

HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
SPECIAL SESSION

MINUTES

March 13, 2012

PRESENT:

Mayor Peter Kelly
Deputy Mayor Bill Karsten
Councillors: Steve Streach
Barry Dalrymple
David Hendsbee
Lorelei Nicoll
Gloria McCluskey
Darren Fisher
Jackie Barkhouse
Jim Smith
Mary Wile
Jerry Blumenthal
Dawn Sloane
Sue Uteck
Jennifer Watts
Russell Walker
Debbie Hum
Stephen Adams
Robert Harvey
Tim Outhit
Reg Rankin
Peter Lund

REGRETS:

Councillors: Linda Mosher
Brad Johns

STAFF:

Mr. Richard Butts, Chief Administrative Officer
Mr. Martin Ward, Acting Municipal Solicitor
Ms. Cathy Mellett, Municipal Clerk
Ms. Sherryll Murphy, Acting Clerk
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. with the Invocation led by Councillor Fisher.

MOVED by Councillor Blumenthal, seconded by Councillor Wile that the Rules of Order be suspended with regard to notification of the meeting. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

2. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

MOVED by Councillor Blumenthal, seconded by Councillor Wile that Council convene In Camera to address item 5.1.1 ATU Contract Negotiations Update.

Councillor Uteck advised that she would not be voting to go in camera. She added that many of the details with regard to the Agreement have already been noted in the media, and therefore, she felt there was no reason for Council to discuss this in camera.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Councillor Uteck retired from the meeting.

At 6:05 p.m. Council convened In Camera.

3. ADDED ITEMS: None

4. NOTICES OF MOTION: None

5. IN CAMERA

5.1 LABOUR RELATIONS

5.1.1 ATU Contract Negotiations Update

This matter was dealt with in camera.

Following an in camera session, Council reconvened to ratify the following motion:

MOVED by Councillor Adams, seconded by Deputy Mayor Karsten that Halifax Regional Council:

- 1. Ratify the new collective agreement with ATU Local 508 as per the key terms found in Table 1 of the March 12, 2012 Private and Confidential staff report;**

2. **Approve the provision of free Metro Transit service from March 16, 2012 to March 31, 2012, and honour February transit passes for the month of April 2012; and**
3. **Release the March 12, 2012 Private and Confidential staff report following Council ratification.**

At the request of Councillor Hendsbee a recorded vote was taken.

THE MOTION WAS PUT AND PASSED with 19 voting in favour and 2 voting against, as follows:

In favour:

Mayor Peter Kelly; Deputy Mayor Bill Karsten; and Councillors: Streach, Dalrymple, Nicoll, McCluskey, Barkhouse, Smith, Wile, Blumenthal, Sloane, Watts, Walker, Hum, Adams, Harvey, Outhit, Rankin, and Lund.

Against:

Councillors: Hendsbee and Fisher

Councillors Mosher and Johns had provided regrets for this meeting. Councillor Uteck retired from the meeting earlier.

Mayor Kelly then invited Metro Transit staff to come forward and provide a presentation with regard to the Agreement reached between Halifax Regional Municipality and ATU Local 508.

Councillor Rankin retired from the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

Mr. Eddie Robar, Director, Metro Transit addressed Council and advised that in accordance with the direction of Halifax Regional Council, the negotiating team has successfully concluded a collective agreement that includes: rostering, wage steps, a new accident review policy, and a wage package that remains within Regional Council's mandate of \$5,629,060 net.

Mr. Robar provided an overview, highlighting the following points of the Agreement:

- The term of the Agreement is 5 years, from August 31, 2011 – August 31, 2016.
- Year 1 has a lump sum payment of \$4,000; and the remaining four years of the Agreement will have a 2% increase.
- Full wage steps from 1 to 5 years.
- Rostering has been achieved, and will include input by the Union into the creation of rosters.
- A new policy with regard to accident review will be implemented which will have accidents reviewed by HRM management to determine preventability.

- The Pick Process will expand to six picks per year if the Pick Process can be reduced to eight calendar days.
- Vacation Board Operators can be put on the Spareboard with no limitations on what work they can be assigned.
- The Two Day Rule in the Ferry Division was removed.
- Removal of all unionized acting management positions from the collective agreement.

Mr. Robar advised that as a way to show customer appreciation and to get passengers back, Metro Transit will be providing free service from March 16, 2012 to March 31, 2012, and honouring February transit passes for the month of April 2012.

With regard to budget implications, Mr. Robar noted that the final net cost of the agreement is \$5,623,332 which is approximately \$6,000 less than the mandate Council provided. He also pointed out that prior to the strike, Metro Transit had projected a surplus of \$200,000 for 2012. Savings realized through the strike are \$2,800,000, and the free March services will cost \$1,500,000 and the cost of Year 1 settlement with fiscal offset will be \$2,400,000. Mr. Robar advised that, overall, the projected deficit for 2012 is \$900,000 but the deficit can be carried forward to 2013 and covered through savings in wages that are currently set aside to cover the collective agreement costs.

In concluding his remarks, Mr. Robar advised that ferry services will be in operation on Thursday, the buses would be back on the roads on Friday, and the Access-a-Bus service would be back on Monday.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Cathy J. Mellett
Municipal Clerk