

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

SOLID WASTE RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE SEPTEMBER 20, 2001 MINUTES

PRESENT: Councillor Reg Rankin, Chair
Councillor Dawn Sloane
Councillor Gary Meade

ABSENT: Councillor Jim Smith (Regrets)
Councillor Gary Hines

STAFF: Mr. Brian Smith, Director of Solid Waste Resources
Mr. Jim Bauld, Diversion Planning Coordinator
Ms. Laurie Lewis, Collection and Processing Coordinator
Ms. Sherryll Murphy, Assistant Municipal Clerk

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1. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The meeting was called to order at 2:10 p.m.

The following items were added to the agenda:

1. Double Liner
2. Pilot Projects - Status
3. Deletion of Provisions for Solid Waste Management Strategy in MGA
4. Education to New Residents of HRM

MOVED by Councillor Sloane, seconded by Councillor Meade that the agenda, as amended, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - June 29, 2001

MOVED by Councillor Sloane, seconded by Councillor Meade that the minutes of June 29, 2001 be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Tim Veniot, referring to the placing on the agenda of the opportunity for public participation, noted that he is unable to comment on matters arising from the meeting. He indicated that he would like an opportunity to speak to issues in a timely manner. Mr. Veniot requested that the public participation portion of the meeting be moved down somewhat on the agenda.

The Chair indicated that staff would comment regarding the placement of the Public Participation on the agenda. The Committee will review their comments and this request at the next meeting.

Mr. Smith reported that a group of representatives from Hamilton were in town touring the composting facilities.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

4.1 By Law S-600 Enforcement (Fines) - Peter James

- This matter was last discussed at the June 29, 2001 meeting at which time the Committee agreed that Mr. James be invited to attend the meeting to discuss the matter. Specifically this matter deals with the 'scavenging' of recyclable materials for

commercial purposes.

Mr. Peter James, Regional Coordinator, By-law Enforcement, advised that there has been a renewed discussion of scavenging and how to respond to this problem. A report is being prepared for Regional Council relative to this matter. The focus of By-law Enforcement is not the homeless or shopping cart collectors, but business/commercial operators. The report will address the overall policy rather than any individual situation.

Mr. James went on to note that the improper placing of solid waste is being addressed through a proposed amendment to By-law S304. The amendment will allow By-law Enforcement to give written notice of the improperly placed solid waste. If the solid waste is not removed, Community Projects staff will pick up the waste with the cost being charged back to the property owner. Second reading of this amendment is to be considered on October 2, 2001.

Responding to a question from Councillor Sloane, Mr. James indicated that the Department is in the process of hiring two additional By-law Enforcement Officers.

A further discussion ensued, with Mr. James noting that Enforcement staff have recognized problem areas and have responded appropriately.

4.2 Corporate Call Centre - Monitoring of Calls

- This matter was last discussed at the June 29, 2001 meeting of the Committee at which time Councillor Rankin expressed concern with the consistency of information provided to callers.

Ms. Jane Young, Team Leader, Corporate Call Centre, provided a brief background to the Centre noting that it has only been an integrated operation for 9 months. She went on to briefly review Call Centre statistics with the Committee. Referring specifically to the concerns raised regarding consistency of information, Ms. Young recognized that there is some inconsistency in information provided to callers. She went on to advise that in response, a training position has recently been added to the staff complement. This individual will provide continuous training to Call Centre staff including orientation of new staff members and training on all new information coming into the Centre.

Ms. Young further advised that the Centre is also working toward the implementation of a quality call monitoring system. A quality call scorecard is now being developed. This will provide a standard for a quality call and will include a number of components one of which will be accuracy of information. A number of issues, including privacy issues, are being addressed with a view to having a monitoring system in place in the near future. The third initiative underway is achieving a firm understanding of the Solid Waste Manual. Discussions

have been held with Ms. Lewis in terms of how best to organize the manual to ensure consistency of information. Ms. Young noted that the information exists, however, it could be better organized to meet the needs of Call Centre staff.

Councillor Rankin noted that the specific complaint he had received was with regard to the hours of operation for the landfill. He went on to thank Ms. Young for the information provided and indicated he was pleased to hear that steps were being taken to ensure consistency of information.

5. SOLID WASTE OPERATIONS REPORT - (ORAL/HAND OUT)

- A report entitled Waste Resources Activity Report (Tonnes) for the period 01 April 2001 - 31 August, 2001.

Ms. Laurie Lewis, Collection and Processing Coordinator, reviewed the YTD date figures with members of the Committee and then responded to questions.

Responding to a question from Councillor Rankin regarding the willingness of Miller to exercise the contracted extra 25,000 tonnes of capacity relative to HRM's needs, Mr. Bauld indicated that the difficulty is that the surplus waste occurs in the Spring and Fall with leaf and yard waste. He went on to note that it is impossible to spread this out over the year and as a result, staff has sought out another party to handle the leaf and yard waste. Note was made that the contract has been awarded.

6. NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSISTANCE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Ms. Lewis introduced the Neighbourhood Assistance Quality Improvement Program as follows:

- < Focuses on curbside monitoring and stickering of green carts re unacceptable materials and follow up contact with residents to improve the quality of green cart material
- < Monitoring and sitckering is ongoing by our haulers
- < Staff send out residents letter following up on reporting from the hauler. Letter says "we've noticed" and provides information package on acceptable green cart materials
- < Also been monitoring the blue bags to improve quality
- < Subsequent to the initial initiative enhanced curbside monitoring has been implemented - staff on the street monitoring green carts, documentation of addresses and door to door follow up by staff
- < Since enhanced monitoring has been in place (August 16, 2000)
 - 3,443 carts monitored

- 690 door to door follow up visits re unacceptable materials
 - enhanced monitoring conducted in Sackville, Dartmouth, Halifax, Eastern Passage, Waverley
 - success of project was measured with a return visit to monitor green carts
 - in the cases the rate of re-occurrence was reduced from a high of 26% of carts monitored containing unacceptable materials to 2% of the same carts monitored containing unacceptable materials.
 - This tells us that the door to door follow up is working to improve the quality of the carts
- < The top three unacceptable materials found in the cart are: corrugated cardboard, newspaper and plastic

Responding to a question from Councillor Rankin regarding the level of resource required to achieve these results, Ms. Lewis indicated that HRM has engaged the Clean Nova Scotia Foundation to do the door to door contact at a cost of approximately \$1,000 per month. Mr. Brian Smith noted that the inspection portion of the program is carried out by individuals working on a grant. The plan is to continue the program to early November and re-institute the program in the early Spring.

Responding to a question from Councillor Sloane regarding the influx of students to HRM and what form education takes for this group, Ms. Lewis indicated that the Clean Nova Scotia Foundation has been engaged to disseminate information to students. They are present on campuses during Frosh Week, utilize the student newspaper, and the South Ender newsletter.

Councillor Sloane suggested that staff check with By-law Enforcement to determine if complaints from neighbours have been decreasing in the areas covered by the Neighbourhood Assistance Quality Improvement Program and in areas where students live.

Mr. Bauld went on to briefly review the overall Education Program for the Solid Waste Program. Note was made that in addition to print media, TV ads were run during June, July and August relative to green cart education. Mr. Bauld noted that the budget for the program was in the area of \$80,000 for the period June to November. Mr. Bauld, referring to other initiatives, noted a recent amendment to the Streets By-law and a meeting with the Director of the Tenancy Board the purpose of which was to look at avenues to having language in the regulations (Tenancies Act) and/or the lease referring to Solid Waste. Mr. Bauld advised of a success with the Halifax/Dartmouth Real Estate Board which involves HRM providing an educational piece re solid waste new residents.

Note was made that HRM has access to some generalized coverage as a part of a Province wide initiative which was developed by the Resource Recovery Board. Mr.

Bauld noted that although the information cannot be HRM specific, this does not mean that information regarding acceptable materials for green cart could not be disseminated in this way. This being the first year of the program, HRM will have to monitor the program to determine how well it works.

Councillor Sloane requested a report regarding worm bins and when HRM may begin promoting these bins.

Councillor Rankin requested that staff begin to report regarding Construction and Demolition materials. He noted that this was within the mandate of the Committee and he felt the Committee should begin to get a feel for what is happening in this area.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee will be Thursday, October 25, 2001. The November meeting will be held on Thursday, November 22, 2001.

8. ADDED ITEMS

8.1 Double Liners - Otter Lake Cells

Councillor Meade noted that this matter had been discussed at a recent Community Monitoring Committee (CMC) meeting. The CMC has expressed concern regarding the possibility of moving from the double liners presently used in the cells at Otter lake to a single liner. The CMC has indicated they would not support the use of single liners given the possible impact on the protection of the community.

Councillor Rankin requested that the Committee take a position with the Province that they will not support moving to single liners and would view this as a breach of protection to the community.

MOVED by Councillor Sloane, seconded by Councillor Meade that the Halifax Regional Municipality Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee go on record with the Province as supporting the status quo, double liners, for use at the Otter Lake facility.

Providing a brief background to the discussion around single liners vs double liners, Mr. Bauld noted that a Committee has been struck with representatives from the Provincial Department of the Environment, the Resource Recovery Fund (RRF), Pictou, West Hants, Chester and HRM. That Committee, with funding from the RRF, issued an RFP for initial assessment of the quality of leachate from landfills around the Province. Phase I of this initiative will be a report assessing parameters for leachate. A potential second phase

would involve a study around the feasibility and risk assessment of moving from double liners to single liners. Mr. Bauld advised that the first phase will be complete this winter and then a decision will be made whether or not to move to Phase 2.

A brief discussion ensued with the Chair indicating that he was not comfortable with the idea of jeopardizing the protection of the community as a cost saving measure.

Mr. Bauld advised that Cell 3, Otter Lake is presently being constructed with a double liner and that construction of Cell 4 would not take place until 2005. He indicated that this would allow ample opportunity to review the situation.

THE MOTION WAS PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

After a further short discussion, it was agreed that a letter would be forwarded to the Department of the Environment advising of the Committee's position.

8.2 Pilot Projects - Status

This matter was dealt with in the In Camera session.

8.3 Deletion of Provisions for Solid Waste Management Strategy in MGA

Councillor Meade, referring to the lack of provision(s) for Solid Waste Management in the Municipal Government Act (MGA), noted that Anne Murray had addressed the Law Amendments Committee with regard to providing for Solid Waste Management in the Act. He went on to quote from the now repealed Halifax Regional Municipality Act, Section 150, Subsection 6 as follow:

(6) Halifax Council Municipality shall strive to develop and adopt through a citizen led, multi-stakeholder, consensus decision making process, an integrated solid-waste resource management strategy for the Regional Municipality and any new strategy so adopted continues in force until altered or amended by the Council follow a similar process.

Councillor Meade indicated that this section had been left out of the MGA which was a cause for concern by the Community Monitoring Committee.

A brief discussion ensued with note being made that the MGA was an act governing municipal government rather than HRM exclusively. Note was made that it was possible this section could be included in By-Law S-600, the Solid Waste Resource Collection and Disposal By-law.

The Committee directed that staff contact the Legal Department with a view to having Subsection 6 of Section 150 of the repealed Halifax Regional Municipality Act included

within By-Law S-600.

8.4 Education of New Residents to HRM

This matter was dealt with under agenda item 6.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

Sherryl Murphy
Assistant Municipal Clerk