

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

SOLID WASTE RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES FEBRUARY 25, 2010

PRESENT: Councillors: Peter Lund, Chair
Sue Uteck, Vice Chair
Lorelei Nicoll
Reg Rankin
Darren Fisher
Debbie Hum
Bill Karsten

REGRETS: Mayor Peter Kelly, ex-officio
Councillor: Tim Outhit

STAFF: Mr. Gord Helm, Manager, Solid Waste Resources
Mr. Robert Orr, Collection & Processing Coordinator,
Solid Waste Resources
Ms. Laurie Lewis, Diversion Planning Coordinator, Solid
Waste Resources
Mr. Don Pellerine, Superintendent - Streets, Municipal
Operations
Mr. Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer -
Operations
Ms. Barbara Coleman, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m. in the East Dartmouth Community Centre, 50 Caledonia Road, Dartmouth.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Item deferred to later in the meeting, see page 5.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - September 24, 2009 - October 22, 2009 (Notes) - October 30, 2009 (Special Meeting)

Item deferred to later in the meeting, see page 6.

4. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS, ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

Item deferred to later in the meeting, see page 6.

7.3 Case Study: Cost-Savings from Solar-Powered Compactors for Trash and Recycling - City of Philadelphia June 2009

- An inaugural report entitled City of Philadelphia - Case Study: Cost Savings from Solar-Powered Compactors for Trash and Recycling, dated June 2009 was before the Committee.

Mr. Rob Dalton, Director, Business Development (BigBelly Solar), delivered a presentation/demonstration of the "BigBelly" solar-powered trash compactor to the Committee. The following points were noted regarding the BigBelly:

- the unit protects against animal infestation and eliminates waste overflow and bag heaviness due to rain/snow
- the mouth of the unit is designed to eliminate household trash deposit
- the unit is 16 inches deep by 18 inches wide
- as the waste compiles the unit stays in an off position; an electronic eye spans the width of the machine; once the waste reaches a certain point, the compactor is triggered to start
- the units can hold approximately 180-200 gallons of compacted waste, which is equivalent to the waste from five trash cans; bag weight is approximately 30-35 pounds
- underneath the solar panel there is a 12 volt battery; both the unit's engine and chains are designed to run continuously for 8-10 years; the

BigBelly runs the equivalent of approximately 10 minutes per 24 hour time span; routine maintenance is not necessary

- the battery needs to be replaced every five years, which cost approximately \$50 and can be purchased locally
- the solar panel is covered with a piece of bicarbonate and is bolted down, which minimizes the risk for vandalism
- the unit's side panels are made of post-industrial car bumper, making it easy to replace an individual panel if damaged

Councillor Uteck asked what the collection procedure would be should a bag be torn open during the process of collection and how the unit would fit within HRM's current disposal system. She expressed concern with the size of the unit and asked where it would be placed within HRM's downtown core and commented that HRM is presently experiencing issues with planter boxes, sandwich boards and narrow sidewalks. Mr. Dalton, advised that using a bag 2-3 millimeters thick should prevent tearing. He commented that he is unsure where the units would be placed throughout HRM but suggested HRM place them in areas where there are large amounts of collection. Mr. Don Pellerine, Superintendent - Streets, Municipal Operations, commented that many of the three stream waste receptacles within HRM's down town core are approximately 18-24 inches in diameter.

In response to a question raised by Councillor Hum, Mr. Dalton advised that an anti-graffiti solution could be sprayed on the unit to assist with graffiti removal.

Councillor Nicoll raised concern with cross contamination and asked how the materials would be separated. Mr. Dalton advised that the lid of the unit must be opened to dispose of waste and noted that the recycling bin does not compact. Materials inside the unit are not compacted tight enough that they would not be easily sortable.

Further points were noted:

- the cost of the BigBelly is approximately \$3-4,000; reduced prices are offered if more than one unit is purchased
- the collection frequency in Philadelphia went from 17 collections to 5 collections per week by replacing 700 standard trash cans with 500 BigBellies, leading to 70% savings
- a blackberry has been placed under the solar panel of the unit to allow the online monitoring; pressure from the unit's compaction triggers a flashing green, yellow or red light, identifying the unit's material capacity

Councillor Uteck expressed concern with the possibility of citizens reaching into the BigBelly to collect recyclables. Mr. Dalton advised that an angled piece of sheet metal was installed that extends to the back of the unit, limiting internal access.

In response to a questions raised by Councillor Fisher, Mr. Dalton noted that there is no smaller version for residential homes.

Mr. Pellerine advised that a proposal for HRM has been prepared and presented to Municipal Operations staff for review. Within the capital district area, there are approximately 400 garbage cans that are emptied at least twice a day. A majority of this frequency is based on the size of the trash cans, generally pole mounted versions, that do not impede sidewalks.

MOVED by Councillor Hum, seconded by Councillor Rankin, that staff provide a cost benefit analysis and any other budget implications of the BigBelly solar-powered compactor, to be provided for the next Committee meeting.

Councillor Rankin suggested staff provide a cost benefit analysis for the equivalent of a leased purchase or life expectancy of the unit.

Councillor Karsten further commented that the source separation of the unit should be part of the business case.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Councillor Karsten left the Chair at 1:45 p.m., at which time the Legislative Assistant assumed the Chair calling for nominations for the position of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee for the 2010 term.

Councillor Uteck nominated Councillor Lund as Chair of the Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee for the 2010 term. Upon Councillor Lund's acceptance of the nomination, and hearing no further nominations, the Legislative Assistant declared Councillor Lund as Chair.

It was noted that Councillor Karsten had also been nominated as Chair for the 2010 term; however, Councillor Karsten respectfully declined.

Councillor Rankin nominated Councillor Uteck as Vice-Chair of the Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee for the 2010 term. Upon Councillor Uteck's acceptance of the nomination, and hearing no further nominations, the Legislative Assistant declared Councillor Uteck as Vice-Chair.

It was noted that Councillor Hum had also been nominated as Vice-Chair for the 2010 term; however, Councillor Hum respectfully declined.

Councillor Lund assumed the Chair at 1:51 p.m.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - September 24, 2009
- October 22, 2009 (Notes)
- October 30, 2009 (Special Meeting)

September 24, 2009 - Amendments

Councillor Rankin advised that on the bottom of page 3, Miller Waste should read *Mirror*. He further noted that on page 6, C & D Committee should be recorded in the minutes as the *Construction and Demolition Committee*.

MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Uteck, that the minutes of September 24, 2009, be approved, as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Councillor Rankin suggested that the October 22, 2009 Notes be included as an attachment to the October 30, 2009 Minutes. He further noted that on page 2, third paragraph, of the October 22nd Notes, Councillor Karsten presented the *staff position* rather than the SWRAC position.

The Committee agreed to the attachment of the October 22, 2009 Notes to the October 30, 2009 Minutes and requested the October 30th Minutes reflect the attachment.

October 30, 2009 - Amendments

Councillor Uteck noted that on page 3, she had made the motion for Item 2.1 - Replacement of Roof - Waste Stabilization Facility, and not Councillor Karsten.

Councillor Karsten indicated that he was not "Co-Chair" and requested it be removed from the minutes.

Councillor Fisher advised that the October 30th meeting was held in *Halifax Hall* and not the Media Room and he was in attendance at this meeting and requested his name be added to the list of attendees.

MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Uteck, that the minutes of October 30, 2009, be approved, as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS, ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

The Committee members agreed, prior to the meeting being called to order, to discuss Item 7.3 - Case Study: Cost-Savings from Solar-Powered Compactors for Trash and Recycling - City of Philadelphia June 2009, as the first item on the agenda.

Additions:

- 9.1 Councillor Lund - Appointment as Chair of the Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee

MOVED by Councillor Uteck, seconded by Councillor Karsten, that the Order of Business, be approved, as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES - NONE**
6. **CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS - NONE**

7. **REPORTS**

7.1 **Staff Update - Verbal**

7.1.1 **Roof Waste Stabilization Facility (WSF)**

Mr. Gord Helm, Manager, Solid Waste Resources, provided an update to the Committee. Highlights were as follows:

- staff is finalizing the project plan from Mirror
- Mirror is responsible for risk and liability of the facility's operations
- staff have confirmed the stimulus project's funding through the Federal and Provincial government
- the engineering time line is approximately 5-6 months for project completion

7.1.2 **Era Contract**

Mr. Helm provided an update to the Committee, noting that staff have established an agreement with the New Era Farm and HRM, based on Council's last approved offer. The contract is in the final states and is being reviewed by legal regarding minor word changes.

In response to a concern raised by Councillor Rankin regarding arbitration, Mr. Helm advised that one of the challenges HRM faces is that HRM's composting footprints and processes do not produce a compost at the end of the cycle, which meets the Provincial guidelines. In order to do so, the compost must be transferred to a second site. Mr. Helm indicated that he has advised New Era and Miller Waste that HRM staff will be reviewing the entire composting program to come up with a new plan to meet the Provincial guidelines, either within the existing guidelines or with the introduction of new technology, process or a third regulated facility. When HRM developed its composting program it was based on the 1998 Canadian Composting Regulation guidelines;

however, at the present time the Canadian Composting Regulations reflect the 2006 guidelines.

7.1.3 Mirror Renewal Contract

Mr. Helm provided a brief update regarding the Mirror renewal contract to the Committee. Staff are conducting an internal comprehensive analysis of the various costs, versus the quotes provided from Mirror. Staff will be preparing a list of questions for preliminary discussions with Mirror. He noted that the present contract expires April 1, 2010. The contract is for 25 years and has a renewal every five years.

7.2 Council Information Reports to be Brought Forward to SWARC

7.2.1 Residential Curbside Give-Away Weekend Event

- An information report dated January 29, 2010 was before the Committee.

During a brief discussion, the Committee raised the following concerns:

- the Halloween weekend date needs to be changed due to the potential for mischief
- whether there will be a tolerance for leaving items outside, or pieces left behind from cleanup
- whether this event encourages residents to dispose of unwanted goods; potential for creating a spike in amounts within the landfill

Mr. Helm provided clarification that the weekend give-away event is an opportunity for residents to dispose of unwanted items they might be holding on to, in hopes that another resident will find a use for it. Items being placed at the curb are not items residents would bag up as daily waste. He noted that the education piece and coordination with the charitable organization will be a key element to make the weekend give-away a success.

7.2.2 Expanded Green Cart Service Cost Options

- An information report dated January 12, 2010 was before the Committee.

Councillor Karsten noted that the fiscal frame work discussions are still in the preliminary stages and will be going back to Council for further discussion. He commented the expression from many Councillors is that there is to be no new programs and no more spending. He further commented that during Council's September 15, 2009 session, the amended motion to request a staff report did not include a request to have the staff report sent to the Solid Waste Resource Advisory

Committee for review. Council voted on a motion to request a staff report on the cost implications of extending the weekly green bin collection. Councillor Karsten commented that he believes some Councillors are under the impression that Council had passed the motion to extend weekly green bin collection service to all areas in HRM.

During a brief discussion, it was **MOVED by Councillor Uteck, seconded by Councillor Rankin, that the Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee cease moving forward on the initiatives for Items 7.2.2 - Expanded Green Cart Service Cost Options and 7.2.3 - Colour Coded Bags for Curbside Collection - By Law S, at this time due to budget constraints.**

Mr. Helm clarified that staff was asked by Council to provide additional research of what the costs would be to do half of June and September, for weekly green bin pickup, in place of all of June and September. The January 29th information report enables the Committee to deliberate on an expansion, non-expansion or elimination of the weekly collection.

Councillor Karsten commented that through his own research, he noted that the cost of blue bags versus clear bags is that a 67 liter blue bag costs 2.82 cents; however, a 121 liter clear bag costs the same at 2.82 cents. Blue bags are not offered in a 121 liter size, making clear bags more affordable based on the larger size.

Mr. Helm advised that staff had spoken with the contractors to verify whether there would be any additional operational implications between collection of a blue bag versus a clear bag. Most contractors advised that there would be additional cost implications, due to the sorting of mixed waste at the facility and decision making process during the collection period.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.2.3 Colour Coded Bags for Curbside Collection - By Law S-600

- An information report dated January 18, 2010 was before the Committee.

This matter was discussed under Item 7.2.2 - Expanded Green Cart Service Cost Options, see page 8.

7.3 Case Study: Cost-Savings from Solar-Powered Compactors for Trash and Recycling - City of Philadelphia June 2009

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting, see page 3.

8. CORRESPONDENCE - NONE

9. ADDED ITEMS

9.1 Councillor Lund - Appointment as Chair of the Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee

Councillor Lund thanked the Committee for appointing him as Chair and noted that he is also a member of the Provincially appointed Round Table on the Environment Sustainable Prosperity. He commented that he could link information together for the Committee through correspondence between the two Committees.

10. NEXT MEETING DATES - April 22, 2010, June 24, 2010, September 23, 2010 and November 25, 2010

The Legislative Assistant noted that there are no meetings scheduled for July and August, as well as, December for the 2010 term.

During a brief discussion it was **MOVED by Councillor Rankin, seconded by Councillor Uteck, that the December 9, 2009 correspondence from Environment Minister Sterling Belliveau be added to the next Committee meeting agenda for discussion. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

Minutes prepared by:
Krista Tidgwell
Legislative Assistant

INFORMATION ITEMS
February 25, 2010

1. Correspondence dated December 9, 2009 from Environment Minister Sterling Belliveau to Councillor Karsten, Chair of the Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee, re: 1998 Organics Landfill Ban and 2006 Compost Facility Guidelines