

HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES
JUNE 17, 1997

PRESENT:

Mayor Walter Fitzgerald
Deputy Mayor Jack Greenough
Councillors
Gordon R. Snow
David Hendsbee
Ron Cooper
Condo Sarto
Bruce Hetherington
Clint Schofield
John Cunningham
Jerry Blumenthal
Howard Epstein
Russell Walker
Bill Stone
Ron Hanson
Stephen Adams
Barry Barnet
Robert Harvey
Peter Kelly
Reg Rankin
Jack Mitchell

Regrets

Councillors Bill Dooks
Harry McInroy
Graham L. Downey
Larry Uteck

STAFF MEMBERS:

Mr. Ken Meech, Chief Administrative Officer
Ms. Vi Carmichael, Municipal Clerk
Ms. Jane Nauss, Assistant Municipal Clerk

As there was no quorum at 2:00 p.m., Mayor Fitzgerald called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - May 13, 20, 22, 1997

MOVED by Councillors Blumenthal and Hetherington to adopt the Committee of the Whole Minutes for May 13, 20 and 22, 1997. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

2. UPDATE - COMMITTEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Councillor Peter Kelly, Chair, Committee Advisory Committee, addressed Council noting a new Committee structure was being proposed. It was anticipated that the manner in which business is handled, should be more efficient and effective. The Committee would be recommending the following:

- a) approval, in principle, of the Round Table Model
- b) authorization for the recruitment of volunteers, in accordance with the Committee's time frame
- c) support for the continued development of the Round Table Model, to coincide with the set time for activation of the new model.

Ms. Barb Neihley, Priority and Policy, addressed Council, and through the use of overheads reviewed the following:

- the Round Tables would provide advice and guidance - region wide
- the Round Tables would provide advice and guidance - Community Specific
- existing Committee structure
- interim Committee structure
- long term goals of the Round Tables
- composition of the Round Tables
- current Committee issues.

To elaborate, Ms. Neihley advised there would be six Round Tables:

- Community Resources & Relations
- Development & Transportation
- Economic Development & Economic Tourism
- Environment & Natural Resources,
- Culture, Arts & Heritage, and
- Corporate & Administration.

Each Table would be composed of:

- 4 Councillors
- 7 citizens, and
- a resource of volunteers (business, community, institutional).

The major activities of each Table would be:

- organize public forums
- invite submissions from interested parties
- delegate work to ad hoc subcommittees
- conduct/commission studies and/or research
- present reports and/or recommendations to Council.

It was anticipated that the costs involved to implement this new structure should not be more than the existing costs (\$22,000).

It is being proposed that the Current Advisory Committees will be associated with the following Round Tables:

- Community Resources & Relations (Police Commission, Cat Committee, Race Relations/Human Rights Disabilities/Persons with Disabilities, Emergency Measures, Grants, Healthy Dartmouth)
- Development & Transportation (Access-A-Bus, Northwest Transit Advisory, Accessible Taxis, Commuter Rail, Fences, Halifax Transit Advisory, Harbour East PAC, Municipal County PAC, Peninsula PAC, Public Transportation, Taxi and Limousine, Taxi and Limousine By-Law)
- Economic Development (Hotels, Tourism Halifax, Dangerous and Unsightly Premises)
- Environment & Natural Resources (Community Monitoring, Dartmouth Lakes, Halifax County Watershed Advisory, Halifax Harbour Waste Water Management, Halifax Lakes and Waterways Advisory, Point Pleasant Park, Solid Waste Advisory, Watershed Advisory Liaison Group)
- Heritage and Culture (Bedford Days, Canada Day, Halifax-Dartmouth Natal Day, Logo Selection, Regional Heritage Advisory)
- Administration & Corporate (Audit, CAO Review, Committee Advisory, Halifax County Pension, Halifax Retirement, Interim Pension, Municipal Election Campaign Contribution, Municipal Legislation Review).

A question and answer period took place between Council and staff, with staff and the Chair advising of the following:

- various existing Committees would remain as sub-committees
- Committees will not have to meet as often as is now often required
- agendas will not need to be long
- there will be more people sharing the workload
- various Committees would remain intact as per legislation

- there will be a phased in process involved
- these Tables will be a mechanism through which information would flow to Council.

Councillor Kelly stated should Council decide in the future, that this structure is not workable, then it can be changed. This proposal is strictly a proposal.

Ms. Val Spencer, Commissioner, Priority and Policy, stated these Round Tables will provide guidance, over time, as it pertains to committee structure. In essence, a ready made advisory system will be in place and Council will have a standing referral service.

Councillor Kelly further stated these Round Tables can deal with matters as needed.

Councillor Stone expressed concern with this proposal noting this information was not what he expected. Further, he enquired as to what has happened to the three Standing Committees (Executive, Operations, Programs) on which it had been proposed that three or four Councillors would sit on each body. The Councillor further stated this proposal was too broad and general, and that volunteers will not be willing to serve. One suggestion was to create ad hoc committees which would complete their mandate and then disband. Councillor Stone stated this proposal simply created another level of bureaucracy.

Councillor Barnet took his place at the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

In response, Councillor Kelly stated this proposal was a new approach which the Committee felt was a viable model to test, at this point in time.

Councillor Walker expressed concern suggesting that matters will not be dealt with under this type of structure.

Councillor Epstein took his place at the meeting (4:10 p.m.).

Councillor Cooper stated that Council appears not to completely understand the concept. The Councillor noted that as a result of the size of the municipality, the Committee is recommending that input from residents would enhance the current Committee system. Councillor Cooper stated that the current structure is detrimental to the municipality. He stressed that the Round Tables will not make all the decisions but will ensure all resources are available to make a decision on any given matter. Regional Council will benefit in the long run.

Councillor Sarto took his place at the meeting (4:11 p.m.).

Deputy Mayor Greenough reiterated an earlier comment that this mechanism was chosen due to the fact it provides for greater citizen participation. Further, these are advisory bodies. The Deputy Mayor suggested that the Committee Advisory Committee be expanded at this point in time.

Mayor Fitzgerald suggested that he meet with the Chair of the Committee Advisory Committee and respective staff, the following day to discuss the Deputy Mayor's suggestion of expanding the Committee.

3. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOVED by Councillor Kelly and Deputy Mayor Greenough to adjourn the meeting at 4:15 p.m. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Vi Carmichael
MUNICIPAL CLERK