

**HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES
March 4, 2005**

- PRESENT:** Mayor Peter Kelly
Deputy Mayor Len Goucher
Councillors: Krista Snow
David Hendsbee
Harry McInroy
Gloria McCluskey
Andrew Younger
Bill Karsten (9:27 am)
Becky Kent (9:26 am)
Jim Smith (9:40 am)
Mary Wile
Patrick Murphy (9:39 am)
Sue Uteck
Russell Walker
Debbie Hum
Linda Mosher
Steve Adams (9:48 am)
Brad Johns
Robert Harvey
Reg Rankin
Gary Meade
- ABSENT:** Councillors: Steve Streach (regrets)
Dawn Sloane (regrets)
Sheila Fougere (regrets)
- STAFF:** Mr. George McLellan, CAO
Ms. Jan Gibson, Municipal Clerk
Ms. Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 9:17 am.

A moment of silence was observed in remembrance of the four RCMP officers killed in the line of duty in Mayerthorpe, Alberta. Councillor Hendsbee requested a letter of sympathy be sent to the Mayor of Mayerthorpe and to the Federal Justice Minister. Mayor Kelly advised protocol is being checked in regards to lowering the flags in the Grand Parade to half mast.

2. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

The order of business was approved as presented.

3. BUDGET DELIBERATIONS

3.1 Transportation and Public Works

Mr. Mike Labrecque, Director, Transportation and Public Works, presented his Business Unit's budget overview. He indicated the name change from *Public Works & Transportation* to *Transportation & Public Works* is to show the focus on transportation.

The following comments/concerns were raised by Council during the ensuing discussion:

- Councillor Uteck requested a copy of the 1993 railway study in regards to current consideration for railways cuts being used as a transport route for trucking/buses.
- Councillor Uteck expressed concern with the technical structure (standard) of the bridges as some are in need of repair with rebar showing through in places. Mr. George McLellan, CAO, requested HRM write a letter to CN to release construction information (bridges) to Mr. David Hubley, a copy to go to Councillor Uteck.
- Councillor Younger requested more information on the integration amount funding in regards to the Duke Street repaving project. Mr. Hubley will provide information to Councillor Younger.
- Councillor Snow requested priority be given for a sidewalk on Brook Street in District 2 as elementary school children will be walking on that road due to the discontinuance of the courtesy school bus for that area. Mr. Hubley will work with Councillor Snow on this matter. Ms. Dale MacLennan indicated she will review the adequacy of funds in the area rate for that area as money has been borrowed then repaid from an area rate in the past for a project.
- Councillor Hendsbee requested more emphasis be given to the Main Street/#7 Highway widening of the 3 km stretch coming into the core as there have been

- many accidents. The section is also lacking a centre lane for turning. He requested property acquisition be considered for this project if necessary.
- Councillor Hendsbee indicated full access is required going in and out of areas in North Preston such as the Simmonds Street area (during large events there is no alternative access). He added the RCMP and Fire and Emergency Services could speak to the necessity for an alternate access. Mr. Hubley advised a cost estimate has been done for construction of a new road as part of the North Preston infrastructure and will have to go through planning and development.
 - Councillor Hendsbee indicated an accelerated paving program for the rural communities should be a priority to insure fair treatment as property taxpayers in rural areas need to see improvements. He suggested the gas tax revenue could be used for the 75-80 streets on the cost sharing petition between the province and HRM in regards to street paving. He added HRM we should have some authority to fix old infrastructure and redirect funds in the budget toward new paving projects that will accelerate the paving of gravel streets.

Mr. George McLellan, CAO, responded that details of how the gas tax will be applied is not known at this time. Determination of how the funds will be distributed is at the Provincial and Federal levels. There is nothing formal on this distribution to date. He added remedial roads do not seem to be part of their plan. Mr. McLellan added there is a need throughout the province and the province will have to respond to that.

Mayor Kelly left the chair at 10:04 am with Deputy Mayor Goucher assuming the chair.

- Councillor McCluskey expressed concern with the Regent Drive area of District 5 being rated 0.30 but no work is planned for this year. She added there are raised sidewalks which could be a liability and there has not been any work done on this street for a number of years. She added HRM would not get a good response from the community in regards to the scorecard. There are raised sidewalks which could lead to tripping and falling. She suggested money be borrowed from another area to address this issue.
- Councillor Mosher requested the traffic signs on Herring Cove Road be replaced as soon as possible as they are in very poor condition. She further requested sidewalk renewal, repaving and the widening of Herring Cove Road be considered now and not wait for the settlement project in the 25 year Regional Plan as some of the properties are quite unsightly.

Councillor Mosher submitted a letter dated February 17, 2005 from Mr. Stuart Frickleton, an area resident, regarding Residential Sidewalk Snow Removal: Issues and Concerns. A copy is on file in the Municipal Clerk's Office. She also submitted comments on a common area rate indicating *"the possible proliferation of different area rates and service levels throughout the municipality and the inequity that this creates."* A copy is on file in the Municipal Clerk's Office.

- Councillor Rankin requested staff consider the following corridors regarding a

transportation plan to alleviate problems: Prospect, Tantallon, Musquodoboit Harbour, St. Margaret's Bay, Bayers Road. He added more buses are needed and HRM should reserve some money from the possible gas tax revenue for augmentation of the transit fleet by providing for feasibility studies for transit service to those corridors.

Mr. Mike Labrecque indicated a regulatory body, to be known as the Capital Transportation Authority (CTA), is to be introduced as a business unit to address transportation issues. Information on the proposed CTA will be brought forward at a future date.

Mayor Kelly resumed the chair at 10:19 am.

- Councillor Karsten inquired, in regards to page 279 of the budget book on street lighting - line R825 - and the \$4m electricity bill if there was anything reserved in this budget to negotiate with NS Power regarding lighting in Dartmouth. Mr. Labrecque indicated staff will look into this.

Mayor Kelly called a recess at 10:30 am.

The meeting was reconvened at 10:44 am.

- Councillor Hum requested more detailed information in regards to salary/wage costs for Snow and Ice control. page 279 - lines R761 to R767.
- Mr. Labrecque confirmed for Councillor Hum that intersection ploughing will be removed from the area rates program and incorporated as a component of road work to be done by HRM staff and contractors. The area rates will be adjusted accordingly.
- Mr. Ken Reashor confirmed for Councillor Wile that a ½ signal will be installed at the Lacewood Drive/Thomas Raddall Drive location to address pedestrian and traffic issues. Further, he confirmed that the location will be re-evaluated next year for possible full signalization.
- Councillor Harvey expressed concern on where Council is going on the issue of sidewalk snow clearing for all of HRM. He explained that when HRM does the clearing it results in more complaints and it would be expensive to have a 24 hour standard for all of HRM.
- Councillor Snow requested signalization for the Beaver Bank Road intersection as there have been 56 accidents and there is only one way in and one way out of Beaver Bank. She asked to see the facts and statistics for the five intersections recommended for signalization. Councillor Johns added the intersection is at an odd angle and school buses travel that road as well as 22,000 cars per day.
- Deputy Mayor Goucher requested staff consider earlier time lines for snow removal contractors as there have been a few early storms (November 26, 2004 for example) that resulted in snow removal delays due to later start dates for the contractors.
- Councillor Adams suggested staff consider snow removal within 24 hours of a

storm for major streets/roads and sidewalks such as the Herring Cove Road and Quinpool Road areas and those roads of five lanes.

- Councillor Uteck requested staff confirm whether Norwood Street in District 13 would be paved.

MOVED BY Councillor Uteck, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee that the Duke Street repaving project be removed and repaving of Armview Avenue be included. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

- Councillor Younger requested money be found in the budget to check to bow in the Waverley Road as there is ice building up to the centre line and the road is not draining properly. He indicated the Waverley Road was redesigned or resurfaced and is now a hill.
- Councillor Younger inquired if there was provision in the HRM budget to repair damage done by a contractor and if that cost is costed back to the contractor. If not, he suggested this option be considered.

MOVED BY Councillor Mosher, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee that \$6m be allocated in the general urban rate for all HRM sidewalks to have snow removal. MOTION DEFEATED.

- Councillor Mosher requested that both sides of Joseph Howe Drive (one side in District 17 and one side in District 15) receive sidewalk snow removal and that the cost come from the District 15 area rate for sidewalk snow removal. She indicated she will provide a petition from the residents to support this request at a later date.
- Councillor Rankin requested there be full opportunity by Council to discuss the merits of the proposed CTA (Capital Transportation Authority). Mr. Mike Labrecque advised a report/presentation will be coming to COW on March 22, 2005.
- Councillor Hendsbee inquired, in regards to pages 279-283 referencing the street lighting surplus, whether the residents were given an option to have more lighting or was the surplus lost in general budget? He suggested the \$4.5 m for street lighting could be reduced by re-evaluating lighting criteria and wattage/type of bulb used.
- Mr. Labrecque confirmed for Councillor Murphy that snow removal for all corners (intersections) is included in this budget?

MOVED BY Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Hum that staff be directed to report back with the:

1. Budget as it was presented.
2. Budget to include things in the parking lot that staff think they can support.
3. Budget to include all things in parking lot.
4. Budget cutting \$28 m to show effect.

5. Budget to cut 2%
6. Budget set by staff to deal with increase in assessments.

Report to be delivered to Council late Monday afternoon by courier in order to debate on Tuesday. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 pm.

Jan Gibson
Municipal Clerk