

TRANSPORTATION STANDING COMMITTEE
MINUTES

February 28, 2013

MEMBERS

PRESENT:

Councillor Reg Rankin, Chair
Councillor Jennifer Watts, Vice-Chair
Councillor Barry Dalrymple
Councillor David Hendsbee
Councillor Darren Fisher
Councillor Waye Mason
Councillor Russell Walker

OTHERS

PRESENT:

Councillor Matt Whitman

REGRETS:

Councillor Tim Outhit

STAFF:

Mr. Mike Labrecque, Deputy CAO
Mr. Derk Slaunwhite, Solicitor
Ms. Jennifer Weagle, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. in the Council Chamber, 3rd Floor, City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 24, 2013

MOVED by Councillor Fisher, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee, that the Transportation Standing Committee minutes of January 24, 2013, be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Additions:

- 4.3.2 Deputy Mayor Rankin - Presentation - Information Item #2 – Options for Managing Advertising Signage Highway 333
- 9.1 Councillor Watts – Request for Presentation – Pedestrian Safety Campaign & Transit Ridership Campaign
- 9.2 Councillor Walker – VON parking
- 9.3 Councillor Fisher - Information Item #3 – Terms of Reference – Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee
- 9.4 Councillor Watts - Request for Report – Regional Parking Study
- 9.5 Councillor Mason - North Park Roundabouts
- 9.6 Councillor Hendsbee – Information Item #1 – HRM Community Based Transit Funding

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Walker, that the order of business be approved, as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & PRESENTATIONS

4.1 Correspondence - None

4.2 Petitions - None

4.3 Presentations

4.3.1 WORKshift Program – Robyn Bews, Calgary Economic Development

Mr. David McCusker, Manager, Regional Transportation, introduced Ms. Robyn Bews, Director of WORKshift. Ms. Bews presented on the Workshift Program to the Committee. A copy of Ms. Bews presentation is available online and on file.

Mr. Mike Labrecque, Deputy CAO, advised that the WORKshift program will be coming to Regional Council in conjunction with an application for funding under the Nova Scotia Moves Program.

Responding to questions from Councillor Watts, Mr. McCusker spoke to the applicability of this program in HRM, which could have fundamental changes on transportation in HRM.

Committee members discussed various aspects of the WORKshift program with Ms. Bews and her WORKshift colleague, Mr. Stephen Coles, including the following:

- What types of businesses bought into the program, and how communication was initiated with businesses about the program.
- Technological upgrades required, such as broadband internet.
- The history of the program in the Calgary, and their position to share the program with other cities at a reduced cost.

The Chair thanked Ms. Bews and Mr. Coles for attending.

4.3.2 Deputy Mayor Rankin - Presentation - Information Item #2 – Options for Managing Advertising Signage Highway 333

An information report dated February 11, 2013 was before the Committee.

Councillor Watts took the Chair and Deputy Mayor Rankin took a seat with the Committee.

Ms. Holly Richardson, Coordinator, Real Property Policy, presented an overview of the pilot project and three options. A copy of this presentation is available online and is on file. Ms. Richardson acknowledged and thanked members of the Community Advisory Committee and area Councillors who have been involved in this initiative.

Councillor Hendsbee noted that there had been a study completed years ago by the Regional Development Association, with regard to uniformity of signage and community recognition signage on Highway 333, and inquired what happened to that study. He noted that businesses should have the ability to have their own signage on their own property at the roadside.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Rankin, seconded by Councillor Walker that the Transportation Standing Committee recommend that Regional Council approve Option 1: Uniform Directional Signs, as set out in the February 11, 2013 staff report.

Deputy Mayor Rankin commented on the importance of this pilot project because of similar signage issues in other areas of HRM. He noted that the initial aim was for a cost neutral program, although the staff report outlines an annual cost of \$106,000 taking

into account enforcement. Deputy Mayor Rankin noted that he feels this is a good investment in the economic development of an area, and it is supported by the local community.

Councillor Walker spoke in support of option 1. He noted however that there is a caveat in the legislation that the Minister has the right to veto the decision of Council, and inquired whether staff have consulted with the current Minister on the options.

Ms. Richardson advised that staff have had conversations with Nova Scotia Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. Mr. Mike Labrecque, Deputy CAO, indicated he would arrange to meet with the Deputy Minister on this matter to obtain feedback.

Councillor Fisher spoke in favour of uniform signage used in PEI. Ms. Richardson indicated they have had conversations with PEI authorities, and that program is one of the models looked at. She noted that this model would involve license fees.

Councillor Whitman noted that Council must determine the designated enforceable boundaries, decide whether the by-law will apply to the entire length of Highway 333, or just to the Gateway intersections. He noted concern with businesses simply moving the signs down the highway out of a designated area, commenting that enforcement will be an issue.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

5.1 Street Closure Policy (December 13/12 TSC meeting)

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Fisher, that the Transportation Standing Committee request a staff report outlining current street closure policy for special events and parades. This report will include a survey of best practices and pricing practices in HRM benchmark cities, and address engineering and traffic and right of way concerns balanced against issues of community building, encouraging place making and supporting unique and special events.

Councillor Mason specified issues to be address in the report including:

- when does HRM consider waving fees
- do other cities wave fees
- does the RCMP in HRM wave fees
- do we have a uniform policy across the municipality
- Is our process for application more complex than other municipalities

Councillor Dalrymple noted that this is an issue discussed often at the Special Events Advisory Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Dalrymple, seconded by Councillor Mason, that the motion be amended to also provide the report to the Special Events Advisory Committee. AMENDMENT PUT AND PASSED.

AMENDED MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – None

7. REPORTS

7.1 STAFF - None

7.2 MATTERS REFERRED FROM REGIONAL COUNCIL - None

7.3 MATTERS REFERRED FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS - None

7.4 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

7.4.1 Update from Councillor Watts (verbal)

Councillor Watts provided a brief update on the activities of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee, including community consultation taking place on the Active Transportation Plan Review, the forthcoming Crosstown Connector report, and discussions with the Halifax Regional Trails Association.

7.5 ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

7.5.1 Update from Councillor Watts (verbal)

Councillor Watts provided a brief update on the activities of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, noting that a number of new members have been appointed and a strategic planning workshop will take place in March to set goals for the Committee over the next few years.

8. MOTIONS

8.1 Councillor Watts

“that the Transportation Standing Committee request a staff report examining the ability to have transit impact studies on development proposals.”

Notice of motion for this matter was provided at the January 24, 2013 meeting.

Councillor Watts noted that this request arises further to a discussion on the matter at a Halifax and West Community Council meeting. She noted that there are a number of

filters that development proposals go through such as environmental impacts and traffic studies, and she would like to see transit compatibility for a certain scale of development examined as well.

Mr. Ken Reashor, Director, Transportation and Public Works, advised that typically when a certain size of development is asked for, staff request certain studies including a traffic impact study. As a part of the traffic study, the applicant is also asked to look at transit, noting routes, services provided, and what percentage of trips are allocated for transit. If a development were to increase transit ridership above 5%, then the applicant would submit how that would be addressed.

Councillor Watts asked that this information be included in the report. Mr. Reashor noted that a briefing note on the subject could be prepared and circulated to all of Regional Council for their information. Councillors Watts agreed with this approach.

Councillor Fisher added that he heard several speakers mention at the recent CUTA conference he attended that subdivision proposals should be planned with a professional transit planner.

Councillor Hendsbee commented that it would only be required in the urban/suburban transit zone.

9. ADDED ITEMS

9.1 Request for Presentation – Pedestrian Safety Campaign & Transit Ridership Campaign

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Fisher, that the Transportation Standing Committee request a presentation by HRM Corporate Communications at the March 28, 2013 meeting outlining the HRM Pedestrian Safety Campaign & Transit Ridership Campaign. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9.2 Councillor Walker – VON parking

Councillor Walker distributed emails from VON workers.

MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee, that the Transportation Standing Committee request a staff report examining the possibility of making VON workers exempt from parking tickets at parking meters in HRM.

Councillor Walker spoke of the numerous phone calls and emails he has received on this issue. He noted that this has become an issue for VON nurses making home visits because their visits usually take more than two hours, which is the maximum for parking meters. Councillor Walker explained that the issue is not with putting money in the meter, it is with having to make the choice between leaving during a home visit to put

more money in the meter or getting a parking ticket. He noted that the VON workers have VON passes in their vehicles.

The Chair noted a similar exemption for medical doctors, which is under provincial legislation.

Councillor Watts noted that she has also received correspondence on this issue and noted the implication that it is becoming harder to find staff willing to work in the urban core because of parking tickets costs.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9.3 Councillor Fisher - Information Item #3 – Terms of Reference – Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee

An information report dated February 19, 2013 was before the Committee.

Councillor Fisher circulated an amended draft Terms of Reference, renaming the proposed Committee to the “Crosswalk Safety Advisory Committee”, along with other sundry amendments with the purpose of narrowing the scope of the Committee to *crosswalk* safety, as opposed to *pedestrian* safety, to better fit with the direction provided by Council on January 29, 2013.

MOVED by Councillor Fisher, seconded by Councillor Watts, that the Transportation Standing Committee recommend that Regional Council approve the Crosswalk Safety Advisory Committee Terms of Reference circulated at the February 28, 2013 meeting.

Councillor Dalrymple suggested that the composition be amended to allow for one councillor at large, and two members of the Transportation Standing Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Fisher, seconded by Councillor Dalrymple, that the Transportation Standing Committee recommend that Regional Council approve the Crosswalk Safety Advisory Committee Terms of Reference circulated at the February 28, 2013 meeting, with an amendment to the composition to one Councillor at large, and two Councillors from the Transportation Standing Committee.

Councillor Fisher requested that this item be brought forward as an added item for the March 5, 2013 Regional Council agenda.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9.4 Councillor Watts- Request for Report – Regional Parking Strategy

MOVED by Councillor Watts, that the Transportation Standing Committee request a staff report on an implementation plan for strategy C.1: Update Parking Governance Structure from the approved HRM Regional Parking Strategy.

Councillor Watts noted that there is renewed interest within the community around dealing with transportation issues in the Regional Plan, and also recent requests from the Business Commissions to look at the issue of parking. She suggested that an update from staff on the implementation plan of the parking strategy would be helpful for everyone, as this is a priority issue with residents and businesses in the urban areas of HRM, and would be timely given discussions with the Regional Plan review. Councillor Watts read from page 45 of the Regional Parking Strategy, which speaks to the need to develop a more formalized organizational and administrative structure for managing municipal parking and page 26 which states "...the parking system in HRM is too complex not to have a body responsible for integration and coordination across departments."

Mr. Mike Labrecque, Deputy CAO, indicated that Planning & Infrastructure has an element in their proposed 2013/14 business plan to address priority issues within the parking strategy. He clarified at the request of the Chair that it would primarily focus on the downtown area. Mr. Labrecque suggested that perhaps Mr. David McCusker, Regional Transportation Manager, could discuss this matter further with the Committee at the next meeting.

There being no seconder to the motion, the **MOTION WAS LOST.**

The Committee agreed that this item be added to the March meeting agenda for further discussion.

9.5 Councillor Mason - North Park Roundabouts

Councillor Mason and Taso Koutroulakis, Acting Manager, Traffic & Right-of-Way, provided a brief update on the public consultation sessions for the traffic improvements at the Commons on North Park Street, and the next steps in the process.

Responding to questions from members, Mr. Mike Labrecque, Deputy CAO, clarified that the traffic improvements will be coming back through the budget planning process for the proposed 2014-15 budget.

9.6 Councillor Hendsbee – Information Item #1 – HRM Community Based Transit Funding

An information report dated January 31, 2013 was before the Committee.

At the request of Councillor Hendsbee, Ms. Patricia Hughes, Supervisor, Service Design and Projects, Metro Transit, and Mr. David McCusker, Manager, Regional Transportation, commented on the information report. Mr. McCusker clarified that a new

funding stream would be created for community based transit funding applications, and these grants go through the Grants Committee. Existing grants funding will not be used for this program.

10. NOTICES OF MOTION – None

11. IN CAMERA

No In Camera session was held. The following item was dealt with during the public session:

11.1 Approval of In Camera Minutes – July 5, 2012 and January 24, 2013

MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Watts, that the In Camera minutes of the July 5, 2012 and January 24, 2013 Transportation Standing Committee meetings be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

12. NEXT MEETING – March 28, 2013

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 28, 2013, at 1:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, 3rd Floor, City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:56 p.m.

Jennifer Weagle
Legislative Assistant

INFORMATION ITEMS

- 1. HRM Community Based Transit Funding** (*information report dated January 31, 2013*)
- 2. Options for Managing Advertising Signage Highway 333** (*information report dated February 11, 2013*)
- 3. Terms of Reference - Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee** (*information report dated February 19, 2013*)