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Harbour East Community Council
May 6, 2010

TO: Councillor Gloria McCluskey, Chair and Members of the Harbour East Community Council

SUBMITTED BY: *Annis McEwen*
for Mr. Peter Connor, Chair, Dartmouth Lakes Advisory Board

DATE: March 31, 2010

SUBJECT: Dartmouth Lakes Advisory Board's Annual Report to Harbour East Community Council

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Dartmouth Lakes Advisory Board meetings of 2009 and the HRM Watershed Advisory Board Workshop of January 2010.

BACKGROUND

The Dartmouth Lakes Advisory Board (DLAB) had another productive year in regard to stewardship of the lakes, natural waterways and their watersheds under the jurisdiction of the Harbour East Community Council. The discussion section of this report will outline matters dealt with at each Board meeting held during 2009 and will include an update from the January 2010 HRM Watershed Advisory Board workshop. For further detail, please view the Dartmouth Lakes Advisory Board minutes on the HRM Board and Committee website available online at www.halifax.ca.

DISCUSSION

January 2009: Mr. Scott MacLeod of Scotia Weather Services was invited to present to the Board on the services provided by his company. Scotia Weather Services specializes in the field of real time environmental information and advised that they would like to expand into the hydrology and water

quality business as climate change has caused an increase in precipitation which has made water quality more important. When asked whether DLAB would consider being a “client” (at no cost) by presenting a question or problem for investigation by Scotia Weather Services, the Board responded that if the focus was on Lake Charles they would be interested as Lake Charles was within their jurisdiction and was the highest lake in the system.

DLAB toured the Dartmouth Wastewater Treatment Plant in November 2008 and was pleased that the facility was working extremely well.

DLAB expressed concern with the possible loss of prior data on the lakes in the area due to unaccessible formats, such as large maps or out of date technology, and suggested that a repository be maintained for environmental information. The Board forwarded their concerns to the HRM Environmental Performance Officer who agreed to consider the matter.

February 2009: Mr. Peter Bigelow, Manager, Real Property Planning, Infrastructure and Asset Management, was invited to present to DLAB on the work surrounding Lake Banook in preparation for the 2009 ICF Canoe Sprint World Championships. The Board was pleased with the upgrades planned for Lake Banook and surrounding area.

March 2009: Mr. Cameron Deacoff, Environmental Performance Officer, Infrastructure and Asset Management, introduced the Stantec Consultants who presented DLAB with a draft of the Water Quality Monitoring Functional Plan as required by HRM’s Regional Plan. DLAB provided comment on the Water Quality Monitoring Functional Plan and comments from all three Watershed Advisory Boards was considered by Stantec in drafting the final Water Quality Monitoring Functional Plan for Regional Council’s consideration.

DLAB was pleased to learn that the Harbour East Community Council had extended the Dartmouth Lakes Advisory Board membership terms to November 30, 2009.

April 2009: Due to a lack of quorum, the April meeting was cancelled.

May 2009: Due to a lack of quorum, the May meeting was cancelled.

June 2009: DLAB members reluctantly accepted the resignation of long-serving volunteer and former Chair Ms. Audrey Manzer and commenced plans to formally celebrate her thirty-eight (38) years of dedicated service. An Interim Chair and Vice-Chair were elected to serve to November 2009.

A final review of the Water Quality Monitoring Functional Plan was done and all pertinent information forwarded to HRM staff for review and forwarding to the Stantec Consultants.

Ms. Cathy Mellett, Acting Municipal Clerk, was invited to present to the Board in regard to Regional Council’s Committee of Council Review. The Board was pleased to learn that Regional Council was very committed to its Boards and Committees, particularly as they relate to the environment and

sustainability, and that an even stronger effort was now being made by staff to work on issues involving lakes/environment/sustainability and the inter-relationship with planning and development. A further update was provided at the September meeting.

The Dartmouth Lakes Advisory Board does not meet in July or August unless required.

July 2009: No meetings were held.

August 2009: No meetings were held.

September 2009: Ms. Cathy Mellett, Acting Municipal Clerk, provided a verbal update on the Committee of Council Review advising that a report had been drafted for Council's consideration. The Board accepted Ms. Mellett's invitation to participate in a Visioning Exercise, to be arranged and facilitated by HRM Staff from Community Development (Planning/Sustainable Environmental Management Office) with input from Halifax Water.

The Board passed motions to continue serving in its present capacity until Regional Council advised of the new course of action following their Committee of Council review, and; that Harbour East Community Council fill the current vacancies on the Dartmouth Lakes Advisory Board and amend the Terms of Reference in regard to quorum requirements to reduce quorum to 50% of the membership at any given time. Harbour East Community Council granted the requests.

Discussions were held in regard to 2010 being the third decade since the data sampling study was commenced with concurrence that the Board would contact the parties involved with the previous samplings to determine if there was an interest in obtaining the data in the spring of 2010.

The Board passed a motion requesting staff to investigate the cause/source of the high phosphorous levels in Russell Lake, discovered as part of the water quality sampling results, outlined in the September 11, 2009 report, and; provide the Dartmouth Lakes Advisory Board with an explanation of the problem and the proposed solutions.

Concern was raised by the Board in regard to an unidentified aquatic weed in Lakes Banook (around Paddlers Cove area) and Mic Mac. Attempts would be made to identify the plant to determine if it was a naturally occurring species or an invasive species. Once identified, the Board proposed to forward a report to the Harbour East Community Council alerting them of the issue and request that they direct staff to investigate further. This matter is ongoing.

Concern was raised as to what caused the high fecal coliform count that closed Oathill Lake in the summer with a motion passed requesting a staff report explaining the investigation resulting from the closure of Oathill Lake as well as comment on any other lake closures.

October 2009: Staff presented the Penhorn/Woodlawn Community Visioning Liaison Group's draft vision and advised that the Dartmouth Lakes Advisory Board was requested to be included as an advisory group for the final Visioning Exercise draft.

Upon receiving staff's response regarding the Oathill Lake closure, the Board passed a motion requesting further information in regard to HRM's sampling strategy and whether or not consideration had been given to standardizing the sampling strategy. The Board expressed appreciation for the quick response and action by HRM and the province in regard to notifying the public of the elevated fecal coliform counts as well as the efficient post analysis response.

The Board reviewed the concept Subdivision Application for 140 Eileen Stubbs Avenue, Dartmouth as presented by staff and agreed to request permission to walk the property in order to have a better understanding of the terrain and waterways in the immediate vicinity.

The Board encouraged as many members as possible to attend the Friends of the Earth Workshop: "*Water Soft Path*"

The Board was pleased to learn that previous participants of the decadel water quality sampling initiative, a project undertaken each of the last two decades, were interested in repeating the project in 2010. With the coordinated efforts of the participants, samples would be taken from 52 lakes in HRM and sent to labs in Moncton, New Brunswick and Ottawa, Ontario for analysis. The analysis would provide important information in regard to current water conditions which would indicate any changes that may have occurred or were occurring.

November 2009: The Board received information from staff in regard to the high fecal coliform levels in Russell Lake and requested a staff report responding to the following: what was staff's understanding in regard to the high fecal coliform levels, what was the procedure for dealing with the issue and would staff consider using local high schools and/or the Nova Scotia Community College to assist with water quality data analysis of Russell Lake.

The Board requested that the Harbour East Community Council fill the existing vacancies; Harbour East Community Council complied and appointed three people to the Board.

The Board received information that the aquatic weed located in Lakes Banook and Mic Mac appeared to be of normal growth but the exact species was yet to be identified. A further update would be provided later in the spring of 2010.

Board members who attended the DAWN workshop: "*Water Soft Path*" provided an update and advised that one of the main points was on the difference between advocacy and advisory. A written summary of the workshop was requested. The summary has been received and will be part of the March 2010 meeting agenda.

The Board was advised that the HRM Visioning Exercise for the three Watershed Advisory Boards would not be held until January 2010.

Members of the Board who walked the area relating to the concept Subdivision Application - Eileen Stubbs Avenue, suggested that staff review their comments and that a definition of "wetland" be

provided.

Staff advised that HRM had approved the Master Plan for the Canal Greenway Project and that work was now underway.

The Board expressed interest in receiving information involving Bissett Lake as the lake was within their jurisdiction.

The Dartmouth Lakes Advisory Board does not meet during the month of December unless required.

December 2009: No meetings were held.

January 2010: The HRM Watershed Advisory Board Workshop was held. Current members of the three HRM Watershed Advisory Boards were in attendance. The consensus was that local Watershed Advisory Boards were an important component in reviewing development projects and were a conduit from the community to HRM. There was acknowledgement that some procedural changes and efficiencies could assist in providing focus to those reviews with support for a Policy Advisory Committee to identify regulatory gaps and recommend policy changes for HRM in consideration with other jurisdictional levels.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications associated with this report.

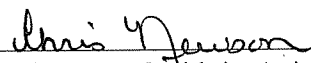
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the proposed Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

ATTACHMENTS - NONE

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/cc.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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