



**ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY STANDING COMMITTEE
MINUTES
May 14, 2015**

PRESENT: Councillor Jennifer Watts, Chair
Councillor Barry Dalrymple, Vice-Chair
Councillor Darren Fisher
Councillor Brad Johns
Deputy Mayor Lorelei Nicoll
Councillor Bill Karsten

OTHERS PRESENT: Councillor David Hendsbee

STAFF: Mr. Mike Labreque, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Mr. Josh Judah, Solicitor
Ms. Sherryl Murphy, Deputy Clerk
Ms. Phoebe Smith, Legislative Assistant

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee are available online:

<http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/SCenv/ESSC150514Agenda-HRM.php>

*The meeting was called to order at 1:01 p.m., and moved into an In Camera session at 2:12.
The Standing Committee reconvened at 2:24 p.m., and adjourned at 2:27 p.m.*

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 2, 2015

MOVED by Councillor Fisher, seconded by Deputy Mayor Nicoll that the minutes of the April 2, 2015 meeting of the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Deletions: 9.1.2 NS Nature Trust 100 Islands

The Legislative Assistant noted that the NS Nature Trust 100 Islands report is currently being reviewed with the intent that it be brought back to Committee at the next meeting in June.

Additions: 12.1 Information Report: Energy from Waste

MOVED by Councillor Dalrymple, seconded by Deputy Mayor Nicoll that the agenda be approved, as amended. (Two-thirds majority vote required.) MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5. MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION – NONE

6. MOTIONS OF RESCISSION – NONE

7. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

8. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

8.1 Correspondence

The Legislative Assistant noted that correspondence was received in reference to items 8.1.1, 9.1.1, 9.1.3, 9.3.2, and information item 4 (now item 12.1), and this correspondence was circulated to all Committee members. For a detailed list of correspondence received, please refer to the specific agenda item.

8.1.1 Correspondence dated April 30, 2015 from David Stevenson of NS Electric Vehicle Highway Services

The Legislative Assistant noted that the matter referenced in the correspondence concerning electric vehicles was before the Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee in May 2011 and did come back to the Committee in August 2011 as an information report. The Legislative Assistant advised that staff are currently writing a report on the subject to be brought to Transportation Standing Committee in the near future.

8.2 Petitions - NONE

8.3 Presentation

8.3.1 Patrick Crabbe, Atlantic WoodWORKS! re Wood Procurement Advancements

The following was before the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee:

- A presentation dated May 14, 2015 entitled “Opportunities for mid-rise construction”
- A document entitled “Unlocking the Potential for Mid-Rise Buildings: Six Storey Wood Structures”
- A document entitled “Evaluating Stakeholder Concerns with Wood Frame Buildings and Fire Risk”
- A video accessed online at <http://www.calgary.ca/PDA/pd/Pages/Permits/Building-permits/six-storey-wood-frame.aspx> entitled “Six-Storey Wood Structures”
- A summary of 6 Storey Wood Frame Building Code Changes prepared by the presenter
- A document entitled “Report on Course of Construction (Fire) Best Practices Guide”

Mr. Patrick Crabbe, Senior Technical Advisor of Atlantic WoodWORKS! gave a presentation to provide information to the Committee. He highlighted the expected approved height and area increases in the 2015 National Model Construction Codes, outlined what some provinces and cities have done to early adopt these Codes, and offered commentary on how these changes support the environmental and sustainable initiatives of HRM.

Councillor Karsten inquired which provincial department Mr. Crabbe’s organization was partnering with and the nature of that partnership. Mr. Crabbe responded that the partnership is with the Department of Natural Resources and there is some funding as well as information sharing on key directives.

The Chair thanked the presenter for providing information for the Committee’s consideration.

9. REPORTS

9.1 STAFF

9.1.1 Water Quality Monitoring Protocol

The following was before the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee:

- A staff recommendation report dated March 30, 2015
- Correspondence from Peter Lund dated May 14, 2015

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Nicoll, seconded by Councillor Johns that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee direct this report to the Regional Watersheds Advisory Board for its information.

Mr. Richard MacLellan, Manager, Energy & Environment and Mr. Cameron Deacoff, Environmental Performance Officer responded to questions of clarification from the Committee.

In response to a question from Deputy Mayor Nicoll, Mr. Deacoff noted that the proposed protocol would provide a consistent approach to water quality monitoring across the municipality, regardless of which secondary plan it is done under.

In reference to the interim baseline collection data program, Councillor Hendsbee questioned whether information on the number and location of watersheds in HRM is available on the municipality’s website. He noted that developers often complete watershed studies as a part of their development application and questioned whether this information would be available to the public.

Mr. Deacoff responded that there is not currently a map on the municipality’s website of the locations of watersheds within HRM, but such a map is available through the Nova Scotia Department of the Environment. He advised that copies of the final reports of all completed watershed studies are available on the Plan HRM website. In response to a follow up question from Councillor Hendsbee, Mr. Deacoff noted that to staff’s knowledge, Halifax Water does not publish data on their source water monitoring

programs and there are no discussions taking place to pursue any arrangement to publish that data on the municipality's website.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the role of the Regional Watershed Advisory Board (RWAB) in providing feedback on the report. Mr. MacLellan noted that the protocol developed out of a number of other projects including the water quality monitoring functional plan which RWAB was involved with. He advised that staff are open to making revisions to the protocol if needed and will engage with RWAB directly without the need for a report to come back to the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee, as staff are not seeking a formal approval of the protocol. Councillor Watts advised that if the motion to forward the report to RWAB passes, it is expected that the Board will review and provide input for staff's consideration in regard to revisions if required.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9.1.2 NS Nature Trust 100 Islands

This item was deleted from the agenda during the setting of the order of business.

9.1.3 Blue Dot Campaign

The following was before the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee:

- A staff recommendation report dated March 3, 2015
- Correspondence dated May 11, 2015 from Katherine Kitching and May 15, 2015 from Katie Perfitt and Alison Petten.

MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Deputy Mayor Nicoll that Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee not forward a recommendation to Regional Council to consider a declaration of support for an Environmental Bill of Rights.

Councillor Karsten noted that, as discussed in the report, the challenge to supporting the Blue Dot movement is that the details and implications are not clear. He advised that financial implications would have to be fleshed out before the matter could be considered and that there is an inherent risk to opening the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* that should be taken seriously. Councillor Karsten noted that when the matter was discussed by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), there was near unanimous support not to move forward. Councillor Dalrymple echoed Councillor Karsten's sentiments and suggested that the matter be considered through FCM, the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) or by HRM staff to provide information and clarity.

MOVED by Councillor Johns, seconded by Deputy Mayor Nicoll that the matter be referred back to staff for clarification in a supplementary report.

Councillor Karsten advised that if the motion on the referral passes, staff should consider in the report changes that other municipalities have made to the wording of the draft declaration and the concerns expressed by the Committee for discussion of whether or not to forward for Regional Council's consideration.

Councillor Dalrymple added that the financial implications should be explored, including any possible repercussions for rural areas related to water and sewage standards. He also expressed interest in learning more about the concerns raised by FCM regarding a possible constitutional debate.

Councillor Johns noted that he would like to have the benefit of more information and suggested revisions to the wording of the draft declaration.

MOTION TO REFER PUT AND PASSED.

9.2 COMMITTEES - NONE

9.3 MEMBERS OF STANDING COMMITTEE

9.3.1 Solid Waste Regional Chairs Committee Update – Councillor Watts

Councillor Watts noted that at the last meeting the Solid Waste Regional Chairs Committee focused on extended producer responsibility (EPR). She advised that the priorities working group is considering the shared and full responsibility producer models. She also noted that a solid waste financial impact study has been completed, but the report has not yet been released.

9.3.2 FCM Update – Councillor Karsten

The following was before the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee:

- Correspondence from Robert Shirkey dated May 12, 2015

Councillor Karsten remarked that at the last Committee meeting, there had been a presentation regarding the labelling of gas pumps and the presenters had noted that the matter was before FCM. He advised that the matter has not yet been before that body, but may come to the September meeting for discussion.

Councillor Watts requested another update on the matter after the FCM meeting in September.

The Committee agreed to discuss item 12.1 at this time.

12. ADDED ITEMS

12.1 Information Report: Energy from Waste

The following was before the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee:

- A staff information report dated April 24, 2015
- Correspondence dated May 12, 2015 from Steve Mader and May 14, 2015 from Peter Lund.

Mr. Matthew Keliher, Manager of Solid Waste spoke on the information report. He noted that a key issue is a lack of clarity surrounding energy from waste within the provincial legislation, as the only energy from waste process currently in the regulations is incineration. He also noted that the Community Feed-in Tariff program (COMFIT) is currently closed, making the selling price of energy unknown. He informed the committee that of the province's 280,000 tonnes of annual waste, the municipality generates only 60,000 tonnes of residential garbage, meaning that there are 220,000 tonnes of waste in the market that could be tapped by an energy from waste company to demonstrate that they can provide the lowest cost per tonne. He advised that the Stantec report determined that energy from waste options are not the best fit for municipal solid waste as it is not homogeneous. Mr. Keliher concluded by noting that given Council's direction to focus on reducing the costs at Otter Lake, there is no staff capacity or budget to pursue energy from waste at this time.

Deputy Mayor Nicoll asked if there was provincial legislation that would restrict the municipality from entering into an agreement regarding energy from waste. Mr. Keliher responded that the answer is not entirely clear and noted that the energy from waste community has posed this question to the province.

Deputy Mayor Nicoll questioned whether the Standing Committee should send a signal to the province that the municipality is interested in exploring energy from waste.

Councillor Watts noted that energy from waste was part of the provincial solid waste review process, but the information that has come back is focused on extended producer responsibility (EPR). Mr. Keliher

agreed with this assessment noting that the “Next Steps” section of the “What We Heard” report is focused on EPR, with nothing to indicate the province is considering energy from waste.

Councillor Fisher expressed concern that Council’s direction may preclude future consideration of energy from waste options and queried whether there is a way to keep considering all options for solid waste management without rescinding Council’s motion on the matter.

Mr. Mike Labreque, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer advised that the door is not closed on alternative technologies, but the question is that of timing. He noted that Council has provided direction on the solid waste strategy for the next zero to five years, which is focused on making the landfill as efficient as possible. He noted further that there are now 80,000 annual tonnes of industrial, commercial and institutional waste from HRM available to the private sector.

Councillor Dalrymple indicated an interest in pursuing energy from waste technologies by working with private companies to assess the viability of these alternatives for HRM.

Councillor Karsten expressed his view that the recently completed Otter Lake Solid Waste review would have been the appropriate time to bring the issue of energy from waste forward if there was an interest.

MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Johns that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee reaffirms the direction given to staff on the Solid Waste strategy to reduce costs at the landfill and for staff to return in two (2) years with a status update on the information report.

Deputy Mayor Nicoll asked whether funds were allocated in the budget for a study to consider energy from waste. Mr. Keliher responded that there was no funding set aside for that purpose.

Councillor Fisher indicated that he did not support the motion on the floor and suggested that the matter be deferred until the following month for further consideration.

MOTION DEFEATED

The Standing Committee agreed to reintroduce the matter at the June meeting.

10. MOTIONS - NONE

11. IN CAMERA

11.1 Minutes – April 2, 2015

MOVED by Councillor Fisher, seconded by Deputy Mayor Nicoll that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee approve the In Camera minutes of April 2, 2015 as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

11.2 Personnel Matter

A matter pertaining to a personnel matter about an identifiable individual/individuals or body with who the municipality has a direct interest.

MOVED by Councillor Johns, seconded by Councillor Karsten to convene to an in camera session to address personnel matters. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

The Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee convened to an in camera session at 2:12 p.m. to address the following matter:

11.2.1 Citizen Nominations to the Board of the Halifax Water Commission

The Standing Committee reconvened at 2:24 p.m.

12. ADDED ITEMS

12.1 Information Report: Energy from Waste

This matter was dealt with earlier in the meeting. See page 5 for details.

13. NOTICES OF MOTION - NONE

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - Thursday, June 11, 2015

The Committee agreed to move the date of the next meeting from June 4th to June 11th to avoid conflict with the FCM Annual Conference.

15. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:27 p.m.

Phoebe Smith
Legislative Assistant