

**HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
SOLID WASTE/RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF MEETING
NOVEMBER 18, 1998 @ 1:30 P.M.
Council Chambers, 2750 Dutch Village Road**

**Present: Mayor Walter Fitzgerald
Councillor Reg Rankin, Chairman
Councillor John Cunningham**

**Others: Councillor Russell Walker
Councillor David Hendsbee
Mark Bernard, Manager, Waste Resources
Jim Bauld, Operations Coordinator
Barbara I. Moar, Assistant Municipal Clerk
Kurt Pyle, Planner**

**Regrets: Councillor Gordon Snow
Councillor Jack Mitchell**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA	3
2.	PRESENTATIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC	
2.1	Kate Carmichael, Downtown Business Commission	3
2.2	Douglas Wilson, Green Cone Ltd.	4
3.	APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 9, 1998	4
4.	CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION WASTE MANAGEMENT	4
5.	SOLID WASTE RESOURCE BY-LAW	5
6.	CURBSIDE COLLECTION FOR NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS	6
7.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
7.1	Household Hazardous Waste Disposal	7
7.2	Household Collections in District #15	7
7.3	Christmas Tree Collection	9

1. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Chairman thanked those in attendance for their patience while the Committee dealt In Camera with contractual matters related to the facilities start-up. The Committee discussed contingency plans on some of the operational problems that may occur with the start-up of all the new equipment on January 1, 1999.

There is a new composition of members for the SWRAC. They are Mayor Fitzgerald, Councillor Reg Rankin, Councillor John Cunningham, Councillor Gordon Snow and Councillor Jack Mitchell.

The following items were added to the Agenda -

- Household Hazardous Waste Disposal
- Household Collections in District #15
- Christmas Tree Collection

MOVED By Councillor Cunningham and seconded by Mayor Fitzgerald THAT the Agenda be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. PRESENTATIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

2.1 Kate Carmichael, Downtown Business Commission

Ms. Carmichael updated the members on the collection of ICI waste. She said they are now selling tags that include clear bags specifically for organics, making it easier to see what the bags contain. She pointed out that the ICI sector is getting into source separation. Referring to the food and beverage industry, she spoke of the importance of visits being made to the kitchens of these operations to see the actual setup that they have in place for dealing with waste. Ms. Carmichael reported that the Downtown Business Commission has applied for funding for one-on-one training/education and also to create a higher technical program for the garbage collection scanner system. Ms. Carmichael expressed some concern on the closing of transfer stations, pointing out that this will affect small haulers who provide a service. She thanked HRM staff for all their support.

Mr. Bauld said staff could provide a letter of support with respect to ICI Sector, specifically organics. It is critical to catch as much of the organic stream right at the source. This applies to residential and ICI. He reported that he had received calls from businesses asking for confirmation that the new system is based on source separation.

2.2 Douglas Wilson, Green Cone Ltd.

Mr. Wilson had previously made a presentation to the Committee and had asked to speak to the members again today. He gave examples of how to reduce the cost of waste disposal in HRM by using Green Cones. He suggested that it may be more cost effective not to pick up compost waste in some HRM households. If these households were given a Green Cone and encouraged to use backyard composting, Mr. Wilson suggested that there would be considerable savings in collection, transporting and tipping costs.

Mr. Bernard responded to some of the costs quoted by Mr. Wilson suggesting that his estimates may be somewhat higher than HRM's actual contract costs. But, he stated that there may be some value in using Green Cones where residents are not using HRM's organic carts. Mr. Bernard said in order for HRM to ensure separation of organics from the system so that the plant could be designed appropriately, it was necessary for HRM to guarantee that the operator would get organics. It was also pointed out by Mr. Bauld that the tipping fees on the organics that HRM is being charged by the two composting companies enabled them to have a revenue stream which financed construction of their two composting facilities. HRM did not have to finance these facilities up front.

Mr. Bernard said staff are almost at the point where it can be determined how many householders have refused to use the organic carts or they are not able to use them because of location, etc. When this information is available, staff could then determine a judgment on how many could use the Green Cones. He asked Mr. Wilson to get back to staff in February/March. Mr. Wilson said he would be willing to sit down now with staff and discuss numbers in terms of savings for collection, etc. Mr. Bernard said the contracts are 5 year contracts with the collectors based on per pickup, not based on per tonne.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Wilson for his presentation.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 9, 1998

MOVED By Mayor Fitzgerald, seconded by Councillor Cunningham THAT the Minutes of September 9, 1998 be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION WASTE MANAGEMENT

Mr. Bauld gave a brief overview of staff's response to a strategy that had been approved earlier this year by Council on how to deal with construction and demolition waste material. Nine recommendations were included in the strategy, and Mr. Bauld gave a breakdown of seven goals that staff have set on how they intend to achieve these goals on a short and

long term basis. Referring to the demolition of buildings, Mr. Bauld said staff are ensuring that before the building is demolished that anything of value is removed, for example light fixtures, counter tops etc., and when the building comes down everything is source separated.

Mr. Bauld pointed out that there are 19 land use by-laws and many C&D operators that have been existing for some time under various permits approved by the previous municipalities. It is planned to bring these all under one by-law. Mr. Bauld said staff are addressing the issues of communication, education and enforcement to get the message out to the public. It is important to continuously get the message out that the more material that is moved away to composting, recycling, hazardous wastes and private C&D facilities, the better it is for HRM not to have to deal with these materials at the Otter Lake facility.

The Chairman stated that it is his understanding that there are no requirements to place an obligation on a C&D operator to sort and he believes there lies the problem. It allows a C&D operator to undercut the competition, and then take the material away and place it on top of the land which he suggested could be more serious than an old landfill. He pointed out that at least the landfill had some controls in place to deal with leachate. Mr. Bauld said this is exactly the situation that staff recognizes exists today. The Chairman asked if staff knows there is a specific problem, is there anything that the Committee can do to support staff to remedy at least this important deficiency? Mr. Bauld responded that staff would like the Committee to agree to provide support for them to proceed to take the steps identified in his overview. Following some further discussion, the following motion was made:

MOTION By Councillor Cunningham, seconded by Mayor Fitzgerald THAT the Committee supports staff to proceed to take steps identified by Mr. Bauld in dealing with the management of construction and demolition waste. MOTION PUT AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. SOLID WASTE RESOURCE BY-LAW

Mr. Bernard referred to the Executive Summary of the Solid Waste Resource By-law that had been distributed to the Committee. He said everything that is in the By-Law had previously been before the Committee and Council. Reference was made to the penalty clause. It was pointed out that staff was hoping to get a penalty clause for removal of waste. For example, when someone leaves their waste out that is non-collectable, staff wanted the clause to allow HRM to remove the waste if they did not remove it and charge them back. Mr. Bernard reported that Legal Services have now advised that the HRM Charter does not allow that and staff are looking at potential changes in the Charter that would allow this to happen.

Mayor Fitzgerald responded that almost always after the garbage collection is completed, there are recyclables, compost materials etc. that are left by the collectors. Obviously, the homeowners have put it out on the wrong days. He suggested there should be one warning given to the homeowner, but after that it should be enforced. If a homeowner continues to do it, there should be a penalty. Mr. Bernard said the By-law would allow HRM to enforce, but it will not allow HRM to pick it up and charge the homeowner.

MOVED By Mayor Fitzgerald, seconded by Councillor Cunningham THAT staff be authorized to contact HRM Legal Counsel to have the HRM Charter changed to allow HRM the ability to pick up garbage and charge the homeowner. MOTION PUT AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOVED BY Councillor Cunningham, seconded by Mayor Fitzgerald THAT the Solid Waste Resource By-law be referred to HRM Council for first reading. MOTION PUT AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. CURBSIDE COLLECTION FOR NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. Bauld referred to the recommendation in the November 9, 1998 staff report which is that **No changes be made in the collection service for non-profit organizations.** Mr. Bauld stated that many of the non-profit organizations have fitted into the new system, and others have made alternate arrangements. Some have made arrangements with local haulers.

The Chairman said this had originally been raised at Council and asked if Councillor Blumenthal had received a copy of the report? Mrs. Moar responded that a copy had been sent to him.

Councillor Hendsbee said this was also an issue raised at the Grants Committee when the Committee was asked by the Metro Food Bank if there was an opportunity for them to get either a grant or a waiver of the tipping fees. Councillor Hendsbee advised that the Metro Food Bank has access to a warehouse in Burnside where damaged products or unrepresentable products from the larger grocery stores is available for them to utilize. The only problem is that when they get this material, they have to sort out what is usable, and dispose of the rest of it. The Metro Food Bank is experiencing a great deal of cost with this separation. The Grants Committee has encouraged them to request the grocery stores to do the source separation. It was a concern of the Grants Committee that if they opened the door for one non-profit organization, it would open the door for others.

Mr. Bauld said it was his understanding that an effort is being made to address this issue including looking at having the waste picked up by haulers who are interested in moving

the organics to their compost facility. Councillor Cunningham stated that staff can provide advice to non-profit organizations, but there is no financial assistance available at this time.

MOVED By Mayor Fitzgerald, seconded by Councillor Cunningham THAT the SWRAC accept staff's recommendation that no changes be made in the collection service for non-profit organizations. MOTION PUT AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 Household Hazardous Waste Disposal

Councillor Cunningham reported on a call that he had received from a constituent who had packed up a lot of hazardous waste materials and drove to the Chain Lake Drive facility from Dartmouth to find that the operation was closed. It was his understanding that the facility was only open on Saturday, but when he called to ask why it was closed, he was told that it was closed because Wednesday, Remembrance Day, was a holiday. He was also told that the facility will be closed at various times throughout the winter and spring months. He asked staff for comments.

Mr. Bauld responded that the schedule for the HHW Depot is generally every Saturday in the spring, summer and fall, except for weekends when there is a holiday Monday or the day before. The reason this was done was because people go away for the long weekend and the volume of customers at the depot drops on those Saturdays. The fact that Remembrance Day was in the middle of the week was not close enough to the weekend and may be an issue to look at in the future.

However, during the months of December, January, February and March, the schedule is such that the depot is open every 2nd or 3rd weekend. The depot will be closed this year the day after Christmas and New Year's. Mr. Bauld stated that what staff is trying to achieve is to match the demand during the spring, summer and fall when there are more users and reduce schedule during January, February and March. The facility costs approximately \$9,000/day to operate and they are trying to achieve some efficiencies based on demand. Mr. Bauld said notices are put in newspapers, schedules in newsletters and also on the information line advising when the depot is closed. Councillor Cunningham suggested that due to the fact that it is only open on Saturdays, and is so far away for most of the population, that if it is going to be closed on certain Saturdays, it should be well advertised. The budget for this facility is \$380/400,000, and driven by volume, the budget was exceeded this year. The Chairman suggested that probably two-thirds of this is not hazardous or toxic - it is latex paint. He believed dry paint cans should be allowed to be placed in the landfill.

Councillor Hendsbee stated that he also received a telephone call about the facility not being open. He had a concern about putting paint cans in the landfill, suggesting that not only can paint be recycled but the cans can be also. He referred to household hazardous days that were held in the past, pointing out how popular they were with the citizens. He suggested consideration be given to having another one during spring cleanup on the Harbour East side. Councillor Hendsbee asked what were the possibilities of partnering up with some of the environment depots across metro to be used as temporary depositories.

Mr. Bauld responded that HRM received funding from the Resource Recovery Fund last year for HHW Days, but did not receive approval for funding this year. Mr. Bauld suggested that staff could nominate funds in the 1999/2000 budget for HHW Days, but as this is an expensive program, it may not be approved.

With respect to depot operations, Mr. Bauld stated that it was his understanding that there are very rigid regulations with respect to storage, even temporary storage, of any volume of materials classified as hazardous wastes.

7.2 Household Collections in District #15

Councillor Walker asked if the collectors were going through garbage bags before they collect them to see what is in them? He stated that he had received calls and a letter from residents complaining that bags were not taken because they had the wrong things in the bag.

Mr. Bauld said the collectors do not open the bags, but he pointed out that, based on the contract HRM has signed with the collector, would dictate how various materials are to be placed. If a collector sees a bag with mixed waste, it does not qualify for recycling or regular collections and he would not pick it up. Another example, would be a cardboard box with refuse, it does not qualify either. He stated that It depends on what is being observed, but if he could receive a copy of the letter, he would respond to the resident, and copy Councillor Walker.

Councillor Walker reported that he had received a lot of complaints from residents about their green carts being upset. They are told to have them out on the street by 7:00 a.m. but they are not picked up until later in the day. As a consequence, school children are knocking them over on the way to school in the morning and again at lunch time. Residents are getting annoyed that garbage is being picked up three times during the day. They asked if some kind of education could be relayed to the schools to have this problem addressed. Councillor Walker asked if the truck is not going to pick up until, say, 4:00 p.m., why have it out on the street at 7:00 a.m.? Mr. Bauld responded that staff would

contact the schools about this problem. With respect to the collection process, he pointed out that in the regulations of the former municipalities, there were always prescribed times for the materials to be at the curb. He said there are some areas that the collectors do not get into until the afternoon but that may adjust, depending on conditions. Because of these fluctuations, staff are unable to advise the public of different times of the day that it would be collected.

Councillor Walker reported on one person in his district putting garbage on another person's property. It was put out on the wrong day and the homeowner has refused to take it in. There is no mechanism in place to pick up this garbage and asked if there was a fund in place? Mr. Bauld said there is no fund for this, but he pointed out that it is a violation if a homeowner allows refuse to remain on the public right-of-way in front of his property even if they have not put it there. Councillor Walker had a real concern about this problem. Following some further discussion on other problems where people drop off waste in front of a property because they missed their own collection day, it was suggested by the Chairman that this be identified as a possible cost area for debate in the new budget.

7.3 Christmas Tree Collection

Councillor Walker asked when was the Christmas tree collection going to start and finish. Mr. Bauld said it is included as an organic material and will be picked up during the organic collection week.

MOVED By Mayor Fitzgerald, seconded by Councillor Cunningham THAT the meeting adjourn. MOTION PUT AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Jim Bauld
Operations Co-ordinator