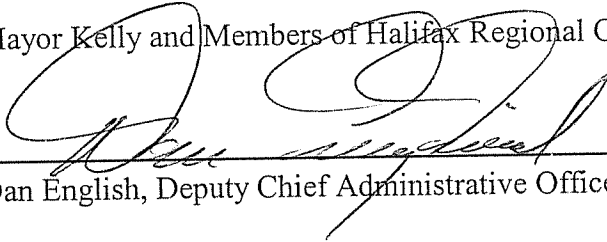


5.



Halifax Regional Council  
October 7, 2003

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:   
Dan English, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: October 1, 2003

SUBJECT: Halifax Regional Library Service

**INFORMATION REPORT**

**ORIGIN**

At the Committee of the Whole meeting of February 26, 2002, Council asked for a staff report regarding the merits of integrating administrative functions of the Halifax Regional Library (HRL) with those of HRM. This report was prepared in conjunction with the HRL staff and reviewed by the HRL Board.

**BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION**

Prior to amalgamation, library service was provided under the direction of the Halifax City Library Board, the Dartmouth Regional Library Board and the Halifax County Library Board. In 1996, at amalgamation, Council decided to retain the library board structure and entered into an Agreement with the Province to provide service under the terms of the Libraries Act of Nova Scotia through the Halifax Regional Library Board (HRLB), created by the formerly separate boards' amalgamation process. A copy of the staff report and recommendation dated February 9, 1996, and subsequent report of April 9, 1996, recommending the establishment of the Regional Library Board is attached.

At amalgamation, it was determined that some administrative functions, such as payroll, purchasing and accounting would be shared to avoid service duplication. Since amalgamation, the HRLB and its staff have fully participated in the business planning and budget processes, Program and Service Committee Review and in HRM corporate initiatives including Regional Planning, the Capital District Project, community development projects and the Corporate Scorecard.

The separate status of the HRLB is not unique in terms of municipal organization in Canada. Boards are the service model norm. Historically, separation has been required to ensure arm's length decision making, to protect intellectual freedom and the public's right of access to information and provide for flexibility in service delivery. While Boards are separate they are not autonomous and are accountable to their funding partners. The HRLB is a body corporate, separate from HRM, but directly accountable to Council through the budget review process. No changes with respect to the status or mandate of the HRLB is being contemplated at this time or a recommendation to integrate the Library Services as a line department of HRM. However, we have recently strengthened the relationship between HRM and HRL by providing Human Resource Services through a Service Agreement. With this arrangement in place, it is timely for an examination of further opportunities to share information, programs and services, to the benefit of both organizations provided that the quality, speed and access to service to the public is not compromised.

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the new arrangement with HRLB for Human Resource Services and advise that staff will undertake an assessment in conjunction with the HRLB of other opportunities which may exist where efficiencies could be gained with a sharing or exchange of services between HRM and HRL.

### **CONCLUSION**

No changes in the current structure of HRL as an independent organization is being recommended at this time. However, staff will undertake a comparative analysis between HRL and HRM of the costs of providing services in the areas such as Financial Services and Information Services and provide a recommendation as to which, if any, might be delivered through a partnership between HRM and HRL.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

There are no budget implications determined at this time. However, an evaluation of potential budget implications/savings will be identified in the review.

### **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 the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

ALTERNATIVES

Council may direct staff not to proceed with the review at this time. This is not the recommended course of action.

ATTACHMENTS

Staff reports dated February 9, and April 9, 1996

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:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Margaret Soley, Coordinator

Report Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dan English, DCAO

**HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY**

Dan English  
Commissioner of Community Services

1505 Barrington Street, Suite 1207  
Halifax, NS B3J 3K5  
Telephone: (902)-496-2010  
Fax: 424-3777  
Cell: 456-5392

TO: Mayor Walter Fitzgerald and Members of Regional Council

DATE: February 9, 1996

SUBJECT: Regional Library Board

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council:

- 1) Agree to the establishment of a Regional Library Board; rather than Council itself assuming this role.
- 2) Direct staff, with the assistance of the Joint Amalgamation Committee of the region's library boards, to negotiate an agreement with the Department of Education for providing regional library service; and
- 3) Request staff to report back to Council with a proposed agreement and recommended appointments to the Regional Library Board.

**BACKGROUND**

The three existing library boards, on the advice of the Amalgamation Coordinator, formed a Joint Amalgamation Committee. This group has ten teams which have been addressing issues such as inter-library loans, computer networks and the location of the regional administrative staff. This work began quite some time ago and discussions regarding the role of regional library board have also taken place with the Amalgamation Coordinator and HRM staff. A recent newspaper article is attached which describes the libraries' amalgamation activities further (Appendix 'A').

**DISCUSSION**

The Halifax Regional Municipality Act provides Council with two options for delivering library services. Council may:

- ▶ provide library services directly; or
- ▶ establish a regional library board to manage and deliver library services (Appendix 'B'), subject to HRM approval of budget.

The board system has proven successful for delivering library services in the past. In addition, as the attached article suggests, the appointment of a regional library board would prove very effective in delivering an amalgamated service.

Prior to appointing a regional library board, it is necessary to negotiate an agreement with the Minister of Education. Staff has prepared a draft agreement which is similar in content to the agreements which established the existing library boards. If Council agrees to establishing a regional library board, staff will finalize terms of the agreement with Department of Education staff and the assistance of the Joint Amalgamation Committee of the existing library boards. This will be returned to Council for approval.

### APPOINTMENTS TO THE REGIONAL BOARD

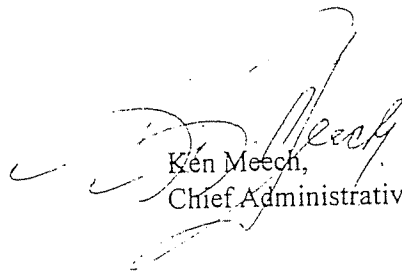
As with the existing agreements, the agreement establishing the regional board will specify the composition of the board as well as the length of the appointments. In order to expedite the process, recommended appointments to the board can be submitted to Council at the same time that the proposed agreement is submitted.

Respectfully submitted,

CAO Concurrence,



Dan English,  
Commissioner of Community Services

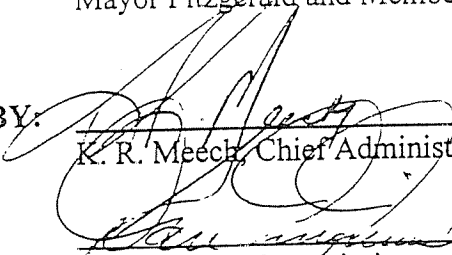


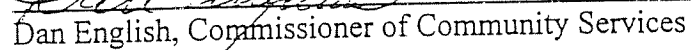
Ken Meech,  
Chief Administrative Officer

APRIL 7, 1996

TO: Mayor Fitzgerald and Members of Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

  
K. R. Meech, Chief Administrative Officer

  
Dan English, Commissioner of Community Services

DATE: April 3, 1996

SUBJECT: REGIONAL LIBRARY BOARD - LIBRARY AGREEMENT

#### ORIGIN

At the February 14, 1996 Council session, Council approved the establishment of a Regional Library Board. Staff were also directed to negotiate a library agreement with the Department of Education and return this to Council for approval.

#### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council authorize the Mayor and Municipal Clerk to execute the attached regional library agreement with the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture.

#### DISCUSSION

The terms of the attached agreement with the Province are similar to the agreements which the former library boards functioned under. The following points highlight the terms of the agreement:

- the assets, liabilities, books and equipment of the former boards are vested in the new Regional Board;
- the Board shall consist of eleven members, with HRM appointing eight (this has been done), the Province appointing two (these appointments have yet to be made) and the Mayor as ex officio; and
- ▶ the Board is subject to the requirements of the Library Act.

## BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Approval of the agreement does not have any immediate budget impact. The Board's budget for managing the regional library service and maintaining the buildings will be submitted to Council for approval during HRM's budget deliberations.

## ATTACHMENTS

Copy of the proposed Regional Library agreement.

Further information regarding the contents of this report may be obtained by contacting Paul Dunphy at 496-2059. For additional copies or for information on the report's status, please contact the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 496-2065 or 424- 3777 (FAX).