

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY  
STANDING COMMITTEE  
MINUTES

March 6, 2014

- PRESENT: Councillor Barry Dalrymple, Chair  
Councillor Jennifer Watts, Vice-Chair  
Deputy Mayor Darren Fisher  
Councillor Lorelei Nicoll  
Councillor Steve Craig
- REGRETS: Councillor Bill Karsten  
Councillor Reg Rankin
- STAFF: Mr. Mike Labrecque, Deputy CAO  
Ms. Jane Fraser, Director Planning and Infrastructure  
Mr. Gord Helm, Manager Solid Waste Resources  
Mr. Richard MacLellan, Manager Energy and Environment  
Mr. Josh Judah, Solicitor  
Mr. Quentin Hill, Legislative Assistant

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. in the Council Chambers, City Hall Halifax.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 6, 2014**

It was noted that Mayor Mike Savage and Ms. Karen MacDonald, Solicitor were in attendance at the February 6, 2014 meeting.

**MOVED by Deputy Mayor Fisher, seconded by Councillor Nicoll that the February 6, 2014 minutes be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

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

Additions: 8.1 Deputy Mayor Fisher – Request for Presentation Dan X

7.3 Environment Conference PEI

**MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Craig 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 & DELEGATIONS**

**6.1 Correspondence - None**

**6.2 Petitions - None**

**6.3 Presentation**

**6.3.1 Ingrid Waldron – Project on Environmental Injustice in Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotia Communities**

Ms. Ingrid Waldron provided the presentation to the Committee. She advised that she had conducted a project on the health effects and socio-economic outcomes associated with toxic industries and waste dumps located in Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotian Communities. She added that the purpose of the project was to engage residents in these areas, conduct research and to impact policy.

Ms. Waldron advised that she had completed a report based on the findings entitled “In Whose Backyard?-Exploring Toxic Legacies in Mi’Kmaq and African Nova Scotian Communities.” The report was forwarded to the Committee through the Municipal Clerk’s office. Ms. Waldron also noted that her study was conducted in five areas in Nova Scotia, which included HRM.

Councillor Dalrymple thanked Ms. Waldron for her presentation and invited members of the Committee for any questions of clarification.

A number of Councillors noted that the presentation from Ms. Waldron touched on a wide arrangement of issues. It was further noted that some of the topics discussed during the presentation related to other municipalities and provincial regulations. They requested Ms. Waldron follow up her presentation and to provide information that is targeted more specifically to HRM.

### **6.3.2 Dan O’Sullivan – Sweet Cheeks Diaper Services**

Mr. Dan O’ Sullivan provided the presentation to the Committee. Mr. O’Sullivan advised that he had been running a re-useable diaper business over the past 14 years and during that time has diverted thousands of tons of waste from the local landfills at no cost to HRM. He added that the taxes on disposable diapers are much cheaper than those on reusable diapers. The tax on a disposable diaper is currently five percent while the tax on the rental program is fifteen percent. Mr. O’Sullivan noted that his re-useable diaper service is put at a disadvantage through this provincial tax and requested the Committee write a letter advocating for the tax to be lowered.

Mr. O’Sullivan also proposed HRM consider implementing a diaper rental program to help divert waste into the landfills.

The Chair thanked Mr. O’Sullivan for his presentation and opened up the floor for questions from the Committee.

Councillor Watts clarified that the diaper rental program as proposed by Mr. O’Sullivan seemed like an investment into a private company which was not something that could be done by the Municipality. She added that HRM could only invest in non-profit organizations.

In response to Deputy Mayor Fisher, Mr. O’Sullivan explained that he had met with two Members of the Legislative Assembly.

It was noted by the Committee that the tax on the diapers was not within the mandate of HRM and was an issue that should be discussed with the provincial government.

### **6.3.3 Clean NS – MOU Urban Forest Master Plan**

Mr. Chris Morrissey and Ms. Andrea MacDonald from Clean Nova Scotia provided the presentation to the Committee.

Mr. Morrissey stated that Clean NS is largest environmental, not-for-profit, charitable environmental agency in Atlantic Canada. He went on to provide the Committee with a list of organizations within the Municipality that Clean NS currently has MOU's with.

Mr. Morrissey outlined the following points for the purpose of an HRM and Clean NS MOU:

- Encourages collaboration and communication between HRM and the Clean Foundation on environmental initiatives
- Strengthens HRM's capacity to deliver outreach and education
- Facilitate partnership and identify opportunities to work together on new initiatives

It was also noted by Ms. MacDonald that HRM is somewhat limited on what they can achieve in the Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP). She noted that the Municipality can only plant on HRM land; limited resources for public education or volunteer engagement and; hard for governments to get funding from foundations and corporations. She added that these limitations make Clean NS a good partner for HRM as they are able to meet those challenges. By integrating UFMP educational goals into Clean NS existing programs, they could reach over 8,400 individuals directly, and potentially tens of thousands through their website. These programs cost over \$463,000 in total to run – which highlights Clean NS ability to exponentially leverage the UFMP \$50,000 annual investment.

The Chair thanked Mr. Morrissey and Ms. MacDonald for the presentation and opened up the floor for questions from the Committee.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Richard Maclellan, Manager Energy and Environment, clarified that staff helped provide information for a report. He noted there is an outstanding motion from the Committee to look at what an MOU would look like with Clean Foundation. He added there has been discussion with staff and Clean Foundation and this report from Clean Foundation would help form that MOU.

The Committee agreed that the report and request should be forwarded to staff to be considered along with the current request for a staff report looking at an MOU with the Clean Foundation.

Deputy Mayor Fisher wanted to know if trees are considered capital. He noted he wanted to do a tree planting program on private property in his district. He wondered if he could provide district capital funds and direct them to Clean Foundation to be able to have them plant the trees in the district.

Mr. John Charles, Project Manager Urban Forest Master Plan advised that trees could not be purchased with district capital funds and then handed out to the public as the

trees become a municipal asset. He noted that a donation could be provided to Clean Foundation; they could then issue a charitable tax receipt for that donation and then purchase the trees.

#### **6.3.4 QUEST – Report on Barriers to District Energy**

Ms. Mary Ellen Donovan provided the presentation to the Committee. She noted that the presentation was based on findings in a recent report completed by QUEST. Ms. Donovan explained the reasoning for a report on District Energy. District Energy has been discussed and attempted many times in HRM over the past 20 years. She noted that there are a variety of reasons why it did not go forward but there are now many examples such as Dalhousie University and Department of National Defense as examples of it working. She added that District Energy is currently a missed opportunity but there will be future opportunities and HRM needs to be prepared to move forward when the time comes.

Ms. Donovan explained that the report had produced 11 recommendations. Three of the recommendations were specifically targeted for HRM and are as follows:

1. HRM needs to establish District Energy supportive policies
2. Connect municipal buildings to District Energy Systems
3. Support municipal ownership and operation of District Energy systems.

Ms. Donovan concluded her presentation by providing the Committee on what QUEST felt the next steps and opportunities for HRM were:

1. Assign development of District Energy supportive HRM policies with the first draft in 4 months.
2. Direct staff to look at District Energy options for all new municipal buildings or retrofits and provide an analysis of option versus traditional boiler/furnace.

The Chair thanked Ms. Donovan for the presentation and opened the floor to questions from the Committee.

Councillor Watts suggested that the link to the presentation and the report should be posted to the HRM website. She expressed interest in seeing what Guelph was achieving in the district energy field in comparison to HRM. She wondered if UNSM should be making District Energy a more proactive file. She requested staff comment on where this might fit in the Community Energy Plan (CEP) that HRM is currently undergoing public consultation on.

Mr. Maclellan stated that he had seen the report and it would likely inform the CEP. He indicated that staff would look at the QUEST report and see how it could be incorporated with the CEP if that was the will of the Committee. He added that the plan is to have the CEP finished and back to the Committee in the fall of 2014.

Councillor Watts expressed concern that actual policies to enable some of the recommendations in the QUEST report might take a significant amount of time. She wondered if there were recommendations in the QUEST report that could be incorporated now and not have to wait for all the policies to be completed.

Mr. Maclellan advised he was uncertain how some of the recommendations would affect future policies and would have to get back to the Committee.

Ms. Jane Fraser, Director Planning and Infrastructure added that there is some ambiguity about what are the actual barriers concerning District energy. She noted if they knew how big they are, it would help staff be able to respond.

Further discussion ensued.

**MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Nicoll that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee:**

- 1. Request a staff report to identify possible opportunities for HRM to move forward on the QUEST: Barriers to District Energy Report that might precede the completion of the Community Energy Plan.**
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- 3. Refer the QUEST: Barriers to District Energy Report for consideration for UNSM Sustainable Practices Committee.**

Councillor Craig expressed concern about directing staff away from work that was already underway. He felt that staff would be considering the QUEST report as part of their work on the Community Energy Plan.

Councillor Watts indicated that the motion was to ensure that there were no opportunities missed by waiting for the energy policy to come forward.

Councillor Nicoll wanted to know why municipalities seem to have more success implementing district energy plans.

Ms. Donovan explained that often one of the biggest benefits for municipalities in the return on investment. She noted that a normal return on investment on capital district energy projects would range from five to ten percent. She added that municipalities have the legislative tools to make district energy projects happen.

Ms. Fraser stated that she would be interested in having a conversation with Ms. Donovan on the report. She noted there are a number of unknown questions that would need to be identified.

Further discussion ensued. The motion was now before the Committee.

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**7. REPORTS**

**7.1 Staff**

**7.1.1 Mandate – Regional Watersheds Advisory Board**

A staff report dated February 17, 2014 was before the Committee.

**MOVED by Councillor Craig, seconded by Deputy Mayor Fisher that there be no changes made to the Terms of Reference for the Regional Watershed Advisory Board. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**7.1.2 FEE General Assembly 2016**

A staff report dated February 12, 2014 was before the Committee.

**MOVED by Deputy Mayor Fisher, seconded by Councillor Craig that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee not make a recommendation to Regional Council to consider funds to co-host the 2016 General Assembly of the Foundation for Environmental Educations.**

Discussion ensued.

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**7.2 Regional Chairs Update**

Councillor Watts advised that there had not been a recent meeting and she would have an update at the next meeting.

**7.3 Environment Conference – PEI**

Councillor Dalrymple provided information to the Committee of the events that he and Councillor Karsten had attended. He stated that was apparent at the conference that HRM is thought of highly in the environmental field across Canada.

**8. ADDED ITEMS**

**8.1 Request to Present – Dan X**

Deputy Mayor Fisher requested that the Committee allow Dan X recycling back to present since they now have new information to provide to the Committee.



**MOVED by Deputy Mayor Fisher, seconded by Councillor Nicoll, that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee to allow a presentation from Dan-X to provide new information as requested by staff.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

- 9. ADDED ITEMS**
- 10. NOTICES OF MOTION - NONE**
- 11. NEXT MEETING DATE – April 3, 2014**
- 12. IN CAMERA - NONE**
- 10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:08 p.m.

Quentin Hill  
Legislative Assistant