

## **HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY**

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### HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES

December 11, 2007

**PRESENT:** Mayor Peter Kelly  
Deputy Mayor Stephen D. Adams  
Councillors: Steve Streach  
David Hendsbee  
Harry McInroy  
Gloria McCluskey  
Andrew Younger  
Bill Karsten  
Jim Smith  
Mary Wile  
Patrick Murphy  
Dawn Sloane  
Sue Uteck  
Sheila Fougere  
Russell Walker  
Debbie Hum  
Linda Mosher  
Brad Johns  
Robert P. Harvey  
Gary Martin  
Reg Rankin  
Gary G. Meade

**REGRETS:** Councillors: Krista Snow

**STAFF:** Mr. Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer  
Ms. Mary Ellen Donovan, Municipal Solicitor  
Ms. Julia Horncastle, Acting Municipal Clerk  
Ms. Barbara Coleman, Legislative Assistant

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Deputy Mayor called the meeting to order at 1:08 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - November 27, 2007**

**MOVED by Councillor Rankin, seconded by Councillor Meade, that the minutes from October 16, 2007 be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**3. STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION PLANNING UPDATE (Staff Presentation)**

David McCusker, Manager, Strategic Transportation Planning, provided the presentation on Strategic Transportation Planning.

Highlights of the presentation were the following:

- The focus of this group is the movement of people and goods efficiently and effectively throughout our transportation network and to implement the transportation components of the Regional Plan.
- The four broad categories involved are Transportation Demand Management (TDM), Active Transportation, Roadway Network, and Transit Network.
- The group provides strategic direction on transportation elements as they come up and are working on monitoring the performance of the network.
- A brief overview of Transportation Demand Management (TDM)
- A brief overview of Active Transportation Plan (AT) and the AT Projects that are underway.

At 1:15 p.m. Councillor Smith entered the meeting.

- An overview of the different Transit Services explaining that there are many new initiatives but that the existing core system needs to be strengthened before these can be started.

At 1:20 p.m. Councillor Wile entered the meeting.

- An update on the Transit Projects underway and the Projects that were upcoming and the challenges that his team are facing for each of these projects
- With all the faster services ending at the ferry terminal or Scotia Square there will be a need to get passengers to their destinations using a Downtown Shuttle Service.
- An update on the Harbour Link, where it is and where it is going.
- An overview on the Road Network, what projects are underway and what projects are

upcoming.

- The group provides strategic direction for more of the nontraditional roles of regional transportation network such as an Inland Terminal study, and the Chester/Lakeside rail spur abandonment and other freight issues.
- Trip counts are being monitored at 13 different sites twice a year - This will tell how the people are choosing to make these trips.

A discussion ensued with Mr. McCusker and his staff responding to questions. The following concerns and comments were noted:

- Buying existing ferries for the Harbour Link as opposed to building ferries is an option that can be looked at.

At 1:40 p.m. Councillor Fougere entered the meeting.

- Acquiring property now for the different transit initiatives is something that staff could look at. It would not require additional buses to be added to the fleet.
- Staff are trying to build a working relationship with the Province in regards to ATV Trails.
- Once the Parking Strategy is completed for the Peninsula, then they will be able to continue with the bike lanes in different areas.

At 2:00 p.m. Mayor Kelly entered the meeting and assumed the Chair.

- Staff will show what the tradeoffs will be in reallocating priorities and what the implications would be in budget talks.

At 2:05 p.m. Councillors McInroy and Mosher entered the meeting.

- Some areas of concern are the Burnside Intersection which is not complete, Downtown Shuttle leaving out such areas as the NSCAD Centre, and Pier 21, etc., and the overpass across HWY 111.

**MOVED BY Councillor Younger and seconded by Councillor Hum that staff be directed to move up or to place a high priority on the Clayton Park, Spryfield, and Main Street Corridors for Metro Link Services.**

Discussion ensued on the motion.

Mr. English, CEO informed Council that the motion on the floor conflicts with the motion passed a couple of months ago. He requested the motion be deferred until Council has started budget talks noting the money for Harbour Link does not compete with current Transit

initiatives.

**MOVED BY Councillor Streach and seconded by Councillor Sloane that the motion be deferred pending discussions during the budget.**

Discussions ensued on the Motion of Deferral.

- C Two thirds of the funds for the Harbour Link would come from upper levels of government.
- C HRM's funding comes from a Strategic Growth Reserve.
- C The Business Case of today only allows HRM to use this for leverage purposes or cost-sharing purposes.
- C It will take about three years to deal with the shortage of buses. Metro Link would then become the number one priority.
- C Monies for the Transit could come from other pockets of money; however, it would be beneficial for Council to understand what fundings are available for this type of transit service before they consider changing priorities.
- C The Cultivation Study has shown that the Harbour Link ferry could pay for itself. It would not have the operating impact that additional buses would have. A report could be issued on this before the budget is tabled.

### **MOTION OF DEFERRAL WAS PUT AND PASSED**

- There is some capacity now to fix the deficiencies in the core services such as adding new *Park and Rides*.
- A conscious decision will need to be made at some point as to what type of ferry HRM wants - capable of open sea areas or the calmer waters of the Bedford Basin, or both.
- One more batch of the smaller buses will be purchased by HRM then HRM will go to the two sectioned buses.
- Land in question for the Lacewood terminal won't be available until 2010, although staff continue to look at other sites.
- Staff is looking at 24 to 30 months before the Halifax garage is up and running.
- Fairview, Lace Wood connection is coming in 2011.
- A location study was done on the expansion of the new Bridge Terminal. Discussions are still going on with hopes that they will be able to move forward in the new year.
- Tunnelling from Dartmouth is far too expensive to contemplate. It is approximately \$100,000 per foot of tunnel and that does not include the roadways.
- Staff will present a report to Harbour East Community Council in the new year to discuss the problem of the overpass over the Hwy 111 from Highfield Park to Burnside Park.
- The land use study is definitely on line with the Active Transportation.
- There are many initiatives going on to make our communities more walkable.

- The high speed ferry cultivation study showed increased ridership from the initial studies increasing the size and frequency of the ferry service which in turn brought the budget up.

Staff advised they would provide Councillor Murphy with the initial budget for the high speed ferry.

- The Ridematching Program is an online program to match the data of where you live and where you need to go with another person of similar needs for carpooling.
- Piggybacking bike lanes onto other projects is the most cost- effective way of getting bike lanes in place.
- It will take 4 to 5 years before all the buses will be low ride buses and wheel chair accessible.

#### **4. TAXI OWNER LICENCE ISSUES**

Due to time constraints, this item was deferred to a future Committee of the Whole.

#### **5. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:34 p.m.

Julia Horncastle,  
Acting Municipal Clerk