

**HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
MINUTES**

**June 14, 2005**

**PRESENT:**

Mayor Peter J. Kelly  
Deputy Mayor Len Goucher  
Councillors: Steve Streach  
Krista Snow  
David Hendsbee  
Harry McInroy  
Gloria McCluskey  
Andrew Younger  
Bill Karsten  
Becky Kent  
Jim Smith  
Mary Wile  
Patrick Murphy (3:20 p.m.)  
Dawn M. Sloane (2:25 p.m.)  
Sue Uteck  
Sheila Fougere  
Russell Walker  
Debbie Hum  
Linda Mosher (2:20 p.m.)  
Brad Johns  
Robert P. Harvey  
Reg Rankin  
Gary G. Meade

**REGRETS:**

Councillor Stephen D. Adams

**STAFF:**

Mr. George McLellan, CAO (4:15 p.m.)  
Mr. Dan English, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer  
Mr. Wayne Anstey, 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 2:00 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**MOVED by Deputy Mayor Goucher, seconded by Councillor Johns, the minutes of May 24, 2005 be approved as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

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

Councillor Walker noted that agenda item 7, *Civic Addressing* had been deferred from a previous meeting and suggested that it be dealt with as the first order of business.

**MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Karsten that agenda item 7 be moved up on the agenda and dealt with as item 4.**

A brief discussion ensued and a suggestion was put forward that arrangements be made to have the presentation on Civic Addressing heard at the June 21, 2005 Council meeting. **THE MOTION WAS PUT AND DEFEATED.**

The agenda was **accepted as presented.**

**4. DESTINATION HALIFAX**

Mr. Stewart Jolliffe, Chair of the Board of Directors of Destination Halifax provided a brief overview of the history of tourism marketing in HRM. He advised that in April of 2002, the Tourism Department of HRM, the former Greater Halifax Convention and Visitors Bureau, the WTCC, and the Province partnered and the new organization of Destination Halifax was formed. He noted that Destination Halifax has an annual budget of 2.25 million dollars, and this has remained unchanged for four years ago. Mr. Jolliffe then introduced Ms. Pat Lyle, CEO, Destination Halifax who elaborated further on Tourism as an industry sector and a driver of the economy in the HRM. She advised that tourism provides significant economic benefit and opportunity for the community and helps support the quality of life amenities for the residents.

In Ms. Lyle's presentation, she elaborated on the following topics:

- S the economic impacts of tourism on the community
- S additional benefits of tourism, other than economic

- S HRM's tourism strategy
- S target areas for Destination Halifax's sales and marketing

Ms. Lyle and Jolliffe responded to questions from Council.

Councillor Uteck noted the importance of developing a hosting policy, adding that she did not see this strategic objective in any of the presentations. The Councillor also spoke in support of an additional conference facility, and the Municipality having a sport liaison official.

(At 2:20 p.m. Mayor Kelly left the meeting and Deputy Mayor Goucher assumed the Chair)

In response to a question regarding HRM's capacity to support another convention centre, Ms. Lyle advised that there was sufficient demand, and noted that the last time they studied the figures, they could sell September convention space three times over.

In response to a question by Councillor Sloane, Mr. English, DCAO, advised that the contract for a study in regard to the needs of a convention centre would be awarded shortly, if it has not already been awarded, and would take about six months before coming back to Council.

## **5. HALIFAX REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

Ms. Veronica MacNeil, Chair of the Board of Directors of Halifax Regional Development Agency, addressed Council and gave a brief presentation on the HRDA from the Board's perspective. She noted that the HRDA is a community economic development agency and their focus and expertise is on the engagement of communities and citizens in the development of their local and regional economies.

Highlights of her presentation are as follows:

- S the HRDA is going through the process of ISO registration and certification which will give international recognition for the type of management they deliver.
- S HRDA is celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup>. Anniversary
- S created a Vision Statement which reflects their confidence in the community; and reflects their confidence in the resources and the capacity of this community to achieve this vision.
- S developed a Strategic Plan which emphasises the importance of continuing the development of small and medium size enterprises in our area as a driver of the local and regional economy.

Mr. Gerald Gabriel, Executive Director of the Halifax Regional Development Agency, addressed Council and provided a presentation with regard to the operational aspects of the HRDA. He pointed out that, as of last Wednesday, HRDA received ISO 9001 registration and certification. Mr. Gabriel outlined the services the HRDA provides; the various groups they serve; and the successful business start-ups and small business expansions over the past two years.

He reviewed the Agency's funding resources, and added that with regard to the core funding received from HRM, they have, essentially doubled those dollars. He pointed out that for the past two years they have been able attract dollars from the private sector and believe they will be there for a third year. Mr. Gabriel concluded his presentation by noting HRDA's impact over the past 10 years, and noting their future objectives.

The Chair thanked the representatives for their presentation and Mr. Gabriel and Ms. MacNeil responded to questions.

Councillor Streach advised that there is a need for small business counselling in urban areas as well as the rural areas

At 3:50 p.m. Mayor Kelly returned to the meeting, assuming the Chair.

At 4:00 p.m. the Committee recessed; and reconvened at 4:10 p.m. with the same members present with the exception of Councillor McInroy.

## **6. GREATER HALIFAX PARTNERSHIP**

Neville Gilfoy, Chair of the Board of Directors of Greater Halifax Partnership addressed the Committee and, on behalf of the Board and GHP's private sector investors, he brought greetings to Regional Council.

Mr. Stephen Dempsey, President and CEO of Greater Halifax Partnership, provided a presentation of Greater Halifax Partnership, highlighting the following aspects:

- S mission statement - GHP has a bias of working with local companies
- S services contract - currently in the second one-year extension of an original three year contract. Will be entering discussions with CAO and Council for longer term contract.
- S operate under balanced scorecard, similar to one that Council does - summary of results shows 83 percent attainment
- S prime investor in Greater Halifax Partnership is HRM - HRM is joined by many other companies to drive growth and those investors have provided strong support.
- S revenues - have seen 25 percent growth over the past few years.
- S reviewed success measures, goals, and the trends in the economy (strong and growing)

Mr. Dempsey concluded his remarks by advising that GHP would welcome further efforts to find ways to coordinate and create greater harmonization in HRM's economic development activities. He added that the three groups who have presented here today work well together and will share strategies with each other, and that the Partnership would welcome any discussion on how it could have more of an impact to their primary stakeholder, which is HRM.

Councillor Streach indicated that he supported the idea of having one strong and efficient body which would provide the best from each of the three organizations heard today. He questioned at what stage the Economic Strategy Committee was at with regard to these

initiatives.

The Chair advised that Council would have an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments first, and then Ms. Betty MacDonald would address the Economic Strategy Committee.

Councillor Murphy advised that the Greater Halifax Partnership has a good message that they sell and pointed out that, at the airport, there is not enough signage promoting the Municipality.

Councillor Rankin cautioned against combining the three groups into one, noting that it may send the wrong message out to the business community. He indicated that any consideration of this was premature in advance of an economic strategy.

Councillor Streach advised that, in his view, there appears to be redundancy among the three groups who have presented today; and he feels there are opportunities for greater efficiencies, and he questioned if the Economic Strategy would look at any opportunities to advance that cause.

In response, Ms. Betty MacDonald, Director of Governance and Strategic Initiatives addressed Council and advised that, two years ago Council asked staff if the Municipality was getting best value for the money they were spending on the RDA and GHP. The analysis showed that HRM was definitely getting value, but staff could not answer the question of whether it was the best value. She explained they could not determine whether they were spending the resources on the right areas because they did not have an economic strategy. Secondly she added, they did not know how it fit in with the other organizations also carrying out economic development. Ms. MacDonald advised that it was felt it would be worthwhile to put together an economic strategy to consider the following questions:

- S what are the most important things to do
- S who is best to do this
- S what is it that HRM needs to focus on to progress its economy.

In response to a question by Councillor Johns, Ms. MacDonald advised that she anticipates having a draft economic strategy for Council by August/September timeline; with an anticipated final approval from Council in October.

Councillor Johns noted that RDA and GHP have had their funding formula frozen while this study has been ongoing, and he expressed concern that these groups were being held up from moving forward. For this reason, Councillor Johns advised that he would like to see the strategy coming forward sooner. Councillor Johns also stressed the importance of having the economic strategy back at Council, before Council moves into its next budget.

In response to a question by Councillor Hendsbee concerning whether the RDA, GHP and Destination Halifax will have an opportunity to participate in further dialogue in regard to the economic strategy, Ms. MacDonald advised that all the organizations will be invited to give their advice as what they think are the most necessary items in their area. She added that a

formal invitation has gone out the RDA, and Destination Halifax. As well, she advised that they were involved in the Economic Strategy working committee.

**7. CIVIC ADDRESSING (staff presentation)**

Due to time constraints, **it was agreed** that this matter would be referred to the June 21, 2005 meeting of Regional Council.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Jan Gibson  
Municipal Clerk