

Item No. 11.3.1
Halifax Regional Council
August 6, 2013

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY:

Councillor Darren Fisher
Chair, Harbour East-Marine Drive Community Council

DATE: July 9, 2013

SUBJECT: Reinstatement of Lakes Water Quality Sampling Program

ORIGIN

Motion approved at the April 18, 2013 meeting of Harbour East-Marine Drive Community Council.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Sections 24 to 31 of the *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter* refer to the establishment, powers and duties of Community Councils. *Administrative Order 48* relates to HRM Community Councils.

RECOMMENDATION

Harbour East-Marine Drive Community Council recommend that Regional Council request that the CAO direct staff to explore the reinstatement of the Lakes Water Quality Sampling Program beginning in the 2014/15 fiscal year in order to facilitate efforts to protect the water resources of the municipality.

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

At the April 18, 2013 Harbour East-Marine Drive Community Council (HEMDCC) meeting, the Lake Echo Watershed Servicing Study Final Report was presented. The study was accepted by Community Council. Community Council also approved an amended recommendation from the Halifax Watershed Advisory Board (HWAB), “that HEMDCC recommend that Regional Council explore the reinstatement of the Lakes Water Quality Sampling Program in order to facilitate efforts to protect the water resources of the municipality.”

In 2012, HRM concluded a five-year baseline data collection of water quality data of lakes in HRM. Upon conclusion of the program, approximately 71 lakes were being tested. The number may vary slightly depending on whether the total includes reporting the number of stations, the number of lakes, and whether or not river stations and any stations currently monitored through Development Agreements are counted. The program provided baseline data for land use planning and data to monitor Halifax Water infrastructure impacts in lakes.

Staff clarified at the April 18th HEMDCC meeting that the HWAB recommendation regarding the Lakes Water Quality Sampling Program relates to testing for the long-term health of lakes, and is separate from the water quality testing that takes place at HRM supervised beaches. From 2006 – 2011 the Lakes Water Quality Sampling Program cost \$100,000 annually.

Staff further clarified that when it comes to considering development agreements, HRM does not have the policy criteria in place to require water quality testing.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications for the 13/14 fiscal year. Should Council approve the re-instatement for the 2014/15 fiscal year it can be conservatively estimated to cost \$100,000 annually. This would be considered as part of the operating budget process for 2014/15.

The funding source for the program, if re-instated, will be identified at a later time.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Harbour East-Marine Drive Community Council is comprised of five duly elected members of Regional Council. HEMDCC meets monthly, and meetings are open to the public, unless stated. Meeting agendas, minutes and reports are posted to the HEMDCC website. Each meeting includes a public participation portion of the meeting for members of the public to speak about matters of concern to Community Council.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of the Lakes Water Quality Sampling Program was to provide baseline data for land use planning and data to monitor Halifax Water infrastructure impacts in lake.

ALTERNATIVES

Regional Council may not choose to explore the reinstatement of the Lakes Water Quality Sampling Program, or may bring forward any further alternatives as deemed appropriate.

ATTACHMENTS

None

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

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