

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

**HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE COUNCIL
APRIL 16, 2007**

PRESENT:

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

**ABSENT WITH
REGRETS:**

Councillors: Harry McInroy
Shelia Fougere

STAFF:

Mr. Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer
Ms. Mary Ellen Donovan, Municipal Solicitor
Ms. Jan Gibson, Municipal Clerk
Ms. Chrissy White, Legislative Assistant
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	CALL TO ORDER	03
2.	APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES- None	03
3.	BUDGET DELIBERATIONS	03
3.1	CAO	03
3.2	2007/2008 Budget Parking Lot Report	06 & 08
3.3	Capital Debt for Regional Recreational Facilities/ Strategic Growth ...	06
4.	ADJOURNMENT	11

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 10:36 a.m. with Deputy Mayor Uteck in the Chair.

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

3. **BUDGET DELIBERATIONS**

3.1 **Chief Administrative Office**

Councillor Walker assumed the Chair.

Deputy Mayor Uteck advised of the need for more staff and equipment in the Councillors Support Office.

Mr. English advised that the CAO's Office will undertake a review of both the Mayor's and Councillors' Office regarding budget increases.

Deputy Mayor Uteck resumed the Chair.

Councillor McCluskey expressed concern with clarity surrounding the breakdown of travel, training and education.

Mayor Peter Kelly joined the meeting at 10:39 a.m. and assumed the Chair.

Staff advised that they would provide Council with an updated analysis on travel, education and training in a breakdown format.

MOVED by Councillor Younger, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee, that staff merge the Building Community Capital Funds and the District Funds.

Staff advised that a report is coming forth regarding the above noted funding mergers and their uses.

Council provided their comments on the above noted motion:

Councillor Hum advised that she would like to wait for the staff report before making any decisions.

Councillor Mosher advised that she would like to see the uses of the monies and the implications of the merger before she makes a decision.

Councillor Sloane advised that she would like to see the staff report before

making a decision.

Councillor Streach advised that he would like to see the staff report.

Without a vote being taken on the motion on the floor, the following motion was placed:

MOVED by Councillor Streach, seconded by Councillor Sloane, that the above noted motion be deferred until a staff report is presented to Council on this issue.

Councillor Johns advised that he has no problem with the original motion as it is to dissolve the community building fund.

Councillor Younger advised that he does not support the deferral. He further suggested Community Council partner together in groups of three and divide the funds evenly among the districts. He further advised that he would like to see a report regarding the rules surrounding the merger.

Staff advised that a report on this issue will be presented to Council on May 1, 2007.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

MOVED by Councillor Hum, seconded by Councillor Johns, that a staff report be forwarded for the 2008/09 budget examining the feasibility of creating a combined constituency office in the Mainland North area with a Councillor support staff.

Councillor Streach advised that staff support in the Councillors' areas would provide a better public service to the constituents in their districts.

Councillor Snow advised that she would like to see the combined Councillors' office in this year's budget.

Without a vote being taken on the motion on the floor, the following motion was placed:

MOVED by Councillor Snow, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee, that a combined constituency office for the Mainland North Area supported with Council support staff be considered for the 2007/08 budget year.

Mr. English advised that possible cost implications could slow down the process for the suggested changes for this year's budget.

- Councillor Mosher advised she would like a staff report on the cost implications regarding increased Council support offices throughout districts in HRM within the next couple of months and then implement the suggestions in next year's budget.
- Councillor Streach advised he would like a short term relief plan regarding the increased Council support offices for the 2007/08 budget and implement a longer term plan in the 2008/09 budget.
- Mr. English advised he will provide a review on the fiscal implications of creating increased Councillor support offices in districts throughout HRM.
- Councillor Hendsbee expressed concern with the amount of support the Provincial MLA's receive in comparison with HRM Councillors'.
- Councillor Johns suggested that HRM staff look at other municipalities and compare trends regarding Council support and what has worked for them.
- Councillor Harvey requested information regarding how increased Councillor support offices throughout districts in HRM will affect the public before the change is made. He advised that he would do a cost benefit analysis on the above noted before Council decides to go forward.
- Councillor Karsten advised that he sees no value in moving due to the amount of access Council has with technology.
- Councillor McCluskey advised that she would like to hear from the residents on this issue before any decision is made. She further advised that larger municipalities have smaller staff.

MOTION DEFEATED.

The following motion was now before Council:

MOVED by Councillor Hum, seconded by Councillor Johns, that a staff report be forwarded for the 2008/09 budget examining the feasibility of creating a combined constituency office in the Mainland North Area to be supported with a Councillor Support Staff. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Councillor Mosher expressed concern regarding safety and possible theft in City Hall due to recent thefts in surrounding buildings.

Mr. English advised that he would review the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) report on City Hall and bring back information.

MOVED by Councillor Mosher, seconded by Councillor Walker that a report be forwarded regarding plans to ensure safe work environments for Scotia Square and City Hall employees. MOTION DEFEATED.

Councillor Streach advised that he believes training and upgrading is important to

ensure a proper level of education to effectively serve the community .

Councillor Snow advised that Council's work regarding e-mail, travel, filing, calls and meeting schedules is measurable. She further advised that those Councillors' who need extra help should be given funding for support.

MOVED by Councilor Snow, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee, that \$4,500 per Councillor be allotted in the 2007/08 budget for additional staff to help with administrative tasks. MOTION DEFEATED.

3.2 2007/2008 BUDGET PARKING LOT REPORT

- A report dated April 16, 2007 was before Council.

MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Martin that:

- 1. Council approve the strategy presented in the discussion section of the April 16, 2007 report to address Parking Lot items; and**
 - 2. Council approve the changes to the Operating, Reserve, and Capital budgets, as summarized in the budget implications section of the April 16, 2007 report and detailed in Attachment B.**
- Councillor Walker advised that supports the parking lot report and will vote in favour.
 - Councillor Johns expressed concern with the amount of money allotted for the parking lot.

Without taking a vote on the motion, Council agreed to deal with item 3.3- Capital Debt for Regional Recreational Facilities/ Strategic Growth Reserve Utilization at this time as it links to the Parking Lot.

3.3 Capital Debt for Regional Recreational Facilities/ Strategic Growth Reserve Utilization at this time.

- A report dated April 13, 2007 was before Council.

Ms. Cathie O'Toole, Acting Director of Finance presented the report.

Ms. O'Toole advised that Strategic Growth Reserve monies were originally intended for the Commonwealth Games. Now that Halifax is no longer bidding, staff and Council will have to reassess the priorities for the money. She further advised that large

infrastructure projects should take priority.

Council recessed at 11:57 a.m.

The meeting reconvened at 1:00 p.m. with Council continuing discussion on the Capital Debt for Regional Recreational Facilities/Strategic Growth Reserve Utilization. Deputy Mayor Uteck was in the Chair.

MOVED by Councillor Johns, seconded by Councillor Snow that Regional Council:

- 1. Endorse the present policy of allowing major facilities to issue debt outside Council's debt policy, and hence require them to pay back principal and interest.**
- 2. Direct staff to prepare a report and return to Council within 3 months, evaluating the operational and financial implications of budgeting, accounting, reporting and managing Sackville Sports Stadium in a manner consistent with other HRM owned and managed facilities such as NorthCliffe or Centennial Pools, or re-establishing a Community Board for the facility.**

At approximately 1:04 p.m. Councillors Smith, Hum, and Rankin entered the meeting.

Councillor Johns advised that he felt Council needed clarification and suggested that a discussion be held on the Strategic Growth Reserve and the future of the Reserve.

In response, Ms. O'Toole advised that it was never envisioned that the Reserve would accumulate an unallocated balance because it was expected that the Fast Ferry Project would have occurred now and that HRM may have had the Commonwealth Games.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

MOVED by Councillor Johns, seconded by Councillor Mosher that Regional Council allocate the funds planned for the Strategic Growth Reserve for this year (\$5 million) to address the issues in the Parking Lot.

Councillor Mosher proposed a friendly amendment, to which Councillor Johns agreed, that the funding be allocated to the Parking Lot items except those that are at the discretion of the Traffic Authority.

At 1:18 p.m. Councillor Kent entered the meeting.

MOTION DEFEATED.

MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Sloane that Regional Council:

- 3. Allocate the existing un-committed balance of the Strategic Growth Reserve as per the budget implications section of the April 6, 2007 report**
- 4. Re-confirm the Strategic Growth Reserve Business Case.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

2007/2008 BUDGET PARKING LOT REPORT (Cont.'d from page 6)

Council reconvened discussion of the 2007/08 Budget Parking Lot Report with the following motion on the floor:

MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Martin that:

- 1. Regional Council approve the strategy presented in the Discussion section of the April 16, 2007 staff report to address Parking Lot items; and**
- 2. Council approve the changes to the Operating, Reserve, and Capital Budgets, as summarized in the Budget Implications section of the April 16, 2007 staff report and detailed in Attachment B.**

MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Mosher that \$125,000 be removed from item 13 of the Parking Lot.

Councillor Mosher noted the importance of addressing the CPTED audit recommendations for the Chocolate Lake Community Centre and the pedestrian tunnel in Cole Harbour and requested that \$125,000 from the GHP Parking Lot item be allocated to these parking lot items.

As the mover of the motion, Councillor Karsten concurred with Councillor Mosher's request.

Without a vote being taken on the motion, the Chair advised that the motion now reads

as follows:

MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Mosher that \$125,000 be removed from GHP Parking Lot and those funds be applied to Chocolate Lake Community Centre (\$75,000) and Cole Harbour (\$50,000) to address recommendations and issues raised in CPTED audits.

The Mayor entered the meeting at 1:40 p.m. and assumed the Chair.

Staff responded to questions.

In response to concerns raised about issues outlined in the CPTED audits, Mr. Paul Dunphy, Director, Community Development advised that staff is not ignoring these studies. He noted that staff do not know where they rank in priority relative to other facilities because similar audits have not been carried out. Mr. Dunphy added that staff are aware of the problems and are looking into solutions. He explained that with regard to the pedestrian tunnel in Cole Harbour, staff agree there is a problem but are not necessarily in agreement that removing the tunnel is a solution. Staff feel there are other solutions and that they could be addressed within the existing budget envelope between Community Development and Transportation and Public Works.

Mr. Dunphy advised that in the situation of the Chocolate Lake Community Centre, some of the issues relate to administration management and staffing, as opposed to the physical condition of the building. He added that measures have already been such as providing additional staff, and they have instituted a buddy system for safety. As well, some of the bushes have been trimmed, and these have all been done within the existing budget envelope.

In response to further questions, Ms. O'Toole advised that the issue around Chocolate Lake is not a funding issue, noting that when something becomes an occupational health and safety issue it gets addressed. She referred to the Capital Budget and pointed out that one of the accounts—Facility Upgrades General—has \$250,000 for 2007/08, and this gets allocated earlier in the year based on priority. Ms. O'Toole added that she just wanted to clarify for Council that the discussion around reducing GHP funding to accommodate the CPTED audits is probably not required because it can be accommodated in the budget.

At the request of Council, the Chair advised that the motions would be split into two separate motions as follows:

MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Mosher that \$125,000 be removed from item 13 of the Parking Lot - GHP Parking Lot. MOTION DEFEATED.

MOVED by Councillor Mosher, seconded by Councillor Karsten that \$125,000 be removed from item 13 of the Parking Lot - GHP and \$75,000 of these funds be allocated to item 8 of the Parking Lot - Chocolate Lake Community Centre and \$50,000 allocated to item 9 of the Parking Lot - Cole Harbour Pedestrian Tunnel. MOTION DEFEATED.

MOVED by Councillor Mosher, seconded by Councillor Adams that with regard to the funds identified by staff in the budget RE: Facility Upgrades - General (\$250,000), that \$75,000 be directed to Chocolate Lake Community Centre to address the CPTED audit recommendations.

In response to a request for clarification, Ms. O'Toole advised that she did not have a list of items pertaining to this particular account at this time, but that there are other funding accounts between Community Development and Transportation and Public Works business units that can come into play to address the issues in the CPTED audits.

MOTION DEFEATED.

Mr. Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer addressed Council and advised that he wanted to give assurance to both councillors that whatever work is necessary to make both situations safe, will be done.

Staff responded to further questions of Council

Council recessed at 2:38 p.m. and reconvened at 2:55 p.m.

Councillor Walker suggested that the debate Council is involved in at this time should be held during debate of the budget at the Regional Council meeting, and that the Rules of Order be suspended to bring closure to this afternoon's meeting.

MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Streach that the Rules of Order be suspended and debate be closed. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

At this time Council agreed to address the motion on the floor which reads as follows:

MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Martin that:

- 1. Regional Council approve the strategy presented in the Discussion section of the April 16, 2007 staff report to address Parking Lot items; and**
- 2. Council approve the changes to the Operating, Reserve, and Capital**

Budgets, as summarized in the Budget Implications section of the April 16, 2007 staff report and detailed in Attachment B.

THE MOTION WAS PUT AND PASSED.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:58 p.m.

Jan Gibson
Municipal Clerk