

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES

May 26, 2009

PRESENT: Mayor Peter Kelly
Deputy Mayor David Hendsbee
Councillors: Barry Dalrymple
Lorelei Nicoll
Andrew Younger
Bill Karsten
Jackie Barkhouse
Mary Wile
Jerry Blumenthal
Dawn Sloane
Sue Uteck
Jennifer Watts
Russell Walker
Debbie Hum
Linda Mosher
Brad Johns
Robert Harvey
Tim Outhit
Peter Lund
Reg Rankin

REGRETS: Councillors: Steve Streach
Gloria McCluskey
Jim Smith
Stephen D. Adams

STAFF: Mr. Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer
Ms. Geri Kaiser, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Ms. Mary Ellen Donovan, Municipal Solicitor
Ms. Julia Horncastle, Acting Municipal Clerk
Mr. Mark Calvi, Legislative Assistant

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 11:25 a.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES- November 25, 2008 (Revised), April 28, May 5 & 12, 2009**

Moved by Councillor Blumenthal and seconded by Councillor Wile that the Minutes of November 25, 2008 (Revised), April 28, May 5 & 12, 2009, be approved as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. **TRANSPORTATION & MUNICIPAL TAX STRUCTURE**

A brief discussion ensued regarding community boundaries and local applications thereof. Council expressed an interest in having any buffer lines clearly shown on maps. It was agreed to amend the boundary limit from 3 km to 1 km.

MOVED by Councillor Nicoll, seconded by Councillor Rankin, that Council approve Option 6(b) - Area Tax Rate (local) for those within a 1 km distance from a transit service and general tax rate (regional) using assessment for a period of one year. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. **BUDGET DELIBERATIONS**

A brief overview was given by Mr. Dan English, CAO, outlining some of the important issues involved in the shaping of the budget, business planning elements, and main themes of Council's intended direction with fiscal planning. Important themes mentioned by Mr. English included planning for change, seizing opportunities, safeguarding the future, and environmental sustainability and accessibility.

Mr. English stated that the decisions made by Council (in tabling the budget) reflect the current economic times, and that the resulting fiscal framework is comprised of modest changes while maintaining the tax rate levels of the previous year. Decisions made prepare for future success with a view to ensuring the community's vibrance, stability and ability to create new opportunities and attract a talented workforce.

Mr. English referred to the Order of Business in the Agenda and noted that the presentation of the budget would follow along the focus areas of Council as previously approved, and include a summary of the outcomes and goals for each of these focus areas. He noted that Ms. Cathie O'Toole, Director of Finance, submitted a memo that contains a package of corrections for the draft budget.

In closing, Mr. English thanked Council for their guidance on decisions and balanced approach to fiscal responsibility.

Ms. Geri Kaiser, Deputy CAO, gave a brief overview of the contents of Council's package and agenda items. Mayor Kelly continued with some preliminary instructions.

MOVED by Councillor Walker and seconded by Councillor Dalrymple that the 2009/2010 Capital and Operating budget be taken off the table and brought forward as proposed. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Governance & Communication

Councillor Uteck posed a question regarding how HRM departments plan to move forward with succession planning pertaining to staffing positions and costs. In response, Ms. Kaiser noted that one of the elements of a sound succession plan is to overstaff positions, which is usually implemented in the protective services area. Ms. Kaiser stated that it is more cost effective to transfer knowledge rather than hire new staff and that funding for this plan derives from the vacancy management funds. In addition, Ms. Kaiser noted that Human Resources will be meeting with Council in September for an overview of the Human Resource planning framework.

Councillor Hum inquired as to whether employees whose retirement may be delayed is taken into consideration when developing succession planning. Ms. Kaiser responded with confirmation that this is built into the planning, as these factors can change frequently and must be taken into account.

Discussion ensued pertaining to Communications staffing, resources and Councillor support, and how these issues are handled. Questions were responded to by Ms. Jennifer Church, Managing Director of External and Corporate Affairs, who noted that Corporate Communications would continue its function as in previous years, supporting the Mayor and Council by motion and request from Council, with certain business units requiring more specific support. There was concern expressed that Councillors are understaffed, prompting Ms. Church to refer to the Communications Plan that addresses the application of resources to Council focus areas. Individual and media support is limited. Members of Council noted that while some areas of Communications are lacking support, in some instances tasks are being duplicated and that a more coordinated approach needs to be implemented.

Another area of discussion within Communications dealt with branding strategies. Councillor Mosher stressed that this issue should be aligned with Council focus areas as well as GHP priorities. In response Mr. English stated that there is an upcoming meeting in June that will address the economic strategy in relation to branding, but although this issue is being worked on, branding was not a major item in the current budget layout.

Councillor Blumenthal made an inquiry as to structure and function within the Communications staff. Ms. Church outlined Communications capacity within the External and Corporate Affairs organization and noted that staff positions cover media relations, communications, marketing, print, design and production, with concentration of resources directed towards the latter four items.

Council recessed at 12:00 p.m.

Council resumed at 1:03 p.m.

(Governance and Communications continued)

Several issues were brought up by Councillor Outhit regarding funding to conduct branding, governance reform, and media resources. Mr. English confirmed there is funding in the budget for the branding exercise and district boundary review. Ms. Church replied to the question pertaining to media resources stating that support would be of the same level it has been in the past.

Regarding professional support for the Mayor, Council, and the Office of the Municipal Clerk, Deputy Mayor Hendsbee expressed concern not only for Clerk's Office staffing, noting that often times they are operating at maximum capacity to fulfill their mandate in serving the various boards and committees, but that the volunteers within those boards and committees receive very little assistance. This needs to be addressed in order to continue to retain membership to these boards and committees and encourage public participation.

Acting Manager of the Clerk's Office, Ms. Cathy Mellett, noted that the reform of Committees of Council is a governance focus area and will be presented to Council for consideration following a presentation to the Membership Selection Committee on June 22, 2009. A major part of this recommendation will be consolidation and change to the structure of these committees, and to a lesser extent the possibility of remuneration for volunteers.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Hendsbee, that \$5000 for each Councillor be included in the budget for an Administrative Assistant with funding from, Account E-400.

The motion was lost as there **was** no seconder.

MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Rankin, that the question now be put. MOTION DEFEATED.

Public Safety

Deputy Mayor Hendsbee asked for clarification of the discrepancy between the Police

Commission report regarding funding allocation and the budget documents. Mr. English, CAO, replied that the funding in the budget book is correct and called upon Ms. O'Toole, to explain further. Ms. O'Toole stated that the difference covers the cost of interdepartmental fleet charges that were not in the budget number approved by the Police Commission, but were reflected correctly in the budget that was tabled.

Discussion then continued with respect to EMO. Deputy Mayor Hendsbee and Councillor Mosher questioned staff regarding Hurricane Juan debris issues, pre and post fire problems and the resulting environmental impact, and the need for a more proactive approach through some type of program, in conjunction with provincial and federal bodies. Councillor Mosher specifically mentioned the EMO Centre inquiring if the proposed enhancements (\$175,000) were currently included in the budget, and if not inquired of the possibility of joint funding support with the Province and/or DNR.

Mr. Roy Hollett, Deputy Chief Director, Fire and Emergency Service, and Mr. English, CAO, both replied that there is no entry in the capital budget for this upgrade, but that staff would undertake to follow up on the matter and explore the possibility of Joint Emergency Planning funding program with the Province. Mr. Hollett noted that similar upgrades have recently been implemented in Provincial centres. It was later confirmed that the \$175,000 was in the budget in a bundled account for HRM building upgrades and that the EMO Centre was included in this.

Councillor Mosher further addressed the need for a portable site operational centre and Deputy Chief Hollett noted there is a request of \$400,000 for this item but that it is not in the budget. Staff responded that this did not make the final list, but noted that this could become a parking lot item if Council can draw from an appropriate source within the current capital budget.

Councillor Mosher expressed concern for staffing needs, succession planning, and IT resources during emergency operations. Staff responded that the training and resources are present and that the Joint Emergency Operation Centre is well equipped to respond to all of these issues. Deputy Chief Hollett noted that there are Police, EHS, Fire, and Ground Search and Rescue command trailers available.

Councillor Watts noted that in the past the Police Commission had requested a special vehicle for hostage situations, and inquired as to whether one vehicle might serve multiple purposes. She also inquired about the video surveillance program with respect to further deployment of mobile cameras throughout HRM. In response, Chief of Police Frank Beazley confirmed that there will be no request for funding for a command vehicle, as one has already been built through previous budgets. The current vehicle is adequate and available. With regard to mobile video surveillance, cameras can be set up temporarily at identified hot spots throughout HRM. Funding derives from the Chief's operational account intended for covering equipment needs.

Councillor Nicoll expressed concern with respect to succession planning in the police detachment of the Cole Harbour District, noting that Officer numbers are decreasing due

to attrition and other factors. In light of recent events, a more proactive approach is necessary within this district and police presence is crucial. RCMP Superintendent Darrell Beaton in response stated that measures are being taken to improve the level of supervision in the area, with ongoing investigation into recent events. A Staff Sergeant has recently been assigned and staff are open to working with Council to consider any rank structure reclassifying that may be recommended.

Council Younger inquired as to the status of the generator for a community centre in his district. EMO staff responded that an account has been set up for this for a variety of locations, but that some of the buildings to receive these generators did not meet the electrical requirements and the process will take some time to complete. There was also discussion regarding a review of EMO Fire Service for all districts across HRM.

Further discussion between Council and EMO staff centred around Ground Search and Rescue and the possibility of more funding for teams. Staff commented that each team receives equal funding but the amount each team actually requires can differ.

Referring back to Councillor Younger's inquiries regarding backup generators at Community Centres, Deputy Mayor Hendsbee expressed concern that older buildings that do not meet code must be assessed and transfer switches for generators must be incorporated. In response, Staff noted that upgrades to such older buildings can exceed budget allotments and that in such cases newer buildings in close proximity were being considered.

Councillor Outhit asked Fire and Emergency Staff if currently a minimum personnel requirement at all urban and suburban fire stations exists. Staff replied that every urban station does have the minimum number of firefighters with four being present at all times, but that some suburban stations do not. The current budget funding does not allow for this. When a call is made Fire personnel employ dual and multi response measures to assemble adequate numbers quickly.

Councillor Uteck asked for clarification on the status of budget funding for the Emergency Mobile Command Centre. Mr. English and Ms. O'Toole in response stated that the funding derives from Equipment and Fleet and that this item is included in the 2010 / 2011 fiscal year. Council would need to include this as a Parking Lot item to have it incorporated in the 2009 / 2010 budget.

In response to a question from Councillor Blumenthal regarding the curfew proposal made by Premier MacDonald, Staff responded that the resources are present if the curfew is imposed.

Councillor Hum made an inquiry regarding emergency response in water and the access and availability of submersible suits for EMO Staff. Fire and Emergency Operations

Director, Deputy Chief Thurber in response stated that ice commander suits are located throughout HRM, but the number of suits does not cover all locations. Any cost implications must cover training as well, which is done on an annual basis.

Community Planning

Councillor Watts asked for updates on funding for cultural programming.

Deputy Mayor Hendsbee inquired about the amount of resources available for community visioning exercises in terms of following time lines and completion of studies. Staff responded that adequate resources are in place.

Councillor Barkhouse addressed the potential need for a recreation/library facility in Shearwater, Eastern Passage and Cow Bay, suggesting a consultation with residents to render a needs assessment study. Councillor Barkhouse inquired as to whether the budget has allotted the proposed \$40,000 in funding for this project. She further stated that time is of the essence in order to have a funding partner, and there currently exists the possibility of partnering with Shearwater. If DND comes forward, HRM must be prepared to move on this item. In response, Mr. Doug Rafuse, Manager, Service Delivery Community Planning, stated that the funds are not in the existing budget capacity and that it would be difficult to meet the time frame, as the needs assessment would need to be completed first. Mr. Rafuse made mention that the Councillor's inquiry is one of the recommendations in the Facilities Master Plan for the upcoming year.

Councillor Barkhouse inquired as to whether other sources such as the Strategic Growth Reserve might be used. Ms. O'Toole replied that this fund supports projects with larger regional impact and larger dollar value, and that there are no available funds in this reserve - it is fully allocated until 2012 / 2013 to fund HRM's share of the 4 Pad, and HRM's share of the 2011 Winter Games. Ms. O'Toole suggested going to a capital budget account for a potential source. Mr. Rafuse clarified that in fact the 1/3 amount refers to provincial funding if eligible, and that HRM would have to cover 2/3. In closing, Councillor Barkhouse stated that the opportunity for partnership is possible and other avenues for funding should be explored.

Councillor Sloane expressed concern for the completion of the 21 proposed functional plans as previously outlined in the budget, and whether the means to complete this is possible given the capacity and staff required. Mr. Austin French, Manager, Community Development Planning Services, responded that a written update on the functional plans would be coming to Council the following week appended to the HRM by Design Report. Three of the 21 projects are complete; 12 well under way with existing funding. One of the plans regarding rural communications towers has been deemed unnecessary given the work that is being done by the private sector. Mr. French stated that the means and capacity for completing the plans is present.

In continuation from the previous discussion of the Eastern Passage and Cow Bay facility,

Councillor Barkhouse inquired of the building demolition at 3790 MacIntyre Street, whether this was going forward, or if funding could be freed up from this. Staff responded that the demolition is a Sale of Land Reserve Funded project and that the project in question addressed by Councillor Barkhouse would not qualify under that reserve. Ms. Kaiser added that until there is a commitment from federal and provincial governments that they intend to go ahead with the study and HRM's relative cost sharing can be determined, further discussion may be premature. Councillor Barkhouse stressed that HRM should be ready to move forward in preparation. Staff mentioned that the time lines of DND are not clear and this presents challenges to the process - DND may be looking at all facility needs in HRM. Councillor Barkhouse inquired of the 4 Pad funding outlined in the budget and staff responded that part of the funding is in the Strategic Growth Reserve. Ms. Kaiser interjected that information is based on the most recent discussions with DND, is that this project may be premature for this budget season. That being said and given the nominal amount, Ms. Kaiser recommended that Councillor Barkhouse leave the matter with staff and they will follow up with DND, and make certain to return to Council with a recommendation for a funding source.

Councillor Watts followed up her previous question regarding cultural funding and the current progress in relation to the percentage target. Mr. Andrew Whittemore, Manager, Community Development responded stating that HRM has made good progress in this area. Mr. Whittemore noted that many progressive communities throughout North America integrate 1% of their operating and capital budgets towards cultural funding. The commitment for public art pieces was \$150,000 last year and remains the same for next year. New programs have been put in place to facilitate various areas in HRM.

Transportation

Councillor Younger made reference to the Various Traffic Related Studies account under the Operating Budget, Capital Projects, and posed a question to Staff regarding the current balance of this account. Mr. Ken Reashor, Manager, Traffic and Right of Way stated that approximately \$200,000 is in this account and that they have chosen to do alternate years for funding. Councillor Younger stressed that with no net change to the budget, the traffic study for Main Street derive from this account, as several other projects and studies hinge upon this traffic study being completed. Mr. Reashor assured Council that the budget accommodates this.

MOVED by Councillor Uteck, seconded by Councillor Sloane, that Council move \$1.714 million in funding from the Transit Corridor Study (p. R12 CMU 000975) to the Street Scaping Program.

Staff responded that the Transit Corridor Study is a fundamental part of the Regional Plan and transit improvements. Mr. David McCusker, Manager, Regional Transportation Planning, further added that the purpose of the project is to build more transit priorities throughout the system and removing funding would delay implementation and the services may be running before the transit priorities are in place. Councillor Uteck noted that there

is no paperwork, no cost breakdown and no details of the implementation phase. Mayor Kelly noted that the Transit Corridor Study was discussed with Council and Staff in conjunction with the overall Rapid Transit Strategy and that these funds had been earmarked for this purpose. Councillor Uteck expressed concern relating to road widening within the HRM peninsula as it relates to this study.

Councillor Sloane also expressed concern that there is no paperwork on the Transit Corridor Study or Staff assigned. She also noted that she will not support any further road widening projects should this be part of the study. Staff interjected that without Council seeing the full details of the plan, it is a difficult issue to discuss moving any funding and that perhaps Street Scaping be put in the Parking Lot.

Councillor Walker stated that he would not support the motion for removal of funds and that it should remain as it is in the budget. The intention is to move transit along and removal of these funds would cause indefinite delay. He also stated that there was no mention or specific reference to any one particular Street Scaping Project.

Councillor Dalrymple stated that he was also opposed to moving funds and that the money is there for the purpose of meeting transit priorities.

Councillor Karsten inquired as to whether there is a particular Street Scaping Project that is earmarked. Mr. Phillip Townsend, Manager, Infrastructure and Asset Management Capital Projects, in response stated that Staff recommendations as per Council's request are outlined in the Report before Council and that depending on what options are selected to go forward, there may or may not be a shortfall in funding.

Councillor Watts asked Mr. McCusker to explain the concept plan discussed to date, and if the widening of Bayers Road is part of the Transit Corridor Project. Mr. McCusker explained that the functional planning has yet to be determined - the budget covers in part the detailed planning and then the implementation of that planning. Bayers Road is one of the routes being looked at to reach the downtown core but that one of the objectives of the Transit Corridor Project is to ultimately reduce the need for road widening. Councillor Watts suggested some of the transit changes be implemented in an incremental way as needed, and asked Staff to further look into the details of the concept plan and return to Council with additional information.

Councillor Wile stated that she would not support the motion to move funds, over concern for how any changes or delay might effect the Clayton Park West area that is in need of transit upgrades to increase efficiency.

Councillor Blumenthal stated that although he understands the perspective behind the motion, he would not support it in anticipation that this may cause areas in need of transit upgrades to lose out. He also emphasized his opposition to any road widening proposals for the Peninsula.

Councillor Sloane called for clarification of the contents of the functional plan, how

planning and implementation costs are differentiated, and how long it will take for the plan to come to fruition. In response, Mr. McCusker stated that the intention of Staff is to deliver the plan to Council in the next few weeks to review the recommendations, as well as consulting with the public on any major items. Priority measures should be in place before Metro Link routes begin operation, but it is possible for Council to delay these measures in order to examine the planning in more detail, but that in doing so this may negatively influence the plan's success. Councillor Sloane suggested that the Staff Report on the planning be brought to the Peninsula Community Council as they are the ones most directly effected.

Mayor Kelly asked Staff when this Report could be presented to Council and in response Staff gave late July as a possible date. Staff also stated that the plan could include such elements as reversing lanes and queuing, without the need for widening roads.

Councillor Hum stated that she views the \$1.714 million in funding, Transit Corridor and Metro Link planning as a win-win situation, not only for Mainland South Mainland North and greater communities, but also for getting traffic off the streets in Peninsula Halifax. She further stated that although she understands the priority of the Street Scaping project, she cannot endorse taking funding out of transit and would not support the motion. There have already been delays and this needs to move forward as a transit priority.

Councillor Watts clarified that what is being asked is not a pulling of the funding, but for Staff to consider looking at moving funding and return to Council with any recommendations.

Councillor Sloane reiterated her previous point asking for a breakdown of the functional plan and the actual implementation, whether implementation was going to involve widening or dedicated lanes and lights. She inquired as to whether any buses had been purchased thus far.

In response Staff clarified that the funds in the account are not meant to purchase buses or stations or any component of the Metro Link, and are intended only for on-street road priorities for Metro Link and Metro X services. Whether the plan will consist of road widening, cue jumping or transit signal priorities will be determined through the functional planning exercise.

MOTION DEFEATED.

Council recessed at 2:47 p.m.

Council resumed at 3:08 p.m.

Councillor Watts, in reference to Rail Corridor Land Acquisition, inquired as to whether there is any specific funding that is being set aside in the current budget year earmarked for road widening on the Peninsula, land acquisition or related to the potential Bayers Road widening. Mr. Reashor responded that there will be no money spent this budget year for any of these items. Councillor Watts also asked that any funding directed towards

crosswalk buttons be directed to other projects. Staff stated that any removal of funding will only delay the upgrading process.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, and seconded by Councillor Sloane, that any further installment of push button activated crosswalk components be delayed, and that any funding in the current budget for this purpose be released to other projects.

There is no specific earmarked amount. Staff recommended that funding not be moved or delayed or the plan be altered in that these intersection components are designed for greater traffic efficiency and help to eliminate the need for any road widening.

Councillor Sloane added that many of these buttons throughout the city do not work. Councillor Younger further added that this particular issue should be looked at location by location.

MOTION DEFEATED.

Councillor Walker asked Staff whether CNIB passes were in the current budget. Ms. Pat Soanes, General Manager, Metro Transit, stated that the expiry of these passes has been deferred for another three months, allowing time for Staff to prepare an information report to be presented to Council. This can be accommodated within the budget should Council approve to continue with the program.

Infrastructure

Councillor Karsten stated progress in Streets and Roads has been commendable and that according to Staff the Stress Disorder Index for this item has stabilised and grown slightly for the first time in many years. Councillor Karsten asked for continued support for this program and recommended moving \$1.5 million into the Parking Lot for Streets and Roads, with \$1 million deriving from Community Facilities for External Agencies Grant Program, and the remaining \$500,000 deriving from the capital budget from areas such as studies for new buildings and new recreation centres.

MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Blumenthal, that \$1.5 million be allocated towards Streets and Roads, with \$1 million deriving from Community Facilities for External Agencies Grant Program, and the remaining \$500,000 deriving from the capital budget from areas such as studies for new buildings and new recreation centres. MOTION DEFEATED.

Councillor Watts asked Staff to comment on potential opportunities for trail development. Mr. Townsend in response stated that there are opportunities arising for infrastructure funding and that Staff would strive to leverage funds from these, but that currently funds have not been specifically identified.

Councillor Blumenthal commented that he supports allocating additional money into the

infrastructure of HRM roads. He questioned Staff as to the funding available to fix potholes. Staff responded that funding is present under operations and resurfacing, and that generally 90% of calls for potholes are responded to and repairs are made accordingly. Councillor Blumenthal also addressed the need for sidewalk repair.

Staff responded to Councillor Johns concern regarding bike lane funding, that \$500,000 is currently in the budget. Councillor Johns further commented that the sidewalk standard for urban areas (curb, sidewalk and gutter), is high and that alternate applications for rural areas should be considered with asphalt sidewalks as a possibility. He suggested the installation of bike lanes in rural areas can function as multi-use trails and that the maintenance prospective is good for this application. Councillor Johns expressed concern that \$500,000 is not sufficient funding for bike lanes, but if for the future budget these lanes could be viewed as multi-use, active transportation corridors and not just bike lanes, that alternative funding could be located. Mr. Reashor commented that bike lanes are often added in conjunction with other projects from which funding may derive. Active transportation corridors are identified and Staff continues to work towards development of multi-use trails wherever possible. Mr. Dave Hubley, Manager, Design and Construction Services, added that there is approximately \$1.2 million for rural roads and shoulder paving.

Councillor Outhit expressed concern for road and sidewalk conditions within HRM and asked Council and Staff to consider a budget increase next year.

Councillor Nicoll asked Staff to clarify p. C 25, Own Source Revenue and what defines this. Ms. O'Toole stated that the majority of this revenue is actually derived from interest. Councillor Nicoll asked Staff to examine the possibility of fines and permit violations as a possible source of funding for Streets and Roads.

Councillor Mosher referred to Councillor Johns concern for shoulders and sidewalks, adding that shoulders be paved along Purcell's Cove, and other suburban areas. She called for report update from Staff regarding the implementation strategy for bike lanes and multi-use trails. Councillor Mosher requested a 10 year plan focussed on main arterial roads, incorporated with paving projects, but also addressing suburban and rural projects. A long term funding allotment out of the capital budget is needed. Mr. Reashor noted that in addition to the \$500,000, the \$1.2 million in conjunction with Design and Construction has been allocated and that Staff is moving forward with the Active Transportation Plan routes that have been identified. Additional funds have been assigned this year that were not present in the past and Staff has taken Council's direction in locating as much funding as possible towards these infrastructure needs. Alternative funding sources such as the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (*MRIF*) have been successfully obtained for upcoming projects.

Councillor Lund asked Staff if there was a specific program in the current budget to address shoulders in terms of widening or filling. Mr. Reashor responded that Municipal Operations do have a shoulder repair budget for base repair and Transportation and Public Works complete the paving out of bike way budget in order to accomplish bike

lanes. Councillor Lund inquired as to whether there should be an increase in the budget for next year for not only bike lanes but also for improvement of shoulders, and if an inventory is maintained. In response Staff replied that public requests are kept on record and if such improvements were to be expedited, more money would need to be added.

Councillor Johns called for clarification of where the \$1 million, mentioned previously by Councillor Karsten, is noted in the budget book, and if in fact it is under Community Development. Ms. O`Toole in response stated that this amount is shown in Fiscal as it is a grant going to an external organization and thus no longer can be considered a capital asset by HRM. The \$750,000 program is not present for this year. Ms. O`Toole further stated that the \$1 million in question is going to the Community Facility Partnership Program, by way of a 2008 Council approved Grants Program that set out the parameters for funds, application process and grants procedure. The program is open to local schools, universities, and district recreation and administered by the Grants Committee.

Councillor Watts proposed a possible source for funding could derive from the snow clearing budget. Staff replied they would return to Council with an information report outlining season performance with details of the various contracts and costs involved in their budget. Councillor Younger expressed concern that the savings in drawing from this source may be overestimated and that there may be differing rates for these services depending on the area.

Councillor Watts asked for comments from Staff regarding commitment to the environment and accessibility. In response Mr. Townsend stated that as a matter of usual practice Staff strives to convey the importance of those two aspects in all projects and cited examples such as recycling asphalt or building materials, through establishment of lead program standards, and regularly undertakes to utilise capital funding for upgrading accessibility features throughout HRM.

As there was no further discussion, the motion was now before Council.

MOVED by Councillor Walker and seconded by Councillor Dalrymple that the 2009/2010 Capital and Operating budget be taken off the table and brought forward as proposed. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Julia Horncastle
Acting Municipal Clerk