



**HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES  
December 3, 2014**

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

REGRETS: Councillor Brad Johns

STAFF: Mr. Richard Butts, Chief Administrative Officer  
Mr. John Traves, Municipal Solicitor  
Ms. Sherryl Murphy, Municipal Clerk  
Mr. Liam MacSween, 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://www.halifax.ca/site/exit.php?url=http://archive.isiglobal.ca/vod/halifax/archive\\_2014-12-03\\_live.mp4.html](http://www.halifax.ca/site/exit.php?url=http://archive.isiglobal.ca/vod/halifax/archive_2014-12-03_live.mp4.html)

*The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to Council are available online:*

<http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/141203cowAgenda.php>

*The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m., and recessed at 12:03 p.m. Council reconvened at 12:25 p.m. and adjourned at 1:53 p.m.*

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Councillor Karsten, Chair, called the meeting to order in Council Chambers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – NONE**

**3. Proposed 2015-16 Capital Program Budget**

The following was before the Committee:

- A staff report dated November 25, 2014
- A staff presentations entitled “Capital Program Budget 2015-16” dated December 3, 2014

Ms. Jane Fraser, Director, Operations Support provided a presentation to Committee of the Whole pertaining to 2015-16 Capital Budget Program.

The Chair thanked Ms. Fraser for her presentation and requested questions of clarification from Committee of the Whole.

**MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Deputy Mayor Nicoll that Committee of the Whole:**

- 1. Direct Staff to prepare the preliminary 2015-16 capital program budget, as well as an additional four years up to and including 2019-20, as a basis to prepare a detailed capital reserves budget, as presented to Committee of the Whole.**
- 2. Approve the list of 2015 advances capital funding as per attachment A of the staff report dated December 3, 2014.**

Councillor Hendsbee inquired if any of the projects listed in the proposed 2015-16 capital budget qualify for funding under the Federal Build Canada Program.

Ms. Fraser noted several projects such as the Downtown Streetscape project, and several initiatives undertaken by Halifax Transit which qualify for funding under the Build Canada program. She advised that several water and wastewater programs managed by Halifax Water also qualify for funding under the federal program. She advised that the water and wastewater projects will not be reflected in HRM's capital budget.

Councillor Hendsbee questioned why the municipality owns the St. Mary's Boat club and inquired if selling it would be appropriate. Mr. Fraser replied that staff could investigate selling the St. Mary's Boat Club if directed to do so by Halifax Regional Council.

Councillor Outhit inquired if the \$1.3 million allotted in the proposed capital budget for the Cogswell Interchange project is allocated for preparation work associated with the project. Ms. Fraser replied in the affirmative.

In response to a follow up question from Councillor Outhit, Ms. Fraser commented that the Burnside Active Transportation project will coincide with the Burnside Connector project. She commented that the line item in the budget is to allow for the development of phase 13-5 of the Burnside Industrial Park. She further noted that staff will bring a recommendation on the Burnside Connector project back to Council for consideration in the near future.

Councillor Outhit requested further commentary from staff pertaining to the projected funding gaps in the 2017 and 2018 capital budget projections.

Ms. Fraser commented that the funding gap as alluded to by the Councillor, comprises a projected gross amount of capital which is required to fund programs. She commented that there are other offsets that are not projected in the document such as the proceeds of sales of surplus land. She further advised that the projections are very conservative in nature and advised that projections pertaining to potential changes in revenue, such as the sale of surplus properties, were not included in the estimations.

Deputy Mayor Nicoll thanked Ms. Fraser and staff for the presentation and requested further information pertaining to the funding for new services related to growth.

Ms. Fraser provided commentary on funding increases within the 2015-16 capital budget for land acquisition in industrial parks, parklands and small increase to the solid waste budget for new green bins.

Deputy Mayor Nicoll proposed the following amendment to the main motion:

**MOVED by Deputy Mayor Nicoll, seconded by Mayor Savage to add the Cole Harbor Artificial Turf project from the proposed 2015-16 capital budget to the actual 2015-16 capital budget.**

Deputy Mayor Nicoll noted that the commitment to the Artificial Turf project has been made to the public and provided commentary on the need for the infrastructure among sports groups in the community.

Councillor Watts inquired as to why the remaining three projects identified with the Cole Harbour Artificial Turf project were not included in the motion proposed by Deputy Mayor Nicoll. She suggested that all of the potential projects should be included in the motion and that staff should prepare a report which identifies the funding sources available for the completion of all the projects identified as lacking Council direction.

Deputy Mayor Nicoll commented that Council had already committed to the Cole Harbour Artificial Turf project in February of 2014 and noted that it would need to be included in the Capital Budget once approved.

Councillor Mason commented that all of the projects listed in the capital budget presentation as “without Council direction” have been approved in principle by Council in the past. He advised that a staff report should come back to Council capturing all of the proposed projects.

Deputy Mayor Nicoll requested clarification from staff as to whether or not a staff report is required to add the Cole Harbour Artificial Turf project to the 2015-16 Budget.

Mr. Greg Keefe, Chief Financial Officer, commented that he believes there are two different motions on the floor, one to include the Cole Harbour Artificial Turf in the budget and another which requests a staff report to provide further information on the proposed projects and identify funding sources.

Councillor Watts commented that she was unable to support the amended motion proposed by Deputy Mayor Nicoll but would support a motion requesting a staff report which identifies funding sources and implications for all four projects.

Councillor Craig agreed with Councillor Watt’s assessment and commented that he does not believe that Council has enough information pertaining to the projects that do not have clear direction from Regional Council. He suggested that a staff report should be prepared which includes further information on all four projects.

Ms. Fraser commented that the direction that staff took from Regional Council on the Cole Harbour Artificial Turf project was to consider funding in the 2015-16 Capital budget. She advised that staff weighed the proposed project against other Council priorities and projects as well as the projected funding gap and noted staff’s recommendation to not include the artificial turf in the Capital Budget for 2015-16.

Ms. Fraser remarked that the other projects, such as the McDonald Bridge Bikeway and the Beazley Field projects are items that are championed by Council but lack clear direction for staff to include them. She further advised that the intent of the presentation of these proposed projects is to illustrate the areas in which staff are aware that there have been discussions held by Council, but lack a clear direction on whether or not to proceed.

Ms. Fraser reiterated that it is the recommendation of staff to not include any of these proposed projects in the 2015-16 Capital budget was due to diminished capacity. She further advised that staff is not recommending that the projects do not go forward, but rather not at the present time.

Councillor Rankin commented that one of the primary outcomes of the budget discussions should be the ability for Council to develop an understanding of the flexibility that is available within the capital budget. He further advised that there has been a strong commitment respecting the Cole Harbour Artificial Turf project.

Councillor Dalrymple expressed his support for Deputy Mayor Nicoll's motion and the commitment made to the community.

Mr. Keefe apologized for any confusion associated with the slide in the presentation pertaining to identified projects without Council direction. He reiterated an earlier point by Ms. Fraser that it was the intention of staff to bring forward the four identified projects that staff were aware that there was some importance and may require additional direction from Council as part of the budget discussions.

Mayor Savage commented that he would support a motion for a staff report pertaining to the four projects but advised of the clear political and fiscal direction which was communicated to the public respecting the Cole Harbour Artificial Turf project. He applauded staff for their work regarding the budgeting process, and inquired if the Cole Harbour project would be included in the 2016-17 Capital Budget.

Ms. Fraser commented that the Cole Harbour Artificial Turf project is not being considered for inclusion in the 2016-17 budget unless otherwise directed by Regional Council.

Mayor Savage expressed his support the motion proposed by Deputy Mayor Nicoll and noted previous comments made by Councillors regarding the commitment to the community respecting the Cole Harbour Artificial Turf.

Further discussion ensued.

**MOTION TO AMEND PUT AND PASSED.**

The motion before Committee of the Whole now reads:

**MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Deputy Mayor Nicoll that Committee of the Whole:**

- 1. Direct Staff to prepare the preliminary 2015-16 capital program budget, as well as an additional four years up to and including 2019-20, as a basis to prepare a detailed capital reserves budget, as presented to Committee of the Whole.**
- 2. Approve the list of 2015 advances capital funding as per attachment A of the staff report dated December 3, 2014.**
- 3. Add the Cole Harbor Artificial Turf project from the proposed 2015-16 Capital Budget to the actual 2015-16 Capital Budget.**

Mayor Savage commented that other motions from members of Regional Council pertaining to the remaining three projects may come forward as the budget discussions progress. He commended staff for their roll in the budget process and presentations to Council and noted that at most other levels of governments, budgets are typically conducted behind closed doors. He inquired if the amount budgeted

for work on the Cogswell Interchange project will commit the municipality to any long term work on the project in 2015-16.

Ms. Fraser noted that the budgeted amount in the 2015-16 capital budget for the Cogswell Interchange project is for preparatory work only.

Mayor Savage inquired if work on the mainland common soccer fields will be completed in time to host pre-FIFA games in Halifax. He inquired if the work can be completed in time so that Halifax can see the economic benefit of hosting the event. Ms. Fraser responded by noting that she would follow up with staff in that regard.

The following amended motion was proposed by Councillor Mason:

**MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Mosher that Committee of Whole request a staff report examining the inclusion of the Beazley Field Grandstands & Upgrades, St. Mary's Boat Club and McDonald Bridge Bikeway Connection programs in the 2015-16 Capital Budget.**

Councillor Mason noted that the last time the St. Mary's Boat Club had a major capital infusion was in 1991 and remarked the facility serves the public very well. He noted that the pylons that support the buildings need to be replaced as well as upgrades to the seawall to prevent damage caused by flooding. He commented that the St. Mary's Boat Club is heavily used by the public and represents one of only two HRM recreation facilities within District 7.

Councillor Walker commented that he supports the motion for a staff report but noted that if something is added to the budget, likely something will need to be removed. He advised that if something is not removed from the budget then taxes will like need to be increased to generate the revenue for the proposed programs.

Councillor Rankin noted that the requested staff report will need to identify funding sources for the proposed projects.

Councillor Outhit noted that he will support the motion and suggested that St. Mary's Boat Club be considered for year round use. He agreed with his colleagues by stating that Council is going to have to become more diligent about prioritizing projects for inclusion in the capital budget.

Mayor Savage noted his support for the motion and commented that he is not advocating that projects get added without due diligence. He advised that the identified projects have already been before Council in the past and the present meeting comprises Council's first look at the proposed capital budget.

Councillor Mosher expressed her support for the motion and noted that the St. Mary's Boat Club is often used for public meetings.

Councillor McCluskey commented that she has been trying to get financial information on the St. Mary's Boat Club since she was elected in 2004. She requested further information pertaining to how much people must pay to use the facilities at the Boat Club.

In response to a follow up question, Ms. Fraser noted that the funding for the St. Mary's Boat Club represents several hundred thousand dollars in the state of good repair budget. She noted that it is not on the top of the list in terms of priorities but was brought forward to Council, because it was the opinion of staff that if an investment in the asset were to be made, it would need to be directed by Council.

Councillor Dalrymple noted that the present motion before Committee of the Whole is for a staff report and that there is no direction to add the renovations to the St. Mary's Boat Club to the 2015-16 budget. He commented that every Councillor in the room could add a list of projects. He provided commentary on a past commitment made by Council for the installation of a library in Musquodoboit and commented that he would like to include that within the staff report.

Councillor Karsten suggested that Councillor Dalrymple include the request for the library within another motion requesting a staff report.

Councillor Whitman commented that he is willing to support a staff report on this issue and noted his concern regarding the closure of the Black Point Fire Station in District 13.

Further discussion ensued.

**MOTION TO AMEND PUT AND PASSED.**

The motion before Committee of the Whole now reads:

**MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Deputy Mayor Nicoll that Committee of the Whole:**

- 1. Direct Staff to prepare the preliminary 2015-16 capital program budget, as well as an additional four years up to and including 2019-20, as a basis to prepare a detailed capital reserves budget, as presented to Committee of the Whole.**
- 2. Approve the list of 2015 advances capital funding as per attachment A of the staff report dated December 3, 2014.**
- 3. Add the Cole Harbor artificial turf from the proposed 2015-16 Capital Budget to the actual 2015-16 Capital Budget**
- 4. Request a staff report examining the inclusion of the Beazley Field Grandstands & Upgrades, St. Mary's Boat Club and McDonald Bridge Bikeway Connection programs to the 2015-16 Capital Budget.**

Councillor Fisher inquired as to when staff will be ready to break ground on the Dartmouth four-pad arena.

Ms. Fraser commented that the projected opening date for the arena is scheduled for the fall of 2017. She noted that staff is currently working on the Request for Proposal for construction on the arena and advised that the project will likely involve a 20 to 22 month building period.

Councillor Fisher further inquired as to when construction will begin on the planned renovations to the Dartmouth Sportsplex. Ms. Fraser noted that construction will likely begin in late 2015 or early 2016.

In response to a follow up question from Councillor Fisher, Mr. Brad Anguish, Director of Parks and Recreation commented that the \$625,000 allotted in the Capital Budget for the Beazley Field is for the development of the site plan and amenity updates such as lighting and field improvements.

Councillor McCluskey requested commentary respecting fire station land acquisition in the proposed budget.

Ms. Fraser commented that funding for fire station land acquisition was approved 2013-14 capital budget. She further advised that the second phase of land acquisition will be determined through in up-coming Fire Services Report.

Councillor McCluskey further inquired about the status the Alderney Gate recapitalization project. Mr. Brad Anguish, Director of Parks and Recreation commented that the project as noted by Councillor McCluskey has been tendered and will be underway in the near future.

The Chair suggested that Council take a twenty minute break. Council took a twenty minute break at 12:03 p.m. and reconvened at 12:25 p.m.

Councillor Watts commented that it would have been beneficial for members of Council to have received the presentation on the proposed capital budget in advance of the meeting. She inquired as to how staff will be able to obtain the funding for the Cole Harbour Artificial Turf project for inclusion in the 2015-16 capital budget.

Ms. Fraser commented that staff will explore a range of options respecting projects that can be completed. She further advised that all option for the funding of the project will be communicated to Council by way of a staff report.

Councillor Dalrymple inquired as to whether there were any plans to build a fire station in the Wellington and Fall River area. Ms. Fraser noted that there is a one million dollar line item within the 2015-16 budget allocated for the new fire training facility but the location has not yet been determined.

In response to a follow up question from Councillor Dalrymple, Ms. Fraser commented that there is still flexibility within the budget to accommodate the building of a seventh cell at the Otter Lake Landfill facility if it is determined that it is required.

Councillor Mosher requested that Ms. Fraser elaborate on funding within the budget for Active Transportation Trails.

Ms. Fraser provided commentary on an annual allotment to urban greenways and trail connectivity. She noted that staff are reviewing projects which have been put forward to determine alignment with Council's priorities.

Councillor Mosher noted that it was recommended in the past, that the Active Transportation budget be increased to \$5 million, citing the need for more neighbourhood connections and commented that there is a need for greater active transportation infrastructure within HRM.

**MOVED by Councillor Mosher, seconded by Councillor Mason that Committee of the Whole request a staff report on the implications of increasing the active transportation allocation to \$5 million annually in the 2015-2016 capital budget and ongoing capital budgets, and to include an overview of the allocations currently within other areas of the capital budget that support interconnectivity**

Ms. Fraser commented that one of the projects that is currently being undertaken by staff is how to improve upon the reporting processes related to Active Transportation projects. She further advised that it is quite likely that the municipality currently spends \$5 million annually on Active Transportation projects. She suggested that more work needs to be done with respect to communicating the status of Active Transportation projects.

Deputy Mayor Nicoll commented that she supports the staff report and commented that she would like to obtain a better understanding of the Active Transportation Plan.

Ms. Fraser commented that the requested staff report will articulate the areas in which staff is currently investing in Active Transportation projects.

**MOTION TO AMEND PUT AND PASSED.**

The motion before Committee of the Whole now reads:

**MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Deputy Mayor Nicoll that Committee of the Whole:**

- 1. Direct staff to prepare the preliminary 2015-2016 capital program budget, as well as an additional four year up to 2019-20, as a basis to prepare a detailed capital and reserves budget, as presented and amended at Committee of the Whole December 3, 2014.**

2. **Approve the list of 2015-2016 advanced capital funding as per Attachment A of the November 25, 2014 staff report.**
3. **Add the Cole Harbour Artificial Turf project from the proposed 2015-2016 budget to actual 2015-2016 capital budget**
4. **Request a staff report on the implications of including three (3) projects (Beazley field upgrades, St. Mary's Boat Club and MacDonald Bridge Bikeway Connection) to the 2015-2016 actual and/or 2016-2017 proposed capital budget**
5. **Request a staff report on the implications of increasing the active transportation allocation to \$5 Million annually in 2015-2016 capital budget and ongoing capital budgets, and to include an overview of the allocations currently in other areas of the capital budget that support interconnectivity**

Councillor Mosher requested further commentary respecting upcoming traffic improvements projects to the Armdale Roundabout and Bayers Road.

Ms. Fraser provided commentary respecting the \$200,000 line item within the capital budget to address safety concerns and improvements to traffic flow in the Armdale roundabout. With respect to Bayers Road, Ms. Fraser cited possible widening and traffic capacity projects, which will form part of the transportation functional plan.

In response to a question from Councillor Walker, Mr. Eddie Robar, Director of Halifax Transit, commented that upgrades to the Mumford Terminal will not be included in the 2015-16 budget.

Councillor Walker further inquired if there will be a line item within the budget for the purchase of the Blue Mountain Birch Cove Business Park.

Ms. Fraser commented that Council has directed staff to continue with the facilitative process with respect to Blue Mountain Birch Cove. She commented that the working group is scheduled to reconvene in February and advised that staff will prepare a report for the consideration of Council with updates on the ongoing process.

Councillor Walker commented that it would be helpful if there was an allocation in the capital budget to show goodwill and good faith on the part of the municipality with respect to advancing the purchase of the Blue Mountain Birch Cove Business Park. He inquired if there are any provisions within future capital budgets in this regard.

Ms. Fraser commented that the terms of reference of the Blue Mountain Birch Cove project stipulates that the Municipality cannot release information pertaining to land purchase negotiations at the present time. She further advised that staff will come back with a status update on the project after the facilitative sessions with the developers takes place.

Councillor Craig requested further information respecting line items within the budget for upgrades respecting Customer Service software utilized by HRM Customer Contact Centres. He further inquired about potential upgrades to the Cobequid bus terminal.

Ms. Donna Davis, Chief Information Officer noted several projects proposed by staff which involves upgrading the customer service centre software utilized by the municipality. She noted that the line item in the budget, as referenced by the Councillor, is intended to ensure that the Customer Relations Management module continues to run effectively while a business plan is developed by staff to consider its eventual replacement as it is nearing the end of its life cycle. She noted that these initiatives would be rolled out in separate phases over the next few years.

With respect to the Cobequid bus terminal, Mr. Eddie Robar commented that currently there are no plans for upgrades within the 2015-16 capital budget.



Councillor Hendsbee stated that he would like a status report on all outstanding projects.

Ms. Fraser commented that staff now provides quarterly updates respecting capital projects in the reports to the Audit & Finance Standing Committee which are forwarded to Regional Council as information items.

The Chair requested that Councillor Walker assume the position of Chair so that he may speak on the budget.

Councillor Karsten thanked staff for the work on the project and inquired if it is based on the Consumer Price Index.

Mr. Keefe commented that the budget is not based on the Consumer Price Index. He further advised that funding within the budget is based on HRM's multi-year fiscal policy.

Councillor Karsten requested an update on the Baker Drive Sports Field Project and Shearwater Connector Projects. He further suggested that the line item in the budget for Regional Trails funding should be increased to ensure that there is funding available for other community trails projects. He proposed the following motion.

**MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Watts that Committee of the Whole request a staff report in regard to the implications of increasing the Regional Trails/Transportation capital fund by \$50,000.00, the purpose of which is to fund the McNabb's Island Trail Association, along with an update and criteria of the projects proposed for the 2015-2016 capital budget.**

Ms. Fraser commented that there is a carryover balance which is allocated for Trails projects that will be available for other community groups outside of the Sackville Greenway project. Mr. Brad Anguish, Director of Parks and Recreation noted that staff will work with the Halifax Regional Trails Association to determine ways to enhance trail projects in HRM.

**MOTION TO AMEND PUT AND PASSED.**

Mr. Anguish noted that the Baker Drive Sports Field project will be include in the Community Facility Master Plan.

Ms. Fraser provided an update on the Shearwater Connector program and noted that the municipality does not have access to the land required to move forward with the project.

In response to a question from Councillor Outhit, Mr. Keefe commented that based on the budget assumptions, staff will be looking for a tax increase between 0 and 1.8 percent.

Councillor Hendsbee proposed the following motion:

**MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Councillor Dalrymple that Committee of the Whole request a staff report examining an increase of Councillors District Capital Funds from \$94,000 to \$100,000.**

Deputy Mayor Nicoll commented that she supports the recommendation for a staff report but commented that a more holistic discussion will need to take place.

Councillor Outhit commented that he will not support the recommendation and commented that discretionary and advertising funding for Councillors should be examined as opposed to District Capital Funds.

Further discussion ensued.

**MOTION PUT AND DEFEATED.**

The motion before Committee of the Whole now reads:

**MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Deputy Mayor Nicoll that Committee of the Whole:**

- 1. Direct staff to prepare the preliminary 2015-2016 capital program budget, as well as an additional four year up to 2019-20, as a basis to prepare a detailed capital and reserves budget, as presented and amended at Committee of the Whole December 3, 2014.**
- 2. Approve the list of 2015-2016 advanced capital funding as per Attachment A of the November 25, 2014 staff report.**
- 3. Add the Cole Harbour Artificial Turf project from the proposed 2015-2016 budget to actual 2015-2016 capital budget**
- 4. Request a staff report on the implications of including three (3) projects (Beazley field upgrades, St. Mary's Boat Club and MacDonald Bridge Bikeway Connection) to the 2015-2016 actual and/or 2016-2017 proposed capital budget**
- 5. Request a staff report on the implications of increasing the active transportation allocation to \$5 Million annually in 2015-2016 capital budget and ongoing capital budgets, and to include an overview of the allocations currently within other areas of the capital budget that support interconnectivity**
- 6. Request a staff report in regard to the implications of increasing the Regional Trails/Transportation capital fund by \$50,000.00, the purpose of which is to fund the McNabb's island trail association, along with an update and criteria of the projects proposed for the 2015-2016 capital budget.**

**THE MOTION AS AMENDED WAS PUT AND PASSED.**

**4. Public Comments**

The Chair called three times for members of the public to come forward to speak on the budget. No members of the public came forward.

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:53 p.m.

Cathy J. Mellett  
Municipal Clerk