

EXECUTIVE STANDING COMMITTEE
MINUTES

February 25, 2013

PRESENT:

Mayor Mike Savage, Chair
Deputy Mayor, Reg Rankin
Councillors: Linda Mosher, Vice Chair
Russell Walker
Matt Whitman
Bill Karsten
Steve Craig
Brad Johns

STAFF:

Mr. Richard Butts, CAO
Ms. Marian Tyson, Acting Director, Legal Services
Ms. Cathy Mellet, Municipal Clerk
Mr. Quentin Hill, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. in Council Chambers, Halifax City Hall.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 28, 2012

MOVED by Councillor Craig, seconded by Councillor Johns that the minutes of January 28, 2012 be approved as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

The Municipal Clerk noted that the staff report for item 7.1 should be kept confidential until the HRM Volunteer Awards Ceremony on April 17, 2013.

Additions:

- 8.1 Councillor Karsten- By-law Rationalization
- 8.2 Councillor Karsten- Councillor Correspondence

MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Walker that the In Camera item 9.3 be moved to item 7.5 on the agenda. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

The Committee agreed to deal with item 7.5 of the agenda ahead of item 7.4.

MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Whitman that the agenda be accepted as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS – NONE

7. REPORTS

7.1 2013 HRM Volunteer Recognition and Award Recipients

An Private and Confidential report dated January 9, 2013 was before the Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Johns, seconded by Councillor Rankin that the Executive Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council:

1. **Retain the total number of awards of 100 with an updated distribution of 5 awards per district; 16 overall awards based on scoring, and 3 awards for community groups to reflect the new district configuration;**
2. **Approve the individual Adult and Youth award recipients (Attachment B);**
3. **Approve the ten volunteers to receive the Provincial Volunteer Awards (Attachment B);**
4. **Approve HRM's 2013 Volunteer of the Year (Attachment B);**
5. **Approve the Community Group award recipients in three categories (Attachment C);**
6. **Approve the Community Group recognition recipients (Attachment C); and**
7. **Not release this report to the public until the 2013 HRM Volunteer Awards Ceremony on April 17, 2013.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.2 Proposed Terms of Reference Change – Executive Standing Committee

A briefing note dated February 25, 2013 was before the Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Walker that the Executive Standing Committee maintain status quo regarding the Terms of Reference of the Executive Standing Committee. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.3 Appointments to CAO Review Sub-Committee

The Municipal Clerk advised that the motion of the Committee was to create a CAO Sub-committee including; Mayor, Deputy Mayor, the Vice –Chair and two additional members. She noted that three names were put forward for additional members. She advised that the Committee could pick two out of the three names or move to expand the Sub-Committee by an additional member.

MOVED by Councillor Johns, seconded by Councillor Walker to expand the CAO Review Sub-committee by one member, members appointed to the Sub-Committee are the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, the Vice-Chair and Councillors Karsten, Walker and Craig. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.4 Standing Committee Discussion Procedures

This item was dealt with later in the meeting. See page 6.

7.5 Personnel – A Matter Related to Identifiable Group or Individual

This matter was moved to the public portion of the agenda during Approval of the Order of Business.

A staff report dated March 23, 2012 was before the Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Mosher seconded by Councillor Walker, that the Councillors Office staff complement be increased to a 1:1 ratio and that the funds that were previously held be released to assist in hiring and transition and that on a go forward basis the Councillor's office budget include funding for these additional staff members.

Councillor Mosher stated that since the reduction of Councillors to Halifax Regional Council, Councillor Districts increased by an average of 44%. She noted that Councillor support staff were having difficulty keeping up with the requests from residents. She advised that staff felt the quality of work had been reduced and the ability to respond to calls was taking longer.

Deputy Mayor Rankin expressed concern regarding increased Councillor support staff, he suggested that a slight increase in support staff would suffice but a 1:1 Councillor support ratio was too radical.

The Committee further discussed the advantages and disadvantages of a 1:1 support staff to Councillor ratio and voted on the motion. **MOTION DEFEATED.**

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Rankin, seconded by Councillor Johns to direct staff to bring forward a proposed 2013-2014 budget that includes a staffing ratio of 1 support staff per 2 Councillors and two (2) additional positions to provide further flexibility in support to Council. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.4 Standing Committee Discussion Procedures

Councillor Walker stated that many of the Standing Committees were being attended by Councillors who are not members. He advised that non-members should sit in the gallery and not be allowed to participate in the Standing Committee discussions unless requested.

Councillor Johns agreed with Councillor Walker noting it was causing confusion. He stated that discussions at Standing Committee level were being interpreted as decisions of Regional Council.

Councillor Walker proposed that other Councillors may attend the Standing Committee meetings but non-member Councillors would only speak on agenda items when requested by the Standing Committee.

Ms. Marian Tyson, Solicitor, advised there were three options before the Committee:

- The Committee could ask members to conduct themselves as Councillor Walker suggested.
- The Committee could propose an amendment to amend Administrative Order One to only allow the Standing Committee members to participate at meetings.
- The Committee has the ability to limit participation as found in Administrative Order One.

Richard Butts, CAO noted that the Committee could request a staff report on how Standing Committees are operating.

MOVED by Councillor Walker seconded by Councillor Mosher requesting a staff report to come back to the Executive Standing Committee regarding the operation of Standing Committees with recommendations and alternatives.

Councillor Karsten suggested that the discussion should be held after the budget process is approved. He noted that it was a decision of Regional Council to invite members to participate in the budget process.

With agreement of the Committee the motion was **TABLED** until the budget process was completed.

8. ADDED ITEMS

8.1 Councillor Karsten- By-law Rationalization

Councillor Karsten stated that he had previously requested that outdated by-laws and ordinances be brought to the Executive Standing Committee for review. He requested that this matter be placed on a future agenda.

Ms. Tyson advised that Legal Services had recently hired a By-law Coordinator. She noted that that Coordinator is tasked to consolidate and review by-laws and to prioritize which by-laws which by-laws need substantial amendments. She stated that the goal is to bring the outdated by-laws back to Council.

Councillor Karsten advised he was satisfied that staff was dealing with the outdated by-laws.

8.2 Councillor Karsten- Councillor Correspondence

Councillor Karsten suggested that correspondence sent through the Clerk's office is forwarded to the appropriate business unit without a response to the sender. He expressed concern that there is no acknowledgment to residents that their correspondence has been received.

The Municipal Clerk noted that correspondence is distributed to the business unit and it is the responsibility of that business unit to respond.

Councillor Karsten stated that there should be some mechanism in place to acknowledge receipt of correspondence.

The CAO noted that some of correspondence that is received is from residents providing advice and input to Council and not necessarily requesting a response.

Mayor Savage advised that he would work with CAO on the issue.

9. IN CAMERA

9.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 10, 2012

This item was dealt with In Camera.

9.2 Personnel – Citizen Appointments to Boards and Committees

This item was dealt with In Camera.

9.3 Personnel – A Matter Related to Identifiable Group or Individual

This item was dealt with earlier in the meeting, see page 5.

10. NEXT MEETING DATE – March 25, 2013

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Quentin Hill
Legislative Assistant