



**HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES
February 5, 2014**

PRESENT: Mayor Mike Savage
Deputy Mayor Darren Fisher
Councillors: Barry Dalrymple
David Hendsbee
Bill Karsten
Lorelei Nicoll
Gloria McCluskey
Waye Mason
Jennifer Watts
Russell Walker
Stephen Adams
Reg Rankin
Matt Whitman
Steve Craig
Tim Outhit

REGRETS: Councillors: Linda Mosher
Brad Johns

STAFF: Mr. Greg Keefe, Director of Finance
Mr. John Traves, Municipal Solicitor
Ms. Cathy Mellett, Municipal Clerk
Ms. Krista Vining, Legislative Assistant

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

*A video recording of this meeting is available:
http://archive.isiglobal.ca/vod/halifax/archive_2014-02-05_live.mp4.html*

*The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to Council are available
online: <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/140205cow-agenda.html>*

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m., and recessed at 11:54 p.m. Council reconvened in at 12:08 p.m. Council adjourned at 1:12 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Councillor Karsten called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – None

3. BUDGET PRESENTATION – HALIFAX REGIONAL POLICE

A report from the Board of Police Commissioners dated January 29, 2014, with accompanying presentation, was before Committee of the Whole.

Councillor Karsten clarified that the presentation was being delivered in a different approach from other business units' presentations. Pursuant to the Police Act, the budget was prepared by the Chief of Police and approved by the Board of Police Commissioners. The role of the Committee of the Whole is to hear the presentation, ask questions of clarification and approve/not approve the budget. Any adjustments to the budget would be sent back to the Police Commission, as Committee of the Whole does not have the authoritative jurisdiction to make changes to the Halifax Regional Police (HRP) budget.

Mayor Savage and Councillors Outhit, Rankin and Hendsbee entered the meeting at this time.

Chief Jean-Michel Blais, HRP and Ms. Micki Ruth, Chair of Board of Police Commissioners presented the proposed 2014/2015 HRP Budget and Business Plan to Committee of the Whole.

- Total Budget Pressures \$2,848,400
 - collective agreement increases (**contractual**)
 - Canadian Corps of Commissionaires contract (**contractual**)
 - Lake Patrol contracts (**contractual**)
 - discontinued secondment of police officer to Criminal Intelligence Service Nova Scotia (CISNS)
 - UN Missions: offset by minimal increases in recoveries due to HRP wage increases

- Total Service Enhancement \$143,800
 - acquire two additional Functional Analysts (two at \$71,900) required to maintain critical policing infrastructure

- HRP Net Expenses by Service Area \$76,233,900/ Budget Gap Increase 3.18%
 - Chief's Office proposed budget of \$19,937,400
 - Operations Division proposed budget of \$56,396,500

- Total Cost Reduction \$582,300
 - offset base cost increase from legal fees and vacancy management initiatives; \$60,000 in transfers to internet service provider to offset a base cost increase; mobile data cost for HRP vehicles

Councillor Karsten thanked Chief Blais and Ms. Ruth for their presentation, recognized members of Council who sit on the Board of Police Commissioners, and opened the floor to members of Council for questions of clarification.

MOVED by Councillor Dalrymple, seconded by Councillor Nicoll that the Committee of the Whole direct staff to proceed to prepare the 2014/2015 Halifax Regional Police Budget and Business Plan as proposed in the accompanying presentation, incorporated additional direction provided by motion of Committee of the Whole for inclusion in the proposed HRM 2014/2015 Budget and Business Plan documents.

Councillor Dalrymple spoke in support of HRP's 2014/2015 budget, concurring with staff that the budget is financially prudent and increases are mostly based on contractual matters. He agreed HRP's approach over the past years to achieve savings that offset salary increases, while achieving consistent quarterly reduction in crime rates for violent and non-violent crimes. Councillor Dalrymple encouraged members of Council to attend a COMSTAT briefing and noted his support for additional analysts' positions. He was pleased to see an increase for crime mapping and commented on HRP/RCMP's pro-activeness/responsiveness respecting recent pedestrian crosswalk accidents. Reference was also made to Sgt. David Reynolds' pro-activeness as a Crosswalk Safety Advisory Committee member.

In response to a question raised by Deputy Mayor Fisher, Chief Blais indicated that the vision for the proposed HRP headquarters is a preliminary. Clarifying that the RCMP headquarters in Burnside is a separate building and is a secure compound/intelligence led in terms of its functions. HRP envisions building a community led/orientated facility that allows the public to access/use a portion of the building. The RCMP presence would be the same integrated forces that currently exist, with no further additions. HRP has not approached their partners as they have not identified what the building will look like, its location and overall functions. However, the vision is to have an HRM public safety building as opposed to an exclusive HRP building.

Deputy Mayor Fisher questioned whether there is benefit to listing all crimes on HRM Crime Mapping. Chief Blais explained that this is part of the discussions/questions (i.e. whether it is in the public's interest to list suicides and domestic violence crimes). HRP is engaged with the Avalon Centre on this approach, as the goal is to allow residents and visitors to understand the criminal dynamics in play in their neighbourhoods.

Deputy Mayor Fisher spoke to the challenges when signing up for City Watch, suggesting the need for a better approach or further promotion. Chief Blais noted that HRP could work with City Watch staff.

Councillor Craig recognized the work being done by the Crosswalk Safety Advisory Committee and HRP's public engagement, awareness campaigns (i.e. Distractions Kill campaign) and

enforcement to address pedestrian safety; and hoped this would be incorporated in the recommendation report to Regional Council.

Councillor Craig questioned officer training relative to education about and addressing mental health situations; and whether there is anything that might impact the budget where Council could provide support.

Chief Blais advised that all police officers receive online training related to mental health through the Canadian Police Knowledge Network (CPKN). All new police officer hires receive in-house training, as well as there is annual block training and critical incident team training. HRP is striving to make critical incident team training more integrated on patrol levels (i.e. extending to booking officers). HRP is also striving to integrate mental health awareness into every training program (i.e. sexualize violence and domestic violence crimes). He noted that three major challenge areas are how to address youth at risk, addictions and mental health situations.

Chief Blais went on to note that the Mental Health Mobile Crisis Team (MHMCT) service is limited in its geographic approach, as it is not available to the East of Musquodoboit Harbour, North Central and the West of Tantallon, and is more centered in the populated area of HRM. MHMCT is a partnered initiative, with four full time police officers who are part of the integrated clinical team; including salaries and benefits the budget is \$422,100 annually. There is an agreement in place whereby Capital Health District reimburses HRP for the cost to provide two of those officers in the amount of \$215,596, netting the cost to HRP at \$206,504 annually. HRP provides two unmarked police vehicles and officers in civilian dress for response transport. The usage of the team is extensive, even with a 24/7 staffed crisis hotline, HRP along with the partners are available from 1 p.m. to 1 a.m., which does have limitations in terms of availability.

Ms. Ruth added that as member of the Canadian Association of Police Governance (CAPG), during the last three conferences mental health has been front and center on the agenda; noting that across the country, police services have been concerned with how to handle mental health incidences in their communities. In addition, she is a member of the Governance's Justice Committee and every year they lobby the Federal government on a number of initiatives. Initiatives include mental health, particularly funding for more programs and for the police agency to better address/help other community organizations and mental health crises in the community.

In response to questions raised by Councillor McCluskey, Chief Blais provided clarification around:

- Crime reduction dividend enabling HRP to re-invest in training and equipment such as ever-greening protective vests
- Number of summary offence tickets issued since February 3, 2014 for collisions involving pedestrians
- Challenges around analyzing data to address speeding in residential neighbourhoods
- HRP working with the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and individual stakeholders to better define the ways of dealing with overconsumption of alcohol in bars

Councillor Watts looked forward to the forthcoming roundtable report (Claremont Report), in particular the section around gun based violence in the community. She mentioned that this has significant impact in District 8 and working in this area continues to be important. From feedback she has received, District 8 residents are looking for community based models for dealing with gun based violence. She provided an example where during a recent Lieutenant Governor's hosted event with African Nova Scotia youth leaders, many of the youth identified education as the most significant impact where work needs to be done. There is a need for a holistic approach, not just through the police budget but looking at the community based model.

Councillor Watts requested additional information around HRP's Strategic Planning Initiative. Chief Blais spoke on the fall public survey, wherein over 400 responses were received. As well, during the police retreat, half of the day was dedicated to community partners providing input. From feedback received, HRP was able to see how much their work is appreciated and how they are able to make a difference as community contributors, and aided in redefining HRP's definition, vision and values. He indicated that HRM will see a significant shift towards community involvement and engagement.

Further points noted by Chief Blais in response to questions raised were:

- HRP will be rolling out a Hub Model; a presentation was given to the Justice Form; the perception that HRP be first responders, and sometimes only responders, creates expectations that cannot be achieved and HRP does not have the resources
- HRP is also engaging/receiving public input through social media
- HRP is aware and contributing to the discussions around cyber bullying and juvenile prostitution; reference was made to the new Federal Legislation to address cyber bullying

Mayor Savage questioned how technology is changing, and how technology impacts on crime and the pressure on young people. Chief Blais advised that the role of a police officer is to respect the rule of law. He noted that the way HRP investigates has changed but is still intelligence driven/data and evidence based. HRP has invested and realigned its resources to look at social media leads and data mining from the internet.

Councillor Adams questioned the number of vacancies for sworn officers and civilian positions. Chief Blais did not have the specific numbers but would get that information to members of Council. However, the vacancy management savings comes as a result of the difference between the time an individual leaves (i.e. retirement) and the time a new member is hired.

Councillor Adams sought clarification around the 2013-2014 approved positions. In regard to the area of analytics, Chief Blais clarified that HRP is determining which positions could be civilianized versus the role sworn officers need to play. He confirmed that there are ten less officers in the organization which have been replaced by civilians but that there are no less officers on the street.

Councillor Nicoll was pleased HRP is working with the Avalon Centre to address mental health issues, suggesting within the Strategic Plan there be a focus around self-esteem for young girls and taking gender into consideration for community design.

Additional points noted by Chief Blais in response to questions raised were:

- impaired driving is within the priority of Traffic Safety
- the Cole Harbour World Café under the Strategic Plan will be RCMP led
- Segway regulations fall under the Highway Traffic Act
- HRP is looking into inner city initiatives
- Boat Patrol is currently/strictly on the Dartmouth Lakes and Marine Patrol, contracted through the Port Authority, in the Halifax Harbour; there are no changes proposed in the budget
- RCMP Superintendent Wells is available to meet with Council respecting RCMP budget questions
- HRP projects approximately 15 sworn officer and civilian retirements per year over the next three years; specifics are reported to the Board of Police Commissioners on a trimestral basis; retention in police services is approximately 99%
- Photo radar and red light may be an area that the Crosswalk Safety Advisory Committee and/or Transportation and Public Works staff would want to review; a legislative component would be required
- School Crossing Guards are renewable positions

Chief Blais was unable to provide comment on Councillor Hendsbee's questions around rural lake boat patrol, in particular for Lake Echo, Porters Lake and Lake Charlotte, as this is RCMP jurisdiction but would forward the question to RCMP for response.

During the ensuing discussion, the Chief Financial Officer responded to a question around the replacement of the communications system, advising that this is included in the Capital Budget submission for Police, Fire and Emergency, and Transportation and Public Works.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Council recessed at 11:54 p.m. and reconvened at 12:08 p.m.

As Committee of the Whole was scheduled to conclude at 12:30 p.m., it was **MOVED by Deputy Mayor Fisher, seconded by Councillor McCluskey to extend the Committee of the Whole session until the budget deliberations is completed for Halifax Regional Fire.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Fisher, seconded by Councillor McCluskey that the Committee of the Whole Budget Deliberation sessions be extended to no later than 3 p.m. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUDGET PRESENTATION – HALIFAX REGIONAL FIRE

A staff report dated January 17, 2014, with attached presentation, was before Council.

Fire Chief Doug Trussler, Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency (HRFE) Services introduced himself and Deputy Fire Chiefs Brian Gray, Operations and Roy Hollet, Operational Support, and presented the Fire & Emergency's 2014-15 Budget and Business Plan.

- Total Budget Pressures \$2,295,000
 - The HRFE budget is made up of over 94% compensation/benefit costs
 - Collective agreement increase (annual 2.21% for IAFF), and 2013-14 salary increases for non-union and NSUPE (**contractual**) - \$1,442,000
 - Benefit increases, primarily pension plan contributions - \$853,000

- Potential Service Changes in Operating Budget
 - Upon completion of the Operational Review/Strategic Plan, HRFE will present Council with various options relating to the development of apparatus and station locations, safe and effective staffing levels, organizational structure and support processes (**to be determined**)

- Cost Reduction Initiatives / Total to offset Base Cost Increase - \$2,400,000
 - A one year only reduction from Fleet Capital - \$1,500,000
 - Refund Reserve Q128 Rural Fire Reserve - \$800,000
 - GL Line item efficiencies - \$100,000

- Priority Alignments – Service Enhancements
 - Increase Volunteer Honorariums - \$200,000
 - HRM Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Assessment - \$125,000
 - Dry Hydrant Surveys - \$232,500
 - E-Learning ICT Business Case 0902 – Training Division – 1 FTE Position - \$120,000

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Councillor Whitman that the Committee of the Whole direct staff to proceed to prepare the 2014/2015 Fire & Emergency Budget and Business Plan as proposed in the accompanying presentation, incorporating additional direction provided by motion of Committee of the Whole for inclusion in the proposed 20104/2015 Budget and Business Plan document.

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Councillor Whitman to amend the motion to include, in the Fire Service Budget for 2014-2015, the Service Enhancement budgetary items, as listed on Slide 16 of the accompanying presentation:

- **Increase Volunteer Honorariums - \$200,000**
- **HRM Hazard, Risk & Vulnerability Assessment - \$125,000**
- **Dry Hydrant Surveys - \$232,500**
- **E-Learning ICT Business Case 0902 – Training Division – 1 FTE Position - \$120,000**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

The motion before Council now reads:

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Councillor Whitman that the Committee of the Whole direct staff to proceed to prepare the 2014/2015 Fire & Emergency Budget and Business Plan as proposed in the accompanying presentation incorporating additional direction provided by motion of Committee of the Whole the Service Enhancement budgetary items, as listed on Slide 16 of the presentation:

- **Increase Volunteer Honorariums - \$200,000**
- **HRM Hazard, Risk & Vulnerability Assessment - \$125,000**
- **Dry Hydrant Surveys - \$232,500**
- **E-Learning ICT Business Case 0902 – Training Division – 1 FTE Position - \$120,000**

Councillor McCluskey requested clarification around having adequate ladders to reach high storey buildings, the number of recent hires and method of hiring career firefighters. Chief Trussler confirmed that HRFE' extension ladders are able to reach 10 storey buildings. As of December 6th there have been 12 new hires from the training list and HRFE is seeking approval to hire 12 more in next the fiscal year.

Councillor McCluskey expressed concern with the rumored closure of Station 13 and recent fire in Quebec at a senior's retirement home. Councillor McCluskey further questioned why career firefighters are conducting residential occupancy inspections. Chief Trussler indicated that they are working with Community and Recreation Services and a business analyst to review procedures under By-law M-100 and recommendations are forthcoming. He encouraged Councillor McCluskey to forward any concerns respecting site inspections to the Fire Prevention Deputy Chief for review.

Councillor Adams spoke highly of Deputy Chief Roy Hollett during his work with him over the past few months on the stations closing in Terrace Bay and Ketch Harbour. He requested a progress update on closed stations being turned over to the community, and the status of the cold water rescue gear from those stations. Chief Trussler advised that during this time of year equipment not being used is taken for service/repairs. Respecting the cold water rescue gear, HRFE repositioned the gear in stations throughout core areas of HRM where staff are trained on the use of the gear. He stressed that there has been no reduction in the level of service.

Respecting questions raised by Councillor Hendsbee, Chief Trussler and Deputy Chief Hollett responded as follows:

- An operational review is being undertaken for recruitment, hire/placements in rural stations and recommendations are forthcoming
- Rescue boats have been taken out for repairs/service and will be repositioned in stations with training
- Buildings with potable water extractions systems fall under Building Maintenance; HRFE works with Building Maintenance to set priorities; if a concern is raised respecting a building, funding is moved around to implement a project; HRFE has

- water testing in each of the buildings and takes the necessary steps to advise residents not to drink the water and work with Building Maintenance to make the water potable
- Trunk Mobile Radio (TMR) is a Provincial lead project under Provincial Communications; HRM is one of the main stakeholders along with Emergency Health Services (EHS), RCMP and Provincial bodies; HRM's lead is ICT and a working group has been formed to review the outcome; one of HRFE's mandates is that any hardware purchased in the last number of years, specifically portable radios will meet the new TMR service standards
- If approved, volunteer honorariums will be increased to just over \$12 per point; points are awarded for attending training and fire calls
- The Mooseland Fire Station has been decommissioned (surplus property) and is going through the process of Administrative Order 50

Councillor Mason exited the meeting at this time.

Councillor Dalrymple expressed appreciation to the over 1,000 volunteer and career firefighters in HRM. He spoke of staff's ongoing efforts and forthcoming reports that will shape the future of HRFE, in particular changes to rural/suburban volunteer stations. He and Councillor Hendsbee are members of the Volunteer HRFE Advisory Board, noting that the Board makes every attempt to keep Council up-to-date. He was pleased with the recommended increase to the volunteer honorarium and commented on staff's professionalism during the meetings to close stations. Councillor Dalrymple went on to note that there is still a need for more volunteer firefighters and noted the challenges to recruit in rural areas. He highlighted the success of the Junior Firefighter Program and asked for additional information on setting up a program.

Chief Trussler stated that the Junior Firefighter Program is run through the volunteer fire halls and there are currently five programs in operation. The program shows young people that careers in firefighting are a viable option and they receive practical in-house training such as first aid and CPR. He suggested that Councillors interested in setting up a program contact Heather McKay, Volunteer Manager and she will contact the local station chief to determine if there is interest within the station.

Chief Trussler and Brad Anguish, Director of Community and Recreation Services responded to additional questions around revisions to By-Law M-100. It was noted that any substantive changes to the By-law would require a Public Hearing. Members of Council and stakeholders will be advised of any recommended changes to the By-law.

Further clarification provided by Chief Trussler:

- Upon review, HRFE does not have the capacity to do in-house snow removal maintenance for dry hydrants
- There is a specific public education section around fire prevention for seniors; HRFE conducts approximately 20 fire prevention presentations per year but additional ones can be scheduled upon request

Deputy Mayor Fisher exited the meeting at 1:00 p.m.

In response to a question raised by Councillor Dalrymple respecting installation/cost of dry hydrants, Deputy Chief Hollett advised that the cost ranges depending on the location, terrain and what type of work needs to be done. The Department of Environment only permits installation of dry hydrants between June and September were there is impact to a waterway. Councillor Dalrymple commented on the need for more dry hydrants in certain areas and ensuring the necessary funding is in place.

MOVED by Councillor Dalrymple, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee that Halifax Regional Council add to the parking lot and ask for a staff report outlining the addition of \$100,000 to fund search and rescue and JEM (Joint Energy Management Team), and clarity whether search and rescue is a subsidiary of Fire Services or a separate non-profit agency. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

The discussion ensued with Chief Trussler responding to questions. It was noted that the Halifax Water Commission is responsible for snow removal around dry hydrants.

The motion before Council reads:

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Councillor Whitman that the Committee of the Whole direct staff to proceed to prepare the 2014/2015 Fire & Emergency Budget and Business Plan as proposed in the accompanying presentation and incorporating additional direction provided by motion of Committee of the Whole to include the Service Enhancement budgetary items, as listed on Slide 16 of the presentation:

- **Increase Volunteer Honorariums - \$200,000**
- **HRM Hazard, Risk & Vulnerability Assessment - \$125,000**
- **Dry Hydrant Surveys - \$232,500**
- **E-Learning ICT Business Case 0902 – Training Division – 1 FTE Position - \$120,000**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5. PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Councillor Karsten called three times for any speakers, there being none the public consultation was closed.

Prior to adjourning, on behalf of Councillor Mason, Councillor Watts requested a status update on the Special Arts & Culture Committee report; and whether it will come forward to Council in time for the budget debate, as previously requested by Council by way of motion. Ms. Cathy Mellett, Municipal Clerk advised that Council's motion was for a staff report which should be directed to the Director of Community and Recreation Services for a status update.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:12 p.m.

Cathy J. Mellett
Municipal Clerk