

File

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES
JANUARY 15, 1996**

PRESENT:

- Mayor Walter Fitzgerald
- Councillor Bill Dooks
- Councillor Gordon Snow
- Councillor David Hendsbee
- Councillor Ron Cooper
- Councillor Harry McInroy
- Councillor Jack Greenough
- Councillor Condo Sarto
- Councillor Clint Schofield
- Councillor John Cunningham
- Councillor Jerry Blumenthal
- Councillor Graham L. Downey
- Councillor Larry Uteck
- Councillor Howard Epstein
- Councillor Russell Walker
- Councillor Bill Stone
- Councillor Ron Hanson
- Councillor Steve Adams
- Councillor Barry Barnet
- Councillor Bob Harvey
- Councillor Peter Kelly
- Councillor Reg Rankin
- Councillor Jack Mitchell

REGRETS:

- Councillor Bruce Hetherington
(For Health Reasons)

ALSO PRESENT:

- K. R. Meech, Chief Administrative Officer
- Wayne Anstey, Solicitor
- L. Corrigan, Interim Municipal Clerk
- Julia Horncastle, Recording Secretary

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE - UPDATE	3
BRIEFING SESSION - HRM ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE ...	3
STANDING ORDER OF BUSINESS	3
Proposed Administrative Order Number One Respecting the Procedures of Council	3
Transitional Reports (Councillor Kelly)	4
BOARDS AND COMMITTEES	5
Establishment of a Grants Committee	5
Establishment of a Pension Committee	6
REPORT - COMMISSIONER OF COMMUNITY SERVICES	7
Social Services Delivery - UPDATE	7
Food Allowances (Councillor Epstein)	8
REPORT - COMMISSIONER OF CORPORATE SERVICES	9
Council Support Services	9
ADDED ITEMS	9
Campaign Contributions	9
INFORMATION ITEMS	10

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:05 p.m.

Council Meeting Schedule - UPDATE

A report dated January 11, 1996 was submitted entitled "Committee of the Whole/Council Meeting Dates."

Following a brief discussion, it was generally agreed that the meeting schedule as set out in the January 11, 1996 report be adopted, with the provision that all meetings (excepting that previously scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 17) commence at 6:00 p.m.

Councillor Adams suggested that additional meetings be scheduled to replace those which will be lost during the March recess (March 11-15) so that Council is able to meet the April 1 deadline in terms of completing the work before it.

His Worship indicated that he would be monitoring the situation on an ongoing basis, and should it be deemed appropriate, Council will be requested to consider scheduling meetings additional to those indicated in the January 11 report.

Briefing Session - HRM Organization Structure

This matter had last been discussed during the January 10 meeting of Regional Council at which time questions had been raised by various Councillors concerning HRM's organization structure, the staffing process, salary levels, etc.

Mr. Meech advised that a briefing session on these and related matters has been arranged for **Thursday, January 18, 1996** in Halifax Hall (Halifax City Hall), commencing at 4:00 p.m.

STANDING ORDER OF BUSINESS

Proposed Administrative Order Number One Respecting the Procedures of Council

During the January 10 meeting of Halifax Regional Council it had been agreed that this matter would be carried as a standing item on the agendas of future meetings (until April 1, 1996) so that appropriate additions and changes could be made.

An Information Report dated January 12, 1996 and entitled "Administrative Order Number One" was received from Mr. Wayne Anstey, Solicitor.

Moved by Councillor Greenough, seconded by Councillor Sarto that the Information Report of January 12, 1996 from Mr. Anstey be officially received by Council. Motion carried.

Transitional Reports (Councillor Kelly)

A memorandum dated January 15, 1996 and entitled "Proposed Transitional Report - Municipalities to Region" was submitted by Councillor Kelly.

In presenting his memorandum, Councillor Kelly emphasized that, in his view, it is essential that members of Regional Council familiarize themselves with the concerns of each of the existing units, particularly from the perspective of capital projects that are either ongoing or proposed. To that end, he proposed that "transitional reports" similar to that now being prepared by the Town of Bedford (and appended in draft form to the January 15 memorandum) be requested from all four municipal units so that the data contained therein can be reviewed by both staff and members of Council.

Responding to a question from Councillor Sarto, Mr. Larry Corrigan, Commissioner of Corporate Services, advised that HRM (in close consultation with municipal staff) is currently in the process of developing a Capital Budget proposal. He emphasized, however, that while staff will attempt to prioritize the individual projects from a technical and financial perspective, Councillors will also be asked for their comments before the budget proposal is officially submitted for Council's consideration.

Councillor Stone concurred with Councillor Kelly's suggestion that members of Regional Council must acquaint themselves with community concerns, referring as an example to the traffic problems experienced throughout the City of Halifax. In this context, the Councillor made reference to the Federal Government's Infrastructure Program, noting that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) is currently lobbying to have this program extended.

It was moved by Councillor Stone, seconded by Councillor Cooper that Halifax Regional Council endorse the efforts of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to have the Federal Infrastructure Program extended, and that letters be written by His Worship Mayor Fitzgerald asking the senior levels of government to accede to this request.

Concurring with the motion, Mayor Fitzgerald asked that Mr. Meech prepare a letter to that effect for his signature.

The motion was put and passed.

Councillor Kelly noted that his concerns were not limited to capital projects, and indicated that, in his opinion, Regional Councillors should be given an opportunity to familiarize themselves with all of the projects which have been undertaken by the municipal units.

Mr. Meech advised that much of this information is already available, but added that he would discuss the matter with the four municipal CAO's so that the information can be distributed to Regional Councillors in a standardized format.

It was subsequently moved by Councillor Kelly, seconded by Councillor Greenough that Councillor Kelly's memorandum of January 15, 1996 be tabled, and that the Chief Administrative Officer be requested to present further information on this matter to Council. Motion carried.

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Establishment of a Grants Committee

This matter had last been discussed during the January 10 meeting of Committee of the Whole at which time an Information Report dated January 4, 1996 and entitled "Grants to Non-Profit Organizations" had been tabled.

A report dated January 11, 1996 and entitled "Establishment of Grants Committee" was submitted.

Moved by Councillor Greenough, seconded by Councillor Sarto that Council authorize staff to bring forward as quickly as possible proposed terms of reference pertaining to the establishment of a Grants Committee.

A discussion ensued concerning the composition of the proposed committee with Councillor Walker indicating that, in his view, the number of public representatives on the committee should exceed that of elected officials. In putting this recommendation forward, the Councillor suggested that representatives of Metro United Way or the Metro Area Chamber of Commerce could prove valuable to the work of the committee.

Speaking in reference to the remarks made by Councillor Walker, Councillor Greenough expressed concern with regard to involving as voting members representatives of agencies who could conceivably profit from the outcome of the committee's recommendations. He went on to make reference to the procedure used by the City of Dartmouth, noting that input of the kind referred to by Councillor Walker is obtained through a series of formal presentations to the Grants Committee.

Responding to a question from Councillor Sarto, Mr. Corrigan advised that it is proposed that the Grants Committee will be requested to review all forms of grants which have been approved in the past by the municipal units, including such things as tax expenditures as well as grants to non-profit organizations.

Concurring with a suggestion put forward by Councillor Stone, Mr. Meech indicated that HRM staff would be conferring with those in the municipal units as to the processes currently followed in the delivery of municipal grants, as well as the criteria agreed upon for the acceptance of grant applications.

In reference to a question from Councillor Walker, Mr. Corrigan advised that HRM has asked the municipal units to consolidate their grant-related information so that it can be transferred to the Regional Grants Committee for review. He went on to note that the Terms of Reference for the proposed committee will be returned to Council for ratification within the next three to weeks.

The motion was put and passed.

Establishment of Pension Committee

A report dated January 11, 1996 and entitled "Establishment of Pension Committee" was submitted.

Moved by Councillor Cooper, seconded by Councillor Cunningham that Council authorize staff to bring forward as quickly as possible proposed terms of reference pertaining to the establishment of a Pension Committee.

While speaking in support of the motion, Councillor Rankin emphasized that this is to be an interim committee only, specifically designed to address those issues which cannot be delayed. He went on to recommend that the "transitional" nature of this committee be emphasized to employees, and that the message be conveyed that when a permanent Pension Committee is established, it will consist (as has traditionally been the case) of employees, employers and elected officials.

Concurring with Councillor Rankin's remarks, Mr. Larry Corrigan, Commissioner of Corporate Services, noted that over the past several weeks there has been considerable staff involvement (through the use of Transition Teams) in the pension plan design process. He emphasized, however, that the transitional Pension Committee is intended to provide an opportunity for input from elected officials before final recommendations are submitted to the full Regional Council.

It was noted that the Council representatives on the existing Pension Committees are:

Councillor Howard Epstein (City of Halifax)
Councillor Reg Rankin (County of Halifax)
Councillor Jack Greenough (City of Dartmouth)

The motion was put and passed.

REPORT - COMMISSIONER OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

Social Services Delivery - UPDATE

This matter had last been discussed during the January 10 meeting of Regional Council.

An Information Report dated January 12, 1996 and entitled "Social Services Delivery" was submitted from Mr. Dan English, Commissioner of Community Services.

Mr. Meech advised that an agreement has not yet been reached with the Province of Nova Scotia with regard to the financial contribution HRM is being asked to make toward the administration of the single-tier program. He went on to point out that if a mutually-acceptable arrangement cannot be devised, it is conceivable that Regional Council may wish to decide whether it wishes to continue administering the social services program at a municipal level. Mr. Meech emphasized, however, that, in his opinion, that approach would not be the Region's best option, adding that he hoped to provide Council with further information on this matter within the next several days.

Responding to a question from Councillor Epstein, Mr. Meech advised that it is intended that most of the staff employed with the municipal Social Services departments will be transferred to the Province as part of the take-over. He added, however, that there are approximately 25-30 positions which have been declared redundant and which will be addressed by the Regional Municipality as part of its employee adjustment program (with 50 percent of the costs being reimbursed to HRM by the Province).

Councillor Stone expressed the view that care should be taken to ensure that any further arrangements made with regard to the delivery of social services are in writing and formalized by both parties so that there are no misunderstandings or changes.

Concerns were expressed by a number of Councillors with regard to the lack of input the Regional Government is likely to have into the development of policy and/or service delivery. The point was also made that Council would prefer to see the existing levels of service maintained.

Mr. Meech advised that he will provide Councillors with a list of organizations that will continue to receive assistance from the Province as well as information pertaining to those for whom cost-shared funds are not available.

After some further discussion and questioning of staff, **it was moved by Councillor Greenough, seconded by Councillor Harvey that the Information Report dated January 12, 1996 be tabled. Motion carried.**

Food Allowances (Councillor Epstein)

This matter had been added to the agenda at the request of Councillor Epstein. Also submitted was a letter dated January 15, 1996 from Mrs. Marg Hiltz, Chairperson of the Disabled Individuals Alliance.

Councillor Epstein made reference to a motion approved by Halifax City Council in December of 1995, intended to increase the food allowance portion of the social services budget for the months of January - March 1996. He noted, however, that because this expenditure of funds (approximately \$210,000 in total) had not been budgeted and would have therefore resulted in an over-expenditure, the City had been forced to refer the matter to the Implementation Coordinator for approval.

Given the fact that Mr. Hayward had refused to allow the requested increase, a motion was proposed by Councillor Epstein that Halifax Regional Council endorse the motion earlier approved by the City of Halifax with regard to increasing the food allowance.

Speaking in opposition to the proposed motion, Councillor Cunningham expressed concern that by endorsing this approach, the Regional Council would be establishing inequities within the system; more specifically, that social service recipients in the City of Halifax would be in a more advantageous position than those in other parts of the Region.

Councillor Sarto agreed with the remarks put forward by Councillor Cunningham, adding that Council would be better served by reviewing the matter of food allowances as they are applied across the Region. He noted, however, that in his view, the matter should not be addressed until after April 1.

Councillor Walker expressed concern that the proposal would, in effect, establish an "area rate" for the City of Halifax. He went on to indicate that he personally could not support such a proposal and strongly recommended that HRM convey the message to municipal councils that the introduction of area rates would not be tolerated.

Councillor Snow suggested that before making a decision such as that proposed by Councillor Epstein, a study be undertaken as quickly as possible to ascertain whether food allowance rates across the Region are adequate.

It was moved by Councillor Epstein, seconded by Councillor Downey that the matter be deferred, and that staff be requested to submit a report with regard to the concerns raised by the previous speakers. The motion was put and defeated.

REPORT - COMMISSIONER OF CORPORATE SERVICES

Council Support Services

A report dated January 11, 1996 and entitled "Council Support Services" was submitted.

Moved by Councillor Schofield, seconded by Councillor Walker that Council appoint an ad hoc committee made up of five members of Council representing a cross-section of Council to work with the Director of Administrative Services to develop a recommendation for the type and level of support services to be provided by the HRM to Councillors. Motion carried.

The following Councillors expressed their interest in serving on the proposed committee:

Councillor Sarto	Councillor Schofield
Councillor McInroy	Councillor Cooper
Councillor Snow	Councillor Dooks
Councillor Barnet	Councillor Blumenthal
Councillor Stone	Councillor Cunningham

ADDED ITEMS

Campaign Contributions

This matter had been added to the agenda at the request of Councillor Epstein who advised that a record of his election campaign contributions had been delivered to the offices of HRM and were available for inspection.

At Mayor Fitzgerald's suggestion, it was moved by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Councillor McInroy that the Solicitor be asked to prepare a full report on this matter for Council's consideration. Motion carried.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Moved by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Councillor McInroy that the following Information Reports be tabled:

- (a) Information Report dated January 12, 1996 and entitled "Regional Operations - Progress Report: Transitional Service & Performance Standards"
- (b) Information Report dated January 12, 1996 and entitled "1996/97 Budget - Base Information"
- (c) Information Report dated January 11, 1996 and entitled "Municipal Tax Structure Conference - January 26 and 27, 1996 (NOTE: Mr. Corrigan distributed draft copies of the Conference Invitation List during the January 15 Council meeting).

There being no further business to be discussed, it was moved by Councillor Greenough, seconded by Councillor Sarto that the Committee rise and report to Council. Motion carried.

MAYOR WALTER FITZGERALD
CHAIRMAN

SUBMITTED BY:
LARRY CORRIGAN
INTERIM MUNICIPAL CLERK