



**BUDGET COMMITTEE
(STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ON BUDGET)
SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES
April 21 and 22, 2021**

PRESENT: Councillor Paul Russell, Chair
Mayor Mike Savage
Deputy Mayor Tim Outhit
Councillors: Cathy Deagle Gammon
David Hendsbee
Becky Kent
Trish Purdy
Sam Austin
Tony Mancini
Waye Mason
Lindell Smith
Shawn Cleary
Kathryn Morse
Patty Cuttell
Iona Stoddard
Pam Lovelace
Lisa Blackburn

STAFF: Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer
Jane Fraser, Executive Director of Finance & Asset Management/Chief Financial Officer
John Traves, Municipal Solicitor and Executive Director of Legal & Legislative Services
Brad Anguish, Executive Director of Transportation & Public Works
Kelly Denty, Executive Director of Planning & Development
Dave Reage, Executive Director of Halifax Transit
Denise Schofield, Executive Director of Parks and Recreation
Chief Dan Kinsella, Chief, Halifax Regional Police
Åsa Kachan, Chief Librarian and Chief Executive Officer of Halifax Public Libraries
Iain MacLean, Municipal Clerk
Andrea Lovasi-Wood, Legislative Assistant

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

The agenda, reports, supporting documents, information items circulated, and video (if available) are online at halifax.ca.

**Special Budget Committee Meeting
Minutes
April 21 and 22, 2021**

The meeting was called to order at 9:32 a.m., and recessed at 11:32 p.m. Budget Committee reconvened at 1:00 p.m. and recessed at 3:20 p.m. Budget Committee reconvened at 3:35 p.m. and recessed on April 21, 2021 at 4:27 p.m. and reconvened on April 22, 2021 at 9:35 a.m., and recessed at 11:51 a.m. Budget Committee reconvened in at 1:00 p.m. and adjourned at 4:24 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – March 24/26, March 31 and April 7, 2021

MOVED by Councillor Stoddard, seconded by Councillor Lovelace

THAT the minutes of March 24/26, March 31 and April 7, 2021, 2021 be approved as circulated.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS – NONE

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Karen Gross, District 8, spoke before the Budget Committee of their opposition to the proposed funding of Halifax Regional Police's body worn camera pilot program and a RCMP staff member to handle public complaints against RCMP. Gross requested that Regional Council undertake measures to defund the police and acknowledged Regional Council's current reviews of the delivery of police services.

Laura Conrod, Dartmouth, spoke before the Budget Committee regarding additional funding to Halifax Regional Police. Conrod noted that Halifax Regional Police's budget is over \$88 million and wondered why this budget could not fund these additional items. Conrod questioned what oversight measures are in place regarding the police budget and cited evidence that body worn cameras do not work to improve public safety or improve police relationships with racialized groups.

Avery Dakin, District 8, also spoke before the Budget Committee regarding their opposition to additional funding to Halifax Regional Police. Dakin suggested Halifax Regional Police's budget could be redirected to address social issues, including affordable housing, noting that public trust is low following the March incident captured on video.

Kate Powe, Halifax, reiterated to the Budget Committee the concerns of previous speakers regarding body worn cameras and opposition to additional funds being provided to Halifax Regional Police. Powe stated that the funds spent on policing should be spent on social services and shelters for the homeless. Powe spoke of a lack of comfort and confidence in the police.

Lou Campbell, Halifax, reiterated to the Budget Committee the concerns of previous speakers regarding body worn cameras and opposition to additional funds being provided to Halifax Regional Police. Campbell noted evidence that body worn cameras are not effective and do not protect racialized people. Campbell also spoke of the lack of community trust in the police.

Kaela Fraser, Halifax South, reiterated to the Budget Committee the concerns of previous speakers regarding body worn cameras and opposition to additional funds being provided to Halifax Regional Police. Fraser referenced the March video circulated via social media as evidence of police verbal abuse and noted that the police have been shown to act impulsively and does not believe additional training will improve it.

Sadie Beaton, Halifax North, reiterated to the Budget Committee the concerns of previous speakers regarding body worn cameras and opposition to additional funds being provided to Halifax Regional

Police. Beaton spoke of the urgent need to defund police department and find alternative ways to improve wellness and public safety. Beaton spoke of evidence that body worn cameras do not improve public perception of police or change police behaviours.

Rachel Derrah, Halifax, reiterated to the Budget Committee the concerns of previous speakers regarding body worn cameras and opposition to additional funds being provided to Halifax Regional Police. Derrah expressed concerns with the ability of Halifax Regional Police to be able to police themselves and bring accountability for their actions.

Robin Tress, Dartmouth, reiterated to the Budget Committee the concerns of previous speakers regarding body worn cameras and opposition to additional funds being provided to Halifax Regional Police. Tress referenced past presentations to the Board of Police Commissioners regarding the ineffectiveness of body worn cameras. Tress expressed concern that study will lead to purchase and use of body worn cameras.

Tonya Hoddinott, spoke before the Budget Committee regarding the reduction of funding for victim services in the Halifax Regional Police budget, noting that COVID-19 and stay at home orders has increased domestic violence. Hoddinott expressed concerns that body worn cameras could lead to facial recognition that can be used to track people.

Madelaine Higgins, District 8, spoke before the Budget Committee asking them to respond to the priorities of the community which includes defunding the police. Higgins expressed opposition to Halifax Regional Police funding and use of polygraph testing. Higgins repeated concerns of previous speakers regarding body worn cameras. Higgins suggested that the police should have a public liability insurance system as a means to monitor and manage their behaviours.

Alex Mann, District 8, reiterated to the Budget Committee the concerns of previous speakers regarding body worn cameras and opposition to additional funds being provided to Halifax Regional Police. Mann expressed concerns that Halifax Regional Police are reticent to disclose policies and fears this will include future body worn camera policies.

Caitlin O'Neill, Halifax, reiterated to the Budget Committee the concerns of previous speakers regarding body worn cameras and opposition to additional funds being provided to Halifax Regional Police. O'Neill referenced the Wortley Street Checks Report to suggest that police are not successful at investigating themselves and do not have a culture where they can successfully manage negative behaviours.

Katie Whitlock, Bedford, spoke before the Budget Committee regarding their witnessing of poor police behavior and actions with various communities and inability of police to effectively interact with racialized groups. Whitlock encouraged HRM to continue research regarding policing services and not increase funding.

Stephanie Clarke, Halifax North, reiterated to the Budget Committee the concerns of previous speakers regarding opposition to additional funds being provided to Halifax Regional Police. Clarke suggested that crime prevention comes from social programs.

Meghan Leary, Halifax North, reiterated to the Budget Committee the concerns of previous speakers regarding body worn cameras and opposition to additional funds being provided to Halifax Regional Police. Leary repeated the call for public liability insurance for police using funds within current police budget as a means to ensure the safety of the community.

Kate Ryan, Dartmouth, spoke before the Budget Committee on the behalf of the parents of children on Craighburn Drive and their concerns regarding safety of having a bus route being added to the street. Ryan is opposed to transit changes to Route 55 that will bring bus service to this street because children play on the street and are used to crossing the street with little traffic to access the playground.

Cheryl Scotland, Dartmouth, spoke before the Budget Committee regarding the changes to Halifax Transit route 55 citing a lack of proper public consultation regarding changes to transit service. Scotland noted that a petition previously provided to Regional Council signed by more than 150 residents opposed to the last 3 km of service being cut from end of route 55 on Waverley Drive. Scotland asked the Budget Committee not to approve the proposed transit change.

Sue MacNeil, Dartmouth, spoke before the Budget Committee regarding the traffic safety concerns for Craighburn subdivision with proposed transit change to route 55, because of visibility issues at various curves along Craighburn Drive and at the intersection of Craighburn Drive and Waverley Road. MacNeil noted concerns about the increased risk for traffic accidents.

Myra MacKay, Dartmouth, reiterated to the Budget Committee the concerns of previous speakers regarding changes to Halifax Transit route 55 and expresses their opposition to the proposed change.

Nancy Ives, Dartmouth, reiterated to the Budget Committee the concerns of previous speakers regarding changes to Halifax Transit route 55 and expresses their opposition to the change. Ives stated the proposed change will require earlier street and sidewalk clearing to allow for buses to have more room to move on the street. Ives asked for more time for the community to engage with Halifax Transit.

Andrea Speranza, Dartmouth, reiterated to the Budget Committee the concerns of previous speakers regarding changes to Halifax Transit route 55 and expressed their opposition to the change. Speranza expressed disappointment that the community was not more fully engaged by Halifax Transit to discuss their opposition to the proposed changes.

Brenda Holland, Dartmouth, spoke before the Budget Committee regarding their opposition to changes to route 55 as bringing buses to Craighburn Drive will result in negative health effects that bus noise and exhaust pollution will bring to the neighbourhood.

Samantha McPherson, Dartmouth, reiterated to the Budget Committee the concerns of previous speakers regarding body worn cameras and opposition to additional funds being provided to Halifax Regional Police. McPherson spoke of their opposition to Budget Committee approving funds for a RCMP staff member to investigate complaints against RCMP.

Doug Colborne, Dartmouth, reiterated to the Budget Committee the concerns of previous speakers regarding changes to Halifax Transit route 55 and expressed their opposition to the change because of safety. Colborne asked whether Halifax Transit performed a hazard or risk assessment about the impacts of route 55 servicing Craighburn Drive especially around the playground and community mailbox location.

Frank Beazley, Dartmouth, reiterated to the Budget Committee the concerns of previous speakers regarding changes to Halifax Transit route 55 and expressed their opposition to the change. Beazley suggested an alternative bus turnaround can happen on Montague Road with far less risk to safety. Beazley also expressed concerns regarding the reduction to service on Waverley Road for the residents in Portobello.

Kara Friesen, Dartmouth, reiterated to the Budget Committee the concerns of previous speakers regarding body worn cameras and opposition to additional funds being provided to Halifax Regional Police.

Brent Moxon, Dartmouth, reiterated to the Budget Committee the concerns of previous speakers regarding changes to Halifax Transit route 55 and expressed their opposition to the change. Moxon suggested ways to improve ridership for route 55 and that the elimination of weekend and holiday service could save the same amount of money as the proposed change.

5. 2021/22 Budget Adjustment List for Consideration

The following was before Budget Committee:

- A staff recommendation report dated April 12, 2021 with attached Budget Adjustment List by Business Unit and Budget Briefing Notes
- A handout dated April 21, 2021 with revised Budget Adjustment List
- A staff presentation dated April 20, 2021 entitled "Budget Adjustment List (BAL) Process"
- Correspondence from Adam Grant, Ayla-Monic McKay, Scott Anderson, Kaelen MacDonald, Miriam Breslow, Sophie Kaufman, Karen Gross, Chris Geddes, Chelsea and Bobby Foley, Kim Sawler, Coral Maloney, Maggie Scott, Rachel Derrah, Tonya Hoddinott

Jane Fraser, Executive Director of Finance & Asset Management/Chief Financial Officer, provided a presentation to Budget Committee reviewing the budget adjustment list (BAL) and the process to be used when the Budget Committee approves the items (over and under) included on the budget adjustment list.

MOVED by Councillor Austin, seconded by Councillor Mancini

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to finalize a Proposed Operating Budget for Regional Council that includes any accepted items from the Budget Adjustment List to be added/removed to/from the 2021/22 Proposed Operating Budget together with proposed amendments, respecting any accepted items from the Budget Adjustment List proposed to be added/removed to/from the 2021/22 approved Capital Budget.

MOVED by Councillor Blackburn, seconded by Councillor Mason

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the 2021/2022 budget with the one-time addition of:

- a. \$71,100 for the proposed Contract Expert for IT Audit for the Office of the Auditor General;**
- b. \$400,000 for Non-Accepted Streets Land Title Search for Transportation & Public Works;**
- c. \$750,000 for COVID Event Grant Program & Recovery Event Program for Parks & Recreation;**
- d. \$1,757,350 for Multi-District Facility Subsidy Request to address COVID impacts for Parks & Recreation;**
- e. \$125,000 for Public Art at Queen's Marque for Parks & Recreation;**
- f. \$150,000 for a report on E. coli microbial analysis In First Lake for Planning & Development;**
- g. \$1,000,000 for Traffic Calming Budget Increase for Transportation & Public Works;**
- h. \$1,315,000 for Urban Forestry Plan for Transportation & Public Works;**

to be funded from the Deed Transfer Tax.

Friendly amendment accepted to remove Body Worn Cameras from the list of one-time items from the Budget Adjustment list to be added to the 2021/2022 budget.

Jane Fraser answered Budget Committee questions regarding the tax bill impacts of funding one-time items via Deed Transfer Tax.

MOTION AS AMENDED PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Councillor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Blackburn

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the 2021/2022 budget with the one-time addition of \$85,000 for the proposed Body Worn Video Project Coordinator (12 Month Term) for Halifax Regional Police.

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer, answered Budget Committee questions regarding the background of the Board of Police Commissioners request that Halifax Regional Police research and

develop policy for Halifax Regional Police's proposed Body Worn Camera pilot project. Dubé advised that after receipt of the report that the Board of Police Commissioners would have the opportunity to review.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED. (14 in favour, 3 against)

In favour: Mayor Savage, Deputy Mayor Outhit, Budget Committee Chair Russell, Councillors Deagle Gammon, Hendsbee, Kent, Purdy, Austin, Mancini, Smith, Cleary, Morse, Lovelace, Blackburn

Against: Councillors Mason, Cuttell, Stoddard

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Blackburn

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the 2021/2022 budget with the ongoing addition of \$72,500 for the anti-black racism project for the Office of Diversity and Inclusion/African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Deputy Mayor Outhit

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the 2021/2022 budget with the ongoing addition of \$56,000 for the proposed council newsletter funding for the Councillor's Support Office.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Councillor Mancini, seconded by Deputy Mayor Outhit

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the 2021/2022 budget with the ongoing addition of \$100,000 for Library Electronic Resources for Halifax Public Libraries.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Councillor Deagle Gammon, seconded by Councillor Mancini

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the 2021/2022 budget with the addition of:

- 1. \$50,000 for a pilot program for Route 55 to continue to service the Portobello turning loop for one year and the expansion of service to the Alderney Ferry Terminal;**
- 2. Peak hour bus availability to be created through rush hour frequency reductions to route 55; and**
- 3. A staff report to be prepared on the effects of the pilot on route 55 ridership.**

John Traves, Municipal Solicitor, in response to Budget Committee concerns that this motion concerns the modification of the Moving Forward Together Plan which is the purview of Regional Council, confirmed that the Budget Committee can consider this motion as is involves Halifax Transit's yearly business plan which is the jurisdiction of the Budget Committee.

Dave Reage, Executive Director of Halifax Transit, answered Budget Committee questions regarding route 55. Reage also clarified that Halifax Transit before Budget Committee not only for approval of budgetary matters but the approval of business plan which includes service changes.

MOTION PUT AND DEFEATED. (8 in favour, 9 against)

In favour: Deputy Mayor Outhit, Councillors Deagle Gammon, Hendsbee, Kent, Purdy, Mancini, Cuttell, Stoddard

Against: Mayor Savage, Budget Committee Chair Russell, Councillors Smith, Cleary, Morse, Lovelace, Blackburn, Austin, Mason

MOVED by Councillor Lovelace, seconded by Councillor Blackburn

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the 2021/2022 budget with the ongoing addition of \$805,300 for additional Planning & Development staff (new positions) for Planning & Development, specifically the following:

- **3 Planner I Positions \$241,800;**
- **3 Assistant Building Officials \$227,400;**
- **3 Compliance Officer I Positions \$227,400; and**
- **1 Senior Program Engineer \$108,700.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Councillor Kent, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the 2021/2022 budget with the ongoing addition of \$115,000 for additional Mobile Household Special Waste Events for Transportation & Public Works.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED. (15 in favour, 2 against)

In favour: Deputy Mayor Outhit, Budget Committee Chair Russell, Councillors Deagle Gammon, Hendsbee, Kent, Purdy, Mancini, Mason, Smith, Cleary, Morse, Cuttell, Stoddard, Lovelace, Blackburn

Against: Mayor Savage, Councillor Austin

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Mancini

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the 2021/2022 budget with the ongoing removal of \$308,500 by reducing weekly recycling blue bag collection to bi-weekly for Transportation & Public Works.

Brad Anguish, Executive Director of Transportation & Public Works, clarified that this reduction to weekly recycling blue bag collection would be for the remaining term of the existing contract and advised that this reduction could be revisited after this vote and prior to the expiration of the contract.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED. (9 in favour, 8 against)

In favour: Mayor Savage, Councillors Hendsbee, Austin, Mancini, Mason, Smith, Cleary, Morse, Lovelace

Against: Deputy Mayor Outhit, Budget Committee Chair Russell, Councillors Deagle Gammon, Kent, Purdy, Cuttell, Stoddard, Blackburn,

Councillor Russell stepped down from the Chair and Councillor Deagle Gammon assumed the Chair.

MOVED by Councillor Russell, seconded by Councillor Blackburn

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the 2021/2022 budget with the ongoing addition of \$85,000 for Multi Service Youth Centre - Future Commitment for Parks & Recreation.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Councillor Russell resumed the Chair.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Outhit, seconded by Councillor Mancini

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the 2021/2022 budget with the ongoing addition of \$50,000 for the Library Food Program for Halifax Public Libraries.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Not present: Councillor Lovelace

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Austin

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the 2021/22 budget with the addition of \$1.25 million in 2021 and \$2.25 million in subsequent years, funded from deed transfer tax, for the costs associated with in-year staffing requirements.

Friendly amendment accepted to include that the Chief Administrative Officer provide Council with a report detailing the proposed staffing resource plan for Council approval prior to the job posting.

MOTION AS AMENDED PUT AND PASSED. (10 in favour, 7 against)

In favour: Deputy Mayor Outhit, Councillors Hendsbee, Austin, Mancini, Mason, Smith, Cleary, Morse, Cuttall, Stoddard, Lovelace, Blackburn

Against: Mayor Savage, Budget Committee Chair Russell, Councillors Deagle Gammon, Kent, Purdy, Mancini, Cuttall

MOVED by Mayor Savage, seconded by Councillor Mason

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the 2021/2022 budget with the ongoing addition of \$250,000 for Discover Halifax – Destination Management-Integrated Tourism Master Plan/COVID Recovery for Parks & Recreation.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Councillor Cleary, seconded by Councillor Stoddard

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the 2021/2022 budget with the ongoing addition of \$2,000,000 for enhanced transit stop clearing for Halifax Transit.

Budget Committee expressed concerns that transit stop clearing to the proposed 24 hour standard might already exist, questioning the need to provide additional funding especially where the 24 hour standard does not apply during exceptional storms.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED. (9 in favour, 8 against)

In favour: Councillors Hendsbee, Kent, Austin, Mason, Smith, Cleary, Morse, Cuttall, Stoddard,

Against: Mayor Savage, Deputy Mayor Outhit, Budget Committee Chair Russell, Councillors Deagle Gammon, Purdy, Mancini, Lovelace, Blackburn

MOVED by Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor Blackburn

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the 2021/2022 budget with the ongoing addition of \$446,000 for the proposed increase to non-profit tax rebate for affordable housing from 25% to 50% starting in fiscal 21/22 for Finance, Asset Management & ICT.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the 2021/2022 budget with the ongoing addition of \$250,000 for Heritage Conservation Districts grant funding for Planning & Development.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED. (16 in favour, 1 against)

In favour: Mayor Savage, Deputy Mayor Outhit, Councillors Deagle Gammon, Hendsbee, Kent, Purdy, Austin, Mancini, Mason, Smith, Cleary, Morse, Cuttall, Stoddard, Lovelace, Blackburn

Against: Budget Committee Chair Russell

MOVED by Councillor Austin, seconded by Councillor Cleary

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the 2021/2022 budget with the ongoing addition of \$60,000 for the Journey to Change training for Halifax Regional Police.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Councillor Austin, seconded by Councillor Cleary

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the 2021/2022 budget with the ongoing addition of \$85,800 for the proposed court disposition clerk (new position) for Halifax Regional Police.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED. (11 in favour, 6 against)

In favour: Mayor Savage, Councillors Hendsbee, Kent, Austin, Mancini, Mason, Smith, Cleary, Morse, Stoddard, Blackburn

Against: Deputy Mayor Outhit, Budget Committee Chair Russell, Councillors Deagle Gammon, Purdy, Cuttall, Lovelace

MOVED by Mayor Savage, seconded by Deputy Mayor Outhit

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to finalize the Proposed Operating Budget for Regional Council with funding from reserves and grants when required for a total tax increase not to exceed 1%.

MOTION TO AMEND PUT AND PASSED. (14 in favour, 3 against)

In favour: Mayor Savage, Deputy Mayor Outhit, Budget Committee Chair Russell, Councillors Deagle Gammon, Hendsbee, Kent, Purdy, Austin, Mancini, Mason, Smith, Cleary, Morse, Cuttell, Stoddard, Lovelace, Blackburn

Against: Councillors Austin, Mason, Morse

The question was called on the main motion as follows:

MOVED by Councillor Austin, seconded by Councillor Mancini

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to finalize the Proposed Operating Budget for Regional Council as amended, that includes the accepted items from the Budget Adjustment List together with the approved amendments from the 2021/22 approved Capital Budget together with funding from reserves and grants when required for a total tax increase not to exceed 1%.

MOTION AS AMENDED PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned on April 22, 2021 at 4:24 p.m.

Iain MacLean
Municipal Clerk