




PO Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3A5, Canada

**Item No. 10.4.1**  
**Halifax Regional Council**  
**June 15, 2010**

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

**SUBMITTED BY:**

  
Councillor Peter Lund, Chair, Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee

**DATE:** May 27, 2010

**SUBJECT:** **Resource Recovery Fund Board (RRFB) Funding Mechanisms to Promote Reduction of Solid Waste to Achieve Provincially Set Targets**

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#### **ORIGIN**

May 14, 2010 meeting of the Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee recommends to Halifax Regional Council that the Mayor write a letter to the Resource Recovery Fund Board (RRFB) requesting that the RRFB:

1. Put a hold on introducing any new program expenditures to promote reduction of solid waste to provincially set targets of reaching 300 kg per capita, until agreement with the municipalities has been reached on the targets; and
2. Not change the existing criteria of diversion credits which is based on the amount of achieved diversion accounting for the individual region's gross mass balance of solid waste.

## BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

On September 24, 2009 the Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee (SWRAC) passed a motion requesting *staff write a letter to the Provincial government requiring that every municipality, and every community within every municipality, provides the separate collection of residential organics, specifically meat, fish, bread, fats/grease etc, for composting at a composting facility, as opposed to backyard composting, prior to the Province implementing the 2006 Composting Facility Guidelines.*

The Honourable Minister Stirling Belliveau provided a response to the SWRAC's letter of September 30, 2009 on December 9, 2009. The Minister indicated that the Committee's concerns have been heard and would be considered as the Province moves forward to develop the Renewed Solid Waste Resource Management Strategy.

At the May 20, 2010 SWRAC meeting, Don MacQueen of Nova Scotia Department of Environment delivered a presentation to the Committee regarding the Datacall 2008/2009 - curbside and disposal results from the Province. During the discussion, it was noted that the current Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act (EGSPA) target of reducing waste disposal to a rate of 300 kg per capita by 2015, introduced by the Province, is a target to be achieved by the Province as a whole and not each municipal unit. Several smaller communities have already reached the target and will therefore be eligible for RRFB new waste diversion incentive funding for reaching the 300 kg target. These communities are not dealing with the same issues that HRM is, in terms of commercial sector and private/public sector development, which generates significant waste that must be dealt with and is included in our per capita disposal rates.

Ms. Laurie Lewis, Diversion Planning Coordinator, Solid Waste Resources, had asked, through the Nova Scotia Solid Waste Resources Management Regional Chairs Committee, that the incentive funding program guidelines be revisited before it was formally approved by RRFB to include a mechanism for regions and municipalities that have made, and continue to make, progress in terms of reduction in per capita waste disposal rates and enhancing diversion to also be recognized and benefit from the RRFB incentive funding programs. The approach suggested by staff was for there to be milestones of achievement rather than the one target figure of 300 kg per capita. The Province acknowledges that this is a Provincial target (Macro) and that it may not be a practical target for some more industrialized municipalities; however, the RRFB program does not reflect this perspective.

## BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications.

### FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN

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

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is not deemed to be necessary in this process.

### ALTERNATIVES

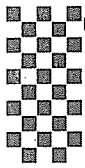
No alternatives provided.

### ATTACHMENTS

1. Correspondence from Councillor Bill Karsten, Chair of the Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee to the Honourable Sterling Belliveau, Minister of Environment, dated September 30, 2009.
2. Correspondence from the Honourable Sterling Belliveau, Minister of Environment to Councillor Bill Karsten, Chair of the Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee, dated December 9, 2009.
3. Minute Extract of the Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee meeting of May 14, 2010.

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.

Report Prepared by: Krista Tidgwell, Legislative Assistant, Municipal Clerks Office, 490-6519



ATTACHMENT 1



Solid Waste Resources  
40 Alderney Dr., Suite 102, Dartmouth  
PO Box 1749, Halifax, NS B3J 3A5

September 30, 2009

The Honourable Sterling Belliveau  
Minister of Environment  
Nova Scotia Environment  
PO Box 442  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 2P8

Dear Mr. Minister:

**Re: November 1998 Organics Landfill Ban and the 2006 Compost Facility Guidelines**

Congratulations on your recent election and appointment as Minister of the Environment.

The Halifax Regional Municipality and Nova Scotia are well known internationally for success in waste diversion. With a waste disposal rate in 2007-08 of less than 430 kgs/per capita - the HRM and the Province are approximately one half of that of other provinces and most major cities. The challenge for the HRM, and for other municipalities, is to achieve (in a sustainable and fiscally responsible manner, supported by industry through non voluntary stewardship agreements) the 300 kg/per capita disposal rate target as contained in the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act.

The 300 kg/per capita target is referenced as there is one opportunity remaining from the 1995 Provincial Solid Waste Strategy and Solid Waste Resource Regulations, which has yet to be implemented. Once implemented by your Department, it will bring equality and consistency within and among all municipalities of Nova Scotia. I am referring to the exception granted by the Department of Environment several years ago, which excluded thousands of residents in their homes across Nova Scotia from composting their kitchen food waste, specifically meat, fish, breads, fat and grease, etc.

At the September 24, 2009 meeting of the Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee (a standing Committee of Halifax Regional Council), it was agreed that a letter be provided to the Province requesting that every municipality and every community therein, be required to provide a minium standard for diversion of all compostable organics banned from landfill disposal

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*Each landfill cell costs \$15 million and is full in three years.  
Help extend the life of each cell by recycling and composting.*

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through the collection of all residential organics, including meat, fish, bread, fats/grease, etc., for composting at a composting facility - as opposed to backyard composting (which is not desired to prevent the attraction of vermin), prior to the implementation of the higher standard 2006 Compost Facility Guidelines.

At the September 9, 2009 meeting of the Regional Chairs Solid Waste Committee, Mrs. Christine Penney, Manager NS Environment, presented the attached "Compost Maturity - Project Charter" which details the process and time line for compliance by compost facility owners/operators - public and private, for implementation of the 2006 Compost Facility Guidelines. As noted in a study conducted for the NS Environment, complying with the 2006 Compost Facility Guidelines could result in major financial implications for privately owned and HRM municipally funded compost facilities by FY 2011/12, if not earlier. Cost implications could be in the order of \$1.4 to \$13.6 million for the two HRM's sponsored 40,000 tonne capacity compost facilities.

The requirement for residents in their home in every community across all of Nova Scotia to compost their meat, fish, bread, oils, fats, grease, etc., will ensure compliance with the 1995 Solid Waste Regulations, which banned all organics from landfill disposal commencing in November 1998. This requirement will enable those municipalities and regions to further their waste diversion programs toward the 300 kgs/per capita goal. It is suggested that this lack of compliance and exception with the 1995 Solid Waste Regulations in many rural communities throughout Nova Scotia, be addressed in advance of implementing the higher standard and costly 2006 Compost Facility Guidelines.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Bill Karsten, Chairman  
Solid Waste/Resource Advisory Committee

Councillor District 7

attachment

- cc: Jennifer Church, Director Intergovernmental Affairs
- Christine Penney, Manager Solid Waste, NS Environment
- Shawnee Gregory, SWRAC Committee Clerk
- Jim Bauld, Manager, HRM Solid Waste Resources
- Mike Labrecque, P.Eng., Director TPW

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Environment  
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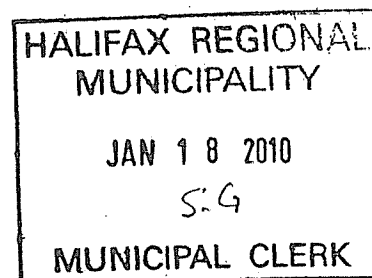
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our file number:

10700-40  
94400-30/HFX-22

DEC 09 2009

Mr. Bill Karsten  
Chairman  
Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee  
PO Box 1749  
40 Alderney Drive, Suite 102  
Dartmouth NS B3J 3A5



Dear Mr. Karsten:

Thank you for your September 30, 2009, letter regarding the 1998 Organics Landfill Ban and the 2006 Compost Facility Guidelines.

As you are aware, the province has been engaged in a consultation process as part of developing a Renewed Solid Waste Resource Management Strategy that will assist us in meeting the 2015 disposal goal of 300 kg/person/yr. During this process, we have heard many ideas about how to divert more waste from disposal, including organics. Some of these ideas include standards for diversion that address your concern about equality and consistency of organics programs throughout the province. Your thoughts have been heard and will be considered as we move forward to develop our Renewed Strategy.

We all have to work together not only to meet the disposal goal but also to meet the intent of the disposal goal: Sustainable Prosperity. In other words, we are challenged to protect the environment while stimulating the economy through the development of local green jobs and businesses. Your municipality's continued cooperation and engagement in this process is appreciated.

With respect to the proposed changes to the Compost Facility Guidelines, these revisions were designed to provide flexibility in meeting the new requirements while maintaining fiscal responsibility. Nova Scotia Environment staff will be consulting with facility operators to ensure they have the opportunity to provide further input into the revisions to the guidelines.

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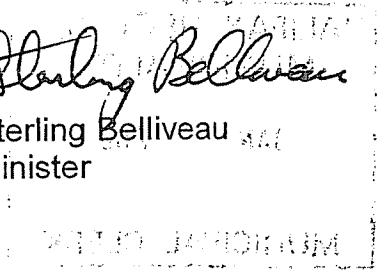
Mr. Bill Karsten  
Page 2

Again, thank you for your continued input and your efforts to assist your residents and businesses in diverting more waste from disposal while protecting the environment and improving the economy.

Sincerely,



Sterling Belliveau  
Minister



Draft Minute Extract of the Solid Waste Advisory Committee  
May 14, 2010 Meeting

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**6. PRESENTATIONS**

**6.1 Briefing Presentation - Diversion Data from the Province (Don MacQueen, Nova Scotia Environment)**

The following documents were circulated to the Committee:

1. A copy of the presentation dated May 2010 entitled: Datacall 2008-09, Curbside & Disposal Results.
2. Graphs indicating HRM and Provincial refuse per capita disposal for the years 2004-2009 and residential and ICI fiscal years refuse generation.

Mr. Don MacQueen, Research Technical Analyst with Solid Waste Resources and Nova Scotia Environment (NSE), delivered a briefing presentation regarding the 2008-2009 Datacall submissions from municipalities to the Committee. The following statistics and points were noted:

- Datacall is a database program that NSE manages online; municipalities provide NSE with tonnages and costs for solid waste activities within the Province of Nova Scotia; data ranges from collecting recyclables, organics and other materials to disposal, transportation and operations
- during 2008-2009 total disposal from the Province was approximately 391,000 tonnes of recyclable, construction & demolition (C&D) and imperial commercial industries (ICI) sector materials, which is a disposal decrease of 9,000 tonnes from 2007-2008
- the ICI sector has declined approximately 11,000 tonnes
- the C&D sector has declined approximately 1,000 to 1,5000 tonnes
- the average kilograms of materials collected at curbside per service unit:
  - garbage: provincial average 386 kg; HRM 486 kg
  - recyclables: provincial average 135 kg; HRM 136 kg
  - organics: provincial average 216 kg; HRM 264 kg
  - total combined (garbage, recyclables and organics): provincial average 736 kg; HRM 386 kg
- the approximate cost per service unit:
  - garbage: provincial average \$33; HRM \$30
  - recyclables: provincial average \$23; HRM \$25
  - organics: provincial average \$31; HRM \$39
  - total combined (garbage, recyclables and organics): provincial average \$87; HRM \$94
- Canso's curbside garbage material collection cost per service unit is disproportionately higher because they have a single contractor providing collection, line hauling costs and disposal for some of their materials



- residential data can not be expressed as per capita number due to:
  - “self hauled” residential tonnages in some municipalities
  - some residents are serviced by ICI sector (ie. apartments)
- C&D disposal per capita:
  - provincial average 85 kgs per person; HRM 48 kgs
- ICI disposal per capita:
  - provincial average 184 kgs per persons; HRM 219 kgs
- total disposal per capita:
  - provincial average 417 kgs per person; HRM 413 kgs (range from 840 kgs to 250 kgs)
- Regional C&D disposal rates per capita:
  - provincial average 85 kgs per person; HRM 48 kgs
- Regional ICI disposal rates per capita:
  - provincial averages 184 kgs; HRM 219 kgs
- Regional total disposal per capita:
  - provincial average 417 kg per person; HRM 413 kgs (range 513 kgs to 329 kgs); the provincial target for the year 2015 is a reduction to 300 kgs per person

Ms. Laurie Lewis, Diversion Planning Coordinator, Solid Waste Resources, circulated a spreadsheet with two graphs indicating HRM and Provincial refuse per capita disposal for the years 2004-2009 and residential and ICI fiscal years refuse generation. The graphs indicate that HRM has been reducing waste over the past two years towards lowering its per capita disposal rate to meet the provincial target rate of 300 kgs. She further advised that Resource Recovery Fund Board (RRFB) has introduced a financial incentive program for municipalities. As HRM moves towards the target rate, the RRFB will financially reward HRM for its efforts. Details regarding the incentive program's formula and mechanics have yet to be finalized by the RRFB; however, RRFB has identified that there will be financial gains for municipalities who reach the target rate of 300 kgs.

In response to a question raised by Councillor Nicholl, Mr. MacQueen indicated that the NSE does recognize that there will be waste deferral percentage variations across the Province with respect to how facilities operate and what services can be provided. With regard to the composting industry, the way the plans are configured throughout various municipalities, materials such as Tim Horton's coffee cups would be considered as a contaminant. He noted that most municipalities will develop a deferral plan based on what best suits their needs/goals.

Councillor Rankin indicated that information regarding how the Ministers of Environment arrived at the target rate of 300 kgs per person may have been provided to the Committee; however, he has never received this information. He expressed concern with respect to the extent of consultation done with municipalities and noted that he has not seen evidence of consultations taking place, nor how the target rate of 300 kgs was determined. He commented that the Committee was seeking this information when the Chair wrote to Environment Minister Sterling Belliveau on September 30, 2009. He

further expressed concern with respect to the Provincial target rate and whether there are sufficient variations. HRM has special infrastructure that generates additional waste. There is another level of garbage that is not reflected in the Provincial target (Macro) approach of Nova Scotia. He further indicated that over half of HRM's geographic area is rural. He asked how the tolerance of backyard composting match up with the Province's standards and whether there would be any relaxation to the standards. HRM has always done very well with diversion based on the mass of waste that has to be dealt with. He further expressed concern as to whether HRM would be fairly treated with respect to the character of its waste. He commented that these are important matters about which the Committee would like to engage with the RRFB.

Mr. MacQueen advised that NSE recognizes that HRM is in a slightly different position from other municipalities in the Province, partly due to the way they dispose of their waste. He commented that he could not discuss at this point in time whether HRM would be allowed to have a higher or lower disposal rate in comparison to other municipalities.

Mr. Helm noted that Waste Resources has expressed these concerns to the RRFB. HRM has also provided a number of different models based on a scaled, staged or staggered approach to meet the 300 kgs target. He commented that at present, the target would unfairly impact municipalities which have differing populations and significant industry.

Councillor Lund asked whether Waste Resources is able to project what the costs implications would be by going through the reduction, in particular with the ICI, or whether the Committee could review cost comparisons.

Mr. Helm indicated that there is an opportunity for Waste Resources to identify the cost implications based on the existing projected models, weights and challenges. He advised that once staff have more information regarding the cost implications, a report could be provided to the Committee.

Councillor Lund commented that his understanding is that 300 kgs is just a random number, due to a lack of evidence that would identify it as a reasonable number.

Mr. MacQueen indicated that he was not present when the determination of 300 kgs per capita was made. He noted that 300 kgs is an approximate number equal to a 60% diversion rate. He noted that when the 300 kgs rate was determined the diversion rate for the Province was approximately 43% with a target rate of 50%.

During the ensuing discussion, Ms. Lewis confirmed that she has provided input to the RRFB on HRM's behalf, indicated that municipalities should be rewarded for their milestones of achievement, rather than being based on the target figure of 300 kg/capita. HRM's per capita disposal rate has decreased every year from 420 to 413 kgs and noted that HRM wants to be rewarded for moving towards the 300 kgs target rate.

Councillor Rankin commented that the diversion, along with the character of mass garbage, varies from each region. He indicated that HRM should appeal the target rate decision to the RRFB.

Councillor Karsten commented that the Renewed Solid Waste Resource Management Strategy is an added program and all other diversion credits are still in place. The 300 kgs was set by the Province without debate or input from the RRFB and municipalities; however, the added incentives were put forward with good intentions.

Councillor Rankin indicated that the formula has not been fully developed with respect to how the fundamental variations will be defined.

**MOVED by Councillor Rankin, seconded by Councillor Outhit, that the Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee recommend to Halifax Regional Council that the Mayor write a letter to the Resource Recovery Fund Board (RRFB) requesting that RRFB:**

- 1. Put a hold on introducing any new program expenditures to promote reduction of solid waste to provincially set targets of reaching 300 kg per capita, until agreement with the municipalities has been reached on the targets; and**
- 2. Not change the existing criteria of diversion credits which is based on the amount of achieved diversion accounting for the individual region's gross mass balance of solid waste.**

Councillor Hum suggested the Committee could ask the RRFB to provide a report or make a presentation to the Committee.

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Councillor Rankin commented that the intent of the motion is to allow for further discussion and does not require the RRFB to make a presentation to the Committee.