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Halifax Regional Council
October 10, 2006

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:


for Jan Gibson, Municipal Clerk

DATE: October 6, 2006

SUBJECT: Council Workshop - Complementary/Alternative Voting Methods

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Committee of the Whole Motion of August 8, 2006 referring the matter in regard to Complementary / Alternative Voting Methods for the 2008 Municipal Elections be deferred to a half-day Council workshop .

BACKGROUND

On February 10, 2004, Halifax Regional Council approved a motion requesting that staff examine complementary voting alternatives in preparation for the 2008 Municipal Election. Further to this request the Municipal Clerk provided Council with a verbal update regarding this matter on October 18, 2005, indicating that a report would be submitted to Council in December 2005. An information report on the approach and status of the initiative was presented to Council December 13, 2005. A presentation on options and alternatives was presented to Council at Committee of the Whole on August 8, 2006 resulting in a motion to defer the matter to a half-day Council Workshop to be held in September 2006.

Following the motion Councillor Meade suggested that the Council workshop be held following the Ontario Municipal Elections to allow Council to consider some of the options regarding internet/phone ballots being used during those elections.

DISCUSSION

The staff working committee met in September to begin the planning for the Council workshop in regard to the options and opportunities of Complementary or Alternative Voting Methods for the 2008 Municipal Election.

Staff wishes to ensure that the workshop serves to provide Council the necessary background to assist with the decision-making process. Through the workshop staff will be seeking Council's input regarding the desired voting methods to be utilized for the upcoming 2008 municipal election in order to achieve the following outcomes:

- (a) increased access to voters within HRM
- (b) increased voter participation rates
- (c) timely reporting of election results
- (d) provision of cost effective voting method(s).

To order to ensure adequate time to prepare the background material and presentations, and to respond to Councillor Meade's suggestion to hold the workshop after the Ontario Municipal Elections which will take place on November 13, 2006. suggest that the Council Workshop be held on the morning of Friday, November 24, 2006.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications to the Council workshop regarding Alternative or Complementary Voting Methods. There are budget implications depending on the approach to the 2008 municipal election.

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 may select another date suitable to Council

ATTACHMENTS

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.

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