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Item No. 12.2

**Halifax Regional Council
November 18, 2008**

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan English".

SUBMITTED BY: _____
Dan English, Chief Administrative Office

DATE: November 18, 2008

SUBJECT: Polygraph & Recruitment Review - Update

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

The Chief Administrative Office committed to providing an interim status update on the polygraph and recruitment review that is underway & to clarify some information with respect to specific questions that have been raised in recent days.

BACKGROUND

The current review encompasses several areas of focus. The information to be provided includes the following:

- A detailed summary of the recruiting process for Police and Fire
- Best practice research with respect to the use of polygraph
- An analysis of how the service was procured in this particular case
- An understanding of whether there was any breach of an administrative policy or order
- Recommended next steps to address any issues raised during the review

It is the responsibility of the Chief Administrative Officer to look into any issues of concern that arise within HRM's operations. While this review is underway, staff have been advised that all requests for information are coordinated through the Chief Administrative Office. This is important to ensure coordination of information dissemination on this particular file.

A commitment has been made to provide a Report to Council, and we are on track to have further detail provided in the coming weeks.

Specific details or the findings of the review will not be provided until the review is complete and Council has been briefed. During the course of the review, staff has been preparing documentation to assist in ensuring that factual information is available.

The Discussion section of this report provides some background that will assist in clarifying misinformation that has been circulating in recent days. The information provided is not inclusive of all aspects of the review, rather, it clarifies some information with respect to specific questions that have been raised in the last several days.

The administration has also prepared a short update (based on the Discussion section of this report) that will be disseminated externally to media and community partners. It is attached for your information.

As previously indicated, this administration takes this matter very seriously, and, working with Chief Beazley and Chief Mosher, I remain committed to gathering all of the pertinent details related to this issue and sharing them with Regional Council and our community.

DISCUSSION

HRM understands that our community wants answers about this situation and we remain committed to sharing the results of the review with Council, our citizens, and the media.

The following is not inclusive of all aspects of the review. More will be provided in the actual report on this matter. The background information below is intended to clarify some information with respect to specific questions that have been raised in recent days.

Halifax Regional Police & Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency

Citizens put faith in both Police Officers and Firefighters. HRM must ensure the people we are hiring to protect our community are not putting citizens or their personal information at risk.

Police Officers can engage in off-duty employment if they meet the criteria of the Nova Scotia Police Act and the Off-Duty Employment Policy of Halifax Regional Police. In 1998, the then Chief of Police granted officers permission to operate within a company known as Integrity Personnel Screening & Interviewing Consultants Inc.

Integrity Personnel Screening & Interviewing Consultants Inc. undertook the polygraph process regarding fire services recruitment utilizing their own equipment.

Eleven (11) of the twenty-one (21) newly hired firefighters were previously volunteers.

Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency volunteers are eligible to participate in HRM professional development programs as they are a part of the Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency team.

Polygraph Usage in HRM

Pre-employment polygraph has been in use internally by police for approximately 30 years.

Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency Services has been using a similar process through a private contractor as noted above for almost ten years.

Within HRM, only prospective Firefighters, Police Officers and civilian staff who have physical and/or electronic access to police information and systems are required to undergo the polygraph process.

The polygraph process, including the questionnaire, is generally standardized across Canada. The questions are neither exclusive to, nor created by HRM.

The questions asked in the polygraph process probe for criminal activity.

A candidate does not pass or fail the polygraph, it is one assessment tool that is utilized as a part of the interview process for both Police and Fire.

Upon completion of the pre-employment polygraph, candidates are given an opportunity to discuss the results.

The information provided herein is not inclusive of the various aspects of the review. It is a compilation of accurate information gathered to date. The administration continues to collect the facts and remains committed to sharing accurate information with Council and our citizens in the report coming to Council in the near future.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

None.

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.

ATTACHMENTS

Backgrounder - being distributed to media and interested stakeholders.

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



Report Prepared & Approved by:

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BACKGROUND

November 18, 2008

HRM Polygraph & Recruitment Review

As there continues to be questions with respect to the recruiting practices of Halifax Regional Municipality, the following provides an update on the status of the review.

HRM Review

The current review encompasses several areas of focus. The information to be provided includes the following:

- A detailed summary of the recruiting process for Police and Fire
- Best practice research with respect to the use of polygraph
- An analysis of how the service was procured in this particular case
- An understanding of whether there was any breach of an administrative policy or order
- Recommended next steps to address any issues raised during the review

The following is not inclusive of all aspects of the review. More information will be provided in a future report to Council in the coming weeks. The background information below is intended to provide accurate answers to specific questions that have been raised in recent days. HRM understands that our community wants answers about this situation and we remain committed to sharing the results of the review with council, our citizens, and the media.

Halifax Regional Police & Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency

- Citizens put faith in both police officers and firefighters. HRM must ensure the people we are hiring to protect our community are not putting citizens or their personal information at risk.
- Police officers can engage in off-duty employment if they meet the criteria of the Nova Scotia Police Act and the Off-Duty Employment Policy of Halifax Regional Police.
- In 1998, the then Chief of Police granted officers permission to operate within a company known as Integrity Personnel Screening & Interviewing Consultants Inc. Integrity Personnel Screening & Interviewing Consultants Inc. undertook their polygraph process with their own equipment.
- Eleven (11) of the 21 newly hired firefighters were previously volunteers.
- Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency volunteers are eligible to participate in HRM professional programs as they are a part of the Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency team.

Polygraph Usage in HRM

- Pre-employment polygraph has been used internally by police for approximately 30 years.
- Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency Services has been using a similar process through a private contractor for almost 10 years.
- Within HRM, only prospective firefighters, police officers and civilian staff who have physical and/or electronic access to police information and systems are required to undergo the polygraph process.
- The polygraph process, including the questionnaire, is generally standardized across Canada. The questions are neither exclusive to, nor created by, HRM.
- The questions asked in the polygraph process probe for criminal activity.
- A candidate does not pass or fail the polygraph; it is one assessment tool that is utilized as a part of the interview process for both Police and Fire.
- Upon completion of the pre-employment polygraph, candidates are given an opportunity to discuss the results.

The information provided is a compilation of accurate information gathered to date. HRM will continue to collect the facts throughout the review process. We remain committed to sharing accurate information with our citizens and the media as it is made available to Council in a report.