

**CULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**May 27, 2005**

**PRESENT:**

Councillor Streach  
Councillor Uteck  
Gary Vermeir  
Mike LaLeune  
Andrew Inch  
Shahin Sayadi  
Allison Outhit  
Paul Greenhalgh  
Gordon Morgan

**REGRETS:**

Margie Clow-Bohan  
Elias Metlej  
Betty Thomas  
Jeffery Spalding  
Dave Roberts

**STAFF**

**& OTHERS:**

Andrew Whittemore, Executive Assistant CAO  
Holly Richardson, Programmer, Recreation & Tourism  
Rachel Harrison, Student Intern, Recreation & Tourism  
Stephanie Parsons, Legislative Assistant

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - May 6, 2005**

**MOVED by Councillor Streach, seconded by Mr. Mike LaLeune that the minutes of May 6, 2005 be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

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

The agenda was accepted as circulated.

**4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES**

**4.1 Revised Terms of Reference**

- A copy of the revised Terms of Reference was before the Committee.

The Chair advised the Committee that Regional Council approved the amendments to the Terms of Reference. It was also noted that Ms. Betty Thomas, Chair of the Community and Race Relations Committee was appointed to the Cultural Advisory Committee.

**4.2 Tentative Meeting Schedule**

- A tentative meeting schedule was before the Committee for consideration.

After a brief discussion the Committee agreed to the meeting schedule and that the meetings will be held from 3:00-5:00 p.m. in Halifax Hall.

**5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS**

**5.1 Consultation and Communications**

- A document entitled "Draft Consultation/Communications Program" was before the Committee for consideration.
- A document entitled "Culture is HRM ... and it Matters" was before the Committee for information.
- A document entitled "The World Café Presents.." was before the Committee for information.

- A copy of the Metro Quarterly Survey was circulated to the Committee for information.

Ms. Holly Richardson advised the Committee that Staff is requesting endorsement of the Communication and Consultation Program. She noted that the program is intended to increase the profile of the Committee and Cultural Plan. She also recommended that the Committee implement the Communications Program in June.

Ms. Holly Richardson further suggested that the Committee use informal conversational tools for public dialogue. In reference to the document “**World Café Presents**” she advised the Café format is used to foster collaborative dialogue in which four or five people are seated together in a kitchen table format. Ms. Richardson also advised the Committee that Staff will be conducting presentations at HRM Community Councils, Board and Committee meetings.

Mr. Andrew Inch commented that a Culture Café is a good idea and should not exclude other options, as there are people who prefer a formal setting.

In reference to the document “**Culture is HRM and it Matters**” Ms. Holly Richardson advised that the document will be in the next issue of Business Voice, a magazine published by the Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Andrew Inch raised concern over issuing an article that states what the Cultural Plan is, before it has been developed. He noted that the article indicates that the policy will provide a 10-year outlook. This has not been agreed to by the Committee.

Ms. Holly Richardson advised the Committee that the Draft Commissioned Questions for the HRM Cultural Action Plan was included in the May issue of Metro Quarterly.

Councillor Streach raised concern over the role of the Committee and the time line that was established by staff. He noted that the Committee did not have an opportunity to review or discuss the questions and that prior to the release of any documents, they need to be approved by the Committee.

Although, some Committee members agreed that decision by e-mail is acceptable, there were other Committee members who raised concern and noted the following:

- Committee members receive numerous e-mails and may overlook an e-mail that requires immediate response.
- The public would assume that the Committee endorsed the document.
- It was suggested that a feedback document be attached to the e-mail if Staff want to receive feedback by e-mail.

After an ensuing discussion, Councillor Uteck suggested that the Committee establish a

Communications Sub-Committee.

The Legislative Assistant advised the Committee that decisions made by e-mail would not be recorded in the official records.

**MOVED by Mr. Andrew Inch, seconded by Ms. Allison Outhit that the Cultural Advisory Committee utilize e-mail as a discussion tool, and that matters requiring a decision be brought back to the Cultural Advisory Committee for approval. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

### **5.1.1 Website Design**

Ms. Holly Richardson advised the Committee of the following:

- The Cultural Website would be the primary communication tool.
- The Committee can provide input and design to the text page, but the menu's are standard for HRM and cannot be changed.
- She recommended that the Committee develop a slogan.

Mr. Gary Vermeir commented that the website requires artistic design and that a professional should be hired to design the web page. Ms. Holly Richardson advised that Shared Services/IT had advised that hiring an outside artist is against HRM protocol. She noted that \$2,000-\$3,000 has been included in the Cultural Plan Budget for website development.

Mr. Paul Greenhalgh offered to provide a list of accredited designers from NSCAD.

**MOVED by Mr. Gary Vermeir, seconded by Councillor Streach that staff investigate hiring a graphic designer to complete the Culture website. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Shahin Sayadi noted that providing information on the Culture Website, may indicate that decisions have been made. He also recommended that staff include a discussion forum on the website and that the website be developed with input from the public.

In response to Ms. Allison Outhit, Mr. Andrew Whittemore commented that once the Committee has met its mandate the content of the website would be replaced with the Cultural Plan.

Councillor Uteck recommended that Staff consult with Mr. Paul Greenhalgh regarding the artistic design of the website.

### **5.1.2 Public Opinion Survey**

Ms. Holly Richardson recommended that the Committee review the questionnaire and be prepared to discuss it at the June 10, 2005 meeting.

### **5.1.3 Press Conference**

The Chair advised the Committee that there will be a press conference on June 14, 2005 at 11:00 a.m. to announce the Cultural Advisory Committee.

### **5.1.4 Community Events**

- A copy of the HRM Cultural Plan Agenda was circulated to the Committee for consideration.

Ms. Holly Richardson updated the Committee on upcoming events and festivals in HRM. She advised the Committee that Staff is recommending that the Committee endorse the Consultation Program.

In response to various questions from Committee Members, Staff advised of the following:

- Some events may be more conducive to a staff member handing out pamphlets and answering questions. Other events may require a more formal presence.
- A comprehensive list of civic events and festivals in HRM is available. A sample of the events that staff thought would be good to attend was provided
- There is an Interdepartmental Committee who communicates information from other business units.

Upon the recommendation of the Committee, Ms. Holly Richardson advised the Committee that in order for the Cultural Advisory Committee to identify opportunities that should be included on the HRM Cultural Plan Agenda, she would provide the Legislative Assistant with an extensive list of Community Events for distribution.

Mr. Shahin Sayadi advised the Committee that at the May 6, 2005 meeting he raised concern regarding "Community Diversity" being a separate element and the use of the term Multi-cultural as it references the culture of others. The discussion paper projects that certain things are art and other things are cultural diversity. Categorizing "Community Diversity" as a separate element suggests the separation of people into groups. He also commented that Cultural Diversity should not reflect ethnicity. It should reflect different ways of creating the arts.

In response to Mr. Shahin Sayadi, Mr. Andrew Whitemore commented that Staff did note his concern however, it was overlooked while revising the discussion paper and that it would be reflected in the next revision.

Mr. Andrew Inch commented that Culture is an element of all segments and that the concept of "Community Diversity" should be removed from the philosophy of the Cultural Plan.

**MOVED by Ms. Allison Outhit, seconded by Mr. Gary Vermeir that the Cultural Advisory Committee approve the Consultation and Communications Plan as presented by staff. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

### **5.1.5 Stakeholder Interest**

No discussion.

### **5.2 Strategic Direction and Goals**

- A document entitled Cultural Goals Scan was previously circulated to Committee Members for Consideration.

See item 5.3

### **5.3 Discussion Paper**

- A revised discussion paper dated May 18, 2005 was before the Committee for consideration.

Mr. Andrew Whitemore advised the Committee of the following:

- The discussion paper is a working document intended to generate public input and foster the generation of ideas and discussion between Committee Members and the public.
- Staff is seeking endorsement of the vision statement and guiding principles, and direction on how to use the discussion paper in relation to public consultation.
- The discussion paper is intended to be a basis to move forward in the development of the goals and objectives.
- That staff have revised the vision statement and have incorporated the suggestions from the discussion at the May 6, 2005 meeting.

In response to a question from Mr. Paul Greenhalgh, Mr. Andrew Whitemore commented that Staff revised the statement based on what the Committee thinks is the future desired state for HRM. The Vision Statement will define the principles, goals and objectives. The Cultural Plan will direct Regional Council in regards to decision making.

Mr. Paul Greenhalgh commented that there is fundamental merit in using words such as excellence and quality in a vision statement. There are various types of events and institutions and there are various types of people who come to see them. The Cultural Policy must recognize that culture belongs to everyone. He suggested that the end result of Culture is the quality of life of the average person. There are two ways that Culture raises the quality of life:

- Examples of high excellence
- Individual participation

In response to Councillor Uteck, he commented that organizations are moving away from a single vision statement, and toward purpose statements that say what the organization is. Single vision statement retrains decision making.

A discussion ensued and the following comments regarding the vision statement were made:

- A vision statement is required in order to guide HRM in deciding where to allocate resources.
- A vision statement will guide HRM philosophically. It will identify where HRM is heading in the future.
- The vision statement should recognize that culture has different meanings to individuals.
- It was suggested that the Committee solicit suggestions and comments regarding the vision statement on the website.
- A vision statement is required in order to have a focus.

In response to a comment by Mr. Andrew Inch, Councillor Uteck advised that Regional Council will always have the discretion of making changes to the Cultural Plan. However, if the policy is entrenched within HRM with a specific purpose it becomes more difficult to change.

Mr. Gary Vermeir commented that there are many concepts that have not been defined by the Committee and that the Committee has yet to define Culture in terms of the Cultural Plan.

Mr. Mike LaLeune commented that the Committee needs to decide what is motivating a better quality of life and where the emphasis will be in the Cultural Plan:

1. To create economic activity on the basis of cultural activity.
2. To see and participate in culture.

He commented that many countries have decided to invest resources in cultural activities that have an economic end result. Although economic factors need to be considered, he

suggested that HRM'S Cultural Plan be motivated by having a cultural result. The question for the Committee is to determine if the Cultural Plan will be based on:

1. Participating in cultural activities that provides economic activity
2. Economic factors driven by culture

A discussion regarding Economics and Culture ensued and Committee Members made the following comments:

- Culture cannot be produced without money.
- Culture and economics are mutually inclusive/interrelated.
- If the end result is a better economy through art, then it doesn't matter
- There is limited funding available.
- Governments require an integrated policy to provide access to cultural training.
- HRM's contribution to culture is economic, such that HRM determines where resources will be allocated.

Mr. Paul Greenhalgh commented that The Atlantic Innovation Fund (AIF) is a \$300-million, fund designed to strengthen the economy of Atlantic Canada by accelerating the development of knowledge-based industry. The program does not recognize that culture has become an industry in Atlantic Canada.

Mr. Mike LaLeune commented that trying to fit culture into an economic development model is a very complicated, a hard argument to make and not sustainable. He also noted that creators of culture rely on the Patronage Model which is complex. He suggested that the Cultural Advisory Committee take a leadership role at the community level to get support. Mr. Gary Vermeir commented that leadership comes from the artist and communities.

Councillor Uteck suggested that the Committee exclude the vision statement while reviewing the discussion paper, and focus on the coordinated services & partnerships. She also advised that the discussion paper can still be revised. The recommendation is to approve the discussion paper in principle so that Staff can move forward. The Committee may decide not to have a vision statement.

**MOVED by Ms. Allison Outhit, seconded by Mr. Gordon Morgan that the Cultural Advisory Committee:**

1. **Recommend that staff exclude the Vision Statement from the Discussion Paper.**
2. **Approve the discussion paper in principle, as amended.**
3. **Endorse the release of the draft discussion paper for public consultation.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

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

7. **NEW BUSINESS/ADDED ITEMS**

8. **NEXT MEETING DATE**

It was agreed that the next meeting date will be Friday, June 10, 2005.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Stephanie Parsons  
Legislative Assistant