

# HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

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## HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE COUNCIL JUNE 19, 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  
Dawn Sloane  
Sue Uteck  
Sheila Fougere  
Debbie Hum  
Linda Mosher  
Stephen Adams  
Robert P. Harvey  
Len Goucher  
Reg Rankin  
Gary Meade

### **ABSENT WITH REGRETS:**

Councillor Brad Johns

### **STAFF:**

Mr. Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer  
Ms. Mary Ellen Donovan, Municipal Solicitor  
Ms. Jan Gibson, Municipal Clerk  
Ms. Sherryll Murphy, Legislative Assistant  
Ms. Jennifer Weagle, Legislative Assistant



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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 9:39 a.m. with Deputy Mayor Walker in the Chair.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - None**

**3. BUDGET DELIBERATIONS**

**3.1 Transportation and Public Work (continuation)**

Council continued debate on the Transportation and Public Works budget.

Councillors Snow and McInroy joined the meeting at 9:42 a.m.

Councillor Hum expressed concern regarding the level of funding for sidewalk renewal. She noted that there is a great need for sidewalk renewal in District 16 and other older neighbourhoods. The Councillor indicated that she believes additional funding for sidewalks that are 75-85% deficient will be required to address the long list of sidewalk issues.

Councillor Hum requested an update as to the status of the off leash park for her area (and that of Deputy Mayor Walker's) which was included in last year's budget. Deputy Mayor Walker requested that the information include an update on the status of the \$49,000 in funding allocated to the park.

Councillors Kent and Fougere joined the meeting at 9:53 a.m.

Councillor Sloane requested that staff look into repairing the large bump on Lower Water Street at Morris Street which is creating a noise problem when large trucks travel over the bump. She further asked if the retaining wall on Brunswick Street is still included in the list of retaining walls to be repaired. Concluding her questions, Councillor Sloane asked staff to report on the possibility of 25% of the sale of HRM land being allocated to a Capital District Reserve. She further requested a list of all HRM properties in the Capital District that are for sale.

Councillor Mosher asked the status of the off leash park for the parkland located off Williams Lake Road. She requested an anticipated time line for new washroom facilities at Chocolate Lake Beach.

Councillor Mosher asked if there were any funds for portable washrooms for the J. Albert Walker sports field. The Councillor also asked for the list of sidewalks which are going to

cleared of snow and ice in the upcoming year. Staff indicated that these lists are available and will be distributed to all members of Council.

Concluding her questions, Councillor Mosher asked if any potential locations have been identified for a Park and Ride off the St. Margaret's Bay Road. The Councillor referred to a future rapid transit bus terminal proposed for the Spryfield Mall which would require a park and ride location for users travelling from Timberlea and Prospect.

Councillor Murphy asked what has been budgeted for the maintenance of the Bloomfield School, as well as, an outline of the work undertaken at the site.

Councillor Hendsbee asked the status of the East Musquodoboit Industrial Park and the findings of a recent report relative to the Park. Staff indicated that they would come forward with an information report providing an update.

Councillor McCluskey asked what was the status of toilet facilities at Maybank Field in the Dartmouth Commons. She stressed that the previously funded bridge at Lake Banook should be installed this year.

Responding to a question from Councillor McCluskey, staff indicated they would bring forward clarification of what was included in the 'bundled' TPW budget items.

Noting residents' concerns, Councillor McCluskey requested that staff review whether time restrictions could be placed on truck loading and unloading on Portland Street.

Councillor McCluskey asked what outside work had been accomplished through the new Winter Works program. Staff noted that this issue is to be considered at the In Camera Council meeting on June 20, 2006.

**MOVED by Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor Snow that \$25,000 be placed in the parking lot for playground replacement for the John MacNeil School. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Councillor Smith expressed concern regarding the proposed expansion of the parking lot at the Dartmouth North Community Centre in terms of a loss of space for a needed expansion of the facility. The Councillor indicated that he wanted to ensure that the idea of a larger facility is not lost.

**MOVED by Councillor Snow, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee that \$125,000 be added to the parking lot to correct drainage issues on the Old Oaks Road in Waverley. MOTION PUT AND DEFEATED.**

In response to questions from Councillor Hendsbee staff is to provide detail on the source of funding for ditch and drainage issues along Ross Road.

Councillor Goucher joined the meeting of 11:00 a.m.

### **3.2 Planning and Development**

Mr. Paul Dunphy, Director, Planning and Development, presented an overview of the 2006-2007 Planning and Development budget.

Mr. Dunphy responded to questions providing the following key information:

- Minimum standards has the first priority for response,
- Municipal Inspection staff are not construction guarantors and can only carry out their inspection based upon the requirements under the building code. They cannot withhold an occupancy permit for such things as floor coverings or other finishing features.

In response to a question from Councillor Hendsbee, staff is to provide a breakdown of current planning/permit fees and fines, which fees have been changed and the revenues generated.

Mr. Dunphy advised that staff is presently developing criteria for the prioritization of community planning projects.

In response to concerns from Councillor Mosher regarding developers not meeting their commitments with regard to the dedication of parkland, Mr. Dunphy requested that the Councillor contact him regarding specific issues. Councillor Mosher went on to request that staff consider the possibility of allowing for public input when HRM is considering cash in lieu for parkland.

Councillor Mosher further asked the status of considering a private tree by-law for HRM.

Councillor Fougere requested that staff provide a breakdown of the expenditures allocated to the Regional Plan.

The meeting recessed at 11:45 a.m.

The meeting reconvened at 2:25 p.m. with Deputy Mayor Walker resuming the Chair and the same members present, with the exception of Councillors McInroy, Younger, Smith, Wile, Murphy, Sloane and Fougere.

Councillors Stretch, Adams, and Rankin also joined the meeting at this time.

### **3.2 Planning and Development Services (continuation)**

At the request of Councillor McCluskey, Mr. Paul Dunphy, Director, Planning and Development Services, advised that staff are seeking additional powers from the Province under the *Municipal Government Act* to include as Capital Cost Contributions such infrastructure as roads, sewers, transit bays, solid waste cells, capital equipment, parks, and recreation facilities. He clarified that staff will not be seeking maintenance costs from developers for such infrastructure.

In response to questions from Councillor Streach, staff are to provide a report on the opportunity to bridge provincially funded rural bus service which is being discontinued at the end of the month, to avoid having rural bus services shut down. A debate on future service will take place at the Provincial Legislature on this matter at a later date.

### **3.3 Financial Services**

Ms. Cathy O'Toole, Acting Director, Finance, presented Council with an overview of the 2006/2007 budget for Financial Services.

Ms. O'Toole clarified the following:

- C The elimination of the temporary tax credit program pertains to both Financial Services and Fiscal Services,
- C The one-time, temporary tax credit that was offered last year was replaced this year by a tax reduction of 5.1%,
- C There is a low income program offered by HRM as well as the Provincial property assessment cap program, that offer some of the same relief that the temporary tax credit program offered.

### **3.4 Fiscal Services**

Ms. O'Toole went on to present Council with an overview of the 2006/2007 budget for Fiscal Services, clarifying the following:

- C Transfers to reserves through Operating Cost of Capital has increased due to new projects and also because of better budgeting approval practices,
- C There is some market risk associated with the increase in revenues through the Deed transfer tax, because the \$1M increase is based on historical trends which include several large sales of HRM owned property. In addition, future market trends are unknown,

- C The increase in Property Tax showing in the 2006/07 Proposed Budget & Business Plans book is incorrect, and should read \$23M, as opposed to \$28.6M,
- C The increase in Grants In Lieu of \$1.7M is due to the realignment of the Business Occupancy Tax.

Ms. O'Toole commented that the Fiscal Services budget is laid out in a different format because Fiscal Services do not deliver any services to the public.

In response to questions from Councillor Hendsbee, staff are to provide a report on current major tax agreements, including what is being forgiven, and how long these agreements have been in place. The report is also to identify opportunities, if any, to collect additional revenues from various corporations.

Councillor McCluskey requested that staff advise how many appeals HRM launched against the assessment roll this tax year and last tax year. She further expressed concern with inaccurate property assessments and tracking of HRM's non-inventory assets.

Councillor Mosher requested that staff address the issue of exempting municipal pension plans from funding solvency deficits.

Councillor McCluskey requested that the CAO report on options for the Parkade, and for generating revenues through the sale of this property (see pages J10, J11, and J12 of the budget book).

### **3.5 Community, Culture and Economic Development**

Ms. Carol Macomber, Acting Director, Community, Culture and Economic Development, presented Council with an overview of the 2006/2007 budget for Community, Culture and Economic Development.

Councillor Snow inquired as to the cost of the Burke Oliver study. She expressed concern that there are no funds allocated in the budget for a new ice rink for the Bedford/Fall River area, which was recommended by staff in 2001.

**MOVED by Councillor Snow, seconded by Councillor McCluskey, that \$5M be added to the parking lot to be allocated for construction of a new ice rink in the Bedford/Fall River area. MOTION DEFEATED.**

Councillor Rankin advised that a community centre in Prospect was identified in the needs assessment and was well received and endorsed by the community. He commented that the next step is to establish a concept plan at a cost of \$150,000. Councillor Rankin advised that

the Community is prepared to offer \$75,000 from the area rate to be matched by HRM to cover the cost of the concept plan.

**MOVED by Councillor Rankin, seconded by Councillor McCluskey, that \$75,000 be added to the parking lot for Phase 1 of a community centre in Prospect, to be matched by community contribution through the area rate. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Councillor Snow left the meeting at 3:21 p.m.

Councillor Mosher commented on the state of the Captain William Spry Community Centre, quoting from a staff report which states that the centre requires modifications at a cost of approximately \$125,000 to be a fully functional facility. She inquired as to the plans to make the centre functional for HRM, and was advised that funds are not allocated in the budget for these upgrades to the centre. Staff advised they would present to Chebucto Community Council on the functionality of the centre.

**MOVED by Councillor Adams, seconded by Councillor Mosher, that \$125,000 be added to the parking lot for facility modifications/retrofits for the Captain William Spry Community Centre, as per the staff report to Chebucto Community Council on June 12, 2006. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Councillor Hum requested an update from staff on HRM rinks and updated needs assessments for HRM owned facilities at a future date.

Councillor Hum further requested that any future budget implications for items in the parking lot be disclosed in the staff reports coming forward to Council.

#### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

A quorum was lost and the meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Jennifer Weagle  
Legislative Assistant