

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

**September 27, 2005**

**PRESENT:**

Mayor Peter Kelly  
Deputy Mayor Len Goucher  
Councillors: Steve Streach  
Krista Snow  
David Hendsbee  
Gloria McCluskey  
Andrew Younger  
Bill Karsten  
Becky Kent  
Jim Smith  
Mary Wile  
Patrick Murphy  
Dawn Sloane  
Sue Uteck  
Sheila Fougere  
Russell Walker  
Debbie Hum  
Linda Mosher  
Brad Johns  
Robert P. Harvey  
Reg Rankin  
Gary Meade

**REGRETS:**

Councillor Harry McInroy  
Councillor Stephen Adams

**STAFF:**

Mr. Dan English, Acting Chief Administrative Officer  
Ms. Mary Ellen Donovan, Acting Municipal Solicitor  
Ms. Julia Horncastle, Acting Municipal Clerk  
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 1:36 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Councillor Sloane, the minutes of August 9, 2005 and September 13, 2005 be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

1. **ROAD TRANSFER / REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING STATUS**

- C An information report dated September 23, 2005 was submitted.
- C A copy of the *PowerPoint* presentation on this matter was submitted.

Mr. Mike Labrecque, Director, Transportation and Public Works, and Mr. Wayne Legere, Manager, Service Delivery & Quality Improvement addressed Council and provided a presentation on the Regional Transportation Planning Status and Road Transfer.

At approximately 1:40 p.m. Councillors Kent, Harvey, Streach, Karsten, Rankin and Hendsbee entered the meeting.

In his remarks, Mr. Labrecque indicated that today's presentation was for information only and that staff was not providing recommendations or seeking direction from Council. Mr. Labrecque then reviewed the objectives of the Joint Regional Transportation Planning Committee; and outlined the working plan for the membership, the priorities of the Committee and the current issues pertaining to Joint Transportation. Mr. Labrecque noted that the Joint Regional Transportation Planning Committee has not met to date, however, the intent is to meet between now and sometime in early November and set some of the short term priorities.

Mr. Wayne Legere, Manager of Service Delivery and Quality Improvement, addressed Council regarding road transfer. He provided background information on what lead up to the HRM Provincial agreement, entitled Agreement HRM-01, explaining that it helps facilitate the road transfer process, and he elaborated on issues of concern pertaining to the Agreement.

At 1:50 p.m. Councillor Fougere entered the meeting.

Using maps to illustrate, Mr. Legere pointed out the areas under consideration for transfer, and noted that the mix of HRM and Provincial streets results in confusion for a large part of the population as to which level government is responsible for particular streets. Mr. Legere advised that the Province is prepared to take over the Pockwock area, and HRM can transfer an equivalent length of streets it currently owns, which are located outside of any areas HRM would consider for road transfer in the foreseeable future. He added that this would be beneficial to HRM because it would reduce some of its maintenance problems. Mr. Legere suggested it would be prudent for staff to come back to Council with a report detailing the streets for Council's consideration for possible transfer.

At 1:58 p.m. Councillor Patrick Murphy entered the meeting.

Mr. Legere concluded his presentation by advising that staff received notification from the Province that it will proceed with the road transfer proposal for the Hammonds Plains Stillwater Lake area. He added that, with Council's approval, this will take place next April.

With regard to the next steps, Mr. Legere advised that taking over the 61 kilometers of road in the Hammonds Plains area equates to an additional \$750,000 on the operating envelope for 2006/07. He added that there will be a \$3.5 million capacity gap on the paving of gravel roads. Mr. Legere emphasized that this transfer brings a number of gravel roads petitioned outside the core, to the inside core list; therefore, increasing the existing list of streets inside the core for paving. Mr. Legere also pointed out additional impacts of taking over streets from the Province, such as the condition of the streets, HRM's capital upgrading responsibilities, and backlog of the paving program.

Mr. Labrecque concluded the presentation by advising that, at this point in time, staff do not have plans to pursue the next phase of any road transfer, but if the Municipality chose to do so, there will be an impact on the budget, as well as an impact on the department's overall program.

A discussion ensued with Mr. Labrecque and Mr. Legere responding to questions.

At 2:28 p.m. Councillor Krista Snow entered the meeting.

## **2. COUNCIL WORKSHOP: PRIORITIES**

C A staff report dated September 26, 2005 was circulated at the meeting.

Ms. Betty MacDonald, Director of Governance and Strategic Initiatives, addressed Council and advised that, in response to the priorities setting workshop held on September 15

and 16 staff is working on a detailed report. In reference to the report circulated at this meeting, Ms. MacDonald advised that she wanted to touch base with Council on the work done at the workshop and seek Council's direction as to how to proceed. She indicated that, out of numerous issues, 11 priority issues were identified and five were identified as top priority and to be dealt with in the very near future; some issues were considered less urgent; and three issues were not discussed in any detail.

Ms. MacDonald indicated that if Council was in agreement with the priorities as contained in the circulated report, then staff will come back with a report in more detail and which outlines what is currently being done in those areas and the next steps.

Ms. MacDonald then reviewed the categories noted as priorities in the staff report.

A discussion ensued and concerns were expressed with regard to the listing of priorities.

Mr. English, Acting Chief Administrative Officer, explained that at this time, staff is looking for Council's endorsement of the areas of priorities, and on October 11, staff will come back at Committee of the Whole with a report that is more in-depth in regard to items such as action plans and status report. He also pointed out that, at that time, a discussion can be held on how Council will have more input in the budget planning process.

At 2:51 p.m. Councillor Mosher retired from the meeting.

A discussion ensued, with differing opinions as to what the top priorities of Council should be and in what order they should be listed. There was general consensus that Council was not prepared at this time to approve the staff recommendation, and that Council would defer this matter until it receives the more detailed report.

**MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Councillor Kent that this matter be deferred to the October 11, 2005 meeting of Committee of the Whole, pending receipt of the complete report.**

Following further discussion, the **MOTION TO DEFER WAS PUT AND PASSED.**

### **3. INFRASTRUCTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CRITERIA**

C A staff report dated September 26, 2005 was circulated at the meeting.

Ms. Betty MacDonald, Director, Governance and Strategic Initiatives, addressed Council and reviewed the report. In her remarks, Ms. MacDonald indicated the purpose of the presentation was to inform Council that there are new opportunities coming forward for possible funding from other levels of government. She noted the importance of a longer term development of an infrastructure plan and advised that developing criteria with which

projects can be ranked will help staff get a better sense of what is important and what needs to be done first. Ms. MacDonald advised that the report contains a set of recommended criteria for Council's consideration.

Councillor McCluskey expressed concern that Council had not yet had an opportunity to review the report because it was placed on their desks only this afternoon.

In response to Councillor McCluskey's concern, Ms. MacDonald elaborated on the Federal Gas Tax Funding Program, the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund, the Transit Fund Program, and the Atlantic Investment Partnership Program. Highlights of her comments are as follows:

**Federal Gas Tax Funding Program:**

- Agreement was signed last Friday(Sept. 23/05).
- HRM expects to receive in the area of \$60 million in five years; estimated allocation for 2005/2006 was \$7.9 million; funding for this year has been included in the budget, and that in future budget years Council will be encouraged to give direction on criteria under the gas tax.

**Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF) Program:**

- This is a replacement of the Canada Nova Scotia Infrastructure Program, and that its intent is to achieve a balance between rural and urban parts of the country.
- HRM is eligible for 20% funding under this program and expect an agreement to be signed in the near future between the Provincial and Federal governments.
- Nova Scotia will receive \$74 million; therefore, the most that HRM can receive is 20% of that figure, which works out to \$14.8 million over five years; HRM would then have to provide a 1/3 funding for projects under this agreement.

**Transit Funds Program:**

- This is a new program announced by the Federal Government in June of this year, whereby, the Federal Government will make an investment of up to \$800 million in public transit over two years.
- Few details have been released on this program but the suggestion is that funds would be allocated based on ridership.
- Staff estimates that \$23.5 million will be allocated for Nova Scotia over the lifetime of the agreement; this money has not been included in the budget.

**Atlantic Investment Partnership Program:**

- This is a program of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency
- This program is designed to invest in strategic projects that build the

- economies of Atlantic Canada's communities.
- If HRM were to apply to this program there would be an expectation it would provide a share of the funding.

Mr. English, Acting Chief Administrative Officer advised that discussion on these funding programs has come up lately, and it is important that Council be ready with criteria, and in agreement with the projects to submit for the programs. He explained that the purpose in bringing the report at this time was to provide information to Council on the programs, and added the matter will come back to the October 11, 2005 meeting of Committee of the Whole. Mr. English indicated that it is hoped at that time, Council will approve the criteria and projects for submission under the respective programs.

**MOVED by Councillor Uteck, seconded by Councillor Karsten that this matter be deferred to the October 11, 2005 Committee of the Whole.**

The Chair advised that, in the interim, if Councillors have any concerns, questions, or additional information they wish to provide, please submit it to staff.

**MOTION TO DEFER WAS PUT AND PASSED.**

## **6. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

Julia Horncastle  
Acting Municipal Clerk