

**HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
SOLID WASTE/RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
FEBRUARY 5, 2001 @  
Council Chambers, 2750 Dutch Village Road**

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**Present:** Councillor Reg Rankin, Chair  
Councillor Gary Hines  
Councillor Jim Smith  
Councillor Dawn Sloane  
Councillor Gary Meade  
Jim Bauld, Diversion Planning Coordinator  
Brian Smith, Director, Solid Waste Operations  
Laurie Lewis, Collection & Processing Coordinator  
Barbara I. Moar, Assistant Municipal Clerk

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**1. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM.

**2. PRESENTATIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no presentations.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER 14, 2000 MEETING**

**MOVED by Councillor Meade, and seconded by Councillor Sloane that the Minutes of December 14, 2000 be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Chair welcomed Don Wright and Reg McAusland, Community Monitoring Committee, Theresa Smolenaars, Miller Waste and Ken Donnelly, LURA.

**4. TONNAGE REPORT - JANUARY 1, 2000 - DECEMBER 31, 2000**

Mr. Smith gave an overview of the waste-resource stream tonnage flow for recycling; ICI compost; residential composting, ICI waste; and residential waste for the year 2000. He also did a 1999/2000 comparison for each of the waste-resource streams, reviewing changes that have occurred. As noted in the report, there is very little difference in the commercial. Mr. Smith stated that any activity with respect to commercial waste is material being brought over the scales and there is a tipping fee of \$110.00/tonne. If commercial tonnage decreases or increases this is offset by the tipping fee.

Mr. Smith stated that the residential tonnage is almost 6% higher in the year 2000 than 1999. This waste is part of HRM's collection system and is paid for out of property taxation. It is the 'black bag' refuse that is left over after recycling, composting, and C&D wastes have been removed, and is sent to the Otter Lake landfill for disposal.

Mr. Smith reported that there has been an increase in the organic and recycling waste streams indicating that residents are participating in the program and using their green carts. He reported that a private compost facility closed in Sackville, and its materials (approximately 6,000/tonnes/year) were switched over to the HRM plants. It was pointed out that these figures do not include C&D wastes.

Referring to updated strategy numbers, Mr. Smith reviewed the diversion figures relative to the original estimated tonnage, the actual tonnage and the revised tonnage for each component of the waste-resource stream. Referring to residential, Mr. Smith pointed out that

the original total percentage was 58%. With the current percentage at 51%, staff feel that a more realistic total diversion figure for residential would be 57.4%.

Referring to ICI (Industrial, Commercial and Industrial), Mr. Smith pointed out that the original total percentage was 66.7%. Looking at the current percentage at 59.5%, a more realistic total diversion figure would be 64.3%. Councillor Smith responded that as long as development continues to grow, the reduction of waste is going to be difficult. Mr. Smith agreed, but emphasized that staff are committed to maximize diversion.

## **5. STAFF PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION**

### **5.1 2000/01 Budget Forecast**

Mr. Smith briefly reviewed the 2000/01 year end forecast figures that would be presented to the February 6<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. Referring to gross expenditures, Mr. Smith reported that the budget for the year 2000-01 was \$39,383,709. With a December forecast of \$41,547,336, Mr. Smith said there would be a budget variance of \$2,164,627. Most of this increase is related to tonnage activity, but there is also an issue at Otter Lake where more leachate is being processed. Leachate is the liquid material that comes off of the landfill cells, and because of the rain conditions this year, and some of the exposed area that staff has been working with in building new cells, leachate volumes are higher.

In reporting on the revenues, Mr. Smith stated that the net revenue was budgeted at \$27,174,000. The net forecast for revenues is \$26,652,336. Mr. Smith pointed out that revenues come from tipping fees, and from diversion credits received from the Resource Recovery Fund Board. The net budget variance for revenues is (\$522,373).

## **6. SOLID WASTE OPERATIONS UPDATE**

### **6.1 Residential Materials Quality Improvement Program**

Ms. Laurie Lewis, Collection & Processing Coordinator, reported on a residential material quality improvement program that staff, in conjunction with the residential haulers, Miller Waste (operators of recycling and composting plants), and New Era Farms (operator of a compost plant), has introduced to improve material quality by reducing residue levels.

Staff has commenced workshops with the collection crews to make them aware of the need to improve the quality. Ms. Lewis stated that the collection crews are the first line communication with HRM's customers. Curb side stickering of blue bags and green carts have been stepped up when a resident places non-recyclable or non-compostable materials in these bags and carts. The stickers notify the resident why the material cannot be collected. Ms. Lewis reported that 'curbside education' was increased initially two weeks ago in

Dartmouth and last week in Halifax, with other areas to be added as more workshops are held with the haulers. Stickers will be monitored.

Councillor Sloane expressed a concern that many residents in her District are not totally familiar with what is considered organics, recycling, household hazardous waste or just regular garbage, and suggested that more educational literature, for example, the "4 Waste Streams" brochure, or another Newsletter should be considered. The Councillor stated that this would be very helpful for new students moving into the area, and for residents who may or may not have received earlier communications. Other members agreed that it is important to educate residents. Ms. Lewis responded that staff are in the process of pursuing ways of educating the public, including billboards, yellow pages and newspapers. Councillor Sloan suggested that consideration should be given to putting this information on Eastlink Cable.

Councillor Smith suggested that before the program commences there should be some kind of advertising put in place to advise residents in the district under scrutiny that their garbage will not be collected if improperly sorted. As one of the initial districts that was chosen to start this program, the Councillor reported that he had received many calls from concerned residents.

## **6.2 Compost Facilities**

Ms. Lewis gave an update on staff's activity in working with the compost facility operators, New Era Farms and Miller Compost, to assist with capacity issues, including the separate collection of Christmas trees. Staff are working with New Era Farms and the Community Liaison Committee to assist in dealing with odour concerns. A meeting of New Era Farms and the Community Liaison Committee is scheduled for Wednesday February 21<sup>st</sup> at Dutch Village Road, @7:00 PM.

Ms. Lewis reported that with the closing of a private composting facility, HRM compost plants have experienced increased tonnages sooner than anticipated. In the year 2000, New Era Farms received from HRM sources, a total of 20,000 tonnes for processing. In addition New Era Farms received 5,000 tonnes from the Valley Region's green cart program. Ms. Lewis report that capacity for each compost plant is 25,000 tonnes, pointing out that there was an impact by the closure of the private sector compost plant on this facility. Miller Compost plant received 21,000 tonnes from HRM sources and another 1,600 tonnes from the Municipality of East Hants. Staff are continually discussing capacities and other issues with the compost operators.

## **7. DIVERSION INITIATIVES**

### **7.1 "Recycle Right"**

Mr. Bauld reported that a message reading "Recycle Right - Please put newspapers in Grocery Bags" will be on billboards in Dartmouth and Halifax starting on Wednesday, and an ad will be inserted in the local newspapers, Masthead News and the Southender. The intent is to encourage residents to use the grocery bags, and not their blue bags for recycling newspapers, with it being noted that this would be a savings to the residents.

## **7.2 Precycling**

Mr. Bauld said this message is to encourage shoppers to look for good quality products that will last for a long time, and that can be serviced when they do break down. Staff are also looking at ways to encourage the reduction of packaging material to make the public aware of the need to reduce this waste.

## **7.3 Office Paper Recycling**

Mr. Bauld reported that staff are stepping up the educational program on office paper recycling. Staff has been working with BOMA (Business Owners Management Association) in preparing a brochure to be sent out, including a certificate, signed by Mayor Kelly, when a company participates in the office recycling program. Mr. Bauld noted that many offices already have a paper recycling program in place and this is a reminder to them on how to make improvements and also to encourage other offices to participate.

## **7.4 Restaurants - How to Guide**

Mr. Bauld said there are many restaurants committed to composting, but there are others that are not. He stressed the need to educate employees on "how to" recycle properly and a brochure is being sent out to encourage owners/mangers to make improvements where necessary, and also to initiate programs in their restaurants.

## **7.5 Apartments - Source Separation Project**

Mr. Bauld reported that staff has been working with 30 of the largest property management firms, representing about 12,000 units in Halifax. Meetings have been held with the property management group, tenants, tenant associations, and haulers. Educational materials and posters have been provided to get these large apartments to compost. Mr. Bauld reported that currently there are about 7,000 apartment units that currently have organic collection services in their buildings. He stated that the Province has to date only played a very minor role in this program. HRM staff recently met with Provincial representatives and stressed the need for the Province to enforce its regulations on those firms that have not responded to HRM's attempts to compost.

## **7.6 Materials Monitoring**

Mr. Bauld spoke to the Committee on a materials monitoring process that has been in place since the Spring of 1999. As an example, he referred to trucks arriving at Otter Lake with a large component of the waste being corrugated cardboard, or organics, or C&D wastes that should not be coming to the landfill. The driver is issued a *waste discrepancy report* and this is followed up by staff with the generator. Mr. Bauld stated that a substantial increase of organics being diverted to the composting facilities through the *waste discrepancy report* monitoring.

### **7.7 Stewardship Agreements**

Mr. Bauld reported that in mid March, 2001, a new provincial Memorandum of Agreement between the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia, and DOE will come into effect, whereby residential sharps used by diabetics will be collected separately at drug stores. The sharps will be put into a sealed box that will be located in each drug store, and these boxes will be collected on a special separate run. They will be taken for disposal into the landfill without going on the tipping floor or through the front end processor, providing a safety feature for staff.

### **7.8 NSDOE Landfill Design Performance Review**

Mr. Bauld reported on a study that would be conducted over this summer and next fall of DOE's design standards for existing disposal cells, recognizing that raw compostable waste and hazardous wastes are no longer going into these cells. The question has been raised as to whether there is still a need for rigid higher performance standards. Mr. Bauld pointed out that this study may have an impact on design costs for cells 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. The Terms of Reference should be issued within the next two/three weeks.

### **7.9 Paint Stewardship**

Mr. Bauld reported that the Resource Recovery Fund has entered into a process whereby old residential paints can be taken to some enviro depots. It is expected that this will be in place in mid-2001. As well, Kent Home Improvement now accept old residential paint at the three stores in metro; and The Paint Recycling Company, Burnside accepts (for a small fee) old residential and commercial paints.

The meeting adjourned for a lunch break and reconvened for an informal meeting.

Jim Bauld  
Diversion Planning Coordinator