

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES JUNE 19, 2001

PRESENT:

Mayor Peter Kelly
Deputy Mayor Jerry Blumenthal
Councillors: Steve Streach
Gary Hines
Ron Cooper
Harry McInroy
Brian Warshick
Condo Sarto
Bruce Hetherington
Jim Smith
John Cunningham
Dawn Sloane
Sue Uteck
Sheila Fougere
Russell Walker
Diana Whalen
Linda Mosher
Robert Harvey
Len Goucher
Gary Meade

ABSENT:

Councillors: Keith Colwell
Stephen Adams
Brad Johns (Regrets)
Reg Rankin

STAFF:

Mr. Ken Meech, Chief Administrative Officer
Mr. Wayne Anstey, Municipal Solicitor
Ms. Vi Carmichael, Municipal Clerk
Ms. Sherryll Murphy, Assistant Municipal Clerk

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	CALL TO ORDER	3
2.	APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS	3
3.	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW RE: DRAFT SERVICE AGREEMENTS - BETTY MACDONALD	3
4.	GREATER HALIFAX PARTNERSHIP PRESENTATION - ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS - STEPHEN DEMPSEY	4
5.	HALIFAX REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY PRESENTATION - BILL GARD AND BECKY MASON	5
6.	ADJOURNMENT	6

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 2:35 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS**

The agenda, as distributed, was approved.

3. **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW RE: DRAFT SERVICE AGREEMENTS - BETTY MACDONALD**

- A copy of the proposed Services Agreement dated June 14, 2001 between the Greater Halifax Partnership and Halifax Regional Municipality was before Council for consideration. A copy of Ms. MacDonald's presentation was also distributed to Council for their reference.

Ms. MacDonald, utilizing the Elmo, made a brief presentation regarding Economic Development in HRM. The presentation included:

- Economic Overview of HRM
- HRM approach to economic development and comparisons with other municipalities
- HRM expectations
- Service agreements

Ms. MacDonald indicated that her intent today was to table the Services Agreement(s) with Council for their review. Approval of the Services Agreement(s) would be considered by Council at a later time.

Responding to questions from Council, Ms. MacDonald commented as follows:

- Tourism Spending/Capita as quoted in Slide 8 of the presentation is related to Municipal dollars spent. This figure did not include the hotel tax referred to by Deputy Mayor Blumenthal
- Staff, after reviewing the roles of RDA and the Greater Halifax Partnership, believe that the two groups are complementary rather than competitive. The clients of these two groups differ, however, more could be made of opportunities to work together
- With respect to the Greater Halifax Partnership being in competition with the Province, there is a feeling that the Province would not have sufficient resources to promote HRM in the desired manner. This is the reasoning behind having a second marketing/promotional body for HRM.

- With reference to tourism dollars spent in other cities, staff will be analyzing the outcomes of expenditures in other cities as compared to HRM. Analysis will provide the necessary information to determine if the level of spending is in line with outcomes

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the Service Agreements for two weeks to the July 3, 2001 meeting of Halifax Regional Council.

Councillor McInroy, noting the two groupings of cities used for comparison, indicated that comparisons between cities should be consistent and appropriate.

Ms. MacDonald noted that Conference Board of Canada, for which HRM pays a fee, reports on economic factors.

Responding to a question from Councillor Sloane regarding the kinds of businesses moving into HRM, Ms. MacDonald indicated that the Business Registry database is insufficient to provide good indicators. She went on to note that much of the information received is anecdotal. Ms. MacDonald indicated that the Conference Board of Canada information received regarding growth sectors was much more reliable.

4. GREATER HALIFAX PARTNERSHIP PRESENTATION - ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS - STEPHEN DEMPSEY

- A copy of the Greater Halifax Partnership presentation was distributed to members of Council for reference

Utilizing a Power Point presentation, Mr. Dempsey made a presentation including the following components:

- Mandate of the Greater Halifax Partnership
- Growth Sectors
 - Energy Sector
 - Life Sciences Sector
- Smart Growth Investment Campaign
- External Markets - Progress to Date
- Sources of Investment
- Performance Indicators: Employment Rates (94% -midpoint); Education Level (58.5% - highest); Housing Starts (7.5 starts/capita - highest); New Business Registrations in Nova Scotia (remaining level)
- Confidence Level - Greater Halifax A Place to Live and Work (increased significantly from 48% Optimistic in 1997 to 87% Optimistic in 2000)
- Exports - Increasing

Mr. Dempsey responded to a questions from members of Council, providing the following information:

- Services Agreement will formalize the communication process between HRM and the Greater Halifax Partnership (GHP). The Services Agreement clearly expresses what GHP is to do and what HRM is to do. The Agreement will help with managing expectations.
- Although data is not available to determine whether GHP is bringing white or blue collar jobs to HRM, based on the fact that GHP is selling HRM's education, it is likely that there are more white collar jobs being brought to HRM
- GHP supports apprenticeship/mentoring programs. Note should be made that Councillor Sloane would like to see GHP become more involved in mentoring programs
- GHP's media "buy" arrangements are in kind -- media provides an investment of space/time to GHP. Media dollars are used on creative rather than purchase of media time/space. Mr. Dempsey is to provide a breakdown of media investment to Council.
- Private Sector funding is much stronger than in past. 109 investors with over \$ 1 million invested
- HRM's investment is seen by private sector as being a strong indicator of the confidence HRM has in GHP. GHP believes that HRM's contribution is a floor amount and sets a basis for strong growth on the private sector, therefore, GHP does not believe this amount should be reduced.

There were no further questions from Council. His Worship thanked Mr. Dempsey and his associates for the presentation.

5. HALIFAX REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY PRESENTATION - BILL GARD AND BECKY MASON

- A package of information including HRDA's presentation, HRDA's 2001-2002 Business Plan, Services Agreement between Halifax Regional Municipality and HRDA and various other promotional materials was distributed to Council.

Mr. Bill Gard, Chair, Halifax Regional Development Agency Board, briefly reviewed the history of RDA's as found in the presentation. Stating the Mission of HRDA as being to create, facilitate and strengthen community economic development in the rural and suburban areas of Halifax Regional Municipality, Mr. Gard provided a quick profile of HRDA. He went on to briefly review the 2001-2005 Strategic Plan noting that it was Board Directed, the intent of the Plan is to have an Organizational Strategy focused on HRDA, includes four organizational goals, and the Plan establishes consistency and

accountability. In closing, Mr. Gard reviewed the Goals of HRDA as follows:

- Facilitate job creation and better quality employment opportunities
- Reduce economic and social disparity for marginalized groups and communities
- Support and facilitate economic development process in local communities
- Achieve and maintain organizational excellence in serving people and communities

Ms. Becky Mason, Acting General Manager, HRDA, referred to highlights of the Service Agreement as found in the presentation. Referring to the 2001-2002 Business Plan, Ms. Mason noted that Bill Collins of Collins Management Consultant Ltd. had reviewed the Plan and commented positively on it being “a very concise statement of what the HRDA wants to do and how it will achieve it”. Ms. Mason went on to indicate that the 2001-2002 Business Plan was impacted by a changing environment, built around Strategic Goals and Objectives, 12 specific service and operational areas, and responds to need for increased accountability.

Ms. Mason went on to outline HRDA’s 2001-2002 Strategic Initiatives noting that the initiatives address partnership gaps and annual priorities. By way of information, Ms. Mason indicated that a recommendation was going before the Board to reinstate voting status to Council representatives serving on the Board. In conclusion Ms. Mason reviewed the allocation of budget dollars and outlined the methodology adopted by HRDA in identifying and monitoring performance measures.

Responding to a question from Councillor Streach regarding how HRDA feels the Service Agreement will contribute to accountability, Ms. Mason indicated that the agreement by requiring a business plan and establishing performance measurements will ease reporting.

After a further short discussion, His Worship thanked Mr. Bard and Ms. Mason for their presentation.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Vi Carmichael
Municipal Clerk