

**SOLID WASTE/RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**SEPTEMBER 8, 1999**

THOSE PRESENT: Councillor Rankin, Chair  
Councillor Mitchell  
Councillor Cunningham (arrived at 2:30 p.m.)

ALSO PRESENT: Mark Bernard, Manager, Waste Resources  
Jim Bauld, Operations Coordinator, Waste Resources  
Fred Wendt, Supervisor, Collection and Process  
Laurie Lewis, Administration Coordinator  
Councillor Fougere  
Sandra Shute, Assistant Municipal Clerk

Regrets: Mayor Fitzgerald  
Councillor Snow

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

Councillor Cunningham indicated prior to the meeting that he would be late. Since Councillor Cunningham constituted the quorum, it was agreed to proceed with Presentations and Information Items until such time as Councillor Cunningham arrived.

Added Items:            Jim Cale - Implementation of the Waste Management Strategy  
                              New Era Farms - Alleged Odour Problems

It was agreed to approve the Agenda as amended above.

**2. PRESENTATIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC****2.1 Garbage and Rubbish Provisions - City of Halifax Ordinance 157 Respecting the Minimum Standards for Existing Buildings and Housing Accommodations**

Mr. Hugh Pullen, 6262 Oakland Road, President, Peninsula South Community Association stated that the above Ordinance was passed by the former City of Halifax in 1973, amended in 1976 and 1984 but he was assured by the Municipal Solicitor that the Ordinance has not been repealed. For solid waste purposes, he referred to Sections 2, 16 and 17 and quoted from same.

Subsequently, Mr. Pullen went on to say that specifically in the older parts of the South end, there were people who keep their garbage at the front door, along with their green bin. This, in his opinion, was not the intention of the Ordinance. Garbage and cardboard rejected by the collection truck sits for the next two to four weeks and this was not the intent either. The older areas are changing from family dwellings to student living, which means more garbage because the number of people living on the Peninsula is rising, especially the transient population, which was the nub of the problem. People come from lesser municipalities and do not know the rules, do not appear to be interested in learning them and carry on the way they did at home.

Mr. Pullen suggested that along with the enforcement program, there needed to be an education program. He had asked Mr. Bauld if it was possible to contact the Student Unions to see if literature could be given out - as circulated to homeowners - and which was effective. He admitted it was difficult to enforce something if people did not know what was being enforced. It was critical that the transient population be aware of the solutions.

Councillor Mitchell asked what percentage in the area was doing this. In response, Mr. Pullen said it varies - in the South Street area, every third or fourth house. Along Victoria Road or Lucknow, it could be every fifth or sixth house.

Mr. Jim Bauld, Operations Coordinator, Waste Resources advised that information packages, which included collection schedules and a notice for off-campus students - went out to Dalhousie and Kings but, unfortunately, Saint Marys was slower in responding to the request. Staff was still in the process of getting the information out this week.

Mr. Bauld pointed out that another issue was not the people moving in but the people moving out who did not care and left the things they did not want behind. The big issue was communication and enforcement and it was important to be vigilant with enforcement.

Mr. Pullen stated further that regrettably the universities felt that their writ stopped at the university and were not concerned with the living standards of students living off the campus.

Councillor Rankin requested that a letter be sent to the Vice-President of Administration, or other appropriate officer of the university soliciting their cooperation with the Student Unions in an effort to get some kind of direction from the senior level.

Mr. Bauld indicated that Waste Resources staff would be encouraging a joint meeting with HRM staff and the separate universities to brainstorm to see what could be done to address the problems.

## **2.2 Implementation of Waste Management Strategy**

Mr. Jim Cale, 5795 Charles Street stated he was supportive of the waste management strategy; however, he wanted to make some initial assessments regarding the success of its implementation. Some fine tuning of the implementation would lead to a much greater overall effectiveness. After attending a meeting of various neighbourhood and community associations on the Peninsula, it became evident that many of the problems he was experiencing were common.

Subsequently, he advised of the following concerns:

1. Green cart smell - In his area, there was no easy access to the back yard and, in fact, some residents did not have a back yard to keep their carts. This also meant difficulty in getting access to a hose to clean out the carts. The carts are not easy to clean, especially if cleaning is required below the screen. Then there were the people who did not care and tossed anything in to the cart to rot for two weeks. There was a need to better educate these people concerning cleanliness and care of the green carts. In the summer, a more frequent pickup would help.
2. Waste in the Streets - Waste left on the curbside is increasing, especially occurring when people move out and put everything they do not want out, regardless of when garbage day occurs. There were also far too many people who put regular garbage

out on a green cart collection day and, rather than bring it back in, leave it out to the following week. He suggested a special collection of garbage at month end for people who are moving as well as stricter enforcement of existing regulations.

3. The area around Charles, John and Agricola is also affected adversely by street people depositing bags of waste from which they have removed the contents that are of some value to them. Some of this garbage is dumped with commercial garbage at the backs of properties and some of these businesses are not concerned with the areas that customers do not see from the front of the premises.
4. Litter - There were few, if any, receptacles for waste in the area yet, for many people, walking is the primary means of transportation. The only streets that appear to have waste receptacles are those in the downtown area.

Mr. Cale suggested that the current pickup schedule needs to be adjusted to accommodate hot weather problems and moving. While the number of people not complying with the current rules are in the minority, they are sufficient to make some areas of the Peninsula smelly, unsightly and unhealthy.

Councillor Rankin asked what enforcement tools were available. There had been a concern with the province giving the necessary authority to charge people with the expense of removal of garbage in the City of Halifax. In response, Mr. Bernard, Manager, Waste Resources advised this requires an amendment to the Municipal Government Act but this amendment has not come about yet. There was the ability to issue a Summary Offence Ticket which can be paid immediately for \$50. He believed there have been some levied but a By-law Enforcement Officer would have to do a report on that.

Councillor Rankin asked if there was any assistance available from the Police. In response, Mr. Bernard advised he did not think there would be much assistance available. With By-law Enforcement Officers, there might be a need to double up at peak times to take care of any problems. This would be looked at for next year.

Mr. Cale asked if the owners of the buildings could be held accountable if the tenants dumped garbage and fled. In response, Mr. Bernard advised yes.

### 3. **ADDED ITEMS**

### 3.1 **New Era Farms, Prospect Road - Alleged Odour Problems**

Mr. Bernard explained that New Era Farms contracted with HRM to operate the facility. The nuisance odour problem that has been discussed in the media over the last few days comes under Mr. Burns' realm of responsibility.

Mr. Roger Burns, Manager, New Era Farms explained that the facility has been operating since January 1, 1999 with everything up to par except for last Friday when there was a situation when they were negligent in leaving the doors open to carry out major work. As there was a strong wind traveling towards Peggys Cove, there was some noticeable odour in the area. Investigation indicated that there were a number of things that had to be fixed and since then, it has been monitored to make sure that it does not happen again. New Era Farms took responsibility and talked to some of the businesses in the area, indicating apologies and that they would keep a closer eye on the facility. It would not be an on-going problem.

Councillor Mitchell asked the status of a Monitoring Committee. In response, Mr. Burns advised they were in the process of setting it up. They were looking for volunteers.

Councillor Mitchell subsequently advised he would speak to Councillor Adams regarding representation on the Committee.

Councillor Rankin thanked Mr. Burns for coming forward and being forthright with the information. It was considered to be an isolated incident.

## 4. **ILLEGAL DUMPING ACTION PLAN**

An Information Report dated September 2, 1999 was before the Committee. Fred Wendt, Supervisor Collection and Process provided an overview of the report.

Councillor Cunningham arrived at 2:30 p.m., constituting a quorum.

Councillor Rankin asked if there was some change taking place. In response, Mr. Wendt advised that there has already been some change but illegal dumping has always been around. The task was to figure out how to put a stop to it.

Councillor Mitchell advised he had put an article in the newspaper asking the public to advise him of people who are dumping illegally. Communication has worked and made quite a difference.

Mr. Wendt advised that the solution will be a combination of factors - education, clean up and selective enforcement.

Councillor Rankin suggested seriously considering providing commercial carriers with a label on the truck for leakage of garbage similar to those on trucks re safe driving habits. This was also an advertisement of the waste management strategy. He offered to pay for the stickers from his District Discretionary Funds.

Mr. Bauld advised that with regard to unsecured loads, there has been on-going enforcement taking place by the Motor Vehicle Compliance Section of the province. They have issued tickets and billed the cost of cleanup.

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES - MAY 12, 1999**

**MOVED by Councillors Mitchell and Cunningham to approve the Minutes of meeting held on May 12, 1999 as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

6. **SOLID WASTE/RESOURCE TONNAGE REPORT**

An Information Report dated September 3, 1999 was before the Committee. Laurie Lewis, Administration Coordinator, Waste Resources provided an overview of the report.

During the course of her presentation, Ms. Lewis explained the chart and statistics provided in the report. She advised that while there was certainly success with diversion with the implementation of organics collection and recycling enhancement, there were still challenges and additional work to be done.

Subsequently, staff answered questions regarding the statistics provided.

7. **PILOT PROJECT - HALIFAX TRANSFER STATION**

An Information Report dated September 8, 1999 was before the Committee. Jim Bauld provided an overview of the report. Dedicated loads of commercial material, starting in October, 1999 for three months, mostly inert, will be inspected at the Transfer Station, organics pulled out and the rest will be transferred directly to the landfill without going through the Front End Processor. This will allow the equivalent additional capacity savings to move residential waste into the Front End Processor rather than to Queens. The Queens contract is effective until the end of March, 2000 and an expensive short term solution but cheaper than other solutions.

Councillor Rankin clarified that this was a modified version of the Front End Processor at the Transfer Station in Halifax.

Councillor Cunningham asked if it was expected to be completely free of diversion to Queens before the end of March. In response, Mr. Bauld said it was intended to get out of Queens as quickly as possible and this was seen as an opportunity. It was hard to know how successful the program will be until the Pilot Program starts. If the Pilot Project proves there is still material that cannot be handled within the system, then staff would come back with recommendations and options in January. This would still allow time before the end of March.

Councillor Rankin pointed out that cost per tonne to Queens was over \$100 and asked what was the cost per tonne to HRM at the Halifax Transfer Station. In response, Mr. Bauld advised that it was cheaper to handle it at the Halifax Transfer Station but it was difficult to give predictions at this time.

Councillor Rankin stressed it was important to have more certainty by the time the budget process gets underway for 2000/01.

Councillor Mitchell asked if there were certain companies causing more problems than others. In response, Mr. Bauld advised that one of the advantages afforded through inspection of material coming into the Front End Processor over the last eight months has been a good opportunity to observe what haulers are doing. There were only about a dozen who had load on/load off containers and staff would be working with them to direct them to the Halifax Transfer Station during the Pilot Program.

Councillor Fougere asked if the projected population growth figured into the overall capacity. In response, Mr. Bauld advised that it will make it more difficult to achieve the goal but does not change the game plan of achieving that goal.

Subsequently, staff provided further information on costs and projections.

## **8. GREEN CART NUISANCE CONTROL AND COLLECTION FREQUENCY**

An Information Report dated September 8, 1999 was before the Committee. Mr. Bernard provided an overview of the report. Council had requested that staff prepare a report examining the possibility of weekly pickup of the green carts during the period of June 1 to September 30. Also before the Committee was an undated letter from the Community Monitoring Committee re summer collection of composting materials.

Councillor Rankin noted that the recommendation was for the status quo and to continue to develop and implement an enhanced communication and education program to assist residents in addressing the seasonal nuisance relating to the organics cart. The cost would be at least another \$750,000 to do a weekly run for four months at the minimum.



Councillor Mitchell asked how to deal with the people who are having the worse problems with the green carts. In response, Mr. Bernard advised that the people who call in with problems can have material directed to them. Staff was working with the collector to determine the areas where there is less use of the green carts to focus on those areas.

Councillor Cunningham stated the telephone calls received indicate there is concern with dealing with a health hazard and asked if this was so. In response, Mr. Bernard advised that Department of Environment indicated there was no health hazard as long as the green cart was properly managed in the sense that it is emptied every two weeks.

Councillor Cunningham noted that he has had more calls with respect to rats since the green carts started and asked if there was a co-relation. In response, Mr. Bernard advised there have been very few calls about rats but he understood that the green carts would not attract a nest of rats because they do not provide any food.

Councillor Cunningham referred to advertising by private companies who are offering to clean the carts. He asked if there was any information available.

Councillor Fougere indicated that you had to book three weeks ahead. They clean the cart the day after the collection day in each area.

Councillor Cunningham stated he was disturbed with the calls he gets from people who are refusing to use the carts anymore because of the current problems. He asked what you could tell these people. In response, Mr. Bernard said he asked them what they were going to do with their organics since they would have to keep them for two weeks. He also points out to them that their garbage will have to be opened by someone else.

Councillor Fougere asked if people were being discouraged publicly from using insecticide to clean their carts. In response, Mr. Bernard advised it was not publicly discouraged. It was not recommended but it was not affecting the end product.

Councillor Fougere advised that some of the language used is very industrial terminology - example, boxboard. People could relate to cereal boxes, for example. She asked if it could be made more user friendly, to the level of the common understanding. Additionally, she recommended two education blitzes a year, in the summer and when the university students come back in the fall.

**MOVED by Councillors Mitchell and Cunningham to support the recommendation contained in the Staff Report dated September 8, 1999 that the frequency of the residential organics collection service, a major component of the solid waste management system set up for five year collection contracts and approved by Halifax**

**Regional Council, remain bi-weekly. Further, that staff be directed to continue to develop and implement an enhanced communication and education program to assist residents in addressing the seasonal nuisance relating to the organics cart. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Councillor Rankin asked, with regard to education, if the Committee would support forwarding the report as an Information Item to the next meeting of Regional Council. Someone could bring it forward. Staff could be in attendance to do a seven or eight minute presentation which would deliver education to the listening audience.

Committee members agreed.

**9. COMMUNITY CONCERN RE C & D WASTE MANAGEMENT**

A letter dated June 30, 1999 from Mary Lyn Saturley with regard to a public meeting held on June 24, 1999 regarding the activities of Halifax County C & D Recycling was before the Committee.

Councillor Mitchell provided an update on what has been done to date and asked that staff look into whether or not arrangements can be made to take more of the material. He advised he was in receipt of the letter and would ensure that copies are provided to members of the Committee and the Clerk.

**10. HRM WASTE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SURVEY**

An Information Report dated September 3, 1999 was before the Committee. The survey was conducted in cooperation with the Nova Scotia Youth Conservation Corps during the summer. Mr. Bernard provided an overview of the survey done on Preston Street - 200 homes.

The Chair recognized Mr. Pullen. Mr. Pullen pointed out that the survey would have been much more relevant if it had taken place in September/October when the transient population is in.

Mr. Bauld advised staff would take Mr. Pullen's point into consideration, especially with Councillor Fougere's emphasis on seasonal blitzes in the spring and fall. Staff had used the opportunity with the Youth Corps/Department of Environment to conduct the summer survey.

**11. NEXT MEETING DATE - No decision made.**

12. **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion from Councillor Mitchell, the meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Jim Bauld  
Operations Coordinator