



**Regional Watershed Advisory Board
MINUTES
June 14, 2017**

PRESENT: Walter N. Regan, Chair
Kelly Schnare, Vice Chair
Penny Henneberry
Tim Boudreau
Rose Featherstone
Kevin Hooper

REGRETS: Aaron Ezekiel
Russell Dmytriw
Derek Vallis
Jennifer Rocard

STAFF: Cameron Deacoff, Environmental Performance Officer
Sharon Chase, Legislative Support

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

The agenda, reports, supporting documents, and information items circulated are online at halifax.ca.

the meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m. and adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair, Walter Regan called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. in the Maxine Tynes Room, 2nd floor, Alderney Public Library, 60 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 3, 2017 and May 10, 2017

MOVED by Rose Featherstone, seconded by Kevin Hooper

THAT the minutes of May 3, 2017 and May 10, 2017 be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

The agenda was approved as presented.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS – NONE

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS – NONE

8. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – NONE

9. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

9.1 STAFF

9.1.1 Draft Halifax Green Network Plan Review

Input into key Watershed Components:

- The planning framework (core concepts, objectives and implementation directions in the Primer document as it relates to watershed planning and management matters)
- The development of implementation actions and recommendations for the final draft plan

The following was before the Board:

- Halifax Green Network Plan Primer (March 2017)
- State of the Landscape Report (October 2015)

Cameron Deacoff, Environmental Performance Officer focused this summary on: water quality monitoring, flood plains, wetland and riparian buffers. Using the Primer Report they reviewed the issues and challenges in each area as well as some of the guiding principles being used: interconnected, grounded in science, context sensitive and versatile. They highlighted Core Planning Concept 5 Interconnected and Multifunctional Spaces where open spaces have both ecology and socio-cultural functions. Ecology objectives cover: water quality and quantity, riparian areas and wetlands, flood and sea-level rise protection.

They then posed a number of questions to the Board for their consideration.

- Are the objectives and direction acceptable?
- What's missing?
- How should we implement these directions?
- Should we incorporate source carrying capacity into planning decisions?

Cameron Deacoff reiterated that the State of the Landscape document summarizes what exists and the Primer Report provides analysis based on identified themes. Two significant rounds of consultation have

been completed and the third phase was begun in April 2017 which includes public information sessions to present the primer and look for feedback. The focus will now be on the work necessary, including Board consultation, to submit a final document to Regional Council this fall.

The Board identified that there was nothing in the plan on watershed management and that a flood plain map needs to be included. It was felt that the Green Network Plan gives HRM the opportunity to take the lead and work with the provincial and federal governments to update flood area mapping. The Board asked for clarification on who oversees what areas. HRM is concerned with land-use planning and works with other stakeholders such as the province, indigenous communities and private land owners each of whom are involved in different processes and areas of the plan. The Board asked about the scope of a source water protection plan. Cameron noted that this is a resource intensive activity and that the drinking water supply is protected by a multi-level approach with well defined processes and framework. The scope of water quality monitoring was also of interest: what is monitored, how is the monitoring designed and will it be broadened for an overall baseline. Currently the focus has been on the public use of water for recreation. The Board noted that there is no provincial standard for setbacks and buffers and wondered if this should be updated using new science to help define the objective and functions of these areas. HRM presently has a 20-metre minimum requirement.

Vice Chair, Kelly Schnare referred to the Ecology Directions section on page 29 of the Primer Report and the legend used to direct work. There were opportunities identified under Water Quality and Waterbody, Flooding and Riparian Area Protection which would be of interest to this Board. For example, stream gauging could be added to the waterbody section under SI, supports initiatives. Under water quality there should be a bullet point under GD, guides data. The Board asked if the Green Network identifies what is being protected and guides where development can happen. There was also a question about brown water and whether specific details would be coming about any joint efforts with the province and federal governments. Drowning or starving wetlands is a concern where additional details on protecting the functional integrity of wetlands would be helpful. An opportunity was identified to include a public education piece, perhaps under the partnerships section, to share information and become a leader in publishing local materials where citizens are proud of Halifax's Green Network. The Board wondered how HRM controls runoff and if there was any legislation to follow. Storm Water Management By-Laws will be developed and are a part of 2017/18's work plan. This work will be coordinated with Halifax Water, the province and Environment Canada. The Green Plan should spell out storm water treatment as it is a function of water quality. Water quality would benefit from having a classification system beyond the present system which focuses on measuring water quality as it relates to recreational activity. The Board asked how HRM might be able to cross boundaries and influence the rest of the province as well as limiting HRM's impact on other jurisdictions. HRM can take a leadership role in pollution prevention where the Halifax Harbour Clean-up was given as a successful example.

It was agreed that there were quite a few areas where a clearer definition of terms would be helpful including one for: watershed management, riparian zone measurement, the definition of buffers and setbacks and restoration funding. Having these clearly understood assists when making planning decisions. It was suggested that a glossary of such terms might be included in the final report. This would also provide an education tool for the public and be useful for HRM departments working with the document who may not have specific technical knowledge of these terms. This high-level plan covers a broad range of ambitions. The Board questioned whether it should be a stand-alone document or incorporated into the Regional Plan.

Cameron Deacoff confirmed that there will be many HRM departments who will deliver on the finalized plan and its initiatives under their areas of expertise. Parks and Recreation and Planning will be heavily involved. Some existing plans will need to be revised once this moves forward. A coordinated implementation of Council's approved plan will be overseen by HRM's Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).

9.1.2 Watershed Management and Water Quality Monitoring Program Review

The following was before the Board:

- A handout with links to Watershed Management & Water Quality Monitoring resource documents

Cameron Deacoff, Environmental Performance Officer shared that a Watershed Planning review is taking place. It was originally planned over three years but staff will now be presenting to Regional Council by year end. Also in 2017, a review will take place of existing water quality monitoring programs as well as any report recommendations to date. With a tightened timeline, staff will also be looking for the Board's input and advice. They then highlighted some of the existing reports and programs which are being included in this review. In 2003 there was a recommendation made for a water quality monitoring program which was initiated in 2006. In 2011 data was collected on 65 lakes and rivers, three times a year from which two reports were generated. There has been an ongoing beach water quality program focusing on recreational and public safety. In 2006 and 2014 watershed studies were done to assist in development planning. This led to the inclusion of water quality monitoring in the development agreements for both Russell Lake and Bedford West. Presently there are a select number of lakes where water quality data is being collected for use in secondary planning policy development. It was felt that this information will be useful for the Board in developing recommendations. Cameron Deacoff has developed a spreadsheet listing these initiatives and the Board asked if this could be re-distributed preferably listing things chronologically for their reference. Cameron Deacoff shared that in the coming weeks staff will be meeting to define the scope of the Water Quality Management review and they will then draft a list of questions for the Board's consideration.

10. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – July 12, 2017 at 5 p.m., Maxine Tynes Room, Alderney Public Library, 60 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Staff information report to Halifax Regional Council dated April 5, 2017 re: Sawmill Creek Daylighting

Sharon Chase
Legislative Support