

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

**MINUTES OF MEETING
MARCH 10, 1999 @ 2:00 P.M.
Council Chambers, 2750 Dutch Village Road**

**Present: Councillor Reg Rankin, Chairman
Councillor Jack Mitchell
Councillor Gordon R. Snow
Councillor John Cunningham**

**Others: Councillor Russell Walker
Mark Bernard, Manager, Waste Resources
Jim Bauld, Operations Coordinator
Barbara I. Moar, Assistant Municipal Clerk**

Regrets: Mayor Walter Fitzgerald

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1. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The following items were added to the Agenda:

- **Request for a tour of landfill and composting facilities**
- **Halifax C & D Facility**
- **Harbour City Homes**

MOVED By Councillors Snow and Mitchell that the Agenda be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. PRESENTATIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**2.1 Shelly Wilcox, EarthCycle - Waste Management in Schools**

Ms. Wilcox reported to the Committee that EarthCycle is Coordinator of The Eco-Schools Program for the HRM School Board. This program is aimed at promoting overall resource management and will measurably change Board policy regarding solid-waste management, as well as change procedures for the operation of physical plant aspects of school facilities. This will be accomplished through community partnership to deliver the project in an environmentally and economically sustainable fashion.

Ms. Wilcox advised that this is a long-term project implemented in phases over the course of three years. The first year will focus on implementing source separation and diversion from the landfill of recyclable and compostable materials in all schools. She reviewed the major goals of the Eco-Schools program which are detailed in a handout distributed at the meeting (copy in meeting file).

Mr. Bauld stated that the HRM Solid Waste Resources is very supportive of this program and are very encouraged with the progress that is being made by all those involved. The Chairman agreed that this is an excellent initiative. The schools are one of the most important components of the educational strategy.

2.2 Stephen Taylor, Enviro Waste Ltd.

Mr. Taylor said he would like to thank HRM for not deviating in its solid waste/resource process. There are solutions being developed and they are working. He stressed the importance of educating the public and to continue with what HRM has started. He pointed out that by passing By-Law #600, HRM has created a good tool that can be used by those in the industry to advise the public what the rules are that must be followed. He pointed out that most businesses are now ready to go ahead with the new changes, including the

composting. He stressed the importance of HRM not accepting negative comments from businesses that are implying they cannot do this. He believes they just need to be educated, and by being open minded, solutions can be found for any problems.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 18, 1998

MOVED BY Councillor Mitchell, seconded by Councillor Cunningham THAT the Minutes of November 18, 1998 be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. STATUS REPORT RE ENFORCEMENT OF BY-LAW S-600 "SOLID WASTE RESOURCE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL BY-LAW"

A March 6, 1999 staff report was distributed to the Committee. By the use of overheads, Peter James, Regional Co-ordinator for By-law Enforcement and Tom Duncan, Special Constable reviewed the report. Mr. James spoke to the members of a series of Options for Enforcement of By-Law Violations.

Mr. James reported that from December 21, 1998 to February 25, 1999, HRM has received 239 complaints dealing with "collection time and frequency alleged violations". The enforcement action taken resulted in 211 verbal warnings and 28 tickets issued. Those tickets are the \$50.00 voluntary payment tickets, payable within 14 days.

There have been 29 "transient waste and illegal dumping alleged violations". These are violations when people are putting solid waste on someone else's property. The enforcement action resulted in 10 education sessions, 18 verbal warnings and 1 ticket being issued.

There have been 8 individuals and 9 vehicles "scavenging alleged violations". Mr. James referred to the scavenging by individuals making a living out of vehicles/trucks going around and collecting recyclables. Mr. James pointed out that Special Constable Duncan did 2 or 3 preventive patrols and discussed with the 8 individuals the legalities of S-600, and they were given verbal warnings. The enforcement action taken on the 9 vehicle violations resulted in 1 verbal warning, 7 written warnings via letters and 1 ticket being issued.

The total number of complaints to February 25, 1999 is 285. The enforcement action taken resulted in:

- 10 Education
- 238 Verbal Warnings
- 7 Letters
- 30 Tickets Issued

Mr. James reported that he could not provide figures today on the amount of revenue that has been generated on the tickets that have been issued. He will provide this in a written report for the Committee's next meeting.

Councillor Mitchell asked if the 238 people that were given the verbal warnings 'listened'? Special Constable Duncan said 99% of the people realize that they made a mistake and some even go out while he is there, to pick up the garbage and put it out on the regular day. He goes back on the day after giving a warning and if it is still there, he issues a ticket.

Councillor Mitchell asked if there was a by-law in place that states the haulers have to have covering over their trucks so that the waste doesn't blow off on to the streets? Mr. Bauld responded that this is included in By-law S-600. Mr. Bauld said staff are working with the Department of Transportation and he is expecting their support when notices are issued at the scale house at the Otter Lake landfill. The notice will make reference to HRM's by-law and also DOT's legislation re the Highways Act.

Councillor Cunningham said he would like to recognize the enthusiastic co-operation he had received from Mr. James and Special Constable Duncan when he has approached them with Solid Waste By-law problems. These have been addressed immediately and Special Constable Duncan has always called Councillor Cunningham back to advise him of the action taken, and this is very much appreciated.

Councillor Snow asked what is being done to find the culprits that are illegally dumping? He stated his concerns with property owners, quite often seniors, either having to remove it themselves, or pay to have it removed. Mr. James responded that there are at least two on-going investigations on illegal dumping. This can be handled in a series of ways, including under the Dangerous and Unsightly section of the HRM Act. Staff try to identify who is responsible for dumping it and follow up with them, but unfortunately sometimes they cannot be identified. HRM does not want to necessarily hold the property owner responsible for items dumped on their property, but sometimes there is no choice.

Councillor Snow questioned whether by-law enforcement is going to be a 'strong arm' approach, expressing that there would probably always be people that will not abide by the by-law? Mr. James responded that staff are doing the very best they can with the resources allocated and they are giving a very pro-active approach to enforcing by-laws to the utmost. Enforcement of all of HRM's by-laws is being taken very seriously by Mr. James and his staff.

The Chairman said he is very pleased with the report and staff's efforts in responding to complaints that have been received.

5. PRESENTATION BY STAFF ON ICI ORGANICS DIVERSION STRATEGY

A staff report dated March 4, 1999 had been distributed to the Committee. Before beginning the presentation on ICI organics diversion strategy, using a graph Mr. Bernard reviewed the overall diversion numbers and overall diversion strategy. Mr. Bernard did a comparison on staff's previous prediction on what the quantities would be, and the actual waste stream tonnages.

Mr. Bernard introduced Mr. Fred Wendt. Mr. Wendt presented the ICI strategy developed by HRM staff to encourage diversion in the ICI (industrial, commercial and industrial) sectors. This strategy has three basic elements - Education, Monitoring and Enforcement; and Tipping Fee Policy. Mr. Wendt referred to the report which outlines these strategies describing how staff is proceeding to meet diversion targets.

Mr. Bauld referred to the Tipping Fee Policy pointing out that should a trend by the ICI sector of a significant diversion of organic material towards the two composting facilities not be apparent within the next sixty days, staff will be coming back to the Committee and Council for the establishment of a review of the tipping fees. The Chairman suggested that consideration be given to looking at an increase in the tipping fees 'sooner than later'. He does not want to be debating this in Council at the eleventh hour if the current trend should continue.

In response to a question from Councillor Walker on whether it was possible to penalize those ICI sectors that are not diverting organic material, the Chairman responded that any ICI fee increase would be across the board. He pointed out that HRM has already captured the residential sector by having control at the curb. But, there is no legislative control on the ICI sectors. If the organic material is not diverted, the only tool that can be used is the tipping fee.

It was also pointed out that when loads arrive at the landfill, they are collected from a number of different sources, some of which are not separating. It would be very difficult to identify those that are not complying with the by-law. Eventually, staff would like to refuse the loads and this would result in haulers refusing to accept loads that are not separated. Councillor Walker again expressed his concern that people who are abiding by all the rules and regulations would have to pay additional fees because of those that do not comply.

Following some further discussion and comments, it was agreed that staff would monitor the ICI diversions and prepare a report for the next SWRAC meeting.

6. ORGANICS GREEN CART PROGRAM UPDATE

Ms. Theresa Smolenaars, Administration Coordinator updated the Committee on the organics green cart program as detailed in a March 10, 1999 staff report. During 1998 approximately 97,000 organic green carts and kitchen bins were delivered to eligible properties throughout all areas of the municipality. At the time of delivery there was an acceptance rate of approximately 99% and the public support for the program continues to remain strong. Included in the report was a table detailing the reasons why carts and/or kitchen bins were removed or delivered and the frequency for each reason.

During the month of January 1999 the composting facilities received 2,122 tonnes of material from the residential program, and 1,359 tonnes of material were received in February, 1999. The tonnage was much higher in January due to the large volumes of Christmas trees collected. The contamination rate is approximately 3%, which indicates the residents are consistently placing the right materials in their carts.

Ms. Smolenaars reported that a new calendar would be going out to residents so that they would know when they have to put their materials out. There will a newsletter going out in the Spring that will emphasize both the recycling and cart programs

On behalf of HRM, Councillor Mitchell congratulated and thanked staff for the excellent job they have been doing with these programs. The Chairman said he believes what is being done in Nova Scotia is unprecedented in North America and he also congratulated staff.

Councillor Cunningham said the only complaints he had received is with regard to the smell. He asked with the warmer weather approaching is staff planning any kind of educational programs? Ms. Smolenaars said this would be addressed in the newsletter that is going out, and there will be some further training with Metro Info to make sure they can handle these kinds of inquiries.

7. ADDED ITEMS

7.1 Request for a Tour of Landfill and Composting Facilities

Councillor Mitchell said some of the Councillors are very interested in having a tour of the composting facilities in Dartmouth and Goodwood and also the landfill. He asked if staff could set up a schedule for these tours? The Chairman also asked that at the first opportunity there be a tour set up for the host community. Mr. Bauld responded that staff had already been talking to MIRROR to set up some tours and when finalized would report back to the Chairman and Councillor Mitchell. Councillor Mitchell added that the elementary school children are also very interested in seeing the landfill and asked that a tour be set up for them.

7.2 Halifax C & D Facility

Councillor Mitchell expressed his concern about some of the waste that is being dumped in the Goodwood area. He referred to a sample of material that he had received at an earlier Committee meeting from Mr. Chassie noting that what is now being dumped at this location is quite different. He had received complaints suggesting an odour was coming from the landfill site, when in fact it was coming from the C & D site. Councillor Mitchell had contacted the owner of the C & D facility, Mr. Bauld and Mr. Bernard to discuss this issue. He referred to garbage at the site that was piled to the top of the trees with steam coming from it and asked the owner to speak to this concern.

Mr. Don Chassie stated that he was very disappointed with what Councillor Mitchell has said today. He said there are 6,000 tonnes of material on the site and everything has been set up through the Department of Environment. Mr. Chassie said there are third party scientists working for him through the DOE, monitoring the materials and he is going through the process of getting his materials permitted for use. It's the same kind of process that people had to go through for composting. Mr. Chassie said he had no problem with the material, it is in the testing process. In response to Councillor Mitchell's concerns, Mr. Chassie said the odour problem was more of a chemical problem than a composting problem. Councillor Mitchell referred to previous problems of illegal dumping in the area and stated that he wants to be able to ensure the residents that this C & D site is being operated properly.

Following some further discussion, it was agreed that staff would follow up with DOE to ensure that the land use is applicable for this purpose and prepare a report for the next Committee meeting.

7.3 Harbour City Homes

Councillor Walker briefly reviewed a March 8th letter he had received from Harbour City Homes addressing their concerns with solid waste disposal. Their concerns include the length of time required to spend in line ups at the Otter Lake scales, garbage dumping on other people's property, and storing green bins. The letter was passed to staff with a request that a meeting be set up with the Nancy Wooden, General Manager, Harbour City Homes.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Committee meeting will be May 5, 1999 @ 2:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Jim Bauld
Manager, Waste Resources