

Item No. 10.3.1
Halifax Regional Council
May 14, 2013

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed
Councillor Dalrymple, Chair, Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee

DATE: May 6, 2013

SUBJECT: Terms of Reference Amendments – Regional Watershed Advisory Board

ORIGIN

Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee, May 2, 2013 – Item 12.1.1

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Terms of Reference, Regional Watersheds Advisory Board

- Governance Section: “On behalf of Regional Council, the Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee shall provide oversight to the Advisory Board Work Plan, Terms of Reference, Appointments and other Governance matters.”
- Appointments Section: “The Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee is designed to be both the nominating and appointment body for all members of the Board, except for the members appointed by each of the Community Councils.”

RECOMMENDATION

The Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee recommends that Halifax Regional Council make the following amendments the Terms of Reference of the Regional Watersheds Advisory Board:

1. Allow the Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee to appoint up to nine (9) members rather than eight (8);

Recommendations continued on page 2.....

2. Stagger appointments in order to build and maintain technical and procedural expertise; and
3. Clearly define which candidates qualify for the academic seats in order to facilitate the appointments process

BACKGROUND

- On November 27, 2013, Regional Council voted to consolidate all three Watershed Advisory Boards into one Regional Watersheds Advisory Board, and to initiate the processes necessary to amend all applicable planning documents
- On February 19, 2013, Regional Council approved Terms of Reference of the new Regional Watersheds Advisory Board
- On March 2, 2013, HRM launched the applications process for the Advisory Board, the deadline being March 11, 2013
- On May 2, 2013, the Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee (ESSC) met in camera to review the applications, with the intention of appointing eight (8) members

DISCUSSION

The Standing Committee requested three amendments to the Terms of Reference before proceeding to fill vacancies on the Regional Watersheds Advisory Board.

Membership

- The Standing Committee was pleased with the high caliber of applicants, noting that it can be difficult recruiting water management professionals. Given this, they requested that the number of appointments be increased from eight (8) to nine (9).

Term Length

- The Standing Committee stressed the importance of building and maintaining the expertise of Advisory Board members. They suggested staggering terms so that the newest members can benefit from the support of experienced members
- Appointing six members for two-year terms and the remaining six for three-year terms would achieve this outcome.

Composition

- The Standing Committee requested that the term “Academia” be clearly defined in the Composition Section of the Terms of Reference.
- It was agreed that targeted advertising may be required to attract candidates from this group. This can be done through the Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) that HRM has signed with local academic institutions.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Currently, the Clerk's Office puts out a general call for applications. Targeted recruitment will require additional staff time but will not require additional funding. The minimal expenses anticipated can be drawn from the existing advertising/promotions budget.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Through the Regional Watersheds Advisory Board, residents of HRM will provide advice to the Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee on the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy and Secondary Planning Strategies.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The Regional Watersheds Advisory Board will play an important role in identifying and remediating development impacts on HRM's watershed.

ALTERNATIVES

Regional Council may choose not to amend the Terms of Reference.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Regional Watersheds Advisory Board Terms of Reference – Proposed Amendments

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

Report Prepared by: Ted Aubut, Legislative Assistant, 490-6519

Financial Approval by: Original Signed
Greg Keefe, Director of Finance & ICT/CFO, 490-6308

Regional Watersheds Advisory Board Terms of Reference

Purpose: As subject matter experts, with respect to watershed management, the Watersheds Advisory Board:

1. Advises the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee on municipal policy projects as required under the HRM Charter, the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy, and Secondary Planning Strategies, and as may be specifically assigned by the Environment & Sustainability Committee;
2. As required by the HRM Charter, the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy, and Secondary Planning Strategies, to fulfil the legislated requirements with respect to municipal development activities;
3. Performs duties as directed by Regional Council on matters described in the Municipal Planning Strategies.

Composition:

- Up to four (5) water related professionals at large
- Up to two (2) seats for current faculty members at post-secondary institutions or for research scientists, with doctoral training, working in watershed management
- Up to two (2) representatives of Environmental NGO's or Recreational Organizations
- One (1) Citizen at large may be appointed by each Community Council

Terms:

To build and maintain technical and procedural expertise, six (6) of the twelve (12) members shall be appointed for a two-year term and the remaining six (6), for a three-year term.

Governance:

On behalf of Regional Council, The Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee shall provide oversight to the Advisory Board Workplan, Terms of Reference, Appointments, and other Governance matters.

Policy Development and Review Projects:

The Halifax Regional Municipality is enabled through the HRM Charter, as an act of Provincial legislation, to be the primary authority for planning within its jurisdiction. The Municipal Planning Strategies enacted by Regional Council are the overarching municipal policy set. The HRM Charter defines the mandate and authority of the municipality in planning matters and municipal planning provides statements of policy to guide the development and management of the municipality including establishing policies to provide a framework for the environmental, social and economic development within the Municipality. All assigned policy projects must comply with these policies and legislative directions.

Officers:

The Board shall have a Chair and Vice Chair to be elected from among its members at the first meeting following composition and at the first meeting of the calendar year. The Vice Chair shall act a Chair in the absence of the Chair. The Chair and Vice Chair may be reappointed for subsequent terms providing they are still members of the Board.

Staff Complement:

The municipality shall supply Board support from the Clerk's Office. The Manager of Energy and Environment shall be the primary staff liaison.

Meetings:

The Board shall meet monthly or as required to conduct the business of the Board. Additional meetings may be scheduled at the discretion of the Chair in consultation with the Clerk's Office.

Quorum:

The quorum for regular meetings shall be in accordance with Section 74 of Administrative Order 1 – Quorum of Committees.

Appointments:

The Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee is designed to be both the nominating and appointing body for members of the Board, except for the members appointed by each of the Community Councils, for which the Community Council will serve as both the nominating and appointing body. Appointments shall be made in accordance with the Public Appointment Policy adopted by Regional Council.

Vacating a Position:

During the term of Office a member may vacate their position on the Board in accordance to the procedures set out in Section 68 of Administrative Order 1 – Vacating a Position on Committee.

Procedure:

Meeting procedures shall be governed by the HRM Administrative Order 1 – Respecting Procedures of Council as it related to Committee Procedures.

Approved February 19, 2013
Amended: X, 2013