

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

TAX REFORM COMMITTEE MINUTES April 12, 2007

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

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 11:07 a.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - March 22, 2007

MOVED by Councillor Younger, seconded by Councillor Johns, that the Minutes of March 22, 2007 be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

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

Additions:

8.1 Commercial Tax Rates

MOVED by Councillor Younger, seconded by Councillor Johns, 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

7. REPORTS

7.1 HRM's Communication and Public Participation Plan

- A report dated April 5, 2007, on the above noted, was before the Committee.

Ms. Shannon Bennett, Researcher, Fiscal and Tax Policy made a presentation to the Committee.

Moved by Councillor Mosher, seconded by Councillor Younger, that TRC

- 1. Approve spring consultations as described in phase 3 of the proposed HRM Communications and Public Participation Plan,**
- 2. Schedule a practice workshop for the TRC Committee on April 19th from 11 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. to help ensure workshops are on the right track for the public participation needs, and,**
- 3. Approve the remaining Communications and Public Participation Plan as a working document to be further refined throughout the Tax Reform process, and present an update on the project to Regional Council on April 17th. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

8. ADDED ITEMS

8.1 Commercial Tax Rate

Giselle Kakamousias asked staff to provide the Committee with a copy of the complete detailed Allocation Model being prepared by Andre MacNeil, Financial Consultant.

Councillor Mosher noted that an article regarding Residential and Commercial Tax, published in the Business Voice, produced by the Chamber of Commerce may have a negative impact on HRM and may hurt the Tax Reform Process.

Giselle Kakamousias commented that the chart, as part of the article in the Business Voice, is comparing information taken from surveys completed on every office building in every major centre in Atlantic Canada every six months. She explained that the information in the article was prepared for a completely different purpose and was not prepared for tax reform purposes.

Councillor Mosher requested staff to provide a copy of the article published in Business Voice as well as an article published in the Globe and Mail on the business climate in HRM. She noted that the article in the Globe and Mail was positive.

Bruce Fisher, Manager of Fiscal & Tax Policy informed the Committee that staff would provide HRM's submission to Finance Minister Baker well as the information on the Vancouver report.

The Committee also discussed area rates and business occupancy tax and their relation to residential and commercial tax rates.

The Committee was provided a draft copy of the brochure that would be circulated to various groups and those interested in attending one of the public consultations being held in May. The Committee agreed to send comments of suggestions through to staff prior to the brochure going to print.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting has been set for Thursday, May 3, 2007 in the Halifax Room, City Hall from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Mark Gilbert, that the meeting adjourn at 12:54 p.m.

Carolyn Wiper
Administrative Support Assistant

