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**Halifax Regional Council**  
**March 29, 2005**

**TO:** Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dale MacLennan".

Dale MacLennan, Director, HRM Financial Services

**DATE:** March 29, 2005

**SUBJECT:** Budget and Business Plan Questions from Committee of the Whole

### **INFORMATION REPORT**

#### **BACKGROUND**

This report responds to the inquiries by Councillors at the Committee of the Whole meetings between February 28<sup>th</sup> and March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2005 for additional information required from the Business Units. The subject of these meetings was the discussion of the proposed 2005-2006 budget and business plans, and the service-level implications of the business plans.

Each Business Unit presented their respective plan implications, detailing the expected service increases, decreases or services not being delivered, resulting from their proposed business plan and the supporting budget envelope. Councillors were given the opportunity to address the Business Unit representatives and to request further clarification on the points and issues raised by the presentation. This report contains the additional related information required to satisfactorily answer the questions needing clarification.

**DISCUSSION**

**Governance:**

**Breakdown of what is being spent on the immigration conference.**

The total cost for the conference is expected to be \$187,000.

Salaries	\$60,000
Speakers	\$30,000
Meals	\$51,500
Website and Registration	\$6,500
Logo Design	\$7,000
Venue	\$3,500
Audio-Visual	\$7,000
Printed Materials	\$3,000
Toolkit Production & Distribution	\$1,500
Contingency	\$17,000
<b>Total Cost:</b>	<b>\$187,000</b>
Offsetting Revenue: Sponsorships	\$33,000
Offsetting Revenue: Registration fees (300 x \$345)	\$103,500
<b>Total HRM Investment: (estimated - March 17)</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>

**Breakdown on what the costs would be to upgrade the audio and video in the Council Chambers.**

IT Services to provide a report outlining the costs and incremental timelines for upgrades.

**Request that staff address issues around an appropriate meeting space for community meeting.**

This issue is being addressed by the Municipal Clerk's office - re-establishing permanent locations, and with all locations being supplied with minimum standard equipment. This will be addressed in a report to Council later in 2005.

**Staff to provide the criteria used to rate budget items when they are reviewed by the Theme Team.**

See attached, Appendix A - Theme Scoring Criteria. This scoring criteria will be revisited during 2005-2006 to identify strengths and weaknesses with the current approach, with the intent of establishing a proposed project validation process that addresses HRM's short, medium and long-term needs and risks; and is in keeping with the strategic decision-making process guiding our planning and budgeting cycle.

**Summary of the election costs and offset from Province.**

Current funds in Election Reserve: \$45,000 (to March 31, 2005).

Compensation & Benefits	\$458,565
Telephone	\$12,645
Courier & Postage	\$87,547
Office Furniture / Equipment	\$2,376
Printing and Reproduction	\$50
Office Supplies	\$96,549
Other Office Expenditures	\$504
Consulting Fees	\$30,683
Travel	\$7,795
Facilities Rental	\$87,712
Advertising	\$37,447
Other Goods / Services	(\$96)
Materials Chargeback	\$5,886
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$827,643</b>
Recovery from Province (for Sunday shopping plebiscite).	(\$178,865)
<b>Net Cost:</b>	<b>\$648,778</b>

**Integrated Emergency Services:**

**Council asked if there is an improved ability to track calls that are received through the various mobile technologies (cell phone, e-mail, etc).**

Currently under discussion with the Province. Once further information has been received, IES will report back to Council.

**Planning & Development:**

**An update on the proposal to seek increased fines for stop work orders.**

Report was sent to Council recommending that the Province consider amendments to the MGA & Building Code Act that would permit judges to issue "compliance orders" in addition to penalties for violations.

The request went to the Province, and HRM Legal staff have met with Provincial officials to discuss this request. To date Legal has not received an indication as to whether the Province is prepared to approve the request.

**Follow up on Keddy's property.**

When Community Projects investigated this matter, the owner decided to rectify the situation and cleared the site of debris and is in the process of replacing boarded walls/windows with new siding. Because the owner has responded to the issue of unsightliness, there are few options available.

**Pursue, if possible, a partnership with Destination Halifax re: heritage incentives.**

Currently, our relationship with Destination Halifax stems from the funding we provide them through the Hotel Tax Levy (an agreement between the HRM and the Hotel Association) for tourism marketing. The funds that are levied are legislated to be applied towards specific expenditures. As such, we would require changes to the applicable legislation in order to shift funding towards heritage incentives.

- Provincial enabling legislation approved in 2001 which established the rate at 2% maximum, by Bylaw.

Hotel Tax - Memorandum of Understanding was signed July 2001. A 1.5% hotel tax is collected:

- 1.0% is directed to DMO (*Destination Marketing Organization - now Destination Halifax*)
- 0.5% is deposited into HRM's Special Events Reserve (Tourism) to fund events consistent with the Events business case.

**Financial Services:****A determination as to whether the correctional facility was exempt from providing a grant because the name has been transferred to a charitable organization.**

As it currently stands, the Assessment Act currently exempts jails from paying taxes. If the HRM wants to change this ruling, it would be required to submit a formal request to the Minister of Service Nova Scotia & Municipal Relations challenging the appropriateness of the Act. HRM could also appeal the assessment. Both of which we have done in the past with no success.

**An estimate of the revenues that could be generated through an improved dog license / registration process.**

See Appendix B - Dog Registration Process 2005

**A re-examination of the issue of tax structure classifications for all of HRM with respect to services provided and clarification of what constitutes urban/suburban/rural. Staff to bring back cost information and an estimated time frame for a tax structure review.**

Staff will be examining this during the 2005/2006 fiscal year and expect to bring a report back to Council. HRM staff to meet with the Province to confirm eligibility of the proposed tax credit program.

**Staff to review the principles for the use of the fuel tax. Is there potential to use the gas tax revenues for feasibility studies for the augmentation of transit service for: Prospect Tantallon, Musquodoboit, Bayer's Road, St. Margaret's Bay Rd.**

Staff is reviewing the principles of the gas tax, and can make a determination once we have a full understanding of the parameters laid down by the Federal and Provincial governments. This cannot occur until the Provincial government tables its budget. A report will be provided to Council subsequently.

**Staff to bring back a report investigating the feasibility of using area rates for supplementary funding. Report is to address the impact of doing that prior to 2006/07.**

Finance staff to develop this report during 2005/2006 fiscal year for presentation to Council.

**Staff to advise Council of amount in cemetery reserve.**

The projected balance for March 31, 2005 is \$91,000. The budgeted balance for March 31, 2006 is \$116,000.

**Sidewalk requested as a priority for Brook St. in District 2 due to the discontinuance of school bus service to a local elementary school. May be possible to borrow from the area rate fund to cover project costs. Finance to investigate area rate issue.**

There was an area rate established to fund future sidewalks. When the area rate is collected, it is credited to the cost centre and at the end of the fiscal year, any surplus/deficit is transferred to a balance sheet account. There is a separate B/S account set up for Waverley (3455) and Fall River (3454). The surplus accumulates until there is enough to build a new sidewalk or at least cover the principal and interest costs of the construction.

For instance this year HRM is building new sidewalks on Lockview Road in Fall River using funds collected through the area rate. The funds have been transferred from the B/S account to centre R739 to cover the contract services costs.

Staff understanding of the Brook Street issue is: a) that it falls within the area covered by the existing Fall River area rate (see attachment 2 below), and b) there will not be enough money in the account to fund the construction, or even enough to cover the principal and interest payments required to construct the sidewalk. Therefore, if we were to construct a new sidewalk, the area rate for Fall River would have to be increased to an amount that would at least cover the principal and interest payments.

**Do we reduce PILT (DND) for fire services provided?**

There is no adjustment to DND's tax bill or their payment in lieu for fire service provision.

**Halifax Regional Water Commission:**

**Information on the status of Regent Drive and other locations experiencing low water pressure.**

The HRWC engineering and operations staff have reviewed the situation and offer the following explanation: Regent Drive is serviced off the Dartmouth Intermediate East zone which provides a normal pressure on the street from 50 to 65 psi based on October 2002 hydrant pressures. Our superintendent advised that they have had no low pressure calls for this street and that a specific problem could be related to a service line blockage at the curb stop or meter. Operations can be contacted at 490-4975 and they will respond and review if called for a specific location. The street is not on the list for a near term main renewal based on limited water main breaks and generally good structural condition.

**HRWC to provide an explanation of the water pressure status pertaining to the Stoneridge subdivision.**

The Stoneridge subdivision is located adjacent to Cowie Hill and is serviced from the Spryfield

General pressure zone. This pressure zone is fed from the Cowie Hill Reservoir. Operating pressures in this zone range from a low of 43psi at Stonegate Dr. & Withrod Dr. to a high of 120 psi on Williams Lake Rd.

The main factor which determines pressure relative to an area is the elevation of that area. Stonegate Drive & Withrod Drive being at a higher elevation results in a lower pressure. Williams Lake Rd being at a low elevation has a higher pressure.

HRWC guidelines for new system extensions require a minimum pressure in the system of 40psi. and a maximum pressure of approx. 90psi where elevation and system layout permit these guidelines.

HRWC has checked a few properties on Stonegate Drive and found that the incoming pressure at the water meter is 43psi. and a good flow rate was observed. The complaint was no water at the bathroom fixtures. The flow rate at the fixtures was checked and found that a very low flow of water was observed. This would indicate an issue with the internal plumbing of the building instead of a problem with the municipal water system. This testing was done January 10, 2002. Unfortunately we have seen this in several subdivisions and HRM plumbing inspection is also concerned. The problem centres around the Canadian Plumbing Code which is not a performance based specification but more of a materials specification. In these cases the plumbing system conforms to the Plumbing Code but is still inadequate to deliver reasonable flow. In our opinion, this is a design issue that should be addressed by the homebuilder or developer.

**Discuss whether there exists the possibility of synergies with Aliant, other utilities.**

It is HRWC policy to always pursue joint projects to save money and minimize disruption to our residents during construction. To that end, HRWC is a member of the Halifax Utility Co-ordinating Committee [HUCC] which was set up specifically for the co-ordination of capital projects. Members of HUCC include HRM, NSPI, Aliant, Heritage Gas and HRWC with meetings held on a monthly basis. In addition, HRWC has staff representation on HRM's Energy and Underground and Services Committee which has been recently given a more direct mandate to co-ordinate underground utilities in light of recent trends in telecommunication and co-generation projects.

**Halifax Regional School Board:**

**School Board is to provide a full copy of the survey they presented for Council's information**

School Board has promised a copy to be provided for circulation to Council once they have had an opportunity to examine the findings presented by the firm hired to conduct the survey.

**Copies of the Halifax Regional School Board Business Plan and Budget for 2004/05 provided to Council last year is to be provided to the new Councillors**

Councillors to be provided with copies of 2004-2005 Budget Book or the specific business plan.

**Halifax Regional Library:**

**Update on the three pilot sites (Sackville, Keshen Goodman, Spring Garden Road) for the wireless hot spots project. Library to provide the cost per branch to enable this service.**

The wireless hotspot pilot at Keshen Goodman, Sackville and Spring Garden Libraries is to develop and test the technical configuration for hotspots, as well as policies and procedures for the service. Following a successful pilot, wireless will be installed region-wide, including Bedford as requested. The cost per branch is estimated at \$1,825.

**Would the Library Board consider budgeting, in next year's budget, to allow for Monday openings at the Tantallon location?**

To be introduced for consideration by the Library Board during 06/07 budget discussions in the fall of 2005.

**Timeline for the Queen Street Master Plan**

It is expected that a site for the new downtown Halifax public library will be determined by year end 2005/2006. The Capital District project is coordinating efforts between the Province, RPAM and the Library to develop this plan. A Memorandum of Understanding and Terms of Reference will be developed by year end, and a consultant will be hired to expedite the process.

**Cost of having a full-time fund raiser for the library?**

A fund raising office comprised of 2 FTEs (1 manager and 1 administrative support staff) and operating costs for printing, postage, events and file management would require an estimated budget of \$150,000.

**Real Property and Asset Management:**

**Staff to continue discussions with appropriate parties re Sir John A MacDonald High School gymnasium expansion and report back to Council in timely manner.**

Staff is in on-going discussions with the province. The province has confirmed verbally that funds will not be required from HRM in the 05/06 fiscal year and that it is committed to working with HRM and the community to resolve the issue.

**Funding allocated for two playgrounds in District 23 (\$25,000 and \$15,000) to be changed to \$20,000 for each.**

Adjustment will be made in the final budget submission. Supplementary sheet and work plan will reflect the change.

**Recreation, Tourism and Culture:**

**Staff to look into the status of Evergreen House.**

Currently, HRM is maintaining this property with a focus on keeping the basic structure intact. Repairs and maintenance for the property have been included annually in the RTC budget. A recent architectural study has been completed on the property which has determined the historic structure of the building to inform future restoration efforts. Copies of this study are available.

**Status of the Titanic Trust.**

The Titanic Trust fund has \$26,153 and a reserve fund has \$2,900. An annual report on Trusts is provided to Council.

**Staff to look into the possibility of allocating any revenue from the lease of the old Dartmouth Museum building towards a new museum location.**

The probability of leasing the Dartmouth Museum is low, given its current condition. If there are any revenues from the lease of the Dartmouth Museum building, they would be used to underwrite HRM's share of the maintenance. There would likely be zero return available for allocation to other funding requests.

**Staff was requested to revisit the master plan for the Eastern Passage/Shearwater area with respect to recreation facility needs as the Shearwater recreation centre is mainly for use by military families and only provides for 50 public memberships. It was also requested that this be reflected in future budgets.**

Staff will revisit indoor recreation facility opportunities in this area of HRM. As part of this initiative, staff will meet with Shearwater administration regarding access to their facilities.

**Opportunities to be explored in future budgets for snowmobile and ATV use of recreational trails to be discussed directly between staff and councillors.**

Need to satisfy that a municipal mandate exists in this area. This is a longer term issue that will be researched during 05/06.

**Fire and Emergency Services:**

**Replacement schedule for fire trucks.**

Response: Following is the a summary of the 2004-2006 Apparatus Purchase and replacement plans for the Fire Service:

Purchase for 2004/2005 budget year will be:

- 1 Custom Rescue Pumper;
- 1 Tandem 1500 imp gallon Water Tenders;
- 3 Tandem 2500 imp gallon Water Tenders;
- 3 1500 imp gallon Water Tenders

These units will allow the following units to be replaced:

Zone 1	73-153E	1973	GMC C65
Zone 2	76-162E	1976	International C01950B
Zone 3	79-176E	1979	Chev. Deluxe 30 4X4
Zone 5/6	82-187E	1982	GMC C65
	79-19E	1979	Scott Tanker
Core	82-24E	1982	Pemfab Custom Pumper
	81-21E	1981	Pemfab Custom Pumper

Purposed purchases for the 2005/2006 budget year are:

- 4 1500 imp gallon Water Tenders;
- 6 Commercial Rescue Pumps 1750 imp pumps (750 gallon tanks);
- 1 2500 imp gallon Water Tender

The purchase of these apparatus will allow the following units to be moved to reserve or be replaced:

Zone 1	81-184E	Replaced 1981 GMC C70
Zone 3	81-182E	Replaced Ford 800
	84-192E	Replaced Ford L8000
Zone 4	79-18E	Replaced Ford L8000



Zone 5-6	80-178E	Replaced Ford C900
	80-298E	Replaced 1980 International
Core	86-36L	Reserve 1986 Ford F800
	93-81E	Reserve 1993 Ford 8000
	92-76E	Reserve Custom Spartan
	93-83E	Reserve 1993 Custom Pierce
	82-25E	Replace 1982 Custom Pemfab
	82-26E	Replace 1982 Custom Pemfab

The purchase will also allow the movement of apparatus to upgrade apparatus in other zones.

**An update on the CityWatch program in terms of future use, as well as whether there would be an upcoming presentation on CityWatch.**

The hiring of a Coordinator for CityWatch will ensure the full usage of this system, which has proven to be an effective means of mass communication. The current system requires upgrades to hardware and ongoing maintenance in order to expand future capacity. The system has been used in the past for meeting notifications, evacuations, public information bulletins, etc. The CityWatch coordinator will be responsible to develop additional capacity for the full utilization of the system including a linkage to the GIS platform which will allow greater capability for notification or information to be provided to specific communities within HRM. A presentation will be made to Council explaining the full benefits of this system and how it can be best utilized by HRM to communicate with citizens.

**Shared Services:**

**HRM to take action to convey our displeasure and insist that full accessibility and proximity to the doors leading to the HRM Customer Service Centre (and Access NS) to residents using the Access-a-Bus service be provided. This would also have an impact on any decision to stay at that location when the lease is ready for renewal.**

RPAM has discussed the 7 foot high barriers installed in the parking area in front of the West End Mall with the property management company. Crombie Property Management has advised that the barriers were placed there to keep trucks out as the "load capacity" of the underground parking was not built to withstand the weight. The result is that Access-A-Bus cannot enter at one location and exit at another. Metro Transit Services advises that, because of safety issues, they are unable to back up vehicles without having a supervisor on hand. Staff will continue to press for a resolution to this issue from the property management company .

This matter will be taken into consideration when staff look at future location requirements.

**Transportation and Public Works:**

**HRM to write a letter to CN requesting that CN release construction information to TPW staff in regards to their bridges.**

Completed. Draft forwarded to CN.

**Feasibility for increased attention to the North Preston area, particularly Simmonds St. Opportunity for cost sharing with province? Can gas tax revenues be used to expedite the gravel street paving?**

Staff was prepared to add projects to the 05/06 capital list in the North Preston area (3 in total). However, projects were subject to LIC's and a decision was made by HRM staff and the District Councillor that the cost to residents through LIC's or area rates was not affordable.

Once the principles surrounding the gas tax have been established, we will have a clearer understanding of whether paving work can be realized using gas tax funds.

**Replacement of traffic signs on Herring Cove Rd, as they are illegible.**

Some signs had been replaced last year and one additional sign will be replaced this year. HRM staff are in contact with the Councillor to ensure all requests are dealt with accordingly.

**Request for the line item for wages and salary costs, fleet costs and contractor costs for snow and ice removal.**

Wages - \$4,472,000; Salaries - \$800,000; Fleet Costs - \$1,300,000; Contract Services - \$3,800,000. **Total:** \$10,373,000.

**Request for a staff report regarding 24 hour snow removal for main streets and sidewalks for roads such as Herring Cove Rd, Quinpool Rd., and those roads with 5 lanes.**

Although this requires further clarification, item will be addressed in upcoming Information Report on Options for Sidewalk Snow Removal.

**Request that money being spent by HRM to fix damage caused by contractors be removed from HRM budget and costed back to the contractor / sub-contractor.**

Currently, contractors are responsible for any damages. However some discretion applies when contractors are asked to plow prior to contracts being in place, when there is no frost in the ground, or when economies of scale are reached with HRM doing repairs in bulk e.g. sod repairs.

**Suggestion that HRM provide sidewalk snow removal for all arterial roads and collector streets under the general tax rate, but not to residential areas.**

Item will be addressed in upcoming Information Report on Options for Sidewalk Snow Removal.

**Request that sidewalk snow removal for the sidewalk on Joseph Howe Drive in District 17 be provided through the District 15 area rate, as the other side of J.H. Drive does have snow removal through the District 15 area rate. Petition from residents to staff to be provided.**

Item will be addressed in upcoming Information Report on Options for Sidewalk Snow Removal.

**Review of the street lighting surplus, and what was the status of the surplus in terms of increased lighting opportunities. Options re: lighting with mercury vs. LED. BU to investigate opportunity for cost efficiencies and savings in lighting. Investigate areas of disproportionate or excessive lighting (e.g. Circumferential highway, Victoria Rd).**

*Energy Efficiency opportunities: Traffic Lighting - LED*

LED are applicable to Traffic lights, but not to street lighting (yet). We have just successfully leveraged \$68K from the Provincial Department of the Environment to do some LED replacements for Traffic Lights, at intersections along Sackville Drive. We have discussed packaging up an application to Natural Resources Canada or the FCM to get the money to do the remainder of the Traffic Lights with LED. We currently have some high level cost estimates developed.

We also successfully negotiated a new rate for LED traffic lights with NSPI as part of the

General 2005 rate hearing, and it just needs to get endorsed by the UARB to become official. That will see some un-budgeted operating savings in the Traffic Lighting budget for 2005/06.

Also, NS DOE, NSPI and HRM jointly conducted an LED lighting seminar in March for other municipalities.

### *Street lighting*

Our tentative plans at this point are as follows:

1. Pilot project to test use of full cut-off luminaries. This would increase effectiveness and light output, lower wattage, save on the monthly energy charge, and reduce GHG emissions. Capital cost of the lights is initially higher, but this is offset by substantial operational savings. Julian and I were writing up an application to get some money to fund a pilot.

2. TPW & EMS are working on a high level plan for street lighting, including looking at the number of lights, new technology, maintenance, lighting standards, demand management, energy efficiency and ownership for 2005/2006. There is potential to save money on maintenance alone, plus we could take some steps to improve public safety through better maintenance of the lighting; and could take a high level approach to doing some energy efficiency projects with the street lighting such as converting to full-cut off luminaries in some areas, determine what wattage/lumination is most appropriate for specified areas, and look at demand side management (i.e. streetlights in residential areas get dimmed between 2:00 and 5:00 in the morning).

### **Concern raised over the provincial Mackay Bridge sign being difficult to see. Staff to follow up with province.**

This sign is located on the exit from Victoria Road to the MacKay Bridge. This entire section of roadway is under the provincial jurisdiction. An email has been forwarded to the province requesting enhanced signage.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

None.

### **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN**

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

### **ALTERNATIVES**

None - information only

**ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix A - Theme Scoring Criteria.

Appendix B - Dog Registration Process 2005

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Michael Pappas, Business Planning Coordinator - Financial Services (490-5534)  
Debbi McCaig, Budget Coordinator - Financial Services (490-4280)

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Approved by:  
Bruce Fisher, Manager - Financial Planning, Financial Services (490-4493)

## Appendix A

### Theme Scoring Criteria Definitions Corporate Scorecard

**Strategic Importance {50%}** - Scoring on this element is intended to weigh the project's linkages to the following:

1. A regulatory obligation that cannot be avoided that is either new or not currently being met.
2. Benefit to the organization (HRM) in terms of meeting the outcomes of the Corporate Scorecard.
3. Value to the citizen relates to a tangible benefit to citizens and shows a clear link to a citizen outcome.
4. Sustainability evaluates HRM or the community's ability to sustain the service/product long term, both from a financial capacity point of view as well as a Council and Staff commitment.
5. Can and will the outcomes be measured, does the project describe how it will be measured. Also, projects that establish a benchmark should be evaluated as having merit.

**Initiative Cost {25%}** - Scoring on this element is intended to rate the projects alignment to the following:

1. The potential to save money in the long & short term.
2. Is this an initial front end investment to generate savings and/or create efficiencies.
3. Knowing what you know about the current state and competing demands, is this affordable?
4. Ability or potential to leverage other funding
5. Is there a private or private/public agency service that could/should be providing the service?
6. Is there an incremental value added to the existing service, and is it measurable (return on investment (R.O.I.)?)

**Success Likelihood {15%}** - Scoring this element is intended to weigh those projects that:

1. Will it achieve the outcome / help to achieve the outcome it is intended to influence?
2. Have the dependencies clearly identified, considered and funded?
3. Will have an immediate tangible measurable outcome (6 - 12 months)?
4. Has a low level of complexity.

**Risk {10%}** - Relates to the risk of not doing this project and should be weighed accordingly with the following considerations:

1. Is there an increased health and safety risk to employees or citizens?
2. Is there a risk that the technology will fail if the investment is not made?
3. Is there a risk of not enhancing services in areas where citizens or employees reported their lowest satisfaction levels through the polling tools we have used? Ie. CRA Employee Survey, audits or Client Satisfaction Surveys.
4. Is there a risk around privacy issues?
5. Is there a financial liability / risk of liability?
6. Is there an environmental impact risk?

## Appendix B - Dog Registration Process

The Registration and Regulation of dogs in the Halifax Regional Municipality is governed by By-law D-100. The Financial Services Business Unit is responsible for the administration of Part I - Registration, and the Environmental Management Services Business Unit is responsible for the administration of Part II - Dog Control.

The Registration Process attempts to ensure that every owner of a dog within the Municipality has their dog registered on an annual basis. Dog owners are required to register their dog by the first day of April every year or within ten days after the owner becomes the owner of the dog during the year. Although it has been mentioned that there are 85,000 dogs in the HRM, we are unable to confirm this number through the registration process. There were 7,500 registrations issued in 2004.

The General Revenue Section administers the Registration Process through the management of advertisements, coordination with veterinary hospitals, processing of payments and control of the registration database.

Starting in late February, advertisements are placed through various media to remind owners of the requirement to register their dog by April 1. Included are advertisements in local and community newspapers, HRM Recreation catalogues, HRM Customer Service Centres, veterinary hospitals, the SPCA and the HRM website. In addition, approximately 15,000 registration forms are mailed to all registered owners of dogs from the prior two registration periods.

Owners are able to register their dog through the following:

- at any of the six HRM Customer Service Centres
- through the mail
- by phone through the Corporate Call Centre using credit card
- at the SPCA
- at any of the 26 Veterinary Hospitals that accept registrations

Registration costs range from \$10.00 to \$30.00 depending if the dog is spayed/neutered and inoculated or unaltered. There is also a 20% discount on registrations from senior citizens. The SPCA and the veterinary hospitals are paid a commission of \$3.00 for each registration processed. The revenue from registrations is received by the Community Projects Division of Environmental Management Services to offset the costs of animal control.

The registration database is a module of the Richter Financial System. The database includes owner and dog information and is used for registration confirmation and inquiries for lost dogs. The database is maintained by General Revenue and is available to the Corporate Call Centre and Customer Service Centres for inquiries.

Approximately \$20,000 is budgeted in Financial Services to administer ongoing registrations. This includes advertising costs and commissions paid for registrations.

About \$100,000 is generated in revenue in recent years and is recorded in the EMS Business Unit.

In 1999/00 a large program to increase dog registrations was undertaken in Financial Services. The program was managed by a full-time dog co-ordinator and included several dog constables (off duty commissionaires and private citizens) who went door to door selling licenses on commission. There was also a very aggressive advertising campaign which included free dog toys for registration and contests. The annual cost of the program was approximately \$70,000.

This effort spanned a period of about 20 months from September 1999 to June 2001. Revenues from dog licenses which were about \$160,000 in 1999/00 increased to \$195,000 in 2001/02. In June 2001 the program ended and resources were redistributed to other areas. This was done as part of a Financial Services reorganization. At that time it was felt that the incremental revenue that was being created was less than the cost to deliver the program.

Since then revenues dropped in 2002/03 to \$120,000 and have since reduced to about \$100,000 annually.

We realize that there may be a more effective way of increasing dog registrations with improved management and administration of the Bylaw. It has been identified through the By-law Integration Project that the responsibility for licensing and non-financial administration should be reviewed. In addition, there are ongoing discussions with management of Financial Services and EMS regarding how to best manage this process.