

COMMUNITY PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
STANDING COMMITTEE
MINUTES

June 9, 2011

PRESENT: Councillor Lorelei Nicoll, Chair
Councillor Sue Uteck, Vice Chair
Councillor Steve Streach
Councillor Darren Fisher
Councillor Mary Wile
Councillor Jerry Blumenthal
Councillor Tim Outhit
Councillor Peter Lund

STAFF: Mr. Jim Donovan, Manager, Economic Development
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	CALL TO ORDER.....	3
2.	APPROVAL OF MINUTES.....	3
3.	APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS.....	3
4.	BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.....	3
5.	CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS	
	5.1 Correspondence.....	3
	5.2 Petitions.....	3
	5.3 Presentations.....	3
6.	REPORTS:	
	6.1 2011-12 Service Level Agreement – Greater Halifax Partnership.....	3
7.	MATTERS REFERRED FROM REGIONAL COUNCIL / OTHER STANDING COMMITTEES:	
	7.1 Regional Council.....	4
	7.2 Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee:	
	7.2.1 Electric Vehicles	5
8.	ADDED ITEMS.....	5
9.	NEXT MEETING DATE.....	5
10.	ADJOURNMENT.....	5

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED by Councillor Blumenthal, seconded by Councillor Wile that the minutes of April 14, 2011 be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Addition:

8.1 Appointment to the Heritage Advisory Committee

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

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES: None

5. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

5.1 Correspondence: None

5.2 Petitions: None

5.3 Presentations: None

6. REPORTS:

6.1 2011-12 Service Level Agreement – Greater Halifax Partnership

A staff report dated May 26, 2011 was submitted.

Mr. Jim Donovan, Manager, Economic Development provided the presentation outlining the Service Level Agreement between the Greater Halifax Partnership and Halifax Regional Municipality for 2011-2012. In his remarks, Mr. Donovan advised that the proposed agreement was for one-year (and not a five-year term like the previous agreement) to enable the completion of the process to review HRM's overall economic development governance, as per direction from Council. Mr. Donovan advised of the following high level objectives of the service level agreement:

- Clarity in regard to service level expectations, deliverables and outcomes
- Tighten alignment with HRM's corporate plan, specifically, economic prosperity outcome area
- Assign lead responsibility for implementation of Economic Strategy to GHP
- Assign specific HRM tasks where GHP is best positioned to deliver on them

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- Establish clear lines of accountability and reporting to: Standing Committee, the Chief Administrative Officer, and Senior Management Team

Mr. Mike Labrecque, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, and Mr. Fred Morley and Mr. Paul Kent, Greater Halifax Partnership responded to questions.

MOVED by Councillor Uteck, seconded by Councillor Outhit that the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee endorse and recommends that Regional Council approve the Service Level Agreement with the Greater Halifax Partnership, as attached to the May 26, 2011 staff report, for the 2011-2012 fiscal year pending final approval of the agreement form by HRM Legal Services.

Councillor Fisher suggested that it would be helpful to receive information that can be used as a baseline, for example, the commercial tax revenue as a percentage of total tax revenue as of today so that in a year from now, a comparison could be made. Also, information on the HRM commercial tax burden as a percentage of the Canadian average would also be beneficial.

The Chair pointed out that these are items currently with the CAO for review, and this is the reason that only a one year agreement is being proposed.

Councillor Fisher added that he felt it would still be beneficial to have this baseline information because at the end of the one year Agreement, it can be determined if the commercial tax revenue has increased as compared to total tax revenue.

Mr. Donovan indicated that that this information would be available through HRM Finance.

Councillor Fisher suggested that information also be provided in regard to the percentage of surveyed businesses that believe they received good value for taxes paid.

The Chair suggested that Councillor Fisher submit his questions to her and she would discuss with Finance staff the possibility of a presentation at upcoming meeting.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7. MATTERS REFERRED FROM REGIONAL COUNCIL / OTHER STANDING COMMITTEES:

7.1 Regional Council: None

7.2 Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee:

7.2.1 Electric Vehicles

A report dated May 18, 2011 was submitted from the Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Uteck, seconded by Councillor Wile that the report be accepted. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Councillor Uteck noted that the work outlined in the report was extensive and she had concern about the staff resources it would require. She advised that the Sustainable Environment Management Office (SEMO) was already working on a lot of initiatives, and this one, in particular, was a concern as she felt it would require a considerable amount of staff time. Councillor Uteck requested a copy of the workplan of SEMO, as well as a copy of the priority list and workplan of the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee, and information on how the initiatives will be achieved.

Councillor Fisher indicated that, in a recent radio interview, he heard Mr. MacLellan, Manager, SEMO speak on this issue and that he had indicated the timeline he envisioned was five to ten years. Councillor Fisher advised that he understood Councillor Uteck's concern about the amount of initiatives SEMO was undertaking, and staff resources they will require.

8. ADDED ITEMS

8.1 Heritage Advisory Committee Appointment

This item was dealt with at an In Camera session held earlier, and was now before the Committee for ratification.

MOVED by Councillor Uteck, seconded by Councillor Wile that the In Camera recommendation regarding an appointment to the Heritage Advisory Committee be forwarded to Regional Council with a recommendation for approval.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE: July 14, 2011

The Chair asked the Legislative Assistant to survey the Committee for quorum for the July meeting, noting that it falls within the Council break and some members may be away.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:17 p.m.

Sheilagh Edmonds
Legislative Assistant

INFORMATION REPORTS

1. Information Report dated May 31, 2011 – Year One Implementation of 2011-16 Economic Strategy