

Halifax Regional Council  
July 9, 2002

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

  
George McLellan, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: July 2, 2002

SUBJECT: Miller Lake Water System Assumption and Upgrade

ORIGIN

Canada -Nova Scotia Infrastructure Program

RECOMMENDATION

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT:**

1. The Capital Budget for the Miller Lake Water System be approved in the amount of \$200,000 (gross), with the net residual amount (after Infrastructure Funding and other recoveries) funded from a per lot charge.
2. The Halifax Regional Water Commission (HRWC) upgrade the existing water system and be the contracting agency to upgrade the Miller Lake Water System.
3. Approve in principle and begin the formal process for the adoption of By-Law Number L- 111, Respecting Charges for the Upgrade of the Miller Lake Water System, Miller Lake, attached hereto.

## BACKGROUND

The Miller Lake Water System is a privately owned public water supply system providing water to approximately 50 homes in the Miller Lake S/D (Fall River Area) since the 1960's. The system is owned and operated by the Miller Lake Homeowners Assoc ( Homeowners Assoc.) With a degradation in water quality over the years including arsenic levels above Canadian standards and increased concerns over operating liability, the Homeowners Assoc. sought help through the NSURB to resolve their issues. Based on an independent consultants report that identified approximately \$200,000.00 in capital upgrades, the Halifax Regional Water Commission (HRWC) expressed a willingness to take ownership and operational control of the system on the condition that the necessary capital upgrades were implemented.

## DISCUSSION

The HRWC and HRM applied for and was successful in receiving  $\frac{2}{3}$  funding towards the estimated \$200,000.00 cost from the Canada/Nova Scotia Infrastructure program.

The balance of the funding will form a lot charge to abutters calculated as follows:

Estimated total project cost	\$200,000
Less:	
Approved Infrastructure Funding( $\frac{2}{3}$ )	\$133,333
Recoverable from abutters	\$66,667
Number of Lots to receive servicing	52 **
Estimated Charge per lot to be serviced	\$1,282

\*\* Includes one property which had been denied service due to capacity, has subsequently incurred considerable costs to obtain on site water service and which is recommended to be excluded from a charge as contained in the By-Law. The HRWC will interim finance this charge until such time as the property owner requests to receive HRWC service.

It should be noted that estimates were based on a preliminary design of the servicing requirements using recent average tender prices in the HRWC for this type of work. The actual cost may vary from the estimate depending upon detailed design requirements and actual tender prices.

To allow for unforeseen works and applying an amount of 9%, it is estimated that a per lot flat charge of \$1400.00 would be sufficient to fully finance the upgrade project, and which is the interim rate recommended in By-Law L-111.

### Project Scope

The scope of work for this project includes three components. The first component is the upgrade to the water treatment facility. This upgrade includes the installation of an arsenic removal system, new instrumentation and controls, and a new treatment building. The second component includes the installation of service lateral shut offs on each existing service line to improve system control and operation. This phase will also include the installation of service laterals to the property line for existing unserviced homes. The extension of the service lateral from the property line to the house is the responsibility of the home owner. The third component is the installation of water meters within each house to allow equitable billing based on water consumption. In addition, later this year a new production well will be installed to add to the system capacity. The exact location and timing will be dependent on early operational experience.

### Community Participation

With infrastructure funding in place, a public meeting was held with all the Miller Lake residents on April 7, 2002 to discuss the proposed plan for capital upgrades and HRWC takeover. The plan identified that the home owners would be responsible for the residual 1/3 funding.

Although the general sense from the April 7, 2002 meeting was very positive, to formalize this consensus a letter and petition dated May 10, 2002 (copy attached) was sent to all residents. The results indicated that of the 52 delivered, there were 33 affirmative replies, 4 negative replies, 4 returned and 11 no responses. Based on these results with 63% of the homeowners in favor of the plan, the HRWC has commenced to proceed with the capital upgrade design and specification as well as the process to effect the ownership transfer of plant and equipment. The following summarizes the results of the petition:

Affirmative	33 - 63%
Negative	4 - 8%
Returned	4 - 8%
No Response	<u>11</u> - 21 %
Total	52

A larger number of positive responses would have been more desirable. Also, subsequent to the May 10, 2002 petition letters, it was determined that cost sharing for service laterals on private property would not be available. Notwithstanding, there are quantity and a quality issues in respect to this servicing. As a result, a subsequent letter of July 3, 2002 (copy attached) has been distributed to all residents advising of the course of action being recommended by the Halifax Regional Water Commission to Halifax Regional Council. The By-Law process provides residents with sufficient time to prepare and schedule for the Public Hearing Process.

### BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The 2002-2003 Capital Budget includes a section on Regional Council's infrastructure funding priorities and those projects approved to date. The Miller Lake Water System has been approved by Halifax Regional Council and the Infrastructure Funding Partners.

A per lot charge will be levied to reflect the actual cost of these phases less any Federal, Provincial or other funding. Therefore, net debt charges to the Municipality will not increase and the costs to finance will be borne directly by those being serviced.

### FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from and the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

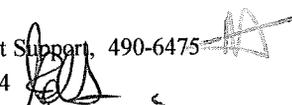
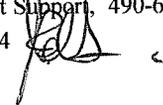
### ALTERNATIVES

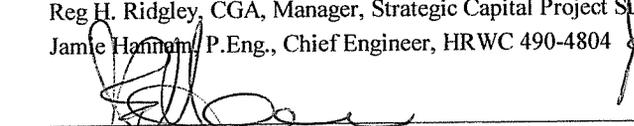
There is no reasonable alternative to providing the quantity and quality of water to this subdivision.

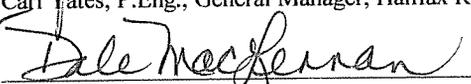
### ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Map, Miller Lake Water System Assumption and Upgrade CS086013, By-Law L-111, dated June 28, 2002.
- 2) Letters(2) to residents of May 10, 2002
- 3) Letter to residents of July 3, 2002
- 4) By-Law L-111 Respecting Charges for Miller Lake Water System Assumption and Upgrade

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Reg H. Ridgley, CGA, Manager, Strategic Capital Project Support, 490-6475   
Jame Hannan, P.Eng., Chief Engineer, HRWC 490-4804 

Approved by:   
Carl Yates, P.Eng., General Manager, Halifax Regional Water Commission

  
S. Dale MacLennan, C.A., Director, Financial Services

**Miller Lake Water System**  
**Assumption and Upgrade CS086013**  
**By-Law L-111 dated June 28, 2002**



	Water System Boundary
	Road ROW
	Existing Watermains
	Reservoir and Pump House
	Booster Pump
	Well Location

Halifax  
Regional  
Water  
Commission

May 10, 2002

«Name» «name\_last»  
«Mail\_Address»  
«FR\_Province» «Postal\_Code»

Dear Resident:

**Re: «Service\_Address»  
Proposed Halifax Regional Water Commission  
Take-Over of Miller Lake Water System**

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The Halifax Regional Water Commission (HRWC) has had ongoing discussions with the Miller Lake Homeowners' Association, and the community in general, regarding the potential take-over of the Miller Lake Water System by the HRWC. This letter is a formal plebiscite asking each homeowner within the Miller Lake Subdivision if they are in favour of transferring the assets and operational control of the Miller Lake Water System to the HRWC, and agreeing to the capital cost contribution to the system upgrades.

The HRWC is proposing to takeover ownership and operational control of the Miller Lake Water System with a goal of providing a consistent, high quality product and level of service to the residents of Miller Lake. Prior to taking over the system, the HRWC proposes to upgrade the system as detailed on the attached cost estimate and project description. Upgrades are proposed both to the water treatment facility and the distribution system.

The water treatment facility would be improved by adding a new arsenic removal system to bring arsenic levels below Canadian Guidelines; installing a new SCADA system to improve the automated control and operation of the system; and a new building to house the new equipment. In addition, we are proposing to install a new well within the system to improve system capacity. On the distribution side of the system, we are proposing to install service lateral shut-offs on all existing services, to improve control to individual properties. In addition, we would be installing a new water meter in each home, to allow us to bill for water service on an equitable consumption based rate verses a flat rate.

As detailed on the cost estimate, with the addition of engineering, legal fees, and related taxes and overheads, the total cost of the system upgrades is approximately \$185,000.00. As noted, there will be an additional charge to current unserviced lots wishing to gain access to the system at this time.

The HRWC proposes to undertake these capital improvements in the spring of 2002, subsequent to the transfer of ownership. The Municipality, on behalf of the Miller Lake Homeowners' Association, has been successful in obtaining a Federal/Provincial infrastructure grant that will fund 2/3rds of the total cost of the system upgrades. With this infrastructure funding applied against the total project cost, the residents would be responsible to pay the balance. As detailed on the attached cost estimate, each individual homeowner's share would be approximately \$1,200.00. The \$1,200.00 capital contribution to the project would be due and payable by the homeowners at the completion of the works. The homeowners have the option of paying the charge in full, or financing it over ten years with HRM. HRM utilizes a financing charge of prime rate plus 2% for this service.

Subsequent to an initial transition period maintaining current rates, the HRWC proposes to charge rates for water service similar to what the existing residents pay now. However, the rates will be based on actual water consumption, so your water bill may be slightly higher or lower than currently paid, depending upon your actual water demand compared to the average water demand within the system.

Please acknowledge whether you are in favour, or not, of proceeding with the Miller Lake Water System transfer to the HRWC and the proposed capital upgrades, by signing one copy of this letter in the designated spot at the bottom of the page and returning it to the HRWC (attention Jamie Hannam) via fax (490-4808) or mail, prior to May 24, 2002. If a significant majority are in favour of the project, then the project will proceed with all properties being assessed the capital improvement charge.

If you have any questions of a technical nature regarding the water system upgrades or its future operations, please contact Jamie Hannam, P. Eng., Chief Engineer, HRWC at 490-4804.

Yours truly,

*Jamie Hannam*

Jamie Hannam, P.Eng.  
Chief Engineer, HRWC

JH:klg

cc. Councilor Gary Hines – Councilor District 2, HRM  
Garland Ingraham – President, Miller Lake Homeowner's Association  
Norman Lavoie – Secretary/Treasurer, Miller Lake Homeowner's Association  
Carl Yates – General Manager, HRWC

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Civic Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes** - We wish to participate in this water main project under the current requirements.

**No** - We do not wish to participate in this water main project under the current requirements.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Civic Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes** - We wish to participate in this water main project under the current requirements.

**No** - We do not wish to participate in this water main project under the current requirements.

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*(Copy of Page Three for Signature)*

# HRWC Engineering

## Miller Lake Water System

### Cost Estimate

**Project Description:** Upgrade of the Miller Lake Water System in conjunction with the take over of the system by HRWC. Upgrades generally include improvements to the treatment facility to handle arsenic removal; installation of individual shut offs to control customer service; and installation of individual meters for accurate and equitable billing.

Component	Item No.	Item	Quantity	Unit Cost	System Cost	New Service Cost
Water Treatment	1	Arsenic Removal System	1	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 75,000.00	
		Building Structure	1	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	
		SCADA System	1	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	
		New Well	1	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	
Distribution System	2	Service Lateral Shut Off	44	\$ 750.00	\$ 33,000.00	
		New Services (7 Unserviced Lots)	7	\$ 2,000.00		\$ 14,000.00
Metering	3	House Meter	51	\$ 100.00	\$ 5,100.00	
		Plumbing Changes	51	\$ 200.00	\$ 10,200.00	
		Engineering			\$ 4,000.00	
		Legal Fees			\$ 10,000.00	
		Contingencies			\$ 4,000.00	
		Subtotal			\$ 168,300.00	\$ 14,000.00
		Net HST			\$ 10,819.29	\$ 900.00
		Overheads & Interest			\$ 5,049.00	\$ 420.00
		<b>TOTAL COST</b>			<b>\$ 184,168.29</b>	<b>\$ 15,320.00</b>

#### Funding Scenario

Total Cost	\$ 184,168.29	\$ 15,320.00
Infrastructure Funding (2/3)	\$ 122,778.86	\$ 10,213.33
Residents Cost	\$ 61,389.43	\$ 5,106.67
Number of Residents		
* Including 7 unserviced lots	51	
* 7 unserviced lots only		7
Cost per Resident		
* All residents	\$ 1,203.71	
* Unserviced Lots Additional Charge		\$ 729.52

May 10, 2002

«First\_Name» «Last\_Name»  
«Mailing\_Address»  
«FRProvince» «Postal\_Code»

Dear Resident:

**Re: «Service\_Address»  
Proposed Halifax Regional Water Commission  
Take-Over of Miller Lake Water System**

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The Halifax Regional Water Commission (HRWC) has had ongoing discussions with the Miller Lake Homeowners' Association, and the community in general, regarding the potential take-over of the Miller Lake Water System by the HRWC. This letter is a formal plebiscite asking each homeowner within the Miller Lake Subdivision if they are in favour of transferring the assets and operational control of the Miller Lake Water System to the HRWC, and agreeing to the capital cost contribution to the system upgrades.

The HRWC is proposing to takeover ownership and operational control of the Miller Lake Water System with a goal of providing a consistent, high quality product and level of service to the residents of Miller Lake. Prior to taking over the system, the HRWC proposes to upgrade the system as detailed on the attached cost estimate and project description. Upgrades are proposed both to the water treatment facility and the distribution system.

The water treatment facility would be improved by adding a new arsenic removal system to bring arsenic levels below Canadian Guidelines; installing a new SCADA system to improve the automated control and operation of the system; and a new building to house the new equipment. In addition, we are proposing to install a new well within the system to improve system capacity. On the distribution side of the system, we are proposing to install service lateral shut-offs on all existing services, to improve control to individual properties. In addition, we would be installing a new water meter in each home, to allow us to bill for water service on an equitable consumption based rate verses a flat rate.

As detailed on the cost estimate, with the addition of engineering, legal fees, and related taxes and overheads, the total cost of the system upgrades is approximately \$185,000.00. As noted, there will be an additional charge to current unserved lots wishing to gain access to the system at this time.

The HRWC proposes to undertake these capital improvements in the spring of 2002, subsequent to the transfer of ownership. The Municipality, on behalf of the Miller Lake Homeowners' Association, has been successful in obtaining a Federal/Provincial infrastructure grant that will fund 2/3rds of the total cost of the system upgrades. With this infrastructure funding applied against the total project cost, the residents would be responsible to pay the balance. As detailed on the attached cost estimate, each individual homeowner's share would be approximately \$1,200.00. The \$1,200.00 capital contribution to the project would be due and payable by the homeowners at the completion of the works. The homeowners have the option of paying the charge in full, or financing it over ten years with HRM. HRM utilizes a financing charge of prime rate plus 2% for this service.

Your specific lot is currently not hooked up to the water system. In conjunction with the proposed system upgrades, an opportunity exists to install a service line to your home. If you wish to have this work done at this time, there would be an additional charge of approximately \$700.00 assigned to your property to cover your 1/3 share of the actual cost of extending the new service. If service is not extended at this time, in the future you would be required to pay the full cost of the service lateral installation.

Subsequent to an initial transition period maintaining current rates, the HRWC proposes to charge rates for water service similar to what the existing residents pay now. However, the rates will be based on actual water consumption, so your water bill may be slightly higher or lower than currently paid, depending upon your actual water demand compared to the average water demand within the system.

Please acknowledge whether you are in favour, or not, of proceeding with the Miller Lake Water System transfer to the HRWC and the proposed capital upgrades, by signing one copy of this letter in the designated spot at the bottom of the page and returning it to the HRWC (attention Jamie Hannam) via fax (490-4808) or mail, prior to May 24, 2002. If a significant majority are in favour of the project, then the project will proceed with all properties being assessed the capital improvement charge.

If you have any questions of a technical nature regarding the water system upgrades or its future operations, please contact Jamie Hannam, P. Eng., Chief Engineer, HRWC at 490-4804.

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Carl Yates – General Manager, HRWC

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Civic Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes** - We wish to participate in this water main project under the current requirements, including the installation of a new service lateral.

**Yes** - We wish to participate in this water main project under the current requirements, excluding the installation of a new service lateral at this time.

**No** - We do not wish to participate in this water main project under the current requirements.

If you have any questions of a technical nature regarding the water system upgrades or its future operations, please contact Jamie Hannam, P. Eng., Chief Engineer, HRWC at 490-4804.

Yours truly,

*Jamie Hannam*

Jamie Hannan, P.Eng.  
Chief Engineer, HRWC

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# HRWC Engineering

## Miller Lake Water System

### Cost Estimate

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Cost per Resident		
* All residents	\$ 1,203.71	
* Unserviced Lots Additional Charge		\$ 729.52

To: Residents of the Miller Lake Area Affected by the Assumption and Upgrade of the Private Water System

Prior to construction design , tender specifications , issuance of tenders and submission to Halifax Regional Council for approval, staff wish to provide information to residents of the Miller Lake area who may be provided with water by the Halifax Regional Water Commission (HRWC) through the assumption and upgrade of the existing water delivery system available to owners of property abutting the service area. The approval process will require a By-Law , with the following anticipated scheduling :

- July 9, 2002 Council Session- Staff report to Council and Notice of Motion proposing By-Law
- July 16, 2002 Council Session- First Reading of By-Law
- Advertisement of two weeks,
- August 20, 2002 Council Session - Public Hearing , Second Reading and By-Law adoption

The servicing plan , identified on the attached map , will require the HRWC to assume ownership of the existing water infrastructure . It also provides for improving the existing water treatment facility by adding a new arsenic removal system to bring arsenic levels below Canadian Guidelines; installing a new SCADA system to improve the automated control and operation of the system ; a new building to house the new equipment and a new well within the system to improve system capacity later , the exact location and timing of which will depend on early operational experience. All existing service laterals would receive a service lateral shutoff as well as a water meter in each home to allow for water billing on a usage basis versus the flat rate which is currently the case.

The results of a community meeting and a letter and petition of May 10, 2002 indicated that there was a general consensus that the servicing strategy should move forward. The results indicated that of the 52 mailed out, there were 33 affirmative replies, 4 negative replies, 4 returned and 11 no responses. Based on these results with 63% of the homeowners in favor of the plan, the HRWC has commenced to proceed with the capital upgrade design and specification as well as the process to effect the ownership transfer of plant and equipment .

The full cost to assume and upgrade service is now estimated at \$200,000. This estimate is based on a preliminary design of the servicing requirements using recent average tender prices in the HRWC for this type of work. The actual cost will vary from the estimate depending upon detailed design requirements and actual tender prices. It should be noted that this amount is only an estimate and cost sharing from other levels of government will be affected as a result. Therefore, the ultimate abutter frontage charge may increase, or decrease.

The Municipality and the HRWC have secured two-thirds funding under the Provincial and Federal Government Infrastructure Program , in the amount of \$133,333. Based upon estimated costs and the approved funding ,there remains a recoverable amount from abutters of approximately \$ 66,666.

The upgrade program will include the installation of a service lateral from the main to the property line for properties that are currently not connected to the existing system. Property owners will be responsible for the extension of the service lateral from the property line to the dwelling. Initial information suggested that this cost would be covered by the project. However,

during detailed project design it became clear that construction on private property was not eligible for the Infrastructure program funding. Based on our experience this lateral cost can be in the range of \$10 to \$15 per foot.

Based upon the preliminary estimates and the configuration of the land and lots being serviced, it is estimated that an interim per lot flat charge of \$1400 will be sufficient to fully finance the installation of water services. This charge would be applicable to all property owners abutting the service whether connected to the system or not. Upon application an exclusion will be granted for any property which has, in the opinion of the Chief Engineer of the Halifax Regional Water Commission, an on site well water supply system that was installed based on denied approval for connection to the existing system due to supply constraints. As of this communication only one property has been identified as a candidate for this application. At the completion of the project and based upon actual costs, the interim charge would be adjusted and the actual per lot flat charge would be billed.

A further charge of one thousand four hundred dollars (\$1400.00) will be levied in respect of all future connections to the water system for properties which are not assessed a local improvement charge or lots which are assessed a local improvement charge and which are subsequently subdivided.

It should be noted that the Federal and Provincial infrastructure cost sharing represents two thirds of the estimated costs. This means that should costs be lower than the estimated \$200,000, the cost sharing will be reduced. If costs exceed \$200,000, increased cost sharing may not be forthcoming, and therefore, the estimated lot charge will have to increase.

It should be noted that Halifax Regional Council must approve all aspects of this water servicing strategy.

Jamie Hannam, P.Eng  
Chief Engineer, Engineering  
Halifax Regional Water Commission  
(902) 490-4804

Reg Ridgley, CGA  
Manager, Strategic Capital Project Support  
Financial Services  
Halifax Regional Municipality  
(902) 490-6475

Dated July 3, 2002

**Miller Lake Water System**  
**Assumption and Upgrade CS086013**  
**By-Law L-111 dated June 28, 2002**



	Water System Boundary
	Road ROW
	Existing Watermains
	Reservoir and Pump House
	Booster Pump
	Well Location



## HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

### BY-LAW NUMBER L- 111 RESPECTING CHARGES FOR LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Be It Enacted by the Council for the Halifax Regional Municipality that By-Law L-100, the Local Improvement By-Law, be amended as follows:

1. Schedule "A" of By-Law L-100 is amended by adding the following:
  - (a) The Miller Lake Water System is a plan for the Halifax Regional Water Commission to assume ownership and responsibility for an existing private water system and generally upgrade the existing system to include, but not be limited to, upgrade of water treatment facility including arsenic removal equipment, individual service lateral shut-offs to control service to customers and installation of individual meters for accurate billing located within the boundaries identified on a plan entitled "Miller Lake Water System Assumption and Upgrade ,CS086013 , By-Law L-111, June 28, 2002" as attached.
  - (b) The Project will be funded by local improvement charges based on the entire cost of the project less any federal, provincial or other revenue.
  - (c) The local improvement charges will be imposed at an interim rate of one thousand four hundred dollars (\$1400.00) per property as recorded at the Registry Of Deeds and which abuts in whole or in part any street
  - (d) Any property which has, in the opinion of the Chief Engineer of the Halifax Regional Water Commission, an on site well water supply system that was installed based on denied approval for connection to the existing system due to supply constraints, upon application , shall be exempt from any charges imposed under section (c) and (e)
  - (e) The interim local improvement charges will be adjusted at the completion of the project, and will be calculated on the basis of the total actual cost of the project at the adjustment date, less any federal or provincial or other funding.
  - (f) A further charge of one thousand four hundred dollars (\$1400.00) is hereby levied in respect of all future connections to the water system for properties which are not assessed a local improvement charge or lots which are assessed a local improvement charge and which are subsequently subdivided.



**Miller Lake Water System**  
**Assumption and Upgrade CS086013**  
**By-Law L-111 dated June 28, 2002**



	Water System Boundary
	Road ROW
	Existing Watermains
	Reservoir and Pump House
	Booster Pump
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Miller Lake