


HALIFAX

P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 14.1.9
Halifax Regional Council
May 10, 2016

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council
Original Signed by 

SUBMITTED BY: _____
John Traves, Q.C. Acting Chief Administrative Officer
Original Signed _____
Brad Anguish, Acting Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: April 15, 2016

SUBJECT: Council Resolution for *Diverse Voices for Change* Project

ORIGIN

Request from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) for a Council resolution in support of the *Diverse Voices for Change* project.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter ("HRM Charter"), subsections 58(1) (2) (3)(4): 58 (1) The Council shall make decisions in the exercise of its powers and duties by resolution, by policy or by by-law.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council pass the resolution in Attachment 2 to endorse HRM's participation and invite Council's participation in FCM's *Diverse Voices for Change* from March 8, 2016 to August 2018.

BACKGROUND

Diverse Voices for Change is a new initiative of FCM's Women in Local Government which is funded by Status of Women Canada and developed by FCM to strengthen the role of women in local government. Through this project, FCM aims to increase the number of women from diverse communities who are actively informed by and engaged in local government decision-making. FCM intends that this project will contribute to its mandate of attaining 30 per cent participation of women in local government by 2026 by increasing the diversity of women in leadership roles at the municipal level.

Through ***Diverse Voices for Change***, FCM has committed to working with (5) five municipalities, and will support municipal staff and elected officials to engage with urban Indigenous, racialized, and underrepresented immigrant women in creating a more inclusive municipal decision-making system. Other participating municipalities include Sioux Lookout, Montréal, Edmonton, and London.

All five municipalities will have access to FCM's program officer for support throughout the initiative. Participating municipalities and community organizations will also have access to a \$12,000 enabling fund that will facilitate the initiative's activities.

FCM asks that municipalities:

- Participate in ***Diverse Voices for Change*** from March 2016 to August 2018;
- Ask council to adopt ***Diverse Voices for Change*** as a resolution;
- Contribute 1.5 days per month to a local working group consisting of elected officials, municipal staff members and/or community organizations/advisory groups;
- Take part in a scan on municipal decision-making processes in March 2016;
- Facilitate focus groups from April to November 2016;
- Take part in civic engagement workshops in March 2017;
- Take part in strategies and recommendations workshops from April to November 2017;
- Work collaboratively with 1 or more community partners (e.g., women's organizations, community organizations, and/or advisory groups).

As ***Diverse Voices for Change*** aligns with the mandate of the African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration Office (ANSAIO), the office submitted an application to FCM to indicate HRM's interest in the program. On March 8, 2016, International Women's Day, FCM announced that Halifax was one of five successful municipalities selected to participate in ***Diverse Voices for Change***.

DISCUSSION

Diverse Voices for Change aligns with Regional Council's Governance & Communications, Healthy Communities, and Economic Development priorities. Facilitating the Public Engagement outcome of the Governance & Communications priority, the project will provide an opportunity for Halifax to effectively engage with diverse women and communities of interest towards the development of fair and responsive municipal policies. ***Diverse Voices for Change*** also supports the Healthy Communities priority by enhancing Halifax's leadership in building inclusive and accessible communities where diverse women can enjoy full participation. Additionally, under the Economic Development priority ***Diverse Voices for Change*** will aid in making Halifax a welcoming community where talented urban Aboriginal, African Nova Scotian, under-represented immigrants and other racialized women can find great opportunities.

ANSAIO's mandate and its positioning under the Office of Diversity and Inclusion align with the objectives of ***Diverse Voices for Change***. Therefore, ANSAIO is equipped to lead HRM's participation in this project. Specifically, ANSAIO will leverage the work of ***Diverse Voices for Change*** through the African Nova Scotian & Visible Minority Women's Network it currently organizes with women employed within the municipality.

Through its focus on diverse women, the objectives of ***Diverse Voices for Change*** support ANSAIO's mandate to provide leadership, strategic direction, policy advice and expertise to all parts of Halifax Regional Municipality (Corporate and Council) to strengthen the delivery of municipal services to residents of African descent and African Nova Scotian communities within HRM. In June 2014, ANSAIO initiated the African Nova Scotian and Visible Minority Women's Network to support HRM employees who self-identify as African Nova Scotian and/or Visible Minority women. This Network meets four times per year to fulfill the following objectives:

- Provide African Nova Scotian and Visible Minority women, across all employment levels, the opportunity to enhance our leadership skills
- Contribute to the commitment of HRM to develop the talents of its employees
- Host a forum for women to network in a shared learning environment
- Celebrate the strengths inherent in women who identify as African Nova Scotian and Visible Minority

ANSAIO will meet the 1.5 day per month commitment required to manage a local working group. ANSAIO is also seeking the research support of a Dalhousie University Gender and Women's Studies student.

A local working group partnership between the municipality and community organizations will be formed in May 2016 to facilitate the collection and analysis of baseline data, identify barriers, and to develop and implement key strategies to overcome those barriers. The ANSAIO has reached out to the Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre, Native Council of Nova Scotia, Black & Immigrant Women's Network, Nova Scotia Association of Black Social Workers, Women's Employment Outreach and Dalhousie University to initiate collaboration on the project.

During the first year of ***Diverse Voices for Change***, the HRM local working group will work towards the collection and analysis of baseline data. Following this process within the first and second years of the project, the local working group will identify barriers and plan key strategies to address these barriers through various municipal-community partnership led strategies and focus groups decided upon by the group. The local group will implement identified strategies to address barriers using the Status of Women Canada enabling fund. The group will report on and evaluate the baseline data, key barriers, promising practices and policies and share findings with the FCM network and wider communities through Webinars and conferences. Finally a publication/video will be produced by the local group to share findings with the wider community. Throughout the 2.5 year period of this project, FCM will provide guidance and advice through the ***Diverse Voices for Change*** Advisory Group established which is comprised of women with lived, academic and professional experience advancing gender equality with an intersectional approach in municipalities across Canada.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Status of Women Canada is providing an enabling fund of \$12,000 and an additional \$3400 to assist with costs related to implementation. No additional budgetary considerations are required as ANSAIO's contributions to the project are covered under the Government Relations and External Affairs budget.

RISK CONSIDERATION

There are no significant risks associated with the recommendation in this Report. The risks considered are low.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

ANSAIO has sought to engage the participation of diverse women from the urban Aboriginal, African Nova Scotian, under-represented immigrant, and other racialized groups to participate on the local

working group by reaching out to internal and external groups and organizations serving these women.

Internally, ANSAIO has engaged the expertise of members of the African Nova Scotian and Visible Minority Women's Network for input and participation. ANSAIO has also contacted and began collaboration with the Black and Immigrant Women's Network, Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre, Native Council of Nova Scotia, Women's Employment Outreach, and Nova Scotia Association of Black Social Workers. These organizations are invited to participate in the Call for Community Organizations.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications for this project.

ALTERNATIVES

Council may choose not to endorse the statement of support. This is not recommended.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - SWC ***Diverse Voices for Change*** Budget/ Workplan/Timelines

Attachment 2 - ***Diverse Voices for Change*** Resolution

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.php> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Kesa Munroe-Anderson, African Nova Scotian Affairs Advisor,
902-490-3326

Report Approved by: _____
Maggie MacDonald, Managing Director, Government Relations & External Affairs
902.490.1742

Financial Approval by: _____
Amanda Whitewood, Director of Finance and Information Technology/CFO, 902.490.6308

Attachment 1

DIVERSE VOICES FOR CHANGE WORKPLAN/TIMELINES
Organization: Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)

Major Activities	2016-17				2017-18				2018	
	Mar-Jun 2016	Jul-Sept 2016	Oct-Dec 2016	Jan-Mar 2017	Apr-Jun 2017	Jul-Sept 2017	Oct-Dec 2017	Jan-Mar 2018	Apr-Jun 2018	Jul-Aug 2018
FCM Diverse Voices for Change advisory group established	X									
Municipalities selected and confirmed	X									
Orientation held for municipalities	X									
Call out for municipal-community partnerships and selection of community partner(s)	X									
Municipal-community Terms of Reference established, budgets projected	X									
Municipal local working group identified and confirmed	X	X								
Collection of baseline data		X								
Analysis of baseline data		X								
Identification of barriers and planning of key strategies to address barriers (e.g., focus groups, municipal-community partnership led strategies)		X	X	X						
Implement identified strategies to address barriers (i.e., enabling fund)				X	X	X	X	X	X	
Reporting and evaluation of baseline data, key barriers, promising practices and policies			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Webinars and conferences to share findings with FCM network and wider communities			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Produce publication/video to share findings with wider community								X	X	X

Attachment 1

431-1 SWC Diverse Voices for Change Initiative		BUDGET 2016-17		BUDGET 2017-18	
5106	Translation		200		200
	<i>Professional Services</i>		200	<i>Professional Services</i>	200
5203	Facility Rental		300		300
5204	Food and refreshments		300		300
5206	Honorarium/Speaker Fees	Allocated for max 3 advisory members (including \$30 honorarium, childcare and parking) - 10 meetings	500	Allocated for max 3 advisory members (including \$30 honorarium, childcare and parking) - 10 meetings	500
	<i>Travel, Meetings & Functions</i>		1,100	<i>Travel, Meetings & Functions</i>	1,100
5301	Marketing/Promotion		250		250
	<i>Marketing, Adv & Com</i>		250	<i>Marketing, Adv & Com</i>	250
5404	Stationary & Supplies		150		150
	<i>Office Supplies</i>		150	<i>Office Supplies</i>	150
5701	Grants	Joint enabling fund for municipalities and community organizations - first installment disbursed by March 31, 2017. More details to come.	6,000	Joint enabling fund for municipalities and community organizations - first installment disbursed by March 31, 2018. More details to come.	6,000
	<i>Grants</i>		6,000	<i>Grants</i>	6,000
	<i>Total Expenses</i>		7,700	<i>Total Expenses</i>	7,700

Attachment 2

Diverse Voices for Change

WHEREAS the Halifax Regional Municipality applied to FCM's new Women in Local Government initiative ***Diverse Voices for Change*** to increase the participation of women across diverse communities in municipal decision making processes, and

WHEREAS the Halifax Regional Municipality agrees to the participation of our community in ***Diverse Voices for Change*** initiative from March 8, 2016 to August 31, 2018, and

WHEREAS Council agrees to supporting community partnerships with one or more community organization(s) to further strengthen the commitment to increase women's participation in municipal decision making processes with urban Aboriginal, African Nova Scotian, racialized/visible minority and immigrant communities, and

WHEREAS the Halifax Regional Municipality designates the African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration Office as the municipal champions of the initiative to participate in regular communication with FCM, assist with baseline data collection, focus groups, workshops, and provide continuous information to the public as the project develops, and

WHEREAS Council is invited to designate members to participate on the ***Diverse Voices for Change*** local working group.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Halifax Regional Municipality supports ***Diverse Voices for Change***.