



Committee of Council Reform

Proposed path forward...

Committee of the Whole

November 10, 2009

(Previously circulated October 6, 2009)

HALIFAX
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY



Committee of Council Reform...a Council Priority

On February 3, 2009 Council confirmed that Committee of Council Reform was one of your three (3) priorities under Council's focus area of governance.

- To meet HRM Regional Council's objective to create a Council and committee governance structure that is efficient, effective, scaled appropriately, and where decisions are made at the appropriate level



Historically..

- In 1994 the City of Halifax recommended moving to a Standing Committee structure – no political consensus was achieved
- In April 1996 the new HRM Council met in COW to discuss standing & advisory committees. Recommended establishing a regional wide advisory committee structure with COW and reinstate some of the existing committees (temporarily)
- In June 1997 –An Ad Hoc Committee of Council recommended moving to a new advisory model for Regional Council – Round Table Model. This model was debated but not adopted.
- At Halifax Regional Council January 17, 2006 (Item 9.2.1 (ii)) Council directed:
 - the Membership Selection Committee to review all committees of Council and make recommendations regarding whether some should be added, removed or moved as advisory committees to Council or Community Council.
 - Work commenced on the development of a Terms of Reference, research and work plan.



Today..

Committees are created by Regional Council (entities of Regional Council) for a specific purpose or mandate, are generally advisory in nature, generally no “sunset” clause unless created for a specific purpose i.e. Tax Reform, District Boundary Review etc.

In addition, HRM appoints a significant number of citizens to Boards of External bodies (17 external committees to which HRM makes appointments- not in scope)

HRM currently has:

- 37 HRM committees
- 43 additional inactive committees
- 158 citizens serve on HRM appointed committees
- Many dedicated volunteers providing excellent service to HRM
- Committees can struggle with quorum, with the terms of reference (focus) & recruitment
- Committees of Council are “a” means of Council receiving input from citizens. It is not the only means available to Council – HRM’s Community Engagement Strategy.
- Council and volunteers desire that the time and effort of community volunteers be productive and meaningful.



Best practice research..

- Committee of Council reform is not an easy process for any municipality
 - Reviewed HRM's benchmark cities: (Winnipeg, Vancouver, Hamilton, Surrey, London, and Brampton. Laval is also a benchmark city, but was excluded due to time constraints. Regina was added as they had conducted a similar review in 2008)
 - Findings:
 - Committee reform is often politically difficult but possible
 - Municipalities are striving for the balance of broad input and effective use of Council and residents time & energy
 - A number of cities have moved to "Standing Committees" of Council – with Advisory Committees reporting through the Standing Committees (Winnipeg, Hamilton, Regina)
 - Other municipalities still have a number of Advisory Committees reporting directly to Council (London, Brampton)
 - In Vancouver the terms and mandate of all committees are set by the incoming Council



July 6th...

- Based on that research and consultation staff presented a number of options to HRM's Membership Selection Committee



Options Considered by Membership Selection Committee of Council..

- Consolidation of a number of committees (*smallest change*)
- Move to Main Committees – comprised of both citizens and Council (*similar to the previous round table approach*)
- Move to “Standing Committees of Council” with associated advisory committees
 - Adopting a standardizing definitions and support levels for committees (Standing/Advisory & Ad Hoc)
 - Under this structure Councillors usually serve as liaison – not voting members of associated advisory committees



July 6, 2009 direction to staff....

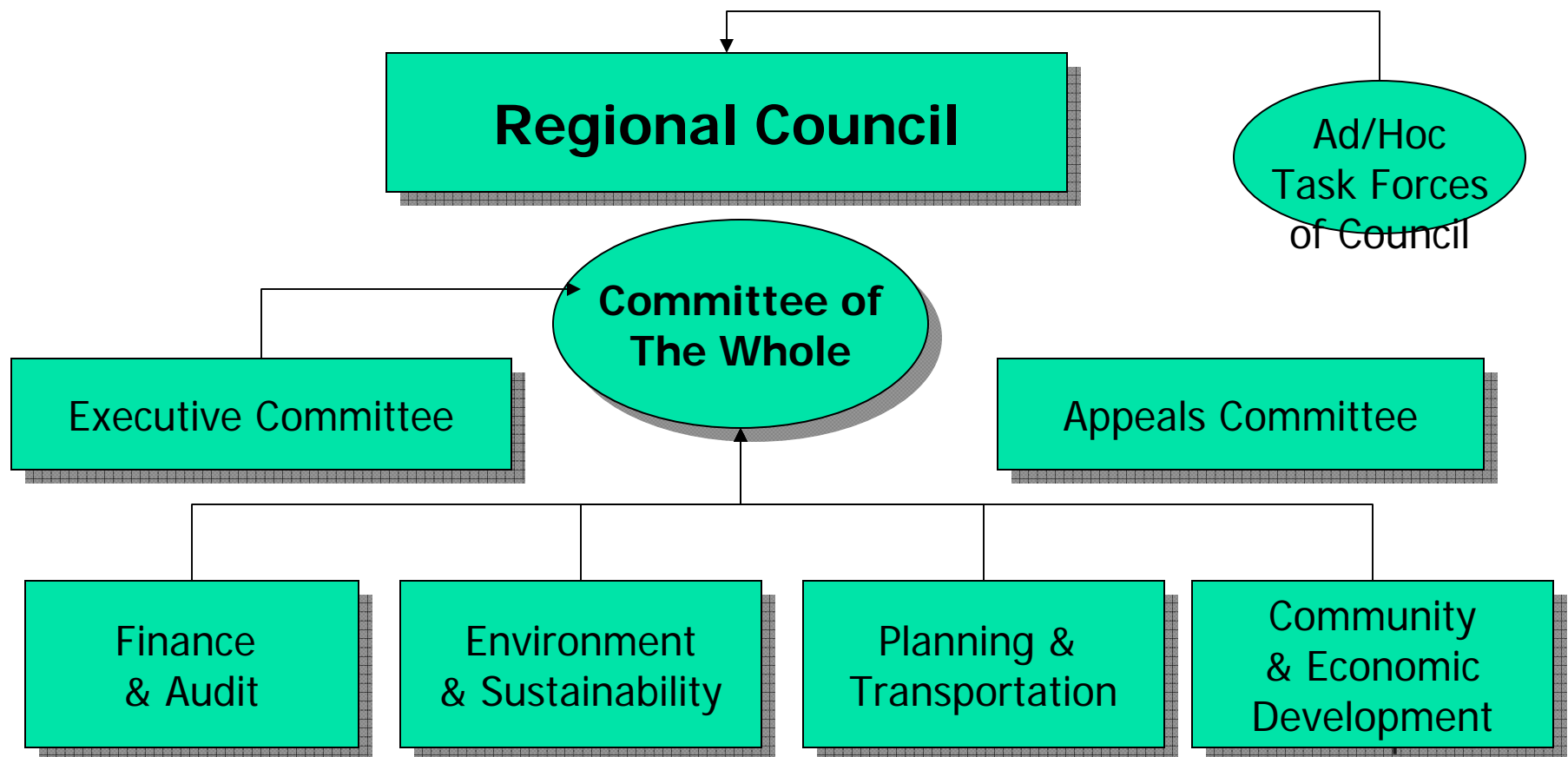
- The Membership Selection Committee of Council generally accepted the concept of Standing Committees of Council – under six (6) headings
Referred back to staff for August 4, 2009, the following:
 - Provide any costs associated with changes
 - Provide a recommendation on how Councillors are appointed to Standing Committees and would membership be on a rotational basis
 - Comment on how Councillors not on a committee could provide input
 - In the Terms of Reference each Standing Committee would be mandated to provide a quarterly update to Council through Committee of the Whole
 - Terms of Reference to provide for public presentations to standing committees – to accommodate broader public input
 - Determine the reporting structure of citizen advisory committees (to Council or through Standing Committees)
 - Provide specific recommendations on where current committees would fit under the new structure

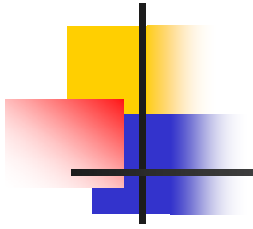


Overview of the Standing Committee approach to follow..

- To move to Standing Committees of Council (Councillors only)
 - Executive, Expanded Appeals, Finance & Audit, Environment & Sustainability, Transportation & Planning, Economic & Community Development
- Councillors to sit on up to two (2) Standing Committees as voting members – appointed through Membership Selection- and could attend meetings of any Committee of Council (as currently provided for in Administrative Order #1)
- Mayor chairs Executive and is ex officio on all other (Admin Order #1)
- Standing Committees would report to Regional Council through Committee of the Whole
- Regional Council may grant decision making authority at its discretion within the limits of HRM Charter (important point)
- Citizen participation would occur through associated advisory committees to Standing Committees and the use of presentation/public input. This approach could serve to increase and broaden public participation to significant Regional issues
- Several committees (geographically specific) would become advisory committees to Community Council

Proposed Standing Committee Structure





Executive

Appeals Committee

Consolidates into Terms of Reference
Membership Selection
CAO Review
EMO (legislatively required)
New Mandate:
Oversight of progress on HRM scorecard & Council's priority areas
Coordination of Standing Committees mandate, TOR, establishment of Sub committees
Other as identified by Council
Liaison with
None
Subcommittees
None

Consolidates into Terms of Reference
Dangerous & Unsightly Appeals
New Mandate:
Appeals of other non judicial decisions under HRM bylaws
Liaise / appointments to:
None
Subcommittees
None

Finance & Audit

Consolidates into Terms of Reference

Audit Committee (MGA/Charter requirements)

Recommendations to Council on grants & contributions including Grants and SEAC

Investment Policy

Environment & Sustainability

Consolidates into Terms of Reference

Solid Waste Advisory

Energy & Underground

Parks, Trails & Open spaces

Watershed Policy Advisory (1)

New Mandate:

Energy security & environment issues coming from Council & SEMO

Liaise / recommend appointments to:

Halifax Water

Move to Community Council

Western. Region Common Wilderness

Community Monitoring

Planning & Transportation

Consolidates into Terms of Reference

Active Transportation

Accessible Transportation

Bikeways Advisory

Taxi & Limousine Advisory

Regional Planning Advisory

Mobile Homes

Private Roads

Urban Design Task Force

Heritage Advisory (must report to Regional Council)

Community Liaison Committees

Liaise / recommend appointments to:

Bridge Commission, CUTA, Transportation Assoc of Canada, Hlfx International. Airport Auth, Port Authority

Move to Community Council

North West Transit Advisory

Community & Economic Development

Consolidates into Terms of Reference

Oversight for Economic plan

Moving forward action plan for economic & community development

Recreation & related facilities (Facilities Master plan)

Canada Day/Natal Day and events committees- report through as working committees

Liaise / recommend appointments to:

Library Board

Trade Centre Ltd

Neptune, Alderney Landing, other facilities

Marketing Levy Board

Move to Community Council

Liaison with Business Districts – Taxation referred to Regional Council



Executive Committee

Consolidates

- Membership Selection
- CAO Review
- Emergency Management Committee

Additional Mandate

- Coordination of establishment/mandates/Terms of reference/Council appointment/review and recommend approval of sub committees of the standing Committees of Council
- Oversight of progress on HRM scorecard & Council's priority areas
- Other additional mandates as assigned by Regional Council

Terms of Reference (TOR)

- Chair- Mayor
- Members
 - Chair of each Community Council
- Terms – for as long as the Councillor hold the positions

Note: No advisory or Subcommittee proposed for the Executive Committee



Expanded Appeals Committee

Consolidates

- Appeals Committee
- Dangerous & Unsightly

Additional Mandate

- Ability of Council to add (if desired) to appeal process for by-laws that are not court based (ticket based)

Terms of Reference (TOR)

- Expanded Appeals Committee of Council
 - Six (6) Councillors appointed by Council
 - Chair elected from members
 - Two (2) year overlapping terms

Note: No Subcommittees or Advisory Committee Proposed for the Appeals Committee



Finance & Audit

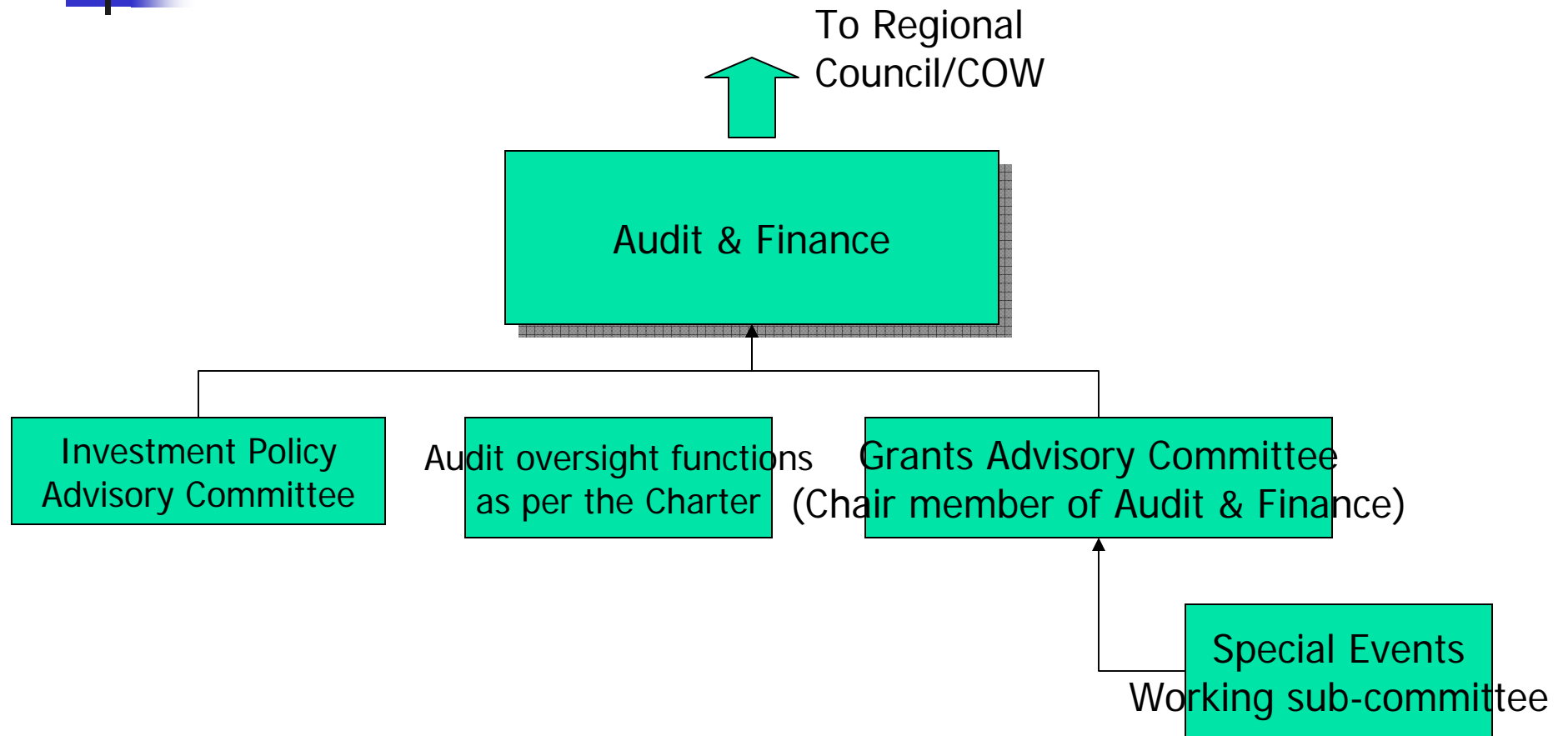
Consolidates

- Audit Committee (MGA/charter requirements)
- Grants Committee
- Special Events Advisory Committee
- Investment Policy Advisory Committee (Citizen Advisory)

Terms of Reference (TOR)

- Serves as Audit Committee as required by Charter/MGA
- Recommends to Council all grants & contributions under the authority of Council
 - Grants subcommittees includes citizens and stakeholder as applicable
- Membership: six (6) Councillors appointed by Executive Committee
- Chair elected from members
- Two (2) year overlapping terms

Audit & Finance





Environment & Sustainability

Consolidates

- Solid Waste Advisory
- Western Common Wilderness Advisory
- Energy & Underground Committee

New mandate

- Focus on issues relevant to HRM's commitment to the environment & sustainability – including energy sustainability

Move to Advisory to Community Council

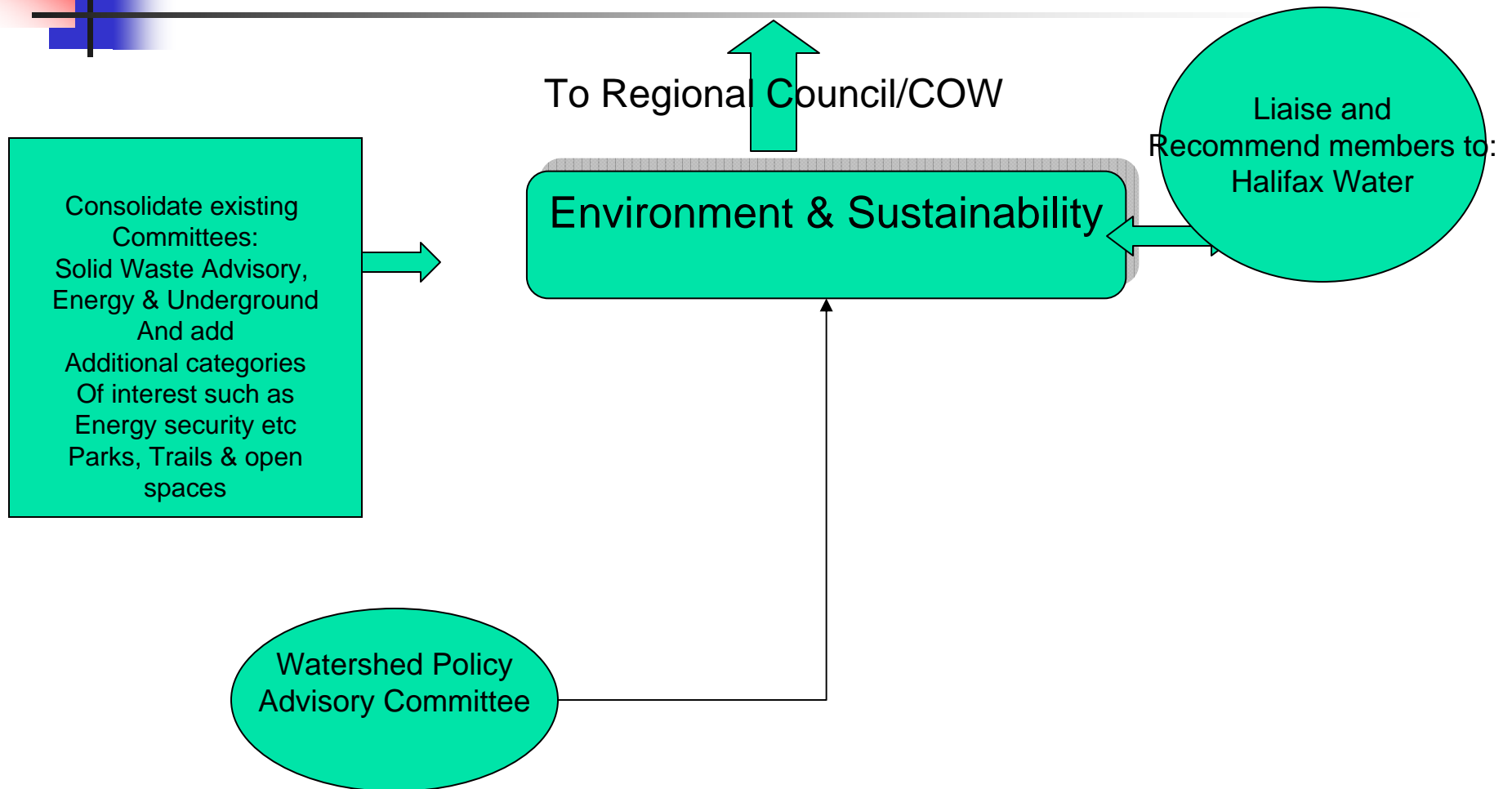
- Community Monitoring Committee
- Point Pleasant Park Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference (TOR)

To recommend to Council directions to support HRM's commitment to the environment & sustainability

- Membership: six (6) Councillors appointed by Executive Committee
- Chair –elected annually
- Advisory Subcommittees include citizens and stakeholder groups as applicable to an issue or initiative

Environment & Sustainability





Planning & Transportation

Consolidates:

All current committees related to
Transportation & Planning in HRM while
adhering to the legislative requirements

Streamlines & Consolidates:

Policy & development issues related to
Regional Planning & Transportation

Keeps decision making re: specific
developments at the appropriate level –
Regional Council & Community Councils.

Provides opportunity for broadening public
and stakeholders input .

Incorporates direction of Council re:
streamlining of Planning processes

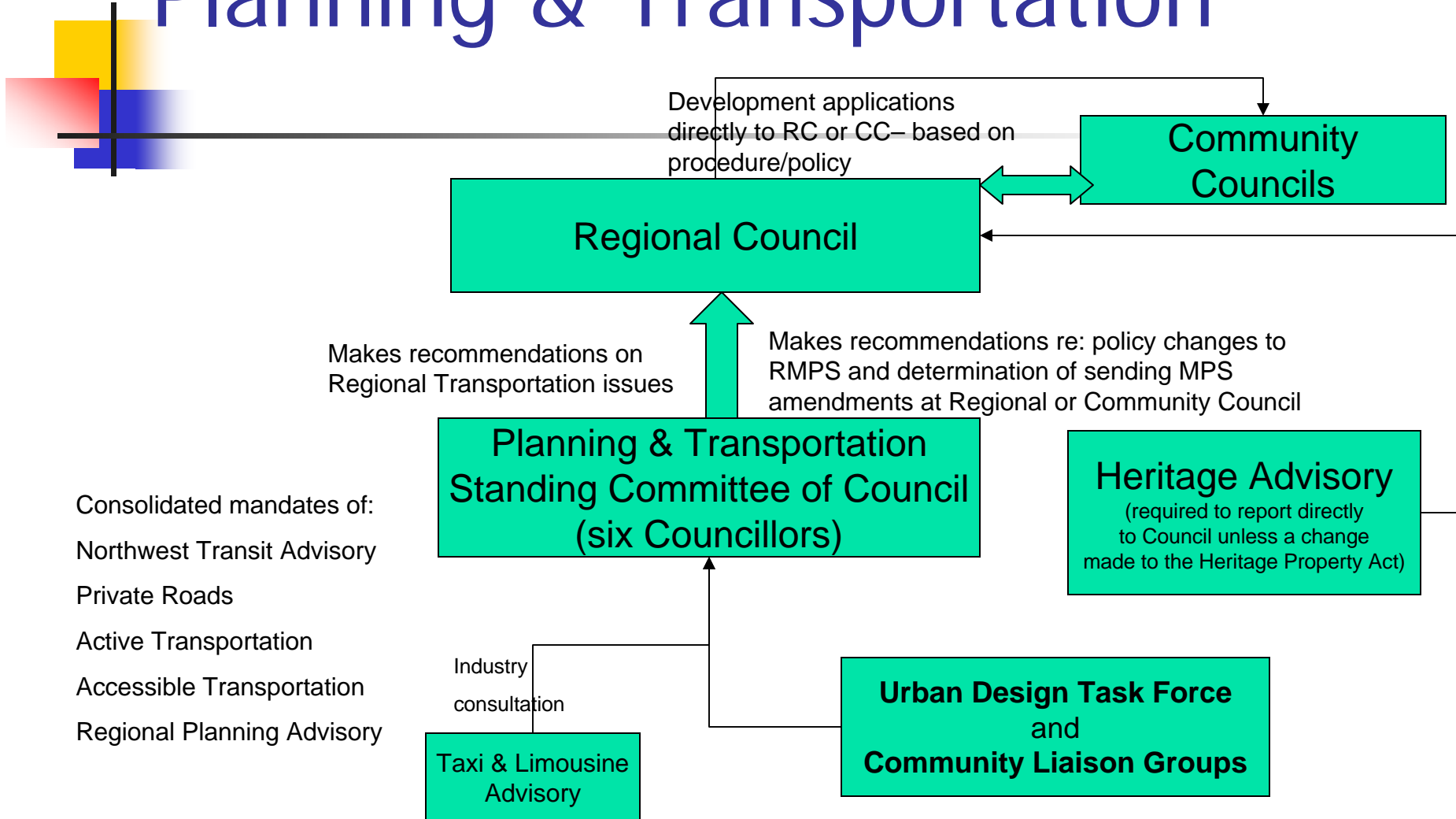
Terms of Reference (TOR)

- 1 Councillor from each Community Council
- Chair – elected from members
- 2 years (overlapping) terms
- Recommend to Council policy changes to the Regional Plan (RMPS) (including use of public consultation by staff in the process)
- Initiate the reviews to the Regional Plan (RMPS) -as required
- Recommend to Council changes/direction in regard to Regional Transportation Issues
- Act as liaison with community, government and industry interests in Regional Transportation issues ie. Bridge Commission, HIAA, Port Authority, Taxi & Limousine industry, Urban Transportation Association

NOTE: Watershed Advisory group moved to Environment & Sustainability.

Community Council given decision to institute or not a Planning Advisory Committees at *the Community Council level* (no District PACs)

Planning & Transportation





Community & Economic Development

Not a large number of Committees currently in this area

Consolidates:

Cultural Advisory

Specific events

Liaison/appointments to substantial number of related Boards & Committees

New Mandate:

Economic Development

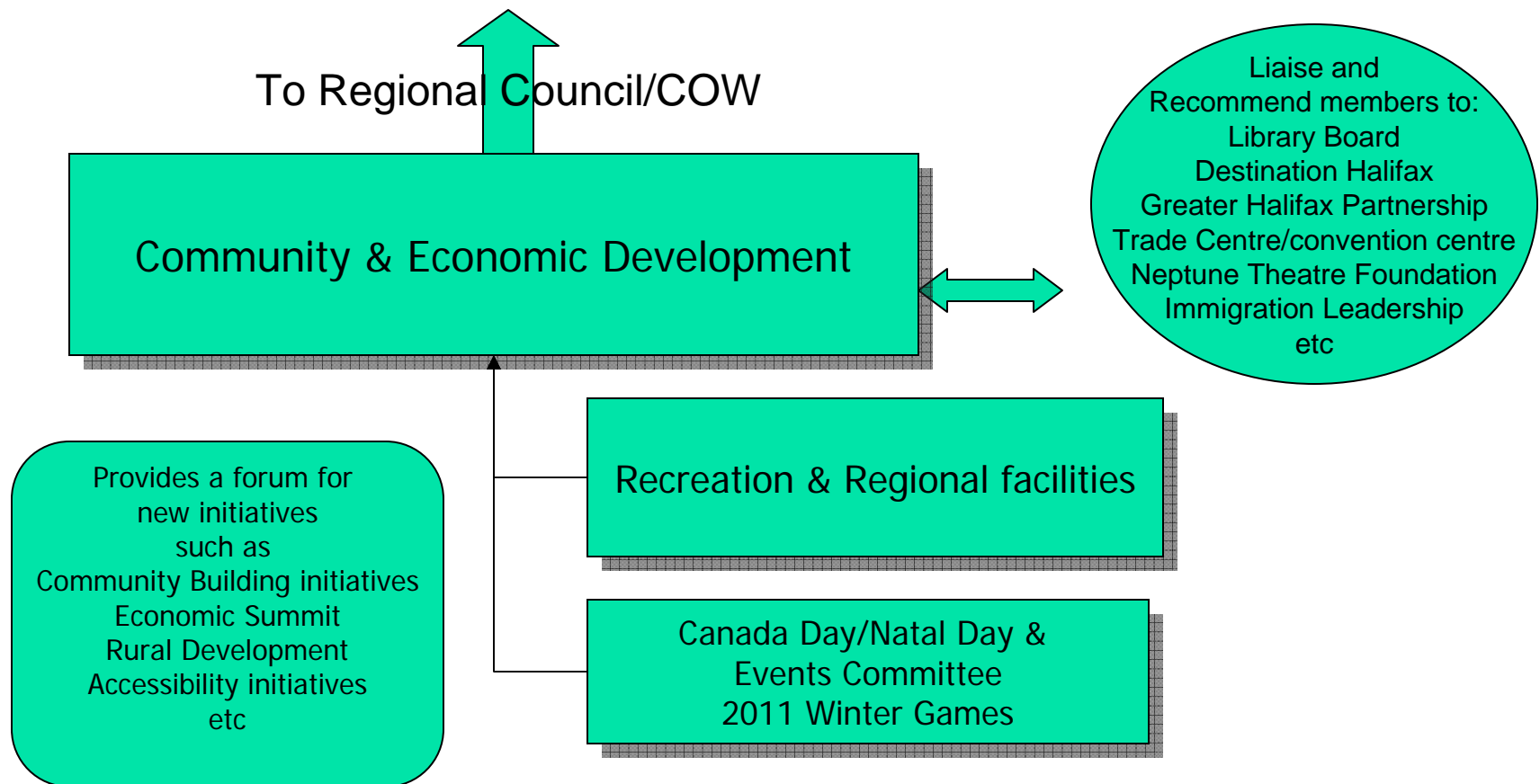
Recreation & Major Facilities

Move liaison with Business Districts to Community Councils – taxation issues to remain with Regional Council

Terms of Reference (TOR)

- To recommend to Council directions to support Community & Economic life in HRM “making HRM the most livable community in which to live, work and play”
- Oversight of HRM’s Economic Strategy
- Membership: six (6) Councillors appointed by Executive Committee
- Chair –elected from members
- Subcommittees should include citizens and stakeholder groups as applicable

Community & Economic Development





Associated Benefits & Costs

- Focus Council, staff & citizen's efforts
- Create synergies of effort – with related external agencies and within HRM
- Builds expertise in particular areas of interest
- Able to address Council's focus areas
- Intended to enhance the ways in which Council & Standing Committees obtain community and stakeholder input
 - Advisory/sub committees as required
 - Direct public/stakeholder consultation to Standing Committees
- Greater staff support will be required (from all business units) to support Standing Committee of Council
- Additional staff resources – not anticipated unless a substantial number of new sub committees are established at the direction of Council or Community Councils
 - Pilot project in Clerk's office to enable greater flexibility
- Reevaluate in future fiscal years as part of the business planning cycle
- Compensation for volunteers– not recommended based on principle of volunteerism & unbudgeted costs



Recommendations of the Membership Selection Committee

- To adopt the six (6) Standing Committees of Council as outlined in the staff presentation
- To adopt in principle the consolidation of the mandates and terms of reference of current Committees of Council under the six (6) Standing Committees of Council as outlined
- To hold an information session with Council as soon as possible in preparation for a formal report to Council
- To direct staff to prepare the detailed Terms of Reference for the six (6) standing committees, ensuring compliance with the MGA, Charter, and any applicable legislation



Additional Housekeeping Recommendations

- To recommend adoption of a standard terminology (standing committees, advisory committees, Ad hoc/Task force of Council and direct staff to develop and implement a standardized Terms of Reference template for each type of committee to ensure consistency of administration
- To direct staff to bring forward changes to Administrative Order #1 to define Quorum for any Committee of Council, Community Council or Standing Committees of Council to be comprised of the majority of the “active/sitting/appointed” members of the committee – and not of the designated number of *possible* committee members.
- At this time, not to recommend compensation for citizens sitting on advisory committees to Council or Community Councils



For Regional Council's Consideration..

- To adopt in principle the six (6) Standing Committees of Council as outlined in the staff presentation
- To direct staff to prepare the detailed Terms of Reference for the six (6) standing committees, ensuring compliance with the MGA, Charter, and any applicable legislation

Discussion & Questions

