

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES February 18, 2003

PRESENT:

Mayor Peter Kelly
Councillors: Steve Streach (3:00 p.m.)
Gary Hines
Keith Colwell
Ron Cooper
Brian Warshick
Condo Sarto
Bruce Hetherington
Jim Smith
John Cunningham
Jerry Blumenthal
Dawn Sloane
Sue Uteck
Sheila Fougere
Russell Walker
Diana Whalen
Linda Mosher (3:10 p.m.)
Brad Johns (3:55 p.m.)
Robert Harvey (4:10 p.m.)
Len Goucher
Reg Rankin
Gary Meade

ABSENT WITH REGRETS:

Deputy Mayor Harry McInroy
Councillor Stephen Adams

STAFF:

Mr. George McLellan, Chief Administrative Officer
Mr. Wayne Anstey, Municipal Solicitor
Ms. Vi Carmichael, Municipal Clerk
Ms. Julia Horncastle, Legislative Assistant

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - February 11, 2003**

MOVED by Councillor Hetherington, seconded by Councillor Sloane, that the minutes of February 11, 2003 be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. **APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS**

MOVED by Councillor Hetherington, seconded by Councillor Smith, that the Order of Business be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. **BY-LAW S-300 - SIDEWALK SNOW CLEARING**

- A report prepared for Mr. Rick Paynter, Director of Public Works and Transportation, dated February 5, 2003, on the above noted, was before Council.

Mr. Wayne Legere, Manager of Streets and Roads Services, presented the staff report, advising staff had been requested to look at the issues of sidewalk snow removal and at HRM's compliance with By-Law S-300 Respecting Streets, in terms of areas where the Municipality provides sidewalk clearing services. Council wished to receive a presentation from staff on areas where residents could improve their efforts to meet the requirements of the By-Law.

Mr. Legere stated the attention staff could give to the 540 Kilometres of sidewalk could never match the level of care that an abutter could provide to frontage fronting their property. He advised the service standard used by HRM is that it will try to clear the sidewalk within three days after the storm and it was never the intent to try to comply with the standards as set out in By-Law S-300.

In response to Mayor Kelly, Mr. Legere clarified that residents are expected to clear their sidewalks within twelve hours after the end of the storm.

Councillor Blumenthal stated the standards should be the same for the residents as it is for HRM staff.

Councillor Sloane expressed concern with the speed of the plows and how, when they are

going too fast, the snow goes up over the snow banks and into the sidewalks. The Councillor also noted the street corners are not cut back and pose a danger.

Councillor Uteck suggested the sidewalk snow clearing regulations be required to be posted in rental properties as they do not currently form part of lease agreements.

In response to Councillor Whalen, Mr. McLellan advised that staff will be looking at the provision of service over the next year. Staff will be looking at sidewalk snow clearing as well as the cost implications.

Mr. Legere advised staff would be coming back to Council later this spring with a comprehensive report on all snow and ice operations, including sidewalks. He noted that as part of the report they can also look at service provision to various standards with accompanying costs.

Councillor Sloane noted the downtown businesses are expressing concern with the piles of snow in the downtown and requested staff do a more aggressive snow removal in the downtown areas.

Councillor Blumenthal reiterated the service levels for the Municipality should be the same as those expected of the residents.

Mr. Gordon Hayward, Snow and Ice Coordinator, provided an oral presentation on tips for snow and ice control for sidewalks and driveways. Councillor Mosher suggested staff make the information available to the public.

Mayor Kelly thanked Mr. Legere and Mr. Hayward for their presentations.

5. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE IN THE FIRE SERVICE

- An information report from Michael E. Eddy, Chief Director, Fire Services, dated December 4, 2002, on the above noted, was before Council.

Councillor Hetherington thanked Chief Eddy and District Chief Roy Hollett for the report, stating that HRM should be encouraging the Province to cost share in some of the revenue received from emergency medical service provided by the fire service.

Chief Eddy advised the report was prepared in consultation with the Cape Breton Regional Municipality. He outlined the report and provided information on how the different areas became involved in first response. Chief Eddy advised the HRM departments averaged 7,200 call responses in one year but, as a result of protocols being put in place, the number

of calls has decreased. He advised there is a committee currently in place to address the issue of emergency first response by fire departments.

Mayor Kelly noted that HRM has had discussions with the Province regarding this issue and advised staff will continue to take it forward on behalf of Council.

Councillor Hetherington suggested a number of Councillors be included in the discussions with the Province.

Mayor Kelly thanked Chief Eddy and District Chief Hollett for their presentation.

6. URB DECISION - NATURAL GAS DISTRIBUTION FRANCHISES

- A report from Mr. George McLellan, Chief Administrative Officer, dated February 18, 2003, on the above noted, was before Council.

Ms. Cathie O'Toole, Executive Assistant, CAO's Officer, with the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, presented the report to Council advising:

- The goal of the UNSM Natural Gas subcommittee is to develop a tax model that will provide something for all municipalities;
- Heritage Gas desires one taxation agreement with all municipalities and the Province is supportive of this position;
- The model is a three part tax model which involves regular tax on assets outside the right of way which would be administrative buildings, fixed formula asset taxation on high volume steel distribution assets and taxation on the revenues;
- There are current tax negotiations with Heritage Gas;
- UNSM will present a counter-proposal to Heritage Gas on the tax issue;
- HRM is discussing the possibility of a nominal equity interest in Heritage Gas, based on Capital contributions in kind.

Mayor Kelly thanked staff for the presentation.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Vi Carmichael
Municipal Clerk