

Special Meeting

**SOLID WASTE RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

October 30, 2009

- PRESENT:** Councillor Bill Karsten, Chair
Councillor Reg Rankin, Vice Chair
Councillor Sue Uteck
Councillor Darren Fisher
Councillor Debbie Hum
Councillor Lorelei Nicoll
Councillor Peter Lund
- REGRETS:** Mayor Peter Kelly
Councillor Tim Outhit
- STAFF:** Mr. Jim Bauld, Manager, Solid Waste Resources
Mr. Robert Orr, Collection and Processing Coordinator, Solid Waste Resources
Ms. Sherryll Murphy, Deputy Municipal Clerk
Ms. Barbara Coleman, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. in the Halifax Hall, City Hall on October 30, 2009.

Councillor Karsten advised the group that there was no agenda before them today. The sole reason for the meeting was to discuss the Replacement of Roof - Waste Stabilization Facility.

2. REPORTS

2.1 Replacement of Roof - Waste Stabilization Facility

- A staff update and matrix dated October 30, 2009 was before the committee.

Councillor Karsten noted that there was no clear direction to follow when the meeting adjourned on Friday, October 22, 2009 resulting in today's meeting.

Mr. Jim Bauld, Manager, Solid Waste Resources reviewed the update and the matrix with the committee noting the comparisons of the two options.

Discussions ensued on the two different options with staff responding to questions or concerns of the Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Uteck, seconded by Councillor Lund that the Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee recommends that Halifax Regional Council approve Option # 2, i.e. demolition and new construction of the Waste Stabilization Facility roof with the ceasing of operations for five to six months, as contained in the Staff report dated September 24, 2009.

Councillor Hum entered the meeting at 9:55 a.m.

Discussion ensued on the motion with the Committee concluding that there was more potential for health and safety risks with Option 1 than with Option 2. Further, it was noted that Principle #4 of the Integrated Solid Waste/Resources Management Strategy would be compromised with either Option, however, it would be better managed with Option # 2.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10.30 a.m.

Barbara Coleman
Legislative Assistant

ATTACHMENT

1. October 22, 2009 meeting notes of the joint meeting between the Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee and the Community Monitoring Committee

**Notes
Joint Meeting
Solid Waste Advisory Committee and
Community Monitoring Committee
October 22/2009, 4:00 pm.
Mirror Offices, 600 Otter Lake Road, Lakeside**

Present: Councillors Bill Karsten, Co-Chair
Mr. Jack Mitchell, Co-Chair
Councillor Reg Rankin
Councillor Loreli Nicoll
Mr. T. Robertson
Mr. Oickle

Staff: Wayne Anstey, Deputy CAO, HRM
Kurt Jacobs, President, Mirror
Jim Bauld, Manager, Solid Waste Resources
Robert Orr, Collection and Processing Coordinator

Regrets: Mayor Peter Kelly
Councillor Darren Fisher

Councillor Karsten, Co-Chair called the meeting to order noting that Council had directed this meeting to better understand the reasoning for the variance of opinion between the consultants report and the Community Monitoring Committee (CMC) recommendation . The consultant, Stantec, recommended Option 1, a phased approach with a roof being built over the existing roof and allowing the facility to continue in operation. CMC endorsed Option 2 calling for the closure of the plant while the roof is replaced. Councillor Karsten went on to note that the staff recommendation agreed with the Stantec recommendation based upon the fact that it more closely adhered to Principle 4 of the Integrated Solid Waste/Resources Management Strategy. Principle 4 provides that “Stable and Inert Material Only will be Disposed in the Landfill.

Councillor Karsten asked that the CMC outline their reasoning for the recommendation they had approved.

Councillor Lund advised that the CMC had met with the consultants and members of staff to review this matter. The consultant presented the options and responded to questions. The Committee then considered the risks identified with each of the options. Option 1 presented significant risk in terms of safety to both Mirror employees and the contractors employees. The environment in the plant is quite aggressive with heat stress being a consideration in the summer for those working on the roof. With the potential for workers above them to drop tools/materials,

Mirror employees might bring into play their right to refuse to work in unsafe conditions causing a slow down in the operations. The proposed schedule for the project would then be extended. A delay would expose HRM/Mirror to financial risk as the contractor would have to be paid during any shut down on the job. Option 2 has a better defined time line and represents less financial risk to HRM.

Option 1 also calls for diversion of waste to the landfill, up to 50% and up to 500 days. In light of this, the CMC thought it would be reasonable to proceed with Option 2 where there is more certainty in the time frame and, consequently, the degree of diversion.

Councillor Karsten presented the staff position indicating that he respected the background and knowledge in the room. He further noted that in light of Principle 4 he was having difficulty understanding the position taken by the CMC. He commented that in his opinion Principle 4 was the essence of how HRM's Waste Management Program worked. He went on to indicate that HRM should use whatever methods necessary to uphold that Principle and, consequently, he was in favour of Option 1.

The Councillor further noted that the risk associated with Option 1 is manageable. He noted that at a recent breakfast hosted by the Minister of Environment, HRM and Mirror had once again been recognized for their leadership in this area. Principle 4 is fundamental to HRM's approach and the leadership for which it is recognized. Councillor Karsten suggested that residents of HRM who are interested in the environment would be very concerned with six months of waste being diverted to the land fill.

Concluding his remarks, Councillor Karsten indicated that the minimum amount of diversion to the landfill was the preferred course of action. Based on the Stantec report this will be achieved with Option 1. Councillor Karsten pointed out that the staff report on Page 6 confirmed the protection of the community relative to the release of odour as the Waste Stabilization Facility will continue to operate.

Jim Bauld, Manager, Solid Waste Resources, briefly addressed the meeting indicating that staff had recommended Option 1. He advised that in consultation with MIRROR, Mr. Jacobs had confirmed that Option 1 was possible providing a detailed work plan was put in place. The Department of the Environment have advised that they will provide the variances required based upon Option 1. Mr. Bauld noted that the Department of Labour may establish certain criteria relative to the build.

A discussion ensued including the following key highlights:

- CMC is not confident that the phasing of Option 1 will proceed as proposed. A number of issues may come into play, including a refusal to work, which will delay the project and increase diversion to the landfill.
- MIRROR has four employees in the plant plus employees operating the loader and trucks that will be impacted by the replacement of the roof. Safety of these employees is of the utmost importance to MIRROR
- The mandate given to Stantec relative to the report did not include a complete shutdown of the plant
- MIRROR can ensure that all guarantees will be fully in place with a complete shutdown
- Option 2 requires a fully detailed work plan to ensure the same guarantees are in place
- The terms and conditions to be imposed by the Minister of the Environment are not known at this time. It is unlikely that the Minister will require more than is in place for other landfills in the Province.
- Leachate /gas would not create a problem due first of all to the relatively organic free waste and secondly because the volume would be limited
- The staff report did not provide an Option 3 – shipping of the garbage outside of HRM
- The CMC sought a compromise with their partner, cognizant of the safety concerns involved and aware that diversion would be required in either option, despite the fact that recommending Option 2 would leave the CMC vulnerable to criticism
- The CMC believes that Option 2 will protect the community and retain the overall intent of the covenant
- Given that the Department of Labour will insist on safe working conditions regardless of what option is chosen, the most reasonable course is to endorse the Option which more closely adheres Principle 4 – Option 1
- How will HRM communicate Option 2 to the community at large – the proposal is completely opposite to Principle 4.
- The Province did not initially request an organic free landfill. The CMC required it be organic free in order to provide assurances to the near community. The community within 5 kilometers of the facility is by far the most impacted and, therefore, the most important
- It is unlikely that the business case for HRM's Waste Management System would be as it exists today if that business case were being proposed today
- Option 2 cannot be won on the safety issue alone. The complexity of Option 1 creates greater uncertainty than is evident with Option 2 and this would be the more reasonable justification for approving Option 2
- There is no contingency for a shut down for repair of the facility and this was an omission at the outset

Councillor Karsten and Mr. Mitchell thanked members of the respective Committees for attending. Councillor Karsten noted that although there had been no meeting of the minds, the

discussion had been worthwhile in terms of greater understanding.

5:50 pm. The meeting adjourned.