

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL SPECIAL SESSION MINUTES

April 3, 2012

PRESENT:

Mayor Peter Kelly
Deputy Mayor Bill Karsten
Councillors: Barry Dalrymple
David Hendsbee
Lorelei Nicoll
Gloria McCluskey
Darren Fisher
Jackie Barkhouse
Jim Smith
Mary Wile
Jerry Blumenthal
Sue Uteck
Jennifer Watts
Russell Walker
Debbie Hum
Linda Mosher
Stephen Adams
Brad Johns
Tim Outhit
Peter Lund

REGRETS:

Councillors: Steve Streach
Dawn Sloane
Brad Johns
Reg Rankin

STAFF:

Mr. Richard Butts, Chief Administrative Officer
Mr. Martin Ward, Acting Municipal Solicitor
Ms. Cathy Mellett, Municipal Clerk
Ms. Sherryll Murphy, Acting Municipal Clerk
Ms. Jennifer Weagle, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall, with the Invocation led by Councillor Blumenthal.

2. APPROVAL MINUTES - NONE

3. 2012/2013 OPERATING & PROJECT BUDGET

This item was addressed earlier in the day at a Committee of the Whole meeting and was now before Regional Council for ratification.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Walker that it is hereby resolved that Halifax Regional Council approve:

- a) **the Operating Budget in the amount of \$788,752,200 gross expenditures (which includes \$667,707,200 in municipal expenditures including the reserve withdrawals specified in the Operating and Project Budget), \$585,143,400 in property tax revenues (including area rate revenues) and \$203,608,800 in other revenues be approved;**
- b) **the Project Budget in the amount of \$131,600,000 be approved;**
- c) **the general rates of taxation on commercial and business occupancy be set at**
 - (i) **\$3.084 for the urban area;**
 - (ii) **\$3.084 for the suburban area; and**
 - (iii) **\$2.733 for the rural area****And applied to the taxable assessment of the property;**
- d) **the general rates of taxation on residential and resource property be set at**
 - (i) **\$0.661 for the urban area;**
 - (ii) **\$0.645 for the suburban area; and**
 - (iii) **\$0.639 for the rural area****And applied to the taxable assessment of the property;**

- e) that Council approve the Metro Transit Annual Service Plan and that the tax rates associated with Transit Taxation be set at
 - (i) \$0.051 for the Regional Transportation tax rate;
 - (ii) \$0.105 for the Local Transit tax rateAnd applied to the taxable assessment of the property;
- f) (i) the boundary of the urban, suburban and rural areas is as delineated in the “Tax Structure Map” as outlined on page 4 of the Proposed Operating Budget 2012/13 document;

(ii) the boundary of the Regional Transportation area includes all properties within communities included within the “Regional Transportation map” as outlined on page 5 of the Proposed Operating Budget 2012/13 document;

(iii) the boundary for the Local Transit area includes all properties within 1km walking distance of any HRM transit stop.
- g) Supplementary Education, under Section 80 of the Halifax Charter, shall be set at the rate of \$0.037 to the residential and resource assessment and at \$0.110 to the commercial assessment including business occupancy;
- h) Fire Protection rates shall be set at the rate of \$0.025 for all residential and resource assessment and at \$0.075 to the commercial assessment including business occupancy; for properties which are within 1,200 feet of a hydrant that is designed and operated for public fire protection purposes.
- i) the final tax bills will become due on Wednesday, October 31, 2012;
- j) the interest rate on the Special Reserve Funds, designated as requiring interest under Section 121(2) of the Halifax Charter, be set at the rate of return on funds invested by HRM for the period April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013;
- k) the interest rate on the Pollution Control Reserves be set at the rate of return on funds invested by HRM for the period April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013;
- l) the interest rate on all reserves except for those identified in j) and k) will be set at the rate of return on funds invested by HRM for the period April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013;
- m) that staff return to Regional Council with a proposed Business Case for a Multi-District Facilities Reserve before July 3, 2012; and

- n) **that the Mayor write the Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC) requesting their assistance in analyzing commercial taxation trends including, but not limited to, assessment data and metrics for individual properties such as the valuation of land, buildings and improvements and the square footage of individual structures.**

Councillor Uteck indicated that she wished to make an amendment to the motion.

MOVED by Councillor Uteck, seconded by Councillor Blumenthal, that Halifax Regional Council move the Local Transit tax rate of 0.105% into the General Transit tax rate.

Mr. Martin Ward, Acting Municipal Solicitor ruled the amendment out of order.

MOVED by Councillor Uteck, seconded by Councillor Blumenthal, that Halifax Regional Council move \$81,000 from Fiscal Services of 4.9 million in the event that Metro Transit cannot incorporate the #3 Manors bus route into future Metro Transit routing schedules.

Deputy Mayor Karsten suggested that this motion may go against the adoption of the Metro Transit Service Plan included in the original motion.

Mr. Greg O'Keefe, Acting Director, Finance, advised that staff use these surplus funds to balance the budget, and recommended against using this amount.

Mr. Ward ruled this amendment out of order.

A recorded vote was called for on the original motion.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED. (18 for, 2 against)

Those voting in favour were: Mayor Kelly, Deputy Mayor Karsten, Councillors Adams, Barkhouse, Dalrymple, Fisher, Harvey, Hendsbee, Hum, Lund, McCluskey, Mosher, Nicoll, Smith, Uteck, Walker, Watts, and Wile.

Those voting against were: Councillors Blumenthal and Outhit.

Councillors Johns, Rankin, Sloane, and Streach were absent from the meeting.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Cathy J. Mellett
Municipal Clerk