. Dickey explained that if the Fascia sign overlaps/encroaches onto a sidewalk for example, then they will require a permit. If the sign is flat against the wall, then no permit is required.

The Mayor thanked staff for their presentation.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Jan Gibson
Deputy Municipal Clerk