



**ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY STANDING COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
February 4, 2016**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Jennifer Watts, Chair  
Councillor Barry Dalrymple, Vice Chair  
Councillor Lorelei Nicoll  
Councillor Bill Karsten  
Councillor Tony Mancini  
Councillor Brad Johns

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Councillor Reg Rankin

**STAFF:** Mr. Mike Labrecque, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer  
Mr. Josh Judah, Solicitor  
Mr. Andrew Reid, 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 the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee are available online:  
<http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/SCenv/160204essc-Agenda.php>*

*The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and adjourned at 2:19 p.m.*

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 14, 2016**

MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Nicoll

**THAT the minutes of January 14, 2016 be approved as circulated.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

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

Additions

The Chair requested the public participation item be added to the agenda.

**16.2 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

MOVED by Councillor Johns, seconded by Councillor Dalrymple,

**THAT the agenda be approved as amended.**

Two-third majority vote required.

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE**

**5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS – NONE**

**6. MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION – NONE**

**7. MOTIONS OF RESCISSION – NONE**

**8. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE**

**9. NOTICES OF TABLED MATTERS – NONE**

**10. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS**

**10.1 Correspondence - None**

**10.2 Petitions - None**

**10.3 Presentation**

**10.3.1 Krystal Therien from Nova Scotia Department of Energy re: Our Electricity Future**

The following was before the Committee:

- A presentation dated February 4, 2016, re: Our Electricity Future

Ms. Therien presented Nova Scotia's Electricity Plan. This presentation is available on file and online. Ms. Therien described the engagement methods of the Province's electricity system review and findings,

highlighting innovation, new pilot programs, accountability, predictable rates, and competition. Innovation would include moving from feed-in tariffs to competitive models and a \$500,000 commitment to innovation pilots and tidal sector development. She also highlighted the development of performance standards to ensure accountability and easier access to information for ratepayers.

The Chair thanked Ms. Therien for her presentation.

Councillor Nicoll requested that the public be provided information on the Department of Energy's ongoing projects.

Councillor Dalrymple questioned consultation results in terms of the interest in different types of power generation. Councillor Dalrymple also questioned what the cost effective alternative to Community Feed In Tariff (COMFIT) would be, indicating that many local organizations were benefiting tremendously from the program. Ms. Therien responded that the results varied depending on the region of the province, with Digby interested in tidal, Truro and Amherst in wind, Cape Breton biomass resources, and HRM solar. Ms. Therien responded that while groups were benefiting, the program had resulted in a 4% increase in rates. She stated that the tariff might not necessarily incentivize the best projects to come forward. Ms. Therien stated that how to best use that renewable energy and storage was the current concern.

The Chair highlighted COMFIT concerns and the ability to clearly support innovation while supporting engagement with the community. She questioned what might municipalities do between now and 2019 regarding renewable energy. Ms. Therien responded that community solar could be pursued. She highlighted the province would be focussing on storage solutions, energy management systems, and automation to pair peak load with what the projects are producing.

**11. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – NONE**

**12. REPORTS**

**12.1 STAFF**

**12.1.1 Organics Processing and Management**

The following was before the Committee

- *A staff recommendation report dated January 6, 2016*

Mr. Matt Keliher, Manager of Solid Waste, presented the report dated January 6, 2016. This presentation is available online and on file. During the presentation, he noted the two composting facilities currently meet the 1996 CCME compost requirements. He presented the history of the compost facilities. Mr. Keliher presented the increase in source separated organics over the past 10 years. He stated that the challenges with existing facilities are that they have reached processing capacity and do not meet revised 2010 NSE compost guidelines and have an estimated compliance date of 2019. He also noted the limitation of the Miller site from expanding because of the proximity of neighbours. Mr. Keliher highlighted 2014 Council Direction regarding the source separated organics program to introduce an anaerobic digestion processing capability. Mr. Keliher gave an assessment and the recommendations for each of the composting facilities as contained in the staff report. He also described the business case review that was conducted and options analyzed by staff. He described the evaluation review and costs associated with the various options, noting that COMFIT revenues had been used in the evaluation review chart for on-farm anaerobic digestion. Mr. Keliher described the strategy of allowing market innovation to assist in procuring a solution. He outlined the procurement process from RFP and evaluation to recommendation to Council.

MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Nicoll

**THAT the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee recommends to Halifax Regional Council to direct staff to initiate the process to identify a service provider for organics management and processing as per the scope of work and requirements included as Attachment A to this report dated January 6, 2016 and to return to Halifax Regional Council to award the organics management and processing contract.**

Councillor Karsten requested the slideshow presentation be included as the item moves forward to Regional Council.

Councillor Dalrymple voiced approval of the target 2019 compliance date so the process is performed correctly and for the market-driven approach to procure a solution. Councillor Dalrymple stated concern that public consultation would not occur until the Request for Proposal (RFP) was released. He suggested that a broader consultation occur with businesses and potential communities prior to the RFP being issued. Mr. Keliher responded that consultation would be an important piece but that the options first needed to be understood as well as potential sites.

Councillor Johns stated the non-binding RFP was unusual but voiced approval. He questioned whether it would deter applicants. Mr. Keliher responded that the non-binding would allow Council to ultimately make the decision and provided added flexibility.

Councillor Rankin highlighted concern for the timeline of public consultation, stating that the commitment of an RFP may burden Council to follow certain criteria written in the tender document. He suggested a potential amendment for his colleagues that would instead direct staff to prepare a defined step by step procurement process for Council's consideration, step one to include an invitation to proponents and the last step to make a close assessment of cost.

Mr. Keliher responded by stating that eliminating the non-binding process would hinder Council's ability to select the best approach to move forward. In terms of consultation, he highlighted the number of options available for conducting a broad consultation but stated that staff would be in a better position after determining where and what type of technology is to be used to actively engage a shortlist of communities. He stated that a broad municipal wide consultation could occur, but may be premature in this step of the process.

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

- 12.2 COMMITTEES – NONE**
- 12.3 MEMBERS OF STANDING COMMITTEE – NONE**
- 13. MOTIONS – NONE**
  
- 14. IN CAMERA (IN PRIVATE)**

The following matter was dealt with in open session:

**14.1 Personnel Matter**

Citizen and Councillor appointments to boards and committees in keeping with the Public Appointment Policy adopted by Regional Council in August 2011, to be found at <http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/documents/Citizenrecruitmentpolicy.pdf>

**14.1.1 Citizen Nominations to Regional Watersheds Advisory Board – Private and Confidential Report**

The following was before the Committee:

- A private and confidential report dated January 28, 2016

MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Nicoll

**THAT the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee proceed to nominate one citizen to the Regional Watersheds Advisory Board for consideration by Regional Council for a term to November 2017 as outlined in the private and confidential staff report dated January 28, 2016.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**15. ADDED ITEMS**

**15.1 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

**Mr. Gordon Helm**, resident of Halifax, stated that renewable energy may be stored by means of using alternative technologies such as biogas. Mr. Helm highlighted the opportunity to use technology to deal with not just compost but an entire spectrum and through a lower cost than that described in Mr. Keliher's presentation. He noted benefits of alternative technologies such as reducing methane gas, closing landfills, and creating synthetic gas at only a slightly higher emission rate than natural gas. Mr. Helm stated that alternatives could combine all non-marketable materials into a viable and renewable clean energy.

The Chair called on any other members to come forward.

**Mr. John Cascadden**, Five Bridges Wilderness Group, stated that while staff priority was placed on cost reduction, equal emphasis should be placed on safety and environment. He highlighted concerns about the approach to Otter Lake being piecemeal because the process was not well-defined. He commented that future landfills should be inert so the placement of future landfills would be less contentious due to the lower risks.

**16. NOTICES OF MOTION – NONE**

**18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – March 3, 2016**

**19. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:19 p.m.

Andrew Reid  
Legislative Assistant