

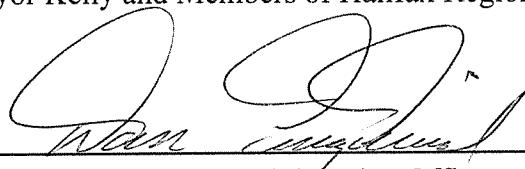
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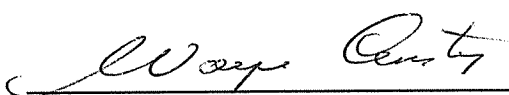


PO Box 1749  
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**Halifax Regional Council**  
**March 27, 2007**

**TO:** Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:**   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer - Operations

**DATE:** March 13, 2007

**SUBJECT:** Purchase of Micou's Island - HRM Contribution

**ORIGIN**

At the February 27, 2007 meeting of Regional Council, Councillor Meade requested a staff report be prepared concerning the feasibility of a partnership between HRM and the St. Margarets Bay Stewardship Association for the purchase of Micou's Island in St. Margaret's Bay.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council approve the withdrawal of \$100,000 from the Parkland Reserve Account #Q107 to be directed towards the purchase of Micou's Island by the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources (NSDNR) and the St. Margarets Bay Stewardship Association. (SMBSA).

## **BACKGROUND**

There are over 20 islands in St. Margarets Bay however most are privately owned. Micou's Island is currently for sale but the current owners have a long term interest in providing public access to their island and have reserved the sale of the island pending an offer from the SMBSA and their funding partners to secure it for posterity for public recreational uses. (Attachment A- Map). The landowner has given the SMBSA until March 31, 2007 to finalize their purchase. The sale price of the 22 acre island is \$780,000. To date the SMBSA (a registered charity with over 400 local members) has raised \$180,000 in private donations for the purchase. NSDNR has agreed to contribute \$500,000 and will hold title to the island as Crown land and administer the island as recreational land therefore qualifying it for Q107 funding. The SMBSA has requested that HRM contribute \$100,000 towards the purchase of the island.

## **DISCUSSION**

The SMBSA is dedicated to preserving St. Margarets Bay's recreational assets, culture, water quality, coastline and islands. Generations of Bay residents have enjoyed the natural beauty of Micou's Island for recreational purposes but unless the SMBSA's fundraising goal is met the island will be sold for development. The island is presently undeveloped. A fisherman's cottage built in the 1840's is the only structure. The islands' natural features include sand and cobble beaches, dunes and coastal wetlands, coastal forest, and osprey, blue heron, and grey seal rookeries. The island contains a diverse habitat that supports populations of bobcat, fox, mink and a rich near shore environment (Attachment B- Photo). Micou's Island is also known locally as a traditional encampment of the Mi'kmaq nation that contains significant archaeological remains that should be preserved. The SMBSA has agreed to form a steward partnership with the NSDNR to maintain the island's ecological integrity as well as its' cultural and archaeological heritage. The stewardship agreement will also ensure continued public access to the island for recreational uses. The SMBSA has raised approximately \$189,000 to create an endowment to ensure the long term sustain ability of their stewardship efforts.

## **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

Generally, the purchase of parkland is from the Parkland reserve Account #Q107 and currently this account has a balance of \$894,970. The MGA requires that Regional Council can only release funds from Q107 for the purchase of lands intended for recreational uses. HRM has been requested to contribute \$100,000 towards the purchase of Micou's Island. Upon purchase the island will become a Crown asset and NSDNR will assume all responsibilities associated with ownership while ensuring its ongoing availability for public recreational use thereby relieving HRM of any continued financial responsibilities. HRM will retain its' contribution of \$100,000 in a holding account pending the successful completion of the SMBSA purchase offer for Micou's Island. Should the SMBSA be unsuccessful in its fundraising efforts to secure the remaining \$180,000 in donations to purchase Micou's Island, the \$100,000 HRM contribution will be returned to Q107. The funding and use of this reserve has been confirmed by finance staff.

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN**

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital Budgets , policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation. If approved this report will increase withdrawals from reserves.

**ALTERNATIVES**

There are no alternatives to the recommendations contained in this report.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix A - Micou's Island, St. Margarets Bay

Appendix B- Micou's Island Photo

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

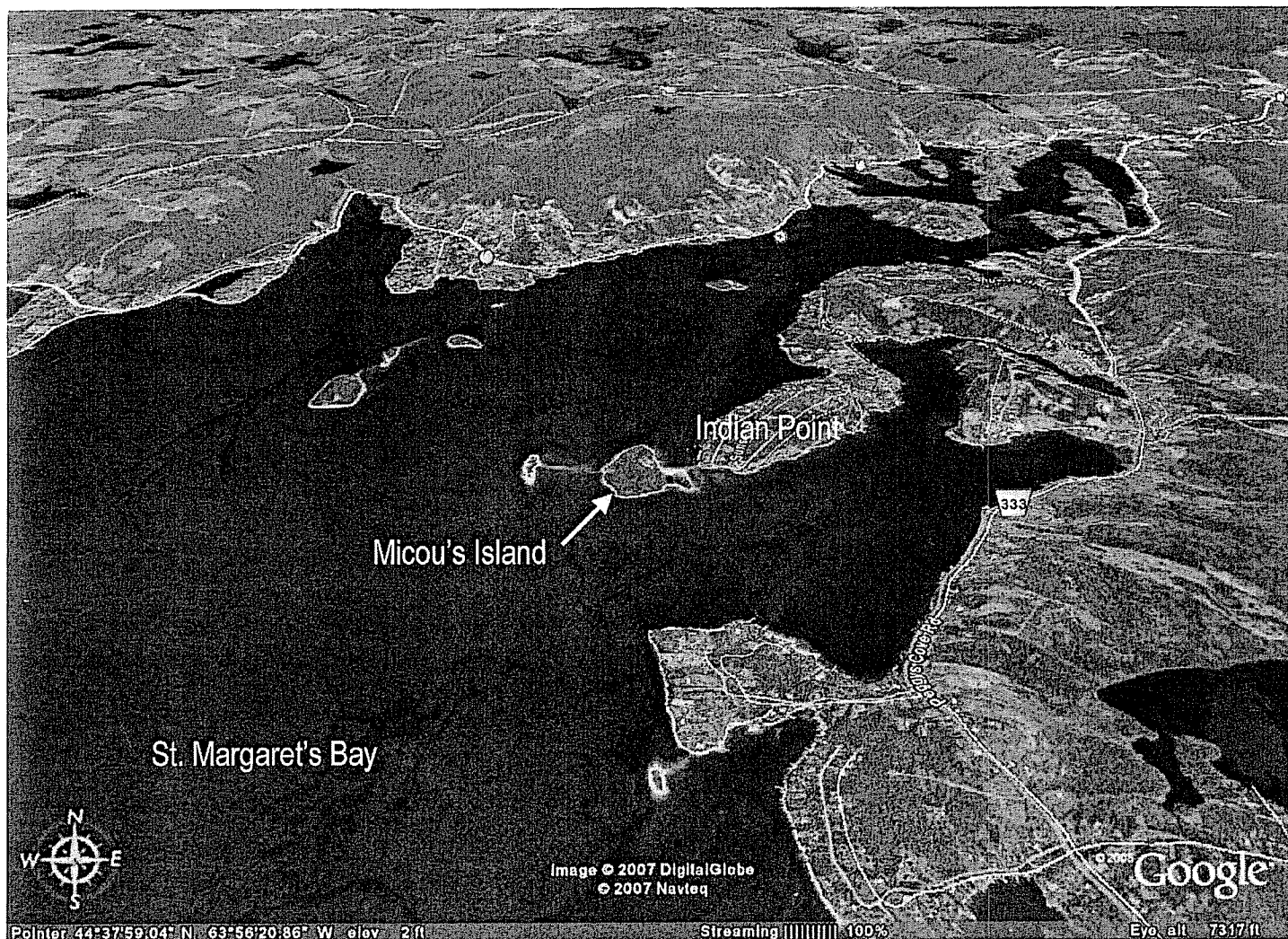
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Cathie Cathy O'Toole, Acting Director, of Finance, 490-6308

Report Approved by:   
Paul Dunphy, Director, Community Development

APPENDIX A - Micou's Island, St. Margarets Bay



APPENDIX B - Micou's Island Photo



View of Micou's Island from Indian Point