

HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES
February 20, 2007

PRESENT:

Mayor Peter Kelly
Deputy Mayor Sue Uteck
Steve Streach
David Hendsbee
Harry McInroy
Gloria McCluskey
Andrew Younger
Becky Kent
Mary Wile
Patrick Murphy
Dawn Sloane
Sheila Fougere
Russell Walker
Debbie Hum
Linda Mosher
Stephen Adams
Brad Johns
Bob Harvey
Gary Meade
Reg Rankin

REGRETS:

Councillor Krista Snow
Bill Karsten
Jim Smith
Gary Martin

STAFF:

Mr. Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer
Ms. Mary Ellen Donovan, Municipal Solicitor
Ms. Jan Gibson, Municipal Clerk
Ms. Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:15 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - January 23, 2007

MOVED BY Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Councillor Meade that the minutes of January 23, 2007, as presented, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. NOVA SCOTIA POWER

- A copy of the PowerPoint presentation was circulated at this time.
- A DVD of the Tufts Cove retrofit was shown at this time.

Mr. James Taylor, General Manager, Environmental Planning and Monitoring, Nova Scotia Power Incorporated, presented. He advised that Nova Scotia Power Incorporated (NSPI) has been striving, successfully, to reduce particulate from the Tufts Cove stacks. The installation of electrostatic precipitators on Stacks 1 and 3 have resulted in 90% less particulate (soot) exiting the chimneys. He further advised that:

- in 2006, 70% of fuel used at Tufts Cove was from natural gas. The forecast for 2007 is similar.
- 25% reduction in SO₂ (Sulphur Dioxide) emissions achieved.
- 20% reduction in Nitrogen Oxide, the visible form of smog, achieved.
- 50% (approximately) reduction in Mercury in 2006.
- action is being taken in response to public concerns. 70% of fuel used at Tufts Cove was natural gas resulting in a much lower carbon intensity. Lower sulphur fuels have been added into the fuel blend and plans to enhance energy efficiency are underway such as the addition of more renewable energy.
- Tufts Cove stacks, 1, 2 and 3 burn both oil and natural gas. Stacks 4 and 5 burn natural gas only.

Councillor Mosher entered the meeting at 2:20 pm.

Councillor Hendsbee entered the meeting at 2:33 pm.

Mr. Taylor responded to questions of Council as follows:

- white emissions from the Tufts Cove stacks are primarily water vapour as 95% of the particles have been removed.
- under normal operation, emissions from the stacks should not affect the local area.
- NSPI has not exceeded Provincial/Federal regulations. NSPI meets all the requirements that are put forward at the lowest possible cost, which is how NSPI

- is regulated. A natural gas only plan would require a submission and request for the rates to support that as natural gas is not the low cost plan that is required.
- in regard to the fuel adjustment mechanism, NSPI will be before the UARB and the public more often as fuel prices fluctuate. The drive for NSPI to do the right thing is there.
 - NSPI is a gas supplier. Revenue from that equals \$40 million per year which reduces the cost to the customer but does not increase the amount to the shareholders as there is a cap of 9.8%.

Councillor Johns entered the meeting at 2:38 pm.

Members of Council raised the following comments/concerns during the ensuing discussion:

- distribute information pamphlets to all residents around the harbour with a view of the Tufts Cove stacks on an ongoing basis to inform them of the initiatives being taken by NSPI.
- the light on top of the middle stack at Tufts Cove is out and should be replaced.
- Councillor Adams requested the actual numbers in regard to the 90% decrease in emissions. Mr. Taylor advised that he will forward that information.

Councillor Streach entered the meeting at 2:54 pm.

4. AWARD OF TENDERS - GRASS CUTTING AND LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE - VARIOUS LOCATIONS

- A PowerPoint presentation dated February 20, 2007 was before Council.
- A staff report dated February 14, 2007 was before Council.

Councillor Streach left the meeting at 3:08 pm.

Mr. Denis Huck, Manager, Real Property Operations, Real Property and Asset Management, presented the report.

Deputy Mayor Uteck assumed the Chair at 3:09 pm.

MOVED BY Councillor Mosher, seconded by Councillor McCluskey that the Committee of the Whole recommend that Regional Council authorize:

1. **The award of ten (10) grass mowing and landscape maintenance tenders listed in the background section of the staff report dated February 14, 2007, with a total award of \$903,930.51 (net HST included) for the period May 1 to November 1, 2007 with funding from Operating Account R710, Grounds and**

Landscaping as outlined in the Budget Implications section of the staff report dated February 14, 2007 and that;

- 2. The second, third and fourth year award would be contingent upon an annual performance review and budget allocation at a total cost of \$903,903.50 (net HST included) per year and would return to Regional Council for approval.**

During the ensuing discussion on the matter, members of Council raised the following comments/concerns:

- in many instances, the quality of work provided by Contractors in 2006 was sub-standard and resulted in numerous complaints from residents.
- the ability of two Supervisors to travel over HRM to inspect Contractors' work was questioned.
- hiring the same Contractors, who provided less than quality work last year, was questioned.
- ensure resident's expectations are met.
- outlying areas (outside the core) are being neglected.
- care is not taken by Contractors to trim the edges or clean-up clippings.

Mr. Denis Huck responded to Councillor Mosher that there are more stringent guidelines/standards in place with this year's contracts such as an inspection of the Contractor's equipment. He added that he is confident the set standards will be met. If the standards are not met, action may be taken to null and void the contract. Staff have met with the Contractors and outlined the parameters.

Councillor Adams requested a staff report on increasing penalties to Contractors who do not perform to HRM Standards. He explained that the current penalty, an approximate average cost of \$0.22 cents per square metre, is not adequate to deter poor performance. There is no incentive for Contractors to do a good job. He added that work done by in-house staff at the Sambro Ball Field was much better than work done by the Contractors.

Mr. Mike Labrecque, Director, Transportation and Public Works, responded to Council that in order to determine whether or not Contractor's are meeting HRM standards, their work has to be inspected. He explained that there has been a consolidation of effort around managing Contractors.

Mayor Kelly resumed the Chair at 3:35 pm.

In response to Councillor Murphy, Mr. Denis Huck advised that:

- the cost to do this work in-house would be approximately \$2.3 to \$2.6 million based on existing labour rates.
- Contractors must abide by Occupational Health and Safety standards or they are

- penalized.
- Contractors are expected to treat members of the public in a dignified and respectful manner.
- the two Supervisors will work weekends.
- inspections will be complaint driven but staff will be as proactive as possible. Public concerns will be addressed immediately.

Due to time constraints, Mayor Kelly advised that the matter would be deferred to the next Committee of the Whole session.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Jan Gibson
Municipal Clerk