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Halifax Regional Council
August 1, 2006

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

Brad Anguish, Dir. Environmental Management Services

DATE: June 30, 2006

SUBJECT: RV Dumping Stations

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

HRM Regional Council, March 28, 2006:

10.6.2 Councillor Younger - Motorhome Dumping Stations

“Staff (are) requested to provide a report on the issue of the possibility of HRM setting up motorhome dumping stations either in industrial parks or along the highways.”

BACKGROUND

Councillor Younger had previously inquired as to the viability of establishing one or two motor home (RV) dump stations in HRM . At present, the HRM owned, privately operated Shubie Park in Dartmouth is the only site in the metro area where a recreational vehicle (RV) can dispose waste. Some Provincial and private campgrounds have waste receiving facilities but have a requirement to stay at the campground. Shubie Park issues a booklet for \$20 which allows four discharges for those RV's not staying at that campground.

Councillor Younger has received citizen concerns regarding RV traffic through the adjacent residential area.

EMS staff responded to Councillor Younger prior to March 28, 2006, indicating that EMS would recommend to Council that a study be commissioned in order to:

- Develop a database of the number of RVs and motorhomes visiting HRM and the urban core.
- Evaluate the level of economic benefits.
- Assess the RV traffic problem in Shubie Park
- Determine the potential for a Provincial role, ie., cost sharing, joint responsibility, etc.
- Evaluate the impact on HRM and other (private) trailer parks should free dump sites be available.
- Develop a number of HRM discharge site options including capital cost, operations costs, fees and liabilities. This will include opportunities to partner with the private sector or having the private sector provide the full service.

Scotia Roamers, an RV association, had previously contacted HRM Real Property and Asset Management to request free access to the Shubie Park dump site. In July 2005, Mayor Peter Kelley responded to Scotian Roamers that the Shubie Park campground was operated on a private basis without HRM subsidies, that the dumping fee structure was reasonable, and that the request was contrary to HRM policies and practices.

DISCUSSION

Further to the response to Councillor Younger, staff are not prepared to recommend to Council that a study be commissioned. This is a result of further internal discussion, review of provincial legislation, and anticipated costs for study and implementation.

The projected cost for a comprehensive study is in excess of \$50,000. Capital cost to provide a dumping facility which includes a small office, parking pad/discharge point, washdown equipment, security fencing, etc., is expected to be in the vicinity of \$100,000. This does not include yearly operations costs.

The Province of Nova Scotia Tourist Accommodations Act does not permit RVs and motorhomes to stay in shopping centre or commercial parking lots. Although weakly enforced, the intent of the Act is to protect the interests of licensed private and provincial campgrounds. The provision of HRM dump stations would very likely encourage a greater portion of RV's to stay away from campgrounds, further fostering the practice of RVs utilizing parking lots rather than campgrounds.

Premier Rodney MacDonald, then Minister of Tourism, stated in 2004: " Our government and the campground industry consider camping in locations such as Walmart parking lots illegal...." . The two exceptions to the legislation are RVs attending a festival or parking on relatives' property.

Many of the new generation of motorhomes have large water and wastewater tanks of up to 200 litres capacity. This allows larger motorhomes longer periods between discharging waste thus allowing sufficient planning and scheduling for visits to approved dump stations or campgrounds outside of the HRM core area.

Staff view this primarily as a tourism issue and not likely to be of interest to the Province of Nova Scotia with regard to providing assistance or cost sharing. Staff from both Moncton and Fredericton have indicated that there is no desire to interfere with the private campground or provincial park operations and therefore do not offer RV discharge services except in rare emergency situations.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

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

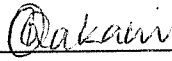
1. Council direct that a study be commissioned with funding out of the General Tax Rate. This initiative was not included in the 2006/07 Business Plan.
2. Council direct that an Expression of Interest be issued to the private sector in order to provide additional RV discharge stations with an applicable full recovery and profit fee structure. Possible commercial interest may include existing large centrally located service stations. This alternative is not recommended for the reasons identified in the discussion section of the report.

ATTACHMENTS

None

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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