



**HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES
February 18, 2015**

PRESENT: Mayor Mike Savage
Deputy Mayor Lorelei Nicoll
Councillors: Barry Dalrymple
David Hendsbee
Bill Karsten, Chair
Gloria McCluskey
Darren Fisher
Waye Mason
Jennifer Watts
Linda Mosher
Russell Walker
Stephen Adams
Reg Rankin
Matt Whitman
Steve Craig

REGRETS: Councillor Brad Johns
Councillor Tim Outhit

STAFF: Mr. Greg Keefe, Acting Chief Administrative Officer
Mr. John Traves, Municipal Solicitor
Ms. Cathy Mellett, Municipal Clerk
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

A video recording of this meeting is available: http://archive.isiglobal.ca/vod/halifax/archive_2015-02-18_live.mp4.html

The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to Council are available online: <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/150218cow-agenda.php>

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 a.m. and adjourned at 12:18 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Councillor Bill Karsten called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – NONE

3. Transportation and Public Works

The following was before Council:

- A staff recommendation report dated February 18, 2015

Mr. Mike Labrecque, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer and Acting Director of Transportation and Public Works presented the draft budget and business plan for the Transportation and Public Works Business Unit.

The Chair invited any members of the public who wished to address Council with respect to the budget, to come forward. No speakers came forward at this time.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Nicoll, seconded by Councillor Whitman that the Committee of the Whole direct staff to proceed to prepare the 2015/2016 Transportation and Public Works (TPW) Budget and Business Plan as proposed in the accompanying presentation, incorporating additional direction provided by motion of Committee of the Whole for inclusion in the proposed HRM 15/16 Budget and Business Plan documents.

Mr. Labrecque and Mr. Taso Koutroulakis, Manager, Traffic Management responded to questions.

In response to a question by Councillor McCluskey, Mr. Labrecque explained that winter maintenance on trails depends on the categorization of the particular trail, noting that the municipality routinely maintains Active Transportation trails. He advised that he would provide a list of the trails to the Councillor.

Councillor Mosher referred to page 10 of the staff presentation concerning Staff Counts and noted that Road Operations Staff Counts it is down 5 FTE's this year over last. She questioned why the business unit would be reducing staff, particularly in light of the difficult winter conditions the Municipality has been experiencing this year and last, and requested information from staff in regard to how many staff has been reduced this year and for the last five years and the impact this is having on operations, which was agreed to be circulated.

Councillor Fisher questioned the Municipality's service standards regarding street lights, advising that it seems to take an exceptionally long time for a burned out street light to be fixed. Mr. Koutroulakis advised that staff is working with the contractor to ensure repairs happen as soon as possible. He added that they did not anticipate the volume of burned out streetlights, and to mitigate this problem the contractor has increased crews from three to five and is working on Saturdays. He advised that the contractor expects to be caught up by the end of February or the first of March.

Councillor Mason referenced the Tree Pruning Project in the Urban Forest Master Plan, and noted that there has been some dialogue with Nova Scotia Power (NSP) on the possibility of their participation in the project, and he asked for an update on the status of NSP's participation. Mr. Labrecque advised that he didn't have the information at hand but would follow up and get back to the Councillor.

Councillor Mason indicated that he was prepared to put forward an amendment to the motion to request a staff report in regard to ending the Municipality's snow removal service in Districts 7 and 8 starting in fiscal 2015/16. The Chair advised that this was a separate matter and rather than an amendment, it would have to be placed as a separate motion.

The Chair advised Council that it was just brought to his attention that a member of the public would like to address Council with respect to the Transportation and Public Works draft business plan and budget.

A resident spoke in favour of the Active Transportation Priorities Plan and emphasized the importance of achieving the goals of the Priorities Plan and encouraged Council to support the plan as part of the budget.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Watts that staff provide a report on ending the Municipality's snow removal service in Districts 7 and 8 starting in fiscal 2015/16.

Councillor Mason explained that the purpose of this motion was to have staff investigate a way to remove Districts 7 and 8 from the snow clearing service. The Councillor advised that they have received many complaints from residents of the snow clearing standard not being met. He added that if Council decides to keep this service then there needs to be a strategy to get equipment that will clear snow and ice to bare pavement. He added that this would be very expensive and he indicated that he wanted staff to provide the cost of doing this.

Councillor Mosher asked Council not to support the motion, and she cited an Ontario court decision which stated that the Municipality was responsible for sidewalk snow clearing.

Councillor Watts pointed out that the sidewalk snow clearing program has been in place for two years and given the amount of complaints from residents, it would be worthwhile to have staff provide a report.

MOTION PUT AND DEFEATED.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:16 p.m.

Cathy J. Mellett
Municipal Clerk