

## HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

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### TAX REFORM COMMITTEE MINUTES May 17, 2007

- PRESENT: Councillor David Hendsbee  
Councillor Brad Johns  
Councillor Linda Mosher  
Councillor Reg Rankin  
Councillor Andrew Younger  
Mr. Mark Gilbert  
Mr. David John Grace  
Mr. Robert Grace  
Ms. Giselle Kakamousias  
Ms. Janice Malay  
Mr. Andrew Murphy
- ABSENT: Deputy Mayor Sue Uteck  
Mr. Randy Anstey
- STAFF: Mr. Bruce Fisher, Manager, Fiscal & Tax Policy, Finance Services  
Mr. Andre MacNeil, Financial Consultant, Finance Services  
Ms. Shannon Bennett, Research, Fiscal & Tax Policy  
Mr. Roger Wells, Senior Advisor, Regional Planning  
Ms. Kim Borgal, Marketing and Communications Assistant  
Ms. Carolyn Wiper, Administrative Assistant, Fiscal & Tax Policy

**Table of Contents**

1.	CALL TO ORDER .....	3
2.	APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - April 12, 2007 .....	3
3.	APPROVAL OF ORDER OF BUSINESS. ....	3
4.	BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES - None .....	3
5.	CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS - None .....	3
6.	CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS - None .....	3
7.	REPORTS .....	3
7.1	Presentation on Regional Plan - Roger Wells, Senior Advisor, Harbour Plan .....	3
7.2	Spring Workshops .....	4
7.2.1	Workshop Materials .....	4
7.2.2	Ad Campaign .....	4
7.2.3	Information Sheets .....	4
7.3	Presentation on Residential Tax Benchmarking .....	4
8.	ADDED ITEMS .....	4
8.1	TRC Biographies .....	4
8.2	Summer Meeting Schedule .....	5
9.	NEXT MEETING DATE .....	5
10.	ADJOURNMENT .....	5

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 11:10 a.m. at St. Mary's Boat Club.

2. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - April 12, 2007**

**MOVED by Councillor Younger, seconded by Mark Gilbert, that the Minutes of April 12, 2007 be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

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

Additions:

- 8.1 TRC Biographies
- 8.2 Summer Meeting Schedule

**MOVED by Councillor Younger, seconded by Mark Gilbert, that the Order of Business, as amended, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

4. **BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES** - None

5. **CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS** - None

6. **CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS** - None

The Committee briefly discussed the public consultation process and timelines.

Councillor Younger suggested that TRC advertise the upcoming workshops on Eastlink's Channel 8, TV listing and ad channel.

The Committee discussed the process on how correspondence should be handled and felt that all correspondence should be distributed to the Committee, a response letter be sent, and not put on the HRM website.

**Moved by Councillor Younger, seconded by Councillor Johns, that TRC treat correspondence as per HRM Policy. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

7. **REPORTS**

7.1 **Presentation on Regional Plan - Roger Wells, Senior Advisor, Harbour Plan**

Bruce Fisher, Manager of Fiscal and Tax Policy introduced Mr. Roger Wells, Senior Advisor, Harbour Plan. Mr. Wells made a presentation to the Committee on the broad overview of the Regional Plan and explained its relation to Tax Reform.

Councillor Hendsbee suggested that the Tax Reform Committee try to tie the same

terminology used in the Regional Plan with the new taxation process.

Roger Wells, Senior Advisor, Harbour Plan suggested that the Tax Reform Committee should simplify the boundaries when moving forward with the process.

Andrew Murphy, Committee Member requested a report from staff with respect to sprawl.

Bruce Fisher suggested that the Committee have Roger Wells back to discuss the boundaries, link between tax system and the Regional Plan, the cost of sprawl, and the link to some individual services such as transit.

## **7.2 Spring Workshops**

### **7.2.1 Workshop Materials**

Bruce Fisher, Manager of Fiscal and Tax Policy gave an explanation of the residential and commercial workshop material that would be used at the upcoming workshops.

The Committee decided on the four strongest cases that would be used during the workshops.

### **7.2.2 Ad Campaign**

Ad Campaigning information was received and discussed.

The Committee agreed that staff place an ad on Eastlink's Channel 8, TV listing and ad channel.

### **7.2.3 Information Sheets**

Information sheets were received by the Committee. The information sheets include topics such as HRM and provincial property tax, taxes in other jurisdictions, budget and our financial health, assessment system, current tax system, the amount of tax that everyone pays, commercial property tax, cost of services for homes and services, and the Regional Plan.

## **7.3 Presentation on Residential Tax Benchmarking**

Andre MacNeil, Financial Consultant, Financial Services was to make a presentation to the Committee on Residential Tax Benchmarking. The Committee was short on time and decided to have him make the presentation at a future meeting.

## **8. ADDED ITEMS**

### **8.1 Committee Biographies**

Bruce Fisher informed the Committee that staff had a request from a resident asking that each Committee Member provide a biography for the website. The Committee discussed and agreed that it would be best to do a group biography without identifying each individual.

## **8.2 Summer Meeting Schedule**

The Committee discussed possible meeting dates for the summer months. The Committee thought that four meetings over the summer months may be required. It was noted that Council is not in session for three weeks in July and three weeks in August. It was decided that the next meeting date would be June 14, 2007 and Staff would email the Committee some other possible dates.

## **9. NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting has been set for Thursday, June 14, 2007 in Halifax Hall, City Hall from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOVED by Giselle Kakamousias, that the meeting adjourn at 1:10 p.m.**

Carolyn Wiper  
Administrative Support Assistant