

**HALIFAX WATERSHED ADVISORY BOARD
Minutes**

February 21, 2007

PRESENT: Dr. Wayne Stobo, Chair
Ms. Ellinor Williams, Vice Chair
Mr. Walter Regan
Mr. David Ripley
Mr. Derrill Hynick
Mr. Ross Evans
Dr. Barry Thomas
Councillor Mary Wile

ABSENT: Mr. Nathaniel Smith

STAFF: Mr. Richard Harvey, Senior Planner
Ms. Christina Sears, Legislative Assistant
Ms. Jennifer Weagle, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall.

2. ORDER OF BUSINESS- ADDITIONS & DELETIONS

Discussion ensued among Board members concerning storm water regulations and control. Mr. Walter Regan requested Councillor Mary Wile bring a copy of the report from Council to the next meeting.

Added Items:

- 7.1 Regional Municipal Planning Strategy
- 7.2 Environmental Home Assessment Program - Derrill Hynick
- 7.3 Off Leash Parks

MOVED by Mr. Walter Regan, seconded by Ms. Ellinor Williams, that the agenda, as amended be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. ITEMS TO BE ADDED TO THE NEXT AGENDA - NONE

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - January 17, 2007

MOVED by Ms. Ellinor Williams, seconded by Mr. David Ripley, that the minutes of January 17, 2007 be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES/DEFERRED AND STATUS SHEET ITEMS:

The Chair requested that staff follow up on the correspondence regarding Sandy Lake to confirm it had been sent out. He requested copies of the correspondence be circulated at the next meeting.

5.1 Presentation to Regional Council - Update

The Chair provided an update to the Board. He advised that Mr. Richard Harvey met with Mr. Austin French, Manager, Planning Services, and Ms. Maureen Ryan, Senior Planner, Regional Planning. Mr. French indicated the Board would be receiving more development agreement proposals with the new Regional Plan. The Board would, in the future, be able to comment on projects due to the deletion of as-of-right under the new Regional Plan. Some of the subdivisions and lands have been grandfathered; however, anything new goes through the

new subdivision 'open space concept'.

The Chair advised that the RFP's that were sent out for the two pilot programs had been discussed. Ms. Ryan apologized for not giving the Board the opportunity to discuss the RFP for the Shubenacadie Watershed Study and indicated their time frame was shortened due to water concerns from the community. She advised that she will be bringing the bids back to the Board for discussion on the elements prescribed in the bid. It was indicated that future RFP's would be brought to the Board for input before they are issued.

Mr. Harvey indicated that there was more to it than just the RFP side of things and identified a role for the Halifax Watershed Advisory Board to be a second set of eyes when it comes to the watershed studies. There are about fifty visioning exercises planned, encapsulating what the community should look like. One of the components of the exercise is to do a watershed study and determine what limitations are for growth, what are the valuable fresh water resources, constraints and opportunities. That information then feeds into a community group that is responsible for looking at the studies and what the community should look like. The Board could act as a liaison and undertake the technical expertise.

5.2 Grand Lake Watershed - Committee Update by Mr. Walter Regan

Mr. Regan advised that the Committee had another meeting and had wrapped up most of the loose ends. The Committee will be presenting a final report to East Hants Council in early March. They hope to have everything up and running by May or June depending on the outcome of the minutes.

The Committee hopes to work extensively with HRM to protect the water quality. They have just finished the mapping for hazardous sites that they are aware of and the mapping of potential hazardous sites. They are exploring their options and alternatives with regard to shutting down the system in the event of a chemical spill.

In response to a question, Mr. Regan advised he does not believe this information will be fed into the RFP study.

5.3 Results of Receiving Water Baseline Sampling Program of September 2006 - Staff Comment

The Chair indicated that he had expected to see some written comments in the minutes from Mr. Tony Blouin based on the Baseline Sampling excel spreadsheet that was discussed concerning the higher level of coliform. He noted there weren't any comments in the report.

Mr. Harvey advised the Chair that he had left a message for Mr. Blouin but has no information at this time. He has acknowledged that this matter has been outstanding for three months.

The Chair requested that Mr. Harvey remind Mr. Blouin once again and if he does not receive

a response then the Board will draft a letter to Environmental Services at their next meeting.

5.4 Case 00983: Development Agreement - 116 Purcells Cove Road, Halifax (Luc Ouellet, Planner)

Mr. Harvey informed the Board that Mr. Luc Ouellet, Planner, was working on the information but has nothing to report at this time. He indicated that Mr. Ouellet has not received the requested information.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

6.1 Fall River Watershed Study- Comments by Derrill Hynick

Mr. Hynick provided an update to the Board, noting the following:

- C The consultant proposals were just presented. This is a whole new field of endeavor for the consultants as they have never done this before. HRM has put forth time constraints with the completion date being September.
- C Samples will be taken of water in different places, with tremendous dependance on the collection of existing data that will then be placed into a computer modelling process.
- C It takes years for things to degrade in the environment. It would take three to five years to get an assessment.
- C Any data prior to 1995 is almost non-existent (Septic Tank Program)

Mr. Hynick expressed concern with this study noting that the province at one time did pollution control studies and would hire consultants. They would then go out into the community and gather information, discussing the information with the community to determine whether or not they supported the idea of separate water and sewer. This would take approximately two years. He is not sure how to accomplish a proper development if you do not have control over these lands, core development areas do not have that information but could serve as an independent study. Mr. Hynick advised that since this is a new initiative the Committee would have to spend more time and energy than this first initiative will produce.

Mr. Hynick noted that he is not a hydro geologist and can not speak on the effects of the watershed. He advised that the consultant indicated there is no drilling on this proposal. Animals and aquatic life have to be taken into consideration and there are no statistics on them at this point.

The Board entered into discussion and noted the following concerns:

- C Years of not doing anything cannot be condensed in three months;
- C It is challenging to take on watershed evaluation without historical data;
- C A histogram is required to know what is present if the property owners do not have water control data;
- C There has never been a requirement to maintain data as a property owner;
- C The Shubenacadie community conducted surveys. Eighty percent of the residents had no information on their septic systems. It is difficult to collect data if residents do not have any paper records or permits;
- C If every resident had to upgrade their septic systems, this would serve as a housekeeping chore for HRM. Every septic system deteriorates, perhaps those that are twenty years or older should be required to upgrade. This would not be acceptable for residents living in rural areas, as it would be an out-of-pocket expense, whereas residents living within the city would have it paid for through taxes.
- C The legislation is in place for the proper operation of a septic system; however, it is not being enforced. They do not have the legal right to trespass on properties unless there is a justifiable cause. Establishing a reasonable cause is difficult and there is only one person assigned to monitor seventy-five plants within HRM. It takes them approximately two years to complete this task.

The Chair noted that the RFP was put out with a deadline of February 16, 2007. They have received the bids back and will be evaluating them. Ms. Williams advised that it would be beneficial for the people bidding on the RFP's to know what the information is. The Chair advised Ms. Williams that this was given to them in the bidders conference.

The Chair proposed having Ms. Ryan at their next meeting to outline what is being proposed, giving the Board the chance to see if any of the bids are adequate or if in fact they should go back to the contractors. Mr. Regan suggested compiling questions and giving them to Ms. Ryan in advance. The Chair indicated that he would send Ms. Ryan an email given the time frame to see if she would like the Board to submit comments to her ahead of time.

C ADDED ITEMS

7.1 Regional Municipality Planning Strategy

The Chair indicated that Ms. Ryan was going to follow up with Ms. Susan Corser, Planner, to see if they could get a copy for all the board members. The Chair asked Mr. Harvey to follow up on that and to also see if there are c.d. copies available.

7.2 Environmental Home Assessment Program

Mr. Hynick advised the Board to go to the website (www.gov.ns.ca/enla) and download the program the province has put on. There are two pages of initiatives and eight pages of questions and answers. There are eighty grants available and eight applications in HRM. The evaluation is free of charge.

7.3 Off Leash Parks

Councillor Mary Wile advised that she had attended the Clayton Park meeting and noted the following:

- C The meetings originally started in Dartmouth at the Fairbank Centre and from there it was divided into workshops located around HRM;
- C Each table had specific topics to discuss;
- C Provincial and Federal parks were not discussed;
- C Many dog owners did not want fenced in areas, they felt as though they could walk their dogs as they do in Seaview and Point Pleasant Parks
- C Suggestions were made to designate certain hours for dogs to be walked off leash;
- C Concerns were shared with respect to working dogs for medical conditions, under those circumstances the dogs would have to be in a fenced in area in the event the owner required their services;
- C Several residents felt that if they had fenced in areas then it would have to be supervised. A volunteer association would have to be formed to supervise and provide bags and water. Concerns were raised with regard to this idea as it was felt the volunteer support would teeter off and support would dwindle.

Councillor Wile noted that this was just a working group, no decisions were made. All the facts will be brought forward in a report.

The Board discussed the Councillors presentation and expressed concern for the following:

- C Responsibility for the dogs within the park;
- C Positioning of the park- maintaining distance from water bodies in order to prevent pollution;
- C The enforcement of dog licencing;

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2007.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Christina Sears
Legislative Assistant

