



**HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES
November 24, 2015**

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

REGRETS: Councillor Tim Outhit

STAFF: Mr. Richard Butts, Chief Administrative Officer
Mr. John Traves, Municipal Solicitor
Ms. Sherryl Murphy, Deputy Municipal Clerk
Ms. Phoebe Rai, 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_2015-11-24_live.mp4.html

The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to Council are available online: <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/151124cow-agenda.php>

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. and adjourned at 10:54 a.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Savage called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

The Mayor introduced Council to the new Manager of Procurement, Ms. Jane Prior.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – October 20, 2015

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Deputy Mayor Whitman

THAT the minutes of October 20, 2015 be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. 16/17 Recommended Priority Outcomes (Continuation from November 10, 2015)

The following documentation was before Committee of the Whole:

- A staff recommendation report dated October 30, 2015
- A staff presentation dated November 10, 2015

Committee of the Whole resumed discussion of 16/17 Recommended Priority Outcomes having received the staff presentation on the matter during the meeting of November 10, 2015.

In response to a question regarding priority outcomes from previous years that have not yet been fully achieved, Mr. Richard Butts, Chief Administrative Officer, advised that the current discussion is at a very high strategic level and does not encompass tactical actions that may be pursued by the business units in support of priority outcomes from previous years. Further detail on these actions will be provided during the budget and business plan discussions.

Responding to a concern relating to the response rate to the 2014 Citizen Survey, Mr. John Traves, Municipal Solicitor indicated that an overlap with an online survey is thought to have impacted the response rate to the official survey. Mr. Butts added that while staff are working to increase the response rate on future surveys, 592 respondents is a statistically significant sample.

Mr. Brad Anguish, Director of Parks and Recreation, responded to questions regarding Healthy Communities priorities. Mr. Anguish commented that the word “leadership” on slide 43 is meant to be understood as both internal and external leadership. He indicated that the proposed wording change represents a heightened focus on resilience from climate change.

Councillor Mosher entered at 10:14 a.m.

Ms. Maggie MacDonald, Managing Director of Government Relations and External Affairs responded to questions of clarification regarding Economic Development outcomes. She advised that the rewording of the Welcoming Community and Youth Retention outcome was intended to align with the current Council-approved economic strategy, but does not reflect a substantive change to activities.

MOVED by Councillor Craig, seconded by Councillor Watts

THAT Halifax Regional Council approve the 2016/2017 Priority Outcomes as described in Attachment A of this report and direct staff to develop the 2016/2017 Budget and Business Plans in support of these priorities.

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Watts

THAT the Pedestrian Safety Priority Outcome under Healthy Communities be amended to insert the phrase “and cycle” after the word “walk” on slide 44 of the staff presentation.

MOTION TO AMEND PUT AND PASSED.

MOVED by Councillor Craig, seconded by Deputy Mayor Whitman

THAT the Pedestrian Safety Priority Outcome under Healthy Communities be amended to insert “engagement” and “evaluation” after the word “engineering” on slide 44 of the staff presentation.

MOTION TO AMEND PUT AND PASSED.

Councillor Hendsbee entered at 10:22 a.m.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Nicoll

THAT the following text be added to the Integrated Mobility Priority Outcome under Transportation on slide 27 of the staff presentation: “and recognizing the importance of sustainable transportation to economic development and youth retention.”

A brief discussion ensued with several members of Council discussing the implications of the word “sustainable” in the proposed amendment. Responding to an inquiry regarding the number and location of transit routes that are sustainable in terms of cost-recovery, Mr. Eddie Robar, Director of Halifax Transit, indicated that approximately 15% of routes are sustainable, of which all are located on the peninsula. Several Councillors raised concerns with the limits to bus services outside the urban core in the regional transit strategy.

Other Councillors spoke in favour of the proposed amendment, noting that improving the transit system is paramount for economic development and youth retention as well as the integration of new immigrants.

Noting that the intention of the word “sustainable” in the amendment was to promote alternatives to vehicular transportation, not to re-examine the regional transit strategy, Councillor Watts expressed her wish to withdraw the amendment.

MOTION TO AMEND WITHDRAWN, with the agreement of Council.

Responding to a question of clarification, Mr. Bruce Zvaniga, Director of Transportation and Public Works, noted that staff have developed a multi-year approach to improving the Surface Distress Index (SDI) cited on slide 24 of the staff presentation. He noted that the SDI figure of 7.45 only considers street conditions; it does not include sidewalks which are rated separately.

Councillor Hendsbee posed a number of clarifying questions to staff. Regarding Governance and Communication, slide 11 of the staff presentation, he inquired whether it was possible to receive information on the respondents to the 2014 citizen survey organized by postal code. From Transportation, slide 22, he asked for information on the three active transportation regional trails projects that were yet to be tendered as of October 2015. With respect to Healthy Communities, slide 32, he requested information on the land tax pilot project with respect to land titles in African Nova Scotian communities. On the subject of Economic Development he posed three questions. Referencing slide 48, Councillor Hendsbee requested information regarding the by-law review project including which by-laws are being prioritized for review; on slide 55, he requested additional information on the projects involved in “rural and suburban business support activities,” in particular whether there will be a focus on the 100 Wild Islands, Sheet Harbour Marina, Heritage Village, and Bay of Islands initiatives; and lastly on slide 62 regarding the

economic viability of rural communities, the Councillor inquired whether there will be secondary planning for Musquodoboit Harbour.

The Mayor advised that staff would respond to provide the requested information.

Mr. Butts responded to a question regarding the acquisition of the World Trade & Convention Centre, indicating that there are timed triggers controlled by the province and the municipality is currently conducting background work.

Responding to a question regarding the possibility of a Grafton Street tunnel, Mr. Butts noted that staff are currently evaluating more cost effective options that would maintain street access while providing cover from weather.

In response to questions regarding the Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency (HRFE) outcome to develop a new firefighter recruitment and selection process based on best industry practices, Deputy Chief Roy Hollett confirmed that staff are currently working on a report on the matter. Mr. Butts added that there are four main processes currently underway to ensure: opportunities related to fire service are available broadly across the municipality; smaller communities are engaged; fairness; and testing in accordance with best practices.

With respect to the Halifax Regional Police (HRP) outcome to develop a comprehensive strategy on how HRP will target juvenile prostitution, Deputy Chief Bill Moore indicated that staff are working with partner agencies to: improve early identification; pursue diversion and target those trying to get juveniles into the trade; and provide assistance and support to those leaving the trade.

Deputy Chief Moore responded to a question regarding the outcome to develop a domestic violence strategy document by informing Council that there is a provincial directive that directs officers to lay charges in all cases of domestic violence when there is sufficient evidence. He indicated that staff are looking to broaden that approach by providing additional materials and tracking early interventions including follow-up with victim services.

MAIN MOTION AS AMENDED PUT AND PASSED.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:54 a.m.

Kevin Arjoon
Municipal Clerk