

HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
MINUTES

January 20, 2009

PRESENT: Mayor Peter Kelly  
Deputy Mayor David Hendsbee  
Councillors: Barry Dalrymple  
Lorelei Nicoll  
Gloria McCluskey  
Andrew Younger  
Bill Karsten  
Jackie Barkhouse  
Mary Wile  
Jerry Blumenthal  
Dawn Sloane  
Sue Uteck  
Jennifer Watts  
Russell Walker  
Debbie Hum  
Linda Mosher  
Stephen D. Adams  
Brad Johns  
Robert Harvey  
Tim Outhit  
Reg Rankin  
Peter Lund

REGRETS: Councillors: Steve Streach  
Jim Smith

STAFF: Mr. Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer  
Mr. Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer  
Ms. Mary Ellen Donovan, Municipal Solicitor  
Ms. Julia Horncastle, Acting Municipal Clerk  
Ms. Shawnee Gregory, Legislative Assistant

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

1.	CALL TO ORDER .....	3
2.	APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES .....	3
3.	COUNCIL FOCUS AREAS .....	3
4.	PLANNING APPROVAL PROCESS .....	4
5.	CORPORATE OFFICE PROCESS .....	5
6.	ADJOURNMENT .....	6

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - December 16, 2008**

**MOVED by Councillor Blumenthal , seconded by Councillor Wile, that the minutes of December 16, 2008 be approved as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**3. COUNCIL FOCUS AREAS**

C A Power Point presentation was circulated.

Mr. Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer, advised that staff would be presenting the results of the Council Focus Areas (CFA's) workshop which had taken place a week prior. He emphasized that CFA's enabled a more targeted approach, however, they would not take away from other important projects and that the discussion would not involve money or budgets.

Mr. Brad Anguish, Director of Business Planning and Information Management, and Ms. Marion Currie, Coordinator to the CAO, provided the presentation on the Council Focus Areas. The following highlights were noted:

- C The two criteria for CFA's required that they be under HRM's control and not specific to any one community's needs;
- C The five CFA's in both options one and two are not listed in order of importance;
- C Youth and affordable recreation has been included under the CFA of Public Safety;
- C Staff favours a Transportation over a Transit CFA as it is important to look at the full context of the transportation network as it lends well to investment in active transportation.

Councillors Hendsbee and Johns entered the meeting at 1:28 p.m.

**MOVED BY Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Wile, that Halifax Regional Council approve:**

- 1. Option 2 of the Proposed Council Focus Areas: Transportation, Infrastructure, Public Safety, Community Planning and Governance and Communications,**

**with a continued emphasis upon Environmental Sustainability and Physical Accessibility; and**

- 2. The recommended next steps in which staff will provide a year end update on previous CFA commitments via an Information Report and commence presenting the proposed direction for new CFA's at the Committee of the Whole session on January 27.**

A discussion on the motion ensued with staff responding to questions. The following points were noted:

- C A news release will be organized to inform the public of the new CFA's;
- C A copy of the detailed results will be made available for Council;
- C Concern that the focus areas were too broad and, therefore, priorities would not be met;
- C The workshop revealed that environmental sustainability transcended all of the focus areas.

#### **MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Councillor Mosher entered the meeting at 2:01 p.m.

#### **4. PLANNING APPROVAL PROCESS**

- C A Power Point presentation was circulated.

Mr. Kurt Pyle, Acting Supervisor of Planning Applications, provided the presentation on the Planning Approval Process. The following highlights were noted:

- C Victoria, Regina, Quebec City and St. John's were researched as benchmark cities;
- C Staff is undertaking ongoing discussions with the development industry;
- C The change in the application process which requires complete applications has had a positive impact on processing times;
- C Staff has completed three community visioning processes and will begin three more;
- C It was suggested that the three existing watershed advisory boards be combined into one.

**MOVED BY Councillor Rankin, seconded by Councillor Karsten, that Halifax Regional Council endorse in principal the proposed procedural changes to Planning Application Processing Times and request that staff come back with options.**

Regarding changes to the Charter, Ms. Mary Ellen Donovan , Municipal Solicitor, advised that HRM staff had already met with the province to discuss the year's program and that they were looking at approximately 30 amendments. She noted that staff was now in the process of identifying additional changes and that the amendment process would probably take place in the fall of 2009.

A discussion on the motion ensued with Mr. Pyle responding to questions. The following points were noted:

- C Certain issues overlap Community Councils which creates even longer processing periods;
- C The importance of maintaining public involvement in the planning approval process was emphasized.

Councillor Sloane entered the meeting at 2:37 p.m.

Mayor Kelly stepped down as Chair at 2:49 p.m. Deputy Mayor Hendsbee assumed the Chair.

- C Merging the Watershed Advisory Boards, Planning Advisory Committees and Heritage Advisory Committee into one Development Committee was suggested as another way to streamline the process;
- C There was support for granting Community Councils more authority.

Mayor Kelly assumed the Chair at 3:04 p.m.

#### **MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Committee of the Whole recessed at 3:05 p.m.

Committee of the Whole reconvened at 3:19 p.m.

#### **5. CORPORATE OFFICE ACCOMMODATION PLANNING**

- C An Information Report dated January 15, 2009 was before Council.

Mr. Peter Stickings, Manager of Real Property, provided the presentation on the Corporate Office Process. The following highlights were noted:

- C Leased space makes up the bulk of HRM's portfolio;

- C Building a new office space is beneficial, however, it must fit in with other priorities;
- C Staff is not seeking a recommendation from Council at this time;
- C HRM is well within the provincial space allocation per employee standard.

A discussion ensued with Mr. Stickings responding to questions. The following points were noted:

- C There was a desire to use any available HRM owned space prior to building new;
- C Staff will be leaving the geographic area of the West End Mall once the lease is up as more space is required;
- C There was interest in utilizing the Birk's site for new office and public space.

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:59 p.m.

Ms. Julia Horncastle  
Acting Municipal Clerk