

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

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HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
MINUTES  
June 15, 2006

PRESENT:

Mayor Peter J. Kelly  
Deputy Mayor Russell Walker  
Councillors: Krista Snow  
David Hendsbee  
Harry McInroy  
Gloria McCluskey  
Andrew Younger  
Bill Karsten  
Becky Kent  
Jim Smith  
Mary Wile  
Patrick Murphy  
Dawn Sloane  
Sue Uteck  
Debbie Hum  
Linda Mosher  
Robert Harvey  
Len Goucher  
Reg Rankin  
Sheila Fougere  
Stephen Adams

REGRETS:

Councillors: Steve Streach  
Brad Johns  
Gary Meade

STAFF:

Mr. Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer  
Ms. Mary Ellen Donovan, Municipal Solicitor  
Ms. Jan Gibson Municipal Clerk  
Ms. Stephanie Parsons, Legislative Assistant  
Ms. Julia Horncastle, Legislative Assistant

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 a.m.

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

**3. BUDGET DELIBERATIONS**

**3.1 Library**

Ms. Judith Hare, Chief Executive Officer, Halifax Public Libraries presented Council with an overview of the 2006-2007 budget.

Councillor Mosher left the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

Mr. Leo McKenna, Chair of the Halifax Public Libraries Board provided an overview of the libraries performance. The following was noted:

- He expressed concern regarding sustainability of the libraries,
- Capital spending of \$49,000 per year is insufficient to maintain 14 libraries,
- In order to maintain the current network of libraries, \$350,000 is required,
- The Board recommends that Halifax Regional Council allocate \$500,000 in the 2006-2007 capital budget to advance the new Central Library and initiate financial planning and budgeting for the projects completion.

Councillor McCluskey raised concern regarding the lack of computers in some libraries as some children do not have access to computers at home.

Ms. Hare advised that there is no space to provide for additional computers.

**MOVED BY Councilor Wile, seconded by Councillor Smith that \$150,000 be added to the parking lot to increase the Library Capital Budget for maintenance of the library facilities. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Councillor Kent entered the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

Mr. Dan English, CAO, advised Council of the following:

- The study of the Central Library site is expected to be tabled at Regional Council on June 27, 2006,
- If the report recommends the Queen Street/Spring Garden Road site, HRM will have

- to acquire the site,
- The funds in the reserve can be used to commence the design,
  - When the site is acquired and the design is complete a long term funding strategy will be developed and the fundraising campaign can begin.

Councillor Sloane entered the meeting at 10:25 a.m.

Councillor Hum requested that staff review the Library Capital Budget for 2007-2008 and 2008-2009.

**MOVED BY Councilor Hendsbee, seconded by Councillor Snow that the \$150,000 that was added to the parking lot to increase the Library Capital Budget for maintenance of the library facilities be increased to \$350,000. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Councillor Hendsbee requested a report from the Grants Committee to explore options of a contribution funding program for future capital campaign efforts (i.e. Halifax Central Library).

Councillor Younger expressed concern that maintenance of other libraries will be deferred if the Central Library is the focus for the next five years. He also commented that:

- The Woodlawn Library is not discussed in the budget documents,
- The library budget should be increased to \$500,000,
- There will be 7.5 million dollars in the Strategic Growth Reserve next year and funding for the maintenance of the libraries can come out of the reserve fund.

**MOVED BY Councillor Younger, seconded by Councillor Smith that the \$350,000 that was added to the parking lot to increase the Library Capital Budget for maintenance of the library facilities be increased to \$500,000. MOTION DEFEATED.**

Councillor Goucher entered the meeting at 10:37 a.m.

Councillor Murphy entered the meeting at 10:48 a.m.

Responding to Councillor Snow regarding the cost of the study Mr. English stated:

- Council approved a joint study with the province on the future use of the joint lands,
- If the study indicates that the library should be on Spring Garden Road HRM will have to acquire the site, as it does not own any land on Spring Garden Road.

Responding to comments of Council, Mr. English advised Council that there are additional

capital funds for libraries in the Transportation and Public Works Budget.

Mr. Mike Labreque, Director of Transportation and Public Works provided a break down of those funds as follows:

- Captain William Spry Library, to replace carpets, \$29,300,
- Halifax Main Branch Library for sandstone restoration, \$100,000 and an additional \$45,000 for other maintenance work,
- Halifax North Branch Library \$19,700,

Mr. Labreque advised that the \$194, 00 is in addition to the \$49,000 Library Capital Budget.

### **RECESS**

A recess was taken at 11:00 a.m. The meeting reconvened at 11:18 a.m. with Mr. Wayne Anstey, Deputy CAO, Operations, assuming the Chair of the Chief Administrative Officer.

Councillor Sloane commented that Word on The Street is an important initiative in promoting literacy.

**MOVED BY Councillor Sloane, seconded by Councillor Karsten that \$6, 630 be added to the parking lot for Word on Street and that Corporate Records Management CID00710, be reduced by \$6,630. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Councillor Sloane suggested a 3.8 percent tax cut given the issues surrounding Fire Services and the Libraries.

Councillor Younger commented:

- The Central Library is a Capital Project and the Woodlawn Library is a leasehold.
- In last year's budget book it was stated that the Central Library would move forward with the funding campaign and despite the Woodlawn Library being a second priority it would move forward parallel to the Central Library,
- He expressed concern that if appropriate funding is not included in this years budget any leasehold opportunities that may exist for the Woodland Library will be missed.

Mr. McKenna advised that the Library Master plan has not changed and that the Central Library is the first priority and Woodlawn Library is the second priority.

Councillor Karsten expressed concern regarding the current value of parking lot items, the budget process and the time, cost and delivery of the budget documents.

Councillor Hum requested clarification regarding the focus sessions and the list of priority items. She stated that Council clearly indicated the Central Library as a priority, and that it was on the priority list.

She expressed concern that other items may have been overlooked in compiling the focus sessions reports.

Mr. Wayne Anstey, Deputy CAO, addressed Council stating:

- The Central Library is on Council's priority list however it did not make the short list for this years budget.
- The CAO has stated that there are additional processes with the first being the identification of a site and acquiring the land.
- The next step is to design the library,
- The \$480,000 in the reserve fund should be used for the design of the Library rather than operational cost.
- Following the design of the library the fund-raising campaign will begin
- In the next budget Council will have to sign off on the purchase of the site and allocate funds for construction of the library.

### **3.2 Environmental Management Services**

Mr. Brad Anguish, Director, Environmental Management Services provided an overview of the 2006-2007 Budget and noted:

- The operating budget decreased by 1 million dollars while delivering more services,
- The most recent recommendation by Council to increase Stormwater Management's budget by 2.4 million dollars is not captured in the current budget document,
- The draft plan to identify a source for those funds will be presented at the end of budget deliberations.

### **RECESS**

Council recessed at 11:57 p.m

The meeting reconvened at 1:00 p.m. with the same members present, with the exception of Councillor McInroy.

Councillor Hendsbee requested a staff report from the Grants Committee exploring options of a contribution funding program for future capital campaign efforts for example Halifax Central Library. The Councillor noted the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is receiving its final payment from HRM this year.

In response to Councillor Wile with regard to the professional and external services fees, Mr. Anguish advised that the amount is for the solid waste contract. He noted the professional fees are for Otter Lake and the external contracts are for all others such as composting. He noted the increase is as a result of the harbour solutions project coming on line.

Councillor Sloane noted there is pressure from the business in the downtown to bury services in the downtown core and suggested that HRM obtain an agreement from NS Power and Aliant such that HRM can bury services in conjunction with their projects.

Councillor Hendsbee stated there needs to be an evaluation on deferred maintenance on infrastructure and questioned what would be involved in doing a watershed or sewershed study done for the Porter's Lake Commercial district. In response, Council was advised that this would be decided as part of the Regional Plan implementation process.

Councillor Snow questioned what would be the option if the watershed study indicates that the lakes in the Waverley/Fall River area are in jeopardy. In response, Council was advised the Fall River plant is at capacity, noting the watershed study will clarify how the area is developed and, if the receiving area can't accept development, other choices will have to be made.

In response to Councillor Smith with regard to the installation of back flow preventers in homes, Council was advised this initiative would involve new money. On question regarding the level of service for the engineered wetland in Burnside, Council was advised that staff is working to keep the wetland in operation and the funding would be included under the "other" account in wastewater treatment.

Councillor Murphy suggested coordination continue with getting letter baskets placed throughout HRM.

Councillor Rankin referenced the road transfer and questioned whether HRM would have the option of seeking redress from the province for the deficiencies.

Councillor McCluskey questioned how many new pumping stations would come on line this year. The Councillor noted that construction is one of the major contributors to the rodent problem and questioned whether there was some way the contractors could identify and mitigate the problem.

Councillor Younger referenced the debt from the Sackville Landfill and questioned whether staff have considered in terms of future fiscal capacity, if the debt should be paid fully this year or in a five year term. Mr. English advised he will look at financing and bring a report back to Council.

**RECESS**

Council recessed from 2:40 p.m. to 2:56 p.m.

### **Transportation and Public Works**

Mike Labrecque, Director, Transportation and Public Works provided an overview of the 2006-2007 Budget and noted:

- All snow and ice control contracts come up this summer for application this coming winter,
- A works control office is being introduced,
- The strategic transportation needs will be defined through Planning and Development,
- The Metro Link service will be eliminated on Saturdays.

In response to Councillor McCluskey with regard to increased investment in business parks, Mr. Labrecque advised this refers to the extension of Phase 7 and it is essentially the construction of roads, grading of lots and bringing the acres to market.

Councillor Fougere referenced page B7 in the Capital Budget book and noted there is \$100,000 for capital improvements for the Halifax Forum and placed the following motion:

**MOVED by Councillor Fougere, seconded by Councillor Sloane, that \$55,000 be reallocated from the High School Rationalization Project and added to the parking lot for wiring, mats for the floors and paving of the Forum parking lot. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Council agreed that Fire Services would be addressed In Camera as the first item for the next meeting, followed by the continuation of Transportation and Public Work.

### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:29 p.m.

Jan Gibson  
Municipal Clerk