

HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES

February 28, 2006

PRESENT: Mayor Peter Kelly
Deputy Mayor Russell Walker
Councillors: Steve Streach
Krista Snow
David Hendsbee
Harry McInroy
Gloria McCluskey
Andrew Younger
Bill Karsten
Becky Kent
Jim Smith
Mary Wile
Patrick Murphy
Sue Uteck
Sheila Fougere
Debbie Hum
Linda Mosher
Stephen D. Adams
Brad Johns
Robert P. Harvey
Reg Rankin
Gary G. Meade

REGRETS: Councillor Dawn M. Sloane
Councillor Len Goucher

STAFF: Mr. Wayne Anstey, Acting Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Ms. Mary Ellen Donovan, Municipal Solicitor
Ms. Jan Gibson, Municipal Clerk
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Councillor Karsten that the minutes of February 14, 2006 and February 21, 2006 be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Councillor McInroy pointed out that a large part of this evening's Council meeting would be taken up with the scheduled public hearing. He suggested, therefore, in order to complete the Council agenda that, at the end of this meeting, Regional Council convene and deal with all other items on the Council agenda.

At 2:14 p.m. Councillor Murphy entered the meeting.

In response to a question in regard to procedure, the Municipal Solicitor advised that a motion with two thirds majority would enable Regional Council to proceed and deal with the Council agenda earlier than scheduled.

MOVED by Councillor McInroy, seconded by Councillor Snow that a meeting of Regional Council convene at adjournment of Committee of the Whole. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. HRM CULTURAL PLAN

- C A staff report dated February 21, 2006 was submitted.
- C A report dated February 21, 2006 from the Chair of the HRM Cultural Advisory Committee was submitted.
- C A letter dated February 27, 2006 from Mr. Paul MacKinnon, Executive Director, Downtown Halifax Business Commission was submitted.
- C An e-mail letter dated February 28, 2006 from Ms. Jane Buss, Executive Director, Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia was circulated.

Ms. Holly Richardson, Recreation Tourism and Culture, Mr. Andrew Inch, HRM Cultural Advisory Committee, and Councillor Sue Uteck were in attendance to present the Cultural Plan, as prepared by HRM's Cultural Advisory Committee.

Ms. Richardson addressed Council and provided background information in regard to the development of the Cultural Plan. She gave a brief overview of the Plan, highlighting the

implementation strategy. Ms. Richardson advised that once Council has approved the document, the Cultural Advisory Committee will have completed its mandate. She thanked the Committee members for their time and work spent on the Plan, and acknowledged Councillors Uteck and Streach for their assistance and support.

At 2:20 p.m. Councillor Fougere entered the meeting.

Councillor Uteck addressed Council in regard to the Cultural Plan, emphasizing that it was a cultural policy and not an arts policy. Councillor Uteck advised of the extensive public consultation process the Plan went through, and indicated that the strategic goal for this year, as set out in the Plan was "getting our own house in order", i.e building and promoting what the Municipality already has. In addressing funding in regard to the Plan, Councillor Uteck noted that no monies are being requested in the 2006/07 season, and she added that staff will be exploring options for Council's consideration and approval in the short term, including a portion of the Assessment Tax and a portion of development fees for cultural infrastructure.

Mr. Andrew Inch, Vice Chair of the Cultural Advisory Committee, addressed Council and provided further detailed information contained in Plan.

At approximately 2:25 p.m. Councillors Smith and Younger entered the meeting.

Mayor Kelly expressed appreciation to the Committee for the time and effort spent on preparing the Cultural Plan.

The following comments were put forward by Council members:

- C In reference to Policy 4.14, concern was expressed with the first bulleted item, which suggested a supplementary education funding contribution to support arts programs in HRM's public school curriculum, grades primary to twelve. Comments were noted of Council's divisiveness on the issue of supplementary funding and that the statement was a very open statement about the future of supplementary funding. Therefore, it was recommended that this bulleted item be removed from the Plan.
- C A suggestion was put forward to encourage developers to construct buildings with innovative design, as the tendency now tends to be the construction of the same style of building over and over.
- C A suggestion was put forward that the policy include reference to signage in various languages to assist newcomers to the area.

At 3:00 p.m. Councillor Adams entered the meeting.

- C Concern was expressed that funding sources have not been identified, and Council did not want to make commitments to funding without having more detailed information in regard to funding sources and timelines.
- C Concern was expressed that each policy states, "Council will", and it was suggested that it be changed to "Council shall".

At this time Councillor Uteck, in reference to the concerns expressed, advised that the comments and feedback provided today will be addressed and brought back to Council on March 7 in a supplementary report.

- C In regard to Policy 3.24 - supporting sporting events - a suggestion was put forward that either all sporting events should be listed or none should be listed.
- C The document did not give recognition of any celebrations of significant achievements, i.e. cultural awards; it was suggested that this be included.

In response to a question in reference to the circulated e-mail, Ms. Richardson advised that the Writers Federation were included in part of the consultation process.

Further comments provided by Council are as follows:

- C Prior to the document going to Council, ensure that it gets the endorsement of cultural groups such as the Cultural Federation of Nova Scotia.
- C Some concern was expressed that there were aspects in the document that suggest HRM may be re-inventing a type of arts council that the Provincial Government had, but had cut from its budget.
- C A suggestion was put forward that a membership program for artists be created and that they be linked with students in schools.
- C Have a staff person designated as a funding liaison officer within HRM to look at funding sources.
- C There is a need to track the progress of the implementation of the plan; and once it is approved, someone has to take ownership for it.
- C It was noted that there was a reference to a concept of Centre for Youth Expression and the Dartmouth Cole Harbour area was a suggested location. It was recommended that since this was a concept, that no particular geographical area should be targeted for placement, and that reference to this area should be removed.

At 3:53 p.m. Mayor Kelly retired from the meeting and Deputy Mayor Walker assumed the Chair.

In response to questions about the next steps in the process and public consultation, Councillor Uteck advised that the concerns expressed would be addressed in a supplementary report and brought back to Council on March 7th. The next steps would see the plan circulated to business units. Councillor Uteck advised that, with regard to public consultation, the Committee has had extensive public consultation, including responses to their website. She indicated that she hoped Council would ratify the document on March 7th; and after Council has approved the document, a cultural kick-off event would be held at City Hall.

In concluding discussion on this matter, the Chair thanked staff for the report. He advised that staff will take the Plan back and review it and return to Council on March 7 with a Supplementary Report, addressing the three main issues which arose out of the discussion.

Those issues being:

- C the reference to supplementary funding
- C the use of permissive language (using 'will' instead of 'shall')
- C timeframes in regard to funding that would be sought from Council.

4. TAX SALE PROCEDURE (Staff Presentation)

This item was deleted from the agenda.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Jan Gibson
Municipal Clerk