

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY
STANDING COMMITTEE
MINUTES

January 9, 2014

PRESENT: Councillor Barry Dalrymple, Chair
Councillor Jennifer Watts, Vice Chair
Deputy Mayor Darren Fisher
Councillor Reg Rankin
Councillor Lorelei Nicoll
Councillor Bill Karsten
Councillor Steve Craig

STAFF: Mr. Mike Labrecque, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Mr. Josh Judah, Solicitor
Mr. Gord Helm, Manager, Solid Waste Resources
Mr. Richard MacLellan, Manager, Energy and Environment
Ms. Laurie Lewis, Diversion Planning Coordinator
Mr. Quentin Hill, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. in the Halifax City Hall Council Chamber, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 5, 2013

MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Nicoll, that the minutes of December 5, 2013, be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Additions: 9.1 Request for Presentation: Sweet Cheeks Diaper Services
6.1.1 Correspondence

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Craig, that the agenda be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

4.1 Status Sheet

The Committee did not make any changes to the status sheet.

4.2 Community Energy Plan Discussion

The Committee agreed to move this item to after the presentations.

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

6.1 Correspondence

6.1.1 Solar Nova Scotia

The Committee accepted the correspondence from Solar Nova Scotia.

6.3 Presentation

6.3.1 Green Energy and Engagement Network

Ms. Emi Belliveau, Ms. Adrienne Smultz, Mr. Chauncey Erskine, Ms. Molly O'Ray, Mr. Brian Pindergask from Dalhousie University provided the presentation to the Committee.

Ms. Belliveau advised that they had been working on a class project with Mr. Julian Boyle from HRM Energy and Environment Department. She noted that through their work was to focus on a sustainability project. They focused on five energy problems within HRM:

- Overconsumption
- Self sufficiency
- Economic growth
- Lack of awareness of the Community Energy Program (CEP)
- Need for more effective and active community engagement.

The group stated that the goal of their project would be to address the five areas through a video series and create a pilot video that would transfer the CEP into a fun and accessible format, along with videos of sustainability success stories by residents of HRM.

The Green Energy and Engagement group then answered questions of clarification from the Committee.

The Committee praised the work of the Green Energy and Engagement Network and invited the students to stay to the end of the meeting to network with staff and Councillors. The Committee also asked the group to return and provide another presentation upon completion of their project.

MOVED by Councillor Craig, seconded by Councillor Nicoll that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee accept the report provided by Green Energy and Engagement Network and request presentation to the Committee upon completion of their project.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

6.3.2 Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

Ms. Laurie Lewis, Diversion Planning Coordinator provided the presentation to the Committee.

Ms. Lewis advised that her presentation was to share the findings of EPR legislation from across Canada and in Europe. They are seeking to expand existing stewardship programs across Nova Scotia and options for new EPR legislations. She further explained that EPR is a regulatory way to make brand owners and manufacturers responsible for the costs of product recycling and disposal. She stated that switching the cost to the producer lessens the cost of recycling by the tax payer.

Ms. Lewis advised that the EPR and Stewardship Model review focused on these five areas:

1. Paint Product and Packaging
2. Household Hazardous Waste
3. Mercury Containing Lights
4. Printed Paper and Packaging
5. Beverage Containers

Ms. Lewis highlighted EPR models that are already in place across Canada and Europe and explained there is opportunity to have a similar program in Nova Scotia. She requested support from the Committee before the research was forwarded to the Province for review. She added that the report could be made available online and staff would like to present back to the Committee in a few months to update the Committee on discussions with the province.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Nicoll that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee accept the EPR report and have the report available on the HRM website and also invite staff to come back and report to the Committee at a future date.

Staff then responded to questions of clarification from the Committee.

Mr. Gord Helm, Manager Solid Waste Resources advised that the EPR report was meant to be a proactive and to work with Regional Chairs, other municipalities and the province in effort to establish an EPR program.

Councillor Watts stated that she would be willing to bring the EPR report forward at the Regional Chairs meetings.

Councillor Karsten asked if staff felt there was a desire from the province and other municipalities to bring forward an EPR program.

Mr. Helm advised that there are indications that the province is moving towards accepting an EPR program. He added that one of the reasons HRM went forward with the report was to show how Nova Scotia compares with other jurisdictions.

Councillor Nicoll asked who would administer the program and what types of fees or funding would be required to operate it.

Mr. Helm advised that there are a number of different models that could be adopted to administer and fund the program. He stated the intent is for brand owners and producers to reduce the amount of packaging used for their product.

Further discussion ensued.

The motion was now before the Committee. **MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

7.2 Regional Chairs Update

Councillor Watts advised that there was a meeting in December 2013, but she was unable to attend. She requested Mr. Helm provide an update to the Committee.

Mr. Helm advised that the RFB provided an update at the Regional Chairs meeting and stated that there was a less than expected revenue. He added that they indicated they were making organizational changes to try and meet their bottom line. He stated that the province updated their position on the regulatory review and would provide information to HRM in the New Year.

9.1 Requests for Presentation: Sweet Cheeks Diaper Services

The Committee agreed to move this item up on the agenda.

Councillor Dalrymple declared conflict of interest and removed himself from the Chair. Councillor Watts assumed the Chair at 2:32 p.m.

Mr. Helm advised that there is provincial tax rebate for disposable diapers and none for reusable diapers. The company wants the province to change that policy however; the Municipality has no jurisdiction on the provincial tax rebate. He added that they understand his position on a waste stream management perspective.

Councillor Karsten did not see that the request was in the authority of the Committee to make a request to the province to change the rebate program.

MOVED by Councillor Rankin, seconded by Councillor Craig to invite Sweet Cheeks Diaper services to make a presentation to the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee at a later date to be determined through the agenda planning. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4.2 Community Energy Plan Discussion

Mr. Richard Maclellan, Manager Energy and Environment provided the presentation to the Committee.

Mr. Maclellan noted that the Committee had requested an update on the Community Energy Plan. He stated that previously in 2012, staff had completed everything in the plan they were able to complete during that time and through the RP+5 discussions, ESSC had requested staff revise the Community Energy Plan. Mr. Maclellan explained that HRM entered into a MOU with the Halifax Chamber of Commerce and QUEST to revise the plan which had been approved by the Committee.

The framework which ESSC approved outlined the following activities:

- Regulatory and Policy Review
- Development of objectives and compilation of data
- Opportunities Assessment
- Development of the Action Plan
- Completion of plan to recommend thru ESSC to Regional Council

Mr. Maclellan explained that the Regulatory and Policy review and the development of objectives and compilation of data were completed. He continued to explain the next steps in the process, as outlined in his presentation.

Councillor Watts raised concern about how the plan would be rolled out. She noted that HRM is engaged with QUEST and the Chamber of Commerce but did not seem to be engaged with residents. She requested explanation of how the ideas expo would look like.

Mr. Maclellan advised that it was difficult to get the business community to participate in the surveys, and with the Regional Plan review underway it is also difficult to get the public to understand what they are being engaged about. The project is able to be completed in the proposed timeframe. He stated that he would come back in a couple months with an outline of what the public engagement process would look like.

In response to comments from the Committee, Mr. Labrecque cautioned the Committee on reviewing the public engagement process. He stated that HRM has had great success with the Shape your City process and more input would slow down the process and not be able to meet the targeted dates.

Councillor Nicoll requested that the Green Energy Engagement network be invited to participate in the ideas expo.

7. REPORTS

7.1 Staff

7.1.1 Clean Nova Scotia Rain Yards 2013 Final Report

A staff report dated December 3, 2013 was before the Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Craig that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee accept the Rain Yards Final Report for 2013 and forward a copy of the Report to the Regional Watershed Advisory Board for its information.

Councillor Craig stated that the information on Rain Yards is not on the Clean NS website and requested staff notify them that it should be on there. He added that he would like to see other areas be involved in the study.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.2 Regional Chairs Update

This item was addressed earlier in the meeting. See page 6.

8. MOTIONS – NONE

9. ADDED ITEMS

9.1 Requests for Presentation: Sweet Cheeks Diaper Services

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

10. NOTICES OF MOTION - NONE

11. NEXT MEETING DATE – February 6, 2014

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:07 p.m.

Quentin Hill
Legislative Assistant