

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES
APRIL 14, 2004

PRESENT: Mayor Peter Kelly
Councillors: Krista Snow
David Hendsbee
Ron Cooper
Harry McInroy
Brian Warshick (9:45 a.m.)
Condo Sarto
Jim Smith
John Cunningham
Jerry Blumenthal
Dawn Sloane
Sue Uteck (9:55 a.m.)
Sheila Fougere (9:50 a.m.)
Russell Walker
Debbie Hum
Linda Mosher
Stephen Adams
Brad Johns
Robert Harvey
Len Goucher
Reg Rankin
Gary Meade

ABSENT WITH
REGRETS: Deputy Mayor Steve Streach
Councillor Hetherington

STAFF: Mr. George McLellan, Chief Administrative Officer
Ms. Jan Gibson, Acting Municipal Clerk
Ms. Sherryll Murphy, Legislative Assistant
Ms. Patti Halliday, Legislative Assistant

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES - None**

3. **APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS**

4. **BUDGET DELIBERATIONS**

4.1 **Public Works and Transportation**

Mr. Rick Paynter, Director, Public Works and Transportation, gave an overview of the 2004/05 budget for Public Works and Transportation.

Mr. Paynter and members of his staff then responded to questions from members of Council.

MOVED by Councillor Blumenthal, seconded by Councillor Sarto that \$300,000 be included in the Parking Lot to cover repair sidewalks on Acadia Street east from Glebe Street to Albert Street, Drummond Court, Novalea Drive and Hyland Avenue adjacent to the St. Stephens School.

A discussion ensued with Councillor Cooper noting that in the last number of years there has been an emphasis on repair/renewing sidewalks in the Peninsula area. He went on to request an update in this regard.

Mr. Paynter advised that sidewalks having an 80% or higher deficiency rating are renewed. He advised that even though there has been an emphasis on the sidewalks, the list is ever growing. He noted that he would provide a detailed update to Council at a later date.

The **MOTION WAS PUT AND DEFEATED.**

A discussion ensued regarding the appropriateness of the Parking Lot and it was **MOVED by Councillor Adams, seconded by Councillor Mosher that the Parking Lot be eliminated.**

MOVED by Councillor Cooper, seconded by Councillor Sloane that the motion be amended to provide that only those items included in the Parking Lot by Councillors be eliminated and staff come back with a report detailing the items they have included in the parking lot and how exactly the money will be spent.

Following a lengthy discussion relating to how to move forward relative to the motions, the **MOTION TO AMEND WAS PUT AND DEFEATED.**

The **MAIN MOTION WAS PUT AND DEFEATED.**

Mr. Paynter and his staff responded to further questions from members of Council.

Mr. Paynter responding to a question regarding whether or not HRM would be cost sharing 50% with residents on Route 333 sidewalk, indicated that he believed this to be the case. Mr. Paynter stated that he would confirm this with Councillor Meade.

Councillor Goucher requested that Development staff determine what further commitment the developers of Bedford South have with regard to the re-capping of the Bedford Highway adjacent to the development.

MOVED by Councillor Sarto, seconded by Councillor Warshick that \$175, 000 be included in the Parking Lot to provide for the upgrading of Topsail Boulevard from Dorothea Drive to Cross Road. MOTION PUT AND DEFEATED.

In response to a request from Councillor Sloane, Mr. Paynter indicated that he would provide members of Council with the street sweeping schedule.

Councillor McInroy asked that staff consider the Brookfield Avenue sidewalk, which is included in the budget, being split between the far end of Astral Drive and Brookfield Avenue (from Willowdale on Brookfield to Astral Drive and the balance from the entrance to Colby South to the existing sidewalk on Astral Drive). He went on to note that this would capture three times as many of the residential streets feeding the collector streets, as well as, capturing 80% of the students who walk Astral Drive and Brookfield Street.

Staff of Public Works and Transportation responded to questions regarding traffic signalization and transit.

In response to a question from Councillor Mosher, Mr. Paynter indicated he would follow up with design and construction staff on jobs which were tendered last year and have not yet been completed. Mr. Paynter further indicated that he would look into developing a mechanism whereby the contractor is required to complete a job within a reasonable period of time.

Replying to concerns expressed by Councillor Mosher, Mr. Paynter indicated that staff is committed to looking into the issue of sidewalk snow removal in the remaining portion of Halifax.

MOVED by Councillor Mosher, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee that funds be included in the parking lot for a sidewalk on the north side of the St. Margaret's Bay Road. MOTION PUT AND DEFEATED.

MOVED by Councillor Mosher, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee that \$1.5 million be included in the parking lot for traffic signalization of those intersections which are now on the list , but are not included in the budget.

Following a brief discussion, the **MOTION WAS PUT AND DEFEATED.**

The meeting recessed at 12:05 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 1:00 p.m. Councillors Hetherington and Blumenthal were absent with Regrets.

Public Works and Transportation (Cont'd)

Councillor Snow inquired about any possibilities for upgrading of Cobequid Road. Mr. Paynter stated he would review the situation and get back to the Councillor prior to her meeting in the community on April 28, 2004.

Councillor Cooper expressed concern with the damage caused to the grass strip along the Forest Hills Parkway from the spreading of pulverized asphalt. Mr. Paynter agreed to follow up on the matter and have staff report back to the Councillor.

Councillor Smith referenced the 1990 Highfield/Pinecrest study and requested that staff bring a report back regarding a time frame when the projects identified in that report will be done.

Councillor Warshick requested that staff ensure that the ditch work for Plymouth Road and Mountain Avenue be completed to ensure no problems occur. The Councillor also requested that staff provide Councillors with a rough schedule for street sweeping.

(Councillor Fougere took her place at the meeting at 1:30 p.m.)

Councillor Mosher expressed concern with maintenance of bus shelters, in particular, those at the intersection of Battery Drive and Purcell's Cove Road, the Cowie Hill Road adjacent to the senior's facility, and on the Herring Cove Road. Mr. Ken Silver, Manager, Transit Planning and Development, agreed to follow up with the shelter advertiser to ensure those shelters are cleaned and report back to the Councillor.

Councillor Sarto requested that staff see what can be done to lessen the danger at the intersection of Mount Edward Road and Wildwood Boulevard Mr. Reashor, Acting Manager, Traffic and Transportation Services, agreed staff would examine this situation.

With regard to contracted services, Councillor Hendsbee inquired what the costs have been for winter maintenance service. Mr. Paynter responded that he could provide the Councillor with that information.

Councillor Cooper requested that staff provide the four Councillors of the Main Street area in Dartmouth with copies of the new traffic signal warrants.

Councillor Cunningham requested clarification regarding resurfacing of Erskine Street, from Hawthorne Street to Summit Street, noting this is a carry over project as it had been approved in previous budgets, however, the budget indicates it is a new request. Mr. Paynter agreed to check on the status of this project.

With respect to street sweeping, Councillor Cunningham noted he received many complaints about streets in downtown Dartmouth and inquired if more can be done in this area. Mr. Paynter stated if more frequent sweepings are required this can be done. He agreed to look into the situation.

Mayor Kelly thanked staff for their presentation and comments.

4.2 Planning and Development Services

Mr. Paul Dunphy, Director, Planning and Development Services, presented an overview of the budget for Planning and Development Services, which included the following:

- C There are a number of new FTEs and changes in service levels.
- C Additional positions have been created from funds found in smaller accounts, enforcement positions have been created from new revenue due to increased permit fees, and a number of minimum standards positions and planners have been created from increases in the general tax.
- C Public participation relative to a harmonized subdivision by-law will be presented to Council and completed.
- C Additional funding to continue the grants for further research in housing has been included.
- C A report will be coming to Council in the near future regarding the Halifax Waterfront Plan.
- C Policies are being developed for the Heritage Conservation District Program - Barrington Street. A potential second heritage district may be identified in a residential area.
- C A harmonized sign by-law should be before Council in the near future to set a date for a public hearing.
- C Increased enforcement of sign regulations will be conducted.
- C Participation in the Regional Planning Project and the Physical Asset Review and Assessment will continue.
- C A review of wiring polices in new developments will be conducted.

- C Improvements to timeliness and accuracy for land use investigations have been made.
- C Participation in by-law integration project will take place.
- C Enhanced customized reporting for Councillors will be provided.
- C Online permit applications through dynamic portal and remote hand held functionality will be explored.
- C An expanded pilot project involving identification of unreported development, particularly commercial development will be conducted.
- C One item deleted since the presentation at Program and Service Review was succession planning for building officials.

(Deputy Mayor Streach took his place at the meeting at 2:15 p.m.)

Mr. Dunphy responded to questions of Council regarding his presentation.

Councillor Uteck stated this business unit needs the funding to hire experienced planners due to increased growth in HRM and the Regional Planning process.

In response to a question of Councillor Sloane regarding enforcement of By-Law M-100, Respecting Standards for Residential Occupancies, Mr. Dunphy stated the three additional positions will assist in dealing with the increased complaints, but they will not be able to address them all. Mr. Dunphy stated statistics regarding the gap will be available for next year's budget, and, perhaps, they could be provided in the second quarter.

In response to a question of Councillor Warshick regarding an additional parkland planner, Mr. Dunphy stated it is his understanding that position is no longer in the budget. Councillor Warshick also inquired when a report is expected back to Council from the Committee studying underground wiring. Mr. Dunphy responded this report should be received within three months.

Deputy Mayor Streach spoke in support of more planning staff and requested that the demographics of HRM be taken into consideration in the hiring process. In response, Mr. Dunphy stated the hiring focus has been more in the area of race, culture and gender. With respect to urban/rural, professional qualifications are considered.

In response to a question of Councillor Sloane regarding the waterfront plan, Mr. Dunphy stated staff have same concerns in terms of the manner in which the Waterfront Development Corporation is presenting themselves and the planning process and funding. He noted nothing has been approved and staff plan to continue discussions with the public and will bring it forth to Council before finalization.

Councillor Sloane inquired if the heritage incentive program is cut, will it affect the Kelly Building on Granville Street. In response, Mr. Dunphy stated he would have to check with Mr. Lew Rogers, Director, Recreation, Culture and Heritage.

There being no further questions, Mayor Kelly thanked staff for their presentation and comments.

RECESS

A recess was taken at 3:00 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 3:20 p.m.

4.3 Shared Services

Ms. Geri Kaiser, Director, Shared Services, presented an overview of the Shared Services budget which included the following:

- C Providing technical support to the Integrated City Project
- C Providing technical support for the new business unit initiatives
- C Providing support for the 2004 Municipal Elections
- C Development and delivery of decision support tools for business units
- C Enhanced survey capabilities for the HRM web site
- C Enhanced capabilities in the Corporate Records Management area.
- C Additional service level agreements with internal clients and associations, boards and commissions.
- C Completion of the civic address and community boundaries corrections for the Eastern Region
- C Migration of the existing non-emergency dispatch service to TMR.
- C Development of a customer contact strategy.
- C Completion of the migration of GIS from its existing environment in ARCGIS.
- C Providing support to the By-Law Integration Project.
- C Consolidation and upgrading of service and disc capacity to support SAP performance improvements and disaster recovery.

Ms. Kaiser responded to questions of Council regarding her presentation.

Councillor Warshick inquired about the time line for providing Councillors with access to the Hansen system. Ms. Kaiser responded that staff are looking at a couple of options to make information available to Councillors while being mindful of FOIPOP. She stated staff can come back to Council within a month with an update on the status.

In response to a question of Councillor Smith, Ms. Kaiser indicated staff are working on a report regarding Hansen inquires regarding grants and she agreed to determine the status of this report for the Councillor.

Ms. Kaiser agreed to look at changing the format of the print outs received by Councillors from the Hansen system, in particular the section regarding action/reaction by department, in response to a request of Councillor Warshick.

Councillor Warshick suggested next year's budget should include a full-time advertising position.

In response to a question of Deputy Mayor Streach regarding consideration for an initiative regarding a toll free calling zone for HRM, Ms. Kaiser stated this is still under process. If the cost is under \$1 per client, Council can make the decision, but if the cost is more, it will have to go to a plebiscite.

There being no further questions, Mayor Kelly thanked Ms. Kaiser for her presentation and comments.

4.4 Human Resources

Mr. Louis Coutinho, Director, Human Resources, presented an overview of the Human Resources budget which included the following:

- C 5 additional FTEs will be added to the budget
- C HRM's absenteeism rate has been reduced to 8.8 percent resulting in a \$431,000 savings.
- C Performance measurement data was circulated and reviewed.
- C Additional funding has been identified for diversity management and corporate safety.

Mr. Coutinho and Mr. Mike Christie, Labour Relations, responded to questions of Council.

There being no further questions, the meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Jan Gibson
Acting Municipal Clerk