

ENERGY AND UNDERGROUND SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
May 2, 2008

MINUTES

PRESENT: Councillor Andrew Younger, Chair
Councillor Jim Smith
Councillor Debbie Hum
Councillor Sue Uteck
Councillor Sheila Fougere

REGRETS: Deputy Mayor Stephen Adams, Vice Chair
Councillor Steve Streach

STAFF: Mr. Angus Doyle, Manager of Utilities Coordination,
Traffic & Right-of-Way Services
Ms. Cathie O'Toole, Director, Infrastructure and
Asset Management
Mr. Carl Yates, General Manager, Halifax Regional Water
Commission
Ms. Mary Ellen Donovan, Municipal Solicitor
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:39 p.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

MOVED by Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor Uteck that the minutes of October 26, 2007 and December 14, 2007 be approved.

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

Deletion:

- 5.3 Approval/Ratification of Spending Priority for Remaining Community Integrations Funds in Woodside

The Chair noted that both Councillor Streach and Deputy Mayor Adams continually are unable to attend the Committee's meetings and it is having an impact on reaching a quorum. He indicated that he spoke with both about eliminating their positions on the Committee and they were in agreement. In this regard, he questioned if the Committee wanted to put forward a motion to reduce the membership by these two positions.

MOVED by Councillor Uteck, seconded by Councillor Hum that membership on the Energy and Underground Services Advisory Committee be reduced from seven (7) positions to five (5) positions. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

The agenda was accepted as amended.

4. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/DEFERRED ITEMS:** None

5. **NEW BUSINESS:**

5.1 **Underground Wiring Plan and Next Steps for Policy including Reports on Feedback from UDI and NSPI**

Mr. Doyle explained that this matter involves the design of a common trench with the goal to get all the utilities to agree to a design for trenching of underground utilities. He added that the final design the group came to agreement on would place the trench under the sidewalk as opposed to under the street. Mr. Doyle advised that the utilities that contributed to design have agreed to meet to sign-off on the design, and he noted that he has scheduled a meeting with the stakeholder group on May 22, 2008 for the engineer to make a presentation on the design, and then for the utilities to review and discuss and then, to provide their sign-off. Mr. Doyle also noted that this would give them a common trench design specific to residential subdivisions only.

Mr. Doyle advised that a second recommendation was to initiate a demonstration project or pilot project to show that the design is workable and the costs are reasonable. In this regard, he added that three developers were contacted, and all expressed interest in

having a discussion on the matter.

At 1:45 p.m. Ms. Mary Ellen Donovan, Municipal Solicitor entered the meeting.

Mr. Doyle and Ms. Cathie O'Toole responded to questions.

In response to a question on timelines, Mr. Doyle advised that the next step in the process would involve having the sign-off by July, initiate the pilot project with completion by late fall; and incorporate it into HRM standards by the end of the year.

At 1:56 p.m. Councillor Fougere entered the meeting.

Mr. Doyle advised that one area which still requires resolution is the ownership of the common trench, explaining that the study was supposed to focus on this aspect as well as the design, but most of the focus was on design and little put forward in the way of models for ownership.

Ms. Donovan pointed out that other jurisdictions who have underground wiring, the utilities want their own infrastructure and the developer is then faced with the question of how many conduits to install, i.e. does the developer provide one service or does the subdivision bylaw obligate them to provide several services so all the competitors can try to sign up the customers. She added that this is a new issue and currently research is being done across Canada on what the general practice is.

MOVED by Councillor Uteck, seconded by Councillor Smith that the Energy and Underground Services Advisory Committee endorse staff proceeding with the next step (May 22, 2008 meeting with Stakeholders) and report back at the Committee's next meeting with an update, including the funding sources. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5.2 Harbour Solutions Update - Secondary Treatment Options/Implications

A letter dated April 25, 2008 from Mr. Carl Yates, General Manager, Halifax Regional Water Commission regarding Secondary Treatment of HHSP Wastewater Treatment Facilities was submitted.

Mr. Yates provided a presentation responding to a recent announcement by the Federal Government giving direction that all wastewater treatment facilities in Canada will be required to be constructed to secondary level treatment. Mr. Yates presented an overview of the options for secondary treatment of the three HHSP facilities, noting that the Federal Minister of the Environment is proposing \$24 billion on a 1/3 option. He added that some small towns have reacted with a lot of concern because they have no treatment whatsoever.

Councillor Fougere pointed out that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities is also looking into this matter and their position is that the 1/3 solution does not work. She added that they believe there has to be some monetary incentive if they are going regulate it, otherwise a lot of municipalities can not comply.

Mr. Yates advised that staff's position at this time is to wait and see what is in the regulations that are brought forward. He noted that the Sewage Treatment Plants are designed to be upgraded.

Mr. Yates responded to questions.

5.3 Approval/Ratification of Spending Priority for Remaining Community Integrations Funds In Woodside

This item was deleted during the approval of the order of business.

5.4 Presentation by Carl Yates RE: CCME MWWE Strategy (*Canada-Wide Strategy for the Management of Municipal Wastewater Effluent and Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment*)

- A PowerPoint Presentation concerning the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) was submitted.

Highlights of Mr Yates presentation are as follows:

- The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment started the Municipal Wastewater Effluent Strategy in recognition of the piecemeal approach to the way wastewater effluent is managed and regulated across Canada
- The whole process to date started with risk assessments
- National performance standards are heading in the direction of secondary treatment
- The Province will step in and add regulations when it comes to site-specific effluent discharge objectives.
- It is expected that the Strategy will be finished this year, and once the Fisheries Act is amended, the regulations will come from this; it expected the regulations will be ready in 2009.
- HRM will have to keep a watch on overflow events as they do not want to see an increase in these events as a result of increased development
- Must monitor for frequency and volume (effluent); currently the Municipality does not do this, but staff will start on a plan this year. Staff will be required to start in 2011 to take measurements

Mr. Yates responded to questions.

6. ADDED ITEMS: None

7. NEXT MEETING DATE - June 20, 2008

8. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED by Councillor Uteck, seconded by Councillor Fougere that the regular meeting adjourn, and that the Committee convene the In Camera portion. **MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

The regular meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

Sheilagh Edmonds
Legislative Assistant