

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES
April 16, 2004

PRESENT:

Mayor Peter J. Kelly
Deputy Mayor Steve Streach (11:30 a.m.)
Councillors: Krista Snow
David Hendsbee
Ron Cooper
Harry McInroy
Brian Warshick
Condo Sarto
Bruce Hetherington (9:50 a.m.)
John Cunningham
Jerry Blumenthal
Dawn Sloane
Sue Uteck
Sheila Fougere (11:30 a.m.)
Debbie Hum
Linda Mosher
Robert Harvey
Len Goucher
Reg Rankin (10:10 a.m.)
Gary Meade

ABSENT:

Councillors: Jim Smith
Russell Walker
Stephen Adams
Brad Johns

STAFF:

Mr. George McLellan, Chief Administrative Officer
Ms. Jan Gibson, Acting Municipal Clerk
Ms. Julia Horncastle, Legislative Assistant

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	CALL TO ORDER	03
2.	APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS	03
3.	BUDGET DELIBERATIONS	
	3.1 General Government	03
	3.2 Financial Services	04
	3.3 Fiscal Services	04
4.	ADJOURNMENT	05

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

MOVED by Councillor Cooper, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee, that the Order to Business be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. BUDGET DELIBERATIONS

3.1 General Government

Ms. Betty MacDonald, Director, Governance and Strategic Initiatives, outlined the proposed budget noting staff is trying to emphasize HRM's efforts towards the outcomes of the excellence in governance in the corporate scorecard themes by:

- putting forward a proposal to other levels of government for the establishment of a Capital Commission;
- an addition of one Council Assistant in the Councillors Office;
- an examination on how the resources in the Clerk's Office can be utilized more effectively;
- examining opportunities to enhance better public participation;
- installing a TTY device in the Clerk's Office;
- looking at an HRM wide approach to encouraging and recognizing HRM volunteers;
- developing a plan to create an understanding and acceptance of change of the service culture within HRM;
- improving delivery of service;
- detailed work in providing solutions for asset management and revenue;
- proposing an HRM wide economic strategy and service agreement with Greater Halifax Partnership and RDA;
- continuing to emphasize the continuation of the capital district plan.
- funding is not being proposed for the Capital District which may result in some reductions in service.

In response to Councillor Warshick with regards to the Woodlawn Library being included, in principle, in the 2003/04 budget, but not in the 2004/05 budget, Mr. Bruce Fisher advised he would provide the information to the Council.

Councillor Warshick noted that Council as a whole passed it but did not, as a group, ask for it to be removed.

Mr. McLellan, Chief Administrative Officer, advised staff would re-examine the budget from the previous year and come back to Council with a reconciliation.

Councillor Cooper suggested the community response initiatives be listed in order of priority.

Councillor Hetherington noted that during the Harbour Solutions Project a needs assessment was done by Oliver Burke which identified the need for a community centre in District 8 and requested the Woodside Fire Station, once surplus, be maintained as a recreation facility.

Councillor Warshick suggested HRM look at conducting CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) audits on all current properties and before any further structures or playgrounds, etc., are built.

Councillor Blumenthal suggested Fire Services be more involved in By-law Enforcement.

3.2 Financial Services

Ms. Dale MacLennan, Director, Financial Services, outlined the proposed budget advising the finance department is primarily responsible for Excellence in Governance and Service Delivery. They have increased staff capacity within the existing resources by reallocation of priorities and resources within the business unit and by increasing the succession planning opportunities for staff by doing this.

Councillor Sloane requested the maximum parking time on meters be adjusted so that they will take a toonie and provide more than a one hour parking time frame. Ms. MacLennan advised staff will examine the matter and report back to Council.

Councillor Hendsbee suggested HRM look at revenue generation outside the tax base and review the fee schedules to see if they are in line with what has been charged in the past or what is being charged by other municipal units of comparable size.

3.3 Fiscal Services

Mr. Bruce Fisher, advised fiscal services is approximately forty percent of the budget and noted the following:

- Capital from operating is down \$2.5 million,
- mandatory education funding has been estimated to be up \$3.5 million,
- there are funds allocated for a capital transportation authority,
- trying to budget fully for the operating costs of new capital projects,
- adjustments have been made to a number of reserves,

- fiscal portion of debt charges is up,
- insurance costs are up by approximately \$1 million,
- there are savings on capital projects with respect to the GST,
- there are some increases with respect to deed transfer tax,
- there are increases in grants in lieu.

Councillor Uteck requested the Mayor, on behalf of Council, write to the Minister of Education asking that the \$3.5 million increase stay within HRM.

Councillor Uteck referenced M361, Councillor Discretionary Fund, in the amount of \$69,000.00 and placed the following motion:

MOVED by Councillor Uteck, seconded by Councillor Cunningham, that the amount of \$69,000.00 be placed into the Parking Lot to be used towards another project. MOTION DEFEATED.

MOVED by Councillor Mosher, seconded by Councillor Sloane, that the Mayor write the Province asking them to look at the excessive increases that have been made in mandatory education funding and request that an amount be earmarked to accommodate the request, from the School Board, of supplementary education funding. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Councillor Fougere, seconded by Councillor Uteck, that Financial Services be requested to develop, over the next year, a package of amendments that would provide HRM with tools that HRM needs to address issues pertaining to assessment. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Councillor Warshick, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee that \$30,000.00 be put in the Parking Lot for consideration for the Night of Excellence. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Jan Gibson
Acting Municipal Clerk

