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Item No. 11.1.1

Halifax Regional Council
September 30, 2008

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Dan English", written over a horizontal line.

SUBMITTED BY: _____
Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: September 17, 2008

SUBJECT: HRM Entrance Signage - Home of Canada's East Coast Navy

ORIGIN

Recognizing the importance of the military to our community, HRM is represented on the Community Leadership Advisory Council to the Admiral. One important initiative the Advisory Council has been working on is a public display of our community's support for the Navy. A method of demonstrating this is adding the phrase "Home of Canada's East Coast Navy" to highway signs at the entrances to HRM.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council approve the incorporation of the phrase "Home of Canada's East Coast Navy" on existing HRM signs at the three highway entrances to HRM (Highway 103, Highway 102, and Highway 101) at the boundaries.

BACKGROUND

Historical:

The Halifax region has a long and special relationship with the Navy. The primary reason for the city's founding was to establish a British military presence to counterbalance French Louisbourg. Dubbed the "Warden of the North" after Rudyard Kipling's description of Halifax in his "Song of the Cities", Halifax's military make-up has long been recognized. Kipling's verse though encapsulates not only Halifax's important military role but also the city's maritime character. The city's relationship with the navy dates back to the city's founding and it remains prominent today. From our founding year, when a court of Vice Admiralty was established here, to the establishment of a repair and maintenance yard for the British navy in 1759 (the dockyard), to 1877 when Halifax native, Sir Provo Wallis, was promoted to Admiral of the Fleet (the highest rank in the British navy), to being the major embarkation and returning point for troops during both world wars and many points between - the navy has been an integral part of the city. In fact, the Halifax naval base helped preserve Nova Scotia as a British possession - securing us a very different future than might otherwise have been the case, as compared to the other thirteen colonies in British North America.

Historically the naval yard has been a source of significant economic activity and status - employing hundreds of people and being a cornerstone of activity. At times in Halifax's early history, the number of soldiers and sailors present outnumbered the local population. Socially, the life of the city was enriched by the presence of the navy - Thomas Chandler Haliburton wrote of the arrival of the Admiral as something "always looked forward to with anxiety and pleasure, as it at once enlivens and benefits the town."

Traditionally Halifax's fortunes have waxed and waned with the tides of war. Over the years the manner of the navy's involvement in the city has changed but it continues to have an enormous impact on the economic, political, social and cultural life of the community.

Present Day:

Halifax has a closely entwined relationship with the military - perhaps more so than any other city in Canada. DND is the largest employer in HRM and is the largest base in Canada in terms of the number of posted personnel, with 10,500 military and civilian employees. Halifax is the top relocation choice of Canadian Forces personnel and is home to approximately 6000 military families, and the military community and their families contribute significantly to the area in many ways: as community volunteers, patrons of local businesses, participants in community events and as employees. DND's economic impact is substantial, contributing \$750 million each year in salaries and local purchase contracts, and a total of approximately \$1.4 billion in direct and indirect costs annually.

DND, and the Navy in particular, is a partner HRM has always counted on in times of upheaval, as demonstrated by its assistance during such events as Swiss Air 111, Hurricane Juan, White Juan and 9/11. In recent years DND has been reaching out to community partners and attempting to become more accessible to the community, and it is a prominent presence at community festivals and events (i.e., Military Days, the Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo, Natal Day ship tours). Every area

of our broad community is touched on in some way by the military presence. HRM's Economic Strategy has identified the retention, expansion and attraction of DND facilities in our community as a priority. In addition, Nova Scotia is a best practices leader in DND-friendly policy, being the first province to appoint a Minister for Military Relations, establish an Interdepartmental Defence Forum, and pass legislation that protects deployed Reservists' civilian jobs and student status.

Future Opportunities:

HRM is in the process of developing a Memorandum of Understanding with DND to establish a more open operational relationship. HRM is also campaigning to become home to DND's Standing Contingency Task Force. This would increase employment and provide a substantial stable and well-trained workforce in the region.

HRM has in the past requested use of the military's facilities during large-scale events, such as using the Armouries during concerts on the Commons. Similar requests are being made to access DND's sport facilities and barracks for the upcoming 2011 Canada Winter Games.

Two significant dates for both the Navy and HRM are approaching: the 250th anniversary of the Halifax Dockyard, and the Centennial of the Canadian Navy. Celebrations are scheduled to start in summer 2009 with the anniversary of Halifax Dockyard's founding, and continue through summer 2010 for the 100th anniversary of the Canadian Navy.

The future potential impact of this positive relationship is significant. DND and HRM have a long-standing relationship that serves us well and must continue into the future.

DISCUSSION

Considering the strengthened relationship HRM is building with DND, the collaboration already underway, upcoming commemorations around the Navy's significant presence here, and its historic role in the city's development, noting the Navy's connection to Halifax on the highway entrance signs is a fitting way to celebrate its past and present contributions to the community.

As outlined above, the military provides huge benefits to HRM - economic and non-economic. There is no other group whose members provide as much in the way of volunteer services, such as providing emergency assistance, search and rescue services, cleaning up roadways and highways, repairing/maintaining community centres, participating in youth groups such as Scouts, and so forth. CFB Halifax is the only naval base in Canada that is located in the city centre, and as such has a profound effect on the community around it.

Highway signs noting the presence of the Navy in Halifax will help increase awareness and appreciation in community. It would also be a mark of recognition for the military's contributions and demonstrate the community's support for the Navy and CFB Halifax.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications for HRM. The Community Leadership Advisory Council to the Admiral proposes to cover the cost of the sign adjustment.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

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

ALTERNATIVES

Council could choose not to alter the highway signs.

Council could opt for a temporary "tag-on" sign that would attach to the highway signs and be removed by a certain date.

ATTACHMENTS

DND Welcome Sign mock-up

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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