

A daytime photograph of the Halifax waterfront. In the foreground, several ferries are docked at a wooden pier. The water is a deep blue. In the background, there are several modern buildings, including a prominent one with a grid-like facade and a tall antenna on top. The sky is clear and blue with a few wispy clouds.

Governance Review Update: External Committees

Executive Standing Committee – Nov. 25, 2013.



Context – Council Motion

- That the Executive Standing Committee, supported by staff, is directed by Halifax Regional Council to undertake a review of Council's governance and committee structure and the terms of reference of Standing Committees to ensure the structure supports Council's priorities, to be completed by June 30, 2014 for submission to Regional Council.
- During the Council discussion, it was agreed that the review should also include the number of external committees members of Regional Council are asked to serve on and whether those councillor appointments best serve the interests of HRM.



Update

- **Since the 1 on 1 Councillor interviews and the last ESC meeting,**
 - Regional Council has acted on issues that arose in the individual meetings, e.g.
 - frequency of meetings
 - approach to the budget
 - Project work has focused on an in-depth look at external committees



External Committees: Key question

- **Appointments to External Committee featured in each individual councillor meeting**
- **The fundamental question is:**
 - Why appoint an Elected Official to an external committee?
- **Two answers:**
 - Fiscal accountability (where HRM funding is involved)
 - Good communication/flow of information



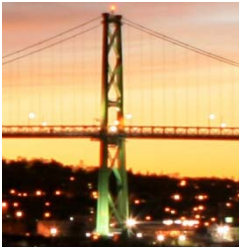
Committee Appointment Types

- **Appointments to External Committees**
 - Externally mandated
 - Typically by provincial legislation
 - HRM directed
 - By HRM bylaw, Council motion, MOU, etc
 - Externally requested
 - Outside group wants an HRM presence
- **Each type of appointment requires its own approach**



Opportunities & Issues

- **Opportunities**
 - Input on matters where there is a mutual interest
 - Information sharing on matters of mutual interest
 - Experience/community knowledge the elected official brings to the external body and gains from that body
- **Issues**
 - Fiduciary interest as a member of a Board
 - Potential arising for conflicts of interest
 - Time requirements
 - Expectations of the external body



Established by Legislation/MOU

- **Elected officials now sit on:**
 - Halifax Harbour Bridges, Halifax Water, Shubenacadie Canal Commission, Trade Centre Ltd, and the Community Monitoring Committee
- **HRM can:**
 - Work within the current legislation/agreement
 - Seek to amend the current legislation/agreement
- **Examples:**
 - Halifax-Dartmouth Bridge Commission Act requires HRM to appoint 4 members
 - Shubenacadie Canal Commission requires HRM to appoint 4 HRM residents
- **Question about the Bridge Commission and the Canal Commission:**
 - Do any or all of these appointees have to be elected officials?
- **Questions for all external boards and committees**
 - What is the HRM interest? How is that interest best served?
 - Can that interest be met within the current legislation or agreements?
 - Should Council recommend changes to the legislation or agreements?

If directed to do so staff will bring forward recommendations in this area for each Board or Committee appointment noted above.



HRM Directed (Council Motion)

- **Regional Council has the most direct influence over these positions**
- **Elected officials now sit on the boards of:**
 - Canada Games Centre, Alderney Landing, Destination Halifax, Greater Halifax Partnership, UNSM, FCM
- **Questions for HRM directed appointments to external boards/committees:**
 - What HRM interest is served by having a elected official on the Board?
 - What options could address HRM's interest- elected official, staff, MOU, reporting, other?
 - What is the best way to protect the HRM interest?

If directed to do so Staff would bring forward recommendations in this area generally and for each specific Board or Committee noted above



Organization Request to HRM

- **HRM is on these Boards by request of the External Organization**
- **Councillors now sit on the boards of:**
 - Neptune Theatre, Discovery Centre, Business Improvement Districts, several Business Commissions, Community Boards in their Districts
- **Questions about these boards:**
 - Why is HRM on some boards but not other similar ones?
 - What HRM interest is served by having a councillor on the Board?
 - What risks arise from recent decisions about conflict of interest?
 - What is the best way to protect elected officials?
- **If directed to do so, staff would bring forward recommendations generally in this area for each Board or Committee appointment noted above.**



Summary of Questions

- **General - Why appoint a Councillor to an external committee?**
- **Legislated Appointments**
 - Do any or all of these appointees have to be elected officials?
 - What is the HRM interest? How is that interest best served?
 - Can that interest be met within the current legislation or agreements?
 - Should Council recommend changes to the legislation or agreements?
- **HRM Directed Appointments**
 - What HRM interest is served by having a councillor on the Board?
 - What options could address the HRM interest- elected official, staff, MOU, reporting, other?
 - What is the best way to protect the HRM interest?
- **Externally requested Appointments**
 - Why is HRM on some boards but not other similar ones?
 - What HRM interest is served by having a councillor on the Board?
 - What risks arise from recent decisions about conflict of interest?
 - What is the best way to protect elected officials?

Are these the appropriate considerations the ESC wishes to have taken into consideration in a review of appointments to External Boards and Committees?

Following discussion we recommend that Executive Standing Committee direct staff to bring forward both policy and specific recommendations regarding appointment of elected officials to External Boards and Committees for consideration at the January meeting.



Next Steps

- **For December ESC meeting staff will:**
 - Summarize comments-recommendations about use of Committee of the Whole
- **For January ESC, if directed, staff will**
 - Prepare specific recommendations about the three categories of External Committee appointments
- **Work on reviewing good practices elsewhere continues**



Comments or questions?

Executive Standing Committee – Nov. 25, 2013.