

EXECUTIVE STANDING COMMITTEE
MINUTES

October 28, 2013

- PRESENT: Mayor Mike Savage, Chair
Deputy Mayor Reg Rankin
Councillor Linda Mosher, Vice Chair
Councillor Russell Walker
Councillor Matt Whitman
Councillor Bill Karsten
Councillor Steve Craig
- REGRETS: Councillor Brad Johns
- STAFF: Mr. Chris Bryant, Senior Advisor, Government Relations &
External Affairs
Mr. John Traves, Director Legal Services
Ms. Cathy Mellett, Municipal Clerk
Ms. Krista Vining, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Savage called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. in Council Chambers, 3rd Floor City Hall, Halifax.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 23, 2013

MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Craig, that the minutes of September 23, 2013 be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Added Item:

10.3 Municipal Clerk – In Camera Matter – Verbal Update Appointment of Board of Police Commissionaires and Halifax International Airport Authority

Councillor Karsten requested an update on Council appointments to Standing Committees. It was noted that this would be addressed under Item 7.1 - Update – Governance Project.

MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Whitman, that the agenda be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS AND PRESENTATIONS – NONE

7. REPORTS

7.1 Update – Governance Project

A staff information report dated October 23, 2013 entitled Update – Governance Project was before the Standing Committee.

Mr. Chris Bryant, Senior Advisor, Government Relations and External Affairs provided an overview of the October 23, 2013 staff information report to the Standing Committee.

Mayor Savage clarified that Josh Bates, Office of the Mayor, was on the Project Team, not Josh Bragg, as identified in Attachment A of the October 23, 2013 staff information report.

Councillor Mosher expressed concern with the Standing Committees. She pointed out that concerns raised by individual Councillors are often shared throughout the Municipality and could benefit from discussion at Council. Other members of the Executive Committee commented on the effectiveness of Standing Committees. Mr. Bryant noted that the general view expressed by members of Council in the interviews was supportive of Standing Committees while recognizing that the effective use of Committee of the Whole is also important.

Councillor Mosher noted that the recommendations coming forward in regard to improving governance should be focused and specific and that she found the notes to be subjective. She further recommended that the cities with comparative salary be used as the benchmark municipalities in the governance review.

It was **MOVED by Councillor Mosher, seconded by Councillor Whitman, that the Executive Standing Committee recommend to Halifax Regional Council that:**

- 1. That the Chairs of each Standing Committees of Council be alternated each year, unless no other Councillor is interested in chairing, which will allow all members on the Standing Committee to have an opportunity to be Chair; and**
- 2. That the Project Plan (Draft) Governance Review 2013-2014 notes not be released to Halifax Regional Council until all members of Council have provided their comments to staff.**

Mr. Bryant clarified that the Governance Project Notes have been provided to all the members of Council that have participated in the discussion, commenting that the notes are subjective at this time, as they are reflective of the individual feedback received. Mr. Bryant commented that the notes are not intended for public release and that a high level summary of themes will be included in the final report.

Following a brief discussion and with the approval of the Standing Committee, Councillor Mosher withdrew her second recommendation.

The motion before the Standing Committee now reads:

MOVED by Councillor Mosher, seconded by Councillor Whitman, that the Executive Standing Committee recommend to Halifax Regional Council that the Chairs of each Standing Committees of Council be alternated each year, unless no other Councillor is interested in chairing, which will allow all members on the Standing Committee to have an opportunity to be Chair.

Further discussion ensued with staff responding to questions. Mr. John Traves, Director Legal Services clarified that under Administrative Order One, Section 77 each Committee shall, unless otherwise determined by Council, determine the procedure for electing its own Chair.

It was then **MOVED by Councillor Mosher, seconded by Councillor Whitman, that the Executive Standing Committee request a staff report reviewing the logistics of**

rotating all Standing Committee Chairs each year to allow each member to be Chair for that Committee.

Following a brief discussion, the motion was withdrawn and the Standing Committee agreed to forward Councillor Mosher's suggestion of rotating Standing Committee Chairs each year to Mr. Bryant for consideration during the governance review.

Mr. Bryant responded to further questions raised by the Standing Committee. He noted that, through the interview process, appointment of members of Council to external boards was an area that many Councillors identified as important to the governance review process. Staff will review the issues regarding external appointments as a first step and bring forward a discussion paper for the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

Councillor Craig questioned how to reconcile Councillors' desires to have more information on a number of issues and asked that the governance report address the framework for Committee of the Whole to facilitate these discussions. Mr. Bryant proposed that the Project Working Group would do some research and bring forward discussions regarding use of Committee of the Whole for discussion in December 2013.

Councillor Karsten commented that the feedback received reaffirms Council's commitment to the Standing Committee structure. He suggested that if there is an overall commitment to continue with Standing Committees but also an interest in the question of how to best utilize Committee of the Whole.

Deputy Mayor Rankin noted the importance of having a good mechanism for agenda setting at both Standing Committees and Council.

Ms. Mellett responded to a request for clarification raised by Councillor Karsten earlier in the meeting on the status of Councillor appointments to Standing Committees. She noted that Regional Council passed a motion to extend all appointments to November 2014, pending the governance review.

Mayor Savage commended Mr. Bryant and staff for the work completed to date. He noted that, in the interviews, members of Council have spoken about the importance of discussions held at the Standing Committee level and Regional Council. He recognized the need for Councillors to have opportunities for input on those decisions because ultimately they are responsible for those decisions. He believed that the Standing Committee structure has shown it can work but there is a need to ensure that all Councillors have the opportunity to discuss key issues.

7.2 2014 Council Meeting Schedule

A staff report dated October 21, 2013 was before the Standing Committee. Ms. Cathy Mellett, Municipal Clerk presented the two scheduling options outlined in the October 21st staff report for the Standing Committee's consideration.

MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Walker, that the Executive Standing Committee recommend to Regional Council that the 2014 Council Meeting Schedule, as set out in Attachment 1 of the October 21, 2013 staff report, be approved.

During the discussion it was noted that additional meetings of Council and or Committee of the Whole could be scheduled if required and with appropriate notice, as provided under the HRM Charter.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

8. COMMITTEE MEMBERS – NONE

9. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

10. IN CAMERA

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Rankin, seconded by Councillor Karsten that the Executive Standing Committee convene into In Camera at this time to address Items 10.1, 10.2 and 10.3. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

10.1 In Camera Minutes – September 23, 2013

The September 23, 2013 minutes were approved during the In Camera session.

10.2 Personnel Matter – Citizen Appointments to Boards and Committees of Council

This matter was addressed during the In Camera session.

10.3 Municipal Clerk – In Camera Matter – Verbal Update Appointment of Board of Police Commissionaires and Halifax International Airport Authority

This matter was addressed during the In Camera session.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – November 25, 2013

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 p.m. to convene In Camera.

Cathy Mellett
Municipal Clerk