

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

**HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE COUNCIL
APRIL 10, 2007**

PRESENT:

Mayor Peter Kelly
Deputy Mayor Sue Uteck
Councillors: Steve Streach
Krista Snow
Harry McInroy
Gloria McCluskey
Andrew Younger
Bill Karsten
Becky Kent
Jim Smith
Mary Wile
Patrick Murphy
Dawn Sloane
Shelia Fougere
Russell Walker
Debbie Hum
Linda Mosher
Brad Johns
Bob Harvey
Gary Martin
Reg Rankin
Gary Meade

REGRETS:

Councillors: David Hendsbee

STAFF:

Mr. Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Ms. Jan Gibson, Municipal Clerk
Ms. Chrissy White, Legislative Assistant
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 a.m with Deputy Mayor Uteck in the Chair.

2. **TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS (continuation)**

Councillor Karsten expressed concern with Councillor focus sessions on roads and streets.

MOVED by Councillor Karsten that staff increase the streets and roads funding by six million dollars for the 2008/09 budget.

The motion was lost due to no seconder.

Councillor Sloane and Councillor Murphy joined the meeting at 10:10 a.m.

Councillor McCluskey expressed concern regarding safety issues surrounding the womens washroom at Maybank Field. She advised that she would like staff to review possible solutions regarding the above noted safety issues. Councillor McCluskey further advised that she would like to receive information on the real estate in business parks, regarding what property has been sold, and to whom.

Moved by Councillor Younger, seconded by Councillor Karsten, that the \$25,000 allotted for the new playground development bundle in District 6 be changed from Lake Shore Terrace to Locks Road. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Councillor Fougere joined the meeting at 10:22 am.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the need for a salt dome in the 2007/08 budget. Staff advised that recommendations will be forwarded by the Federal government regarding this issue, and the result of those recommendations will predict the progress for the dome.

Councillor Wile joined the meeting at 10:26 a.m.

Councillor Johns expressed concern regarding the lack of transit service in Lucasville. He further advised that transit service should be provided to areas that have been without service for years before new commercial developments receive funding for service. He noted the Neighbourhood Bus Project and requested staff provide information on the status of the project.

Mr. Mike Labreque, Director of Transportation and Public Works advised that the Neighbourhood Bus priorities will be set by Council with regards to funding and start-up. He further advised that cost implications of starting the service would be upwards of one

million dollars. He concluded by advising that the Neighbourhood Bus Project was balanced with other transit priorities and will be introduced in the 2008/09 Budget.

Councillor Stretch joined the meeting at 10:35 am.

Mr. Labreque suggested Council strike an Advisory Committee regarding transit priorities.

Councillor Hum expressed concern regarding the level of funding for sidewalk projects in District 16 and advised that she would like to see improvements in the future.

Councillor Fougere expressed concern regarding funding for vandalism. She requested further information on the break down of costs.

In response to Councillor Smith's questions regarding the Hurricane Juan Tree Restoration Project, staff advised that the budget will allot \$300,000 for new and replacement trees. Staff further advised that they will provide more information on tree restorations as they occur.

Councillor Smith advised that he would like more information on the funding for the overpass from Highfield Park to Burnside Drive. He further advised the he would like to see improvements made to entry ways into Halifax and Dartmouth.

In response to Councillor Snow's request for nighttime construction in HRM, Mr. Lebreque advised that nighttime construction conflicts with the HRM Noise By-law and amendments would have to be made to the By-law before nighttime construction could be considered.

Councillor Snow requested that staff provide her with the construction counts for 2006. She further requested that staff provide her with the name of the supplier of the trees for the Hurricane Juan Tree Restoration Project. She continued by expressing concern regarding the price and inconvenience of Beaver Bank and Rural transit fares in her district. Staff advised that they are considering proposing a community transit fare and will report back to Council on this initiative. Councillor Snow concluded by advising staff that she would like to see more equality regarding funding for recreation facilities.

In response to Councillor Martin regarding hiring an artist to aid in graffiti cleanup, staff advised that a full time artist has been hired by Community Development using existing funds.

Mr. Wayne Anstey, Deputy CAO advised that the Graffiti By-law report will go before Council on May 1, 2007.

Councillor Martin requested a staff update regarding the Nuisance By-law.

Councillor Sloane advised of her support for nighttime construction in busy core areas.

Council recessed at 11:05 a.m

Council reconvened at 11:15 a.m.

Councillor Murphy advised that he would like staff to provide information on cost comparisons regarding in-house flower production and outsourcing. He further advised that he would like to see a bus shelter at the corner of Robie and Young.

Councillor McCluskey advised that she would like to see the \$300,000 allotted for Council Chamber upgrades put towards transit upgrades.

Councillor Adams advised that he would like the funding allotted for transit upgrades in the downtown core be used to provide transit service to areas that currently have no bus service. He further advised that he would like to see increased funding for the Neighbourhood Bus Project.

In response to Councillor Johns questions regarding Gas Tax priorities, staff advised that the priorities set by funding from the Gas Tax must follow a certain criteria. Staff are working to promote environmentally friendly outcomes, and capacity has been built into long term planning regarding projects being brought back to Council. Ultimately, the Gas Tax monies will be spent on projects approved by Council.

Councillor Johns advised that he would like some of the Gas Tax money allotted to fund the Neighbourhood Bus Project. He further advised that he would like to see some funding for pavement in rural and suburban areas.

MOVED by Councillor Johns, seconded by Councillor Walker, that \$250,000 be moved into the parking lot to fund the Neighbourhood Bus Project. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Councillor Wile advised that she would like to propose a cost sharing strategy with the businesses in Bayers Lake to fund sidewalks for that area. Staff advised that a sidewalk initiative for Bayers Lake would have to be lead by the Business Community.

Councillor Martin requested information regarding the Rocky Lake bus service.

Councillor Mosher suggested removing the \$700,000 from the parking lot allotted for pedestrian countdown signals.

Councillor Mosher advised that she would like an update on the Herring Cove Road plan. Staff advised that they would report back with more detailed information.

Councillor Snow advised that she would like the area rates for sidewalks in Fall River eliminated. Staff advised that they will provide information regarding options.

Councillor Walker requested a breakdown of total expenditures, revenues and shortfalls regarding Metro Transit.

Council recessed at 12:02 pm.

The meeting reconvened at 1:32 p.m. with the same members present

2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Mr. Brad Anguish, Director, Environmental Management Services addressed Regional Council and presented his business plan and budget for 2007/08. Prior to this, he pointed out that with the proposed transfer of the Wastewater Section to the Halifax Regional Water Commission, and the major realignment of staff it will involve, this will likely be the last EMS budget he presents. Mr. Anguish then introduced his managers who were attendance and expressed his sincere appreciation to each one for their commitment to their work and the support they have shown him over the past number of years.

With regard to this year's budget, Mr. Anguish advised that their theme for the budget is *'moving from strategy to action, ensuring best environmental return for every tax dollar spent'*, adding that their focus has been to be a leader in becoming a sustainable municipality. With regard to accomplishments, he noted that:

- C The Business Unit has moved redundancies between three levels of government and built synergies;
- C Developed partnerships with UNSM, as well as establishing a good relationship with the Province; and
- C Leveraged over \$80 million in funding from those relationships over the past years.
- C The Business Unit has moved well beyond the traditional three items the department initially focussed on.

Mr. Anguish noted the following recent awards his staff received:

- C The Radio Marketing Bureau Annual Crystal Award in communication and education
- C The 2006 Communicator Award, Honourable Mention, in the Print Category for Naturally Green newsletter
- C The 2006 Communicator Award, Award of Distinction, in the Print Category for Harbour Solutions Special Edition newsletter
- C RRFB Mobius Award - HRM 2006 Litter Prevention Campaign

At 1:39 p.m. Councillor Mosher entered the meeting.

Mr. Anguish reviewed the status of various programs and initiatives in his business unit; as well as the increases in his proposed business plan, and the services that are not expected to be delivered. He noted that there were no decreases in service.

Referring to the PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Anguish noted that it shows there is a \$1.4 million net budget increase and a \$1.1 million effective budget increase. He explained the reason for this was that, last year, to get the half cell coverage at Otter Lake, staff reduced cost savings for the leachate program by taking them out of the operating budget and placing in the capital side. As that cost enters back into the budget this year, it means the budget is only increased by 3.9% as opposed to 5.2%.

At 1:48 p.m. Councillors Murphy and Rankin entered the meeting.

Mr. Anguish reviewed the increases in the budget, noting that increased expenditures are due to a \$1.1 million solid waste contract increase; a \$687,000 Solid Waste Reserve Stability; and \$106K Wage Increases (municipal inflation is at 4 percent). In reviewing the increases in the wastewater/stormwater capital program he pointed out that staff is still working through the question of how to fund the Eastern Passage wastewater plant and will be back to Council shortly on this item.

In addition to increases in the wastewater/stormwater capital program Mr. Anguish advised of the following highlights:

- C Will see Nova Scotia's first combined regulated water and wastewater utility;
- C A grit disposal study;
- C The closure of Cell 3 at Otter lake;
- C Solid waste by-law amendment that will lower residential refuse bag limit; prohibit mixing of industrial and commercial waste; and require signage on industrial/commercial containers;
- C The Highland Energy projects which will see electricity from landfill gas;
- C The community energy plan will be completed;
- C The community education will be refocused on pesticide reduction and sustainable alternatives;
- C Watershed studies in Fall River and Hubbards to support the community visioning process;
- C Developing synergies with the Province with water quality monitoring; and,
- C A State of the Environment Report will be released.

In concluding his presentation Mr. Anguish advised that his department will face some operational pressure this year in the completion of North Dartmouth Trunk sewer, adding

that this is a key project that must be completed over the next couple of years; but that is currently not in the Business Plan. As well, Mr. Anguish advised that salaries and competition are significant pressures to complete capital plans.

Mr. Anguish and his staff responded to questions.

Councillor Uteck made reference to the manner in which the EMS budget was laid out in the budget book and advised that she found it difficult to determine whether staff is one of the cost drivers. She indicated that in order to defend the Municipality's budget to her constituents she would prefer that staff present the information in the budget book more clearly.

Councillor McCluskey advised that a resident had told her that the Municipality gave away free compost from its Turner Drive depot last year because they were unable to sell it. She noted that the compost was from HRM's leaf collection program. Councillor McCluskey questioned the status of this situation.

Mr. Anguish indicated he did not have the information at this time, but would get back to the Councillor.

Councillor Johns entered the meeting at 2:45 p.m.

The meeting recessed at 2:45 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 3:04 p.m.

Councillor Younger referred to a line item in the budget book and asked staff to change the name of the Port Wallace sewer system to 200 Waverley Road, noting it would be less confusing for the residents.

In response to a question by Councillor Younger, Mr. Anguish advised that staff are not opposed to holding a second Household Hazardous Waste Depot.

MOVED by Councillor Younger, seconded by Councillor Karsten that \$25,000 be placed in the Parking Lot for a second Household Hazardous Waste Depot. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

At 3:19 p.m. Councillor Fougere entered the meeting.

MOVED by Councillor Meade, seconded by Councillor Sloane that \$25,000 be placed in the Parking Lot for sewer repairs on Station Road, Hubbards. MOTION DEFEATED.

Councillor Johns asked that it be noted for the record that the Lively Road project was only one section of an entire project that will extend servicing up to the Springfield Estates Trailer Park and to Springfield Lake, and that he raised this issue with staff previously and was raising it again.

Councillor Johns expressed frustration with regard to Policy P-71 to the Springfield Lake watershed. He explained that approximately 15 years ago Springfield Lake was recognized as a head-water lake and there were special circumstances pertaining to that particular watershed. An extensive report was carried out and a number of suggestions to save the lake were provided. Councillor Johns went on to note that since 2001, North West Community Council has raised this issue and for four years staff advised that when the Regional Plan was completed, it would contain something to move forward with on Policy P-71. The Councillor noted that the Regional Plan was approved last year, and last month North West Community Council received an information report which essentially stated that staff were going to start studying the matter. Councillor Johns advised that he would like specific information as to when the watershed study and management guidelines as a functional plan will be performed for Springfield Lake.

In response, Ms. Denise Schofield, Acting Manager of Development Engineering addressed Council and noted that there was nothing in earnest in the budget that will implement specific outcomes but that the stormwater functional plan is being done now.

Councillor Johns advised that he was very disappointed that after 20 years of waiting for the policy, it has not been addressed. He asked staff to move forward on this, and if something was not going to be in the budget for this year for Springfield Lake, then it be addressed in next year's budget.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:38 p.m.

Jan Gibson
Municipal Clerk