

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE 2001/2002 OPERATING BUDGET MINUTES March 19, 2001

PRESENT:

**Mayor Peter J. Kelly
Councillors: Gary Hines
Keith Colwell
Ron Cooper
Condo Sarto
Bruce Hetherington
Jim Smith
John Cunningham
Dawn Sloane
Sue Uteck
Sheila Fougere
Russell Walker
Diana Whalen
Linda Mosher
Stephen Adams
Brad Johns
Robert Harvey
Gary Meade**

ABSENT:

**Deputy Mayor Jerry Blumenthal (Regrets)
Councillors: Steve Streach
Harry MacInroy
Len Goucher (Regrets)
Reg Rankin**

STAFF:

**Mr. Ken Meech, Chief Administrative Officer
Ms. Sherryll Murphy, Assistant Municipal Clerk**

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Mayor Kelly called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

1. **CONTINUATION OF 2001/2002 OPERATING BUDGET DELIBERATIONS**

REGIONAL POLICE SERVICES (CONTINUED)

Responding to a questions from Mayor Kelly regarding recent media stories which referred to the need for 15 additional officers, Chief MacKinnon indicated that the original submission had been for 15 officers. He went on to note that after Peer Review this number had been adjusted to 10 and that is the number presently being requested. He went on to note that he had indicated on the 9th that he would be looking for an additional 5 officers in next year's budget.

MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Sloane that five (5) additional Regional Police officers at a cost of \$152,500 (includes vehicles and benefits budgeted on a six (6) month basis) be added to the parking lot. MOTION PASSED.

A brief discussion ensued and it was **MOVED by Councillor Meade, seconded by Councillor Johns that five additional RCMP officers at a cost of \$420,000 be added to the parking lot.**

After a further discussion, the **MOTION WAS PUT AND DEFEATED.**

Chief MacKinnon responded to questions from members of Council.

Referring to Line P455 (Bike Patrol) on page 217, Councillor Walker requested that the Chief provide the number of bicycles presently in use.

PUBLIC WORKS & TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Dan English, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer provided a brief overview of the Public Works and Transportation budget indicating that the net allocation was \$25.8 million. He went not to note that Peer Review had recommended a reduction in the snow removal budget.

Mayor Kelly, responding to Mr. English, asked if it was staff's intent to rethink this position given that he understood that the snow removal budget for this year had been expended including the reserve. Mayor Kelly requested a current status and the plan to restock reserve funds.

Mr. Kulvinder Dhillon, Director of Public Works and Transportation, advised that in fact approximately \$11 million has been expended. Adjustments relative to various area rates for sidewalk clearing and staffing have yet to be made and staff is hopeful to be within budget in this area and provide a balance in reserve.

Mr. English went on to note that Peer Review had not supported the continuation of the leaf program, consequently the program had been removed from the budget.

Councillor Fougere addressed the removal of the leaf program and **MOVED, seconded by Councillor Sloane that the Leaf Program at a cost of \$184,000 be added to the parking lot.**

A discussion ensued. Responding to a question from Councillor Cunningham, Mr. Dhillon indicated that the Leaf Program was an HRM wide program with various levels of service depending on the situation.

Councillor Smith speaking in support of the motion indicated that he would like to see a plan or study prepared prior to the fall which would outline a program of leaf pick up over all of HRM.

Subsequent to closing remarks by Councillor Fougere, the **MOTION WAS PUT AND PASSED.**

Referring to removal of snow from sidewalks, Councillor Walker asked if these costs were accounted for in the budget on Page 198, Line R764 (Sdwlk Plo/Ice Control). Mr. Dhillon indicated that this line did represent a portion of the costs. Councillor Walker requested a breakdown of costs based on expenditures in Halifax, Dartmouth, the County and HRM Properties.

Note was made that monies accounted for in the Building Repair and Maintenance line, Page 197 related to electrical and other systems within the building rather than repair and maintenance. Councillor Walker suggested the heading should be changed.

Mr. Dhillon noted an error in Line R818, Sewer Lateral, Page 199. Staff will make the appropriate adjustment in the documents.

Councillor Hetherington requested a listing of sidewalks, streets and roads scheduled for maintenance/renewal in the 2000-2001 budget which were not completed and which will be completed in 2001-2002.

Councillor Hetherington, referring to monies budgeted for renewal of Johnstone Avenue, noted that the outcome of a site visit by staff was that additional dollars would be required to complete the necessary work. Councillor Hetherington indicated that he did not see these monies included in the 2001-2002 budget and requested a report on the status of this matter.

Referring to complaints he has received regarding the cleaning of catch basins, Councillor Hetherington requested that each Councillor be provided a schedule of catch basin cleaning in his/her District.

Councillor Fougere referred to the public waste receptacles presently provided noting that they did not provide for the separation of recyclable material. Councillor Fougere requested that Public Works to carry on a discussion with Solid Waste regarding the possibility of making public litter pick up more environmentally friendly.

Councillor Sloane referred to street cleaning and requested that staff provide a report of the process and schedule for last year and what is proposed for the upcoming year.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - BUDGET - MEETING DATES

Council agreed the following dates/times be set to continue budget deliberations:

Monday, March 26, 2001 – 9 am - 12 pm
Tuesday, March 27, 2001 - 9 am - 12 pm
Wednesday, March 28, 2001 - 9 am - 12 pm

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 am

Sherryl Murphy
Assistant Municipal Clerk